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This is a monochrome reproduction of Japanese Manuscript 58, held by the Wellcome Trust in London. The manuscript received little attention in the Wellcome Library for nearly one hundred years until recently, when it was reproduced in the *Asien- und Afrika-Studien* series of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin in 2005. The editor, Dr. Walravens, has placed facsimiles on odd-numbered pages and printed transcriptions on the facing pages. In the preface, he provides a bibliographic analysis, raising several questions about the manuscript. I will introduce his conclusions, adding some related historical details not mentioned in the book. I will also respond to some of the questions raised by him.

Dr. Walravens’ bibliographic analysis recognised the manuscript as a colour-illustrated copy excerpted from *Cruydt-boeck* (1664), an enlarged edition of *Cruijdeboeck*, by the Flemish physician Rembert Dodoens (1517-1585). The manuscript does not provide much information about its origins, though one clue is the phrase ‘Present van Gonossky’ on the manuscript. Dr. Walravens has painstakingly traced this Gonossky, who was the former owner of the manuscript, discovering that the father of one Gonnosuke Yoshio 吉雄権之助 (1785-1831), Kōgyū Yoshio 吉雄耕牛 (1724-1800), left a few incomplete translations of *Cruydt-boeck.*

1 The letters ‘-ij-’ in most plant names have been replaced with ‘-y’, for example, 4 Allij (‘Ally’ in the editor’s transcription). Since ‘ij’ and ‘y’ are interchangeable in Dutch spelling, the editor gives ‘-y’ instead of ‘-ij’. Further, there are simple printing errors such as 2 Acori ‘菖蒲’ (菖蒲), 24 Consolida majoris ‘景天草’ (景天模), 27 ‘長崎ニラ’ (長崎ニラ), and 64 Pentaphylla ‘黄蜀葵’ (黄獨葵). 58 Nymphaeae: Two Kanji names, ‘萍川’ and ‘蓬骨’, were incorrectly transcribed. As Japanese words are traditionally aligned from top to bottom, these should read as ‘川骨’ and ‘萍蓬.’ In *Honzo kōmoku keino* 本草綱目啓蒙, ‘萍蓬草’ is listed with its Japanese equivalent ‘Kawahone’ (川骨).

2 This handwritten name actually appears more like ‘Gonnosky’.
Looking back at the Yoshio family’s early connections with Cruydt-boeck, Gonnosuke’s grandfather, Yoshio Tosaburō 吉雄藤三郎 was involved in the translation project of Cruydt-boeck. In 1741, when Opperhoofd J. van der Waejen visited the eighth Shogun Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳川吉宗, Waejen was accompanied by the interpreter Tosaburō and the Dutch surgeon, P. P. Musculus. It was during this time that the official physician, Noro Genjō 野呂元丈, was obligated to undertake the translation of Cruydt-boeck by order of the Shogun. Taking this opportunity, Noro asked Musculus to explain the contents of Cruydt-boeck. As Noro spoke little Dutch, Tosaburō was naturally involved as a translator for a few months. As the project lasted for a decade, Kōgyū Yoshio also worked with Musculus in 1743 and 1747, when he stayed in Edo temporarily as an interpreter for the Dutch ambassadors.³ Kōgyū possibly learned some Dutch herbal medicine through this experience, and, in Nagasaki, he learned Dutch medicine from Musculus during the period 1739-1747. Later, in 1775 and 1776, Kōgyū also learned medicine from Carl P. Thunberg (1743-1828), a famous student of Carl von Linné (1707-1778).⁴ Kōgyū became an important supporter of Thunberg’s plant hunting, and it is possible that he learned more about the Linnéan system of plant classification as well as the latest Western pharmacology.

After Kōgyū passed away, the entire translation of Cruydt-boeck (Ensei Dodonæus sōnoku-fu 遠西獨度涅烏斯草木譜) was completed in 1823 by order of Matsudaira Sadanobu 松平定信. Gonnosuke’s nephew, Yoshio Jōsan 吉雄常三 (1787-1843) had been engaged in the translation, and the preface states, “late in his [i.e. Kōgyū] life, he set about translating the great herbal written by Dodoneus. He worked day and night, but ... he could not finish the enterprise.”⁵ This legacy of his translation was presumably incorporated into the 1823 edition. The Yoshio family continued to contribute greatly to the translation of Cruydt-boeck, and Dr. Walravens’ assumption that Gonossky refers to Gonnosuke Yoshio is distinctly possible.

What is more, Gonnosuke owned Kōgyū’s manuscript work on translation, Dodonæus honzō abose ruiju 獨獨匿烏斯本草アベセ類聚 (Alphabetical Enumeration in Dodoens’ Herbal). It was later given to Itō Keisuke 伊藤圭介 (1803-1901), a student of P. F. von Siebold (1796-1866). As Dr. Walravens assumes, the manuscript in the Wellcome Library may have come from Kōgyū, and P. F. von Siebold might have received it before returning to the Netherlands, although this is not certain.

On the other hand, Dr. Walravens assesses the date of the original drawings and asserts, “as the paper seems older [than Gonnosuke’s time],

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there is the option that the drawings were done earlier ... The copying may have been done very early, i.e. any time after ca. 1650, or rather later.” It is possible, then, that Kōgyū is neither the creator of the illustrations nor the primary owner.

The manuscript includes reference page numbers to Cruyd-boeck, which are in accordance with the 1664 edition. The same edition was used for Noro’s translation work (1741-1750), although the Shogun held an earlier edition, which was given to the fourth Shogun as a tribute in 1659. Kōgyū was able to see the 1664 edition during his participation in Noro’s ten-year project. However, most of the plants selected in the manuscript do not match those selected by Noro. Thus, the time when the illustrations were drawn, the person who made them, the reason for making them, and the process of their production remain fundamental mysteries.

This manuscript consists of 84 species of coloured plant sketches with Latin and Dutch names. Dr. Walravens raises the interesting question of by what criteria were the 84 plants selected out of at least 1,470 species? Answering this can contribute to understanding the primary author’s interest in this manuscript. It appears that the 84 plants can be roughly divided into the following types: (1) medicinal plants native to or cultivated in Japan, (2) medicinal plants used in European medicine, and (3) plants newly introduced by Europeans.

Most species of type 1 were commonly used as herbal medicines in both Europe and East Asia. Accordingly, the author appended Japanese and/or Chinese names (e.g. Liliorúm alborúm (lily) 白百合, Paeoniae (peony) 芍薬, Plantaginis (plantain) 車前草, etc.).

The correspondence with the Japanese and Chinese names is accurate for the most part, but there are some conflicts and errors. In the case of 53 Coekoecksbrood, the illustration appears very similar to Oxalis acetosella L., and Katabami was appropriately used as the Japanese equivalent, but the other two equivalents, Suikanbo スイカンボ and Sammo 酸模, should be considered errors, since these names generally refer to Rumex acetosa L. (Suikanbo may have stood for O. acetosella in the Nagasaki dialect, but Sammo is clearly incorrect). Both plants can be easily distinguished by the shapes of their leaves and are similarly characterised by a distinct sour taste. This suggests that plants in the manuscript were identified by the properties described in the text (or as heard from Dutch doctors) as well as by the illustrations.

Moreover, some items had added vernacular names in the Nagasaki dialect or corrections of commonly used but inaccurate names. Therefore,
we can safely presume that one purpose of this manuscript was to find equivalents or synonyms in Japanese and Chinese. This is, however, not the only purpose. Nearly half of the 84 plants are actually non-native to Japan.

Type 2 includes medicinal plants from overseas: 3 Alcanna, 7 Apij, 8 Ari, etc. As Western medicine was propagated across Japan during the nineteenth century, it boosted Japan’s demand for Western drugs, and pharmaceutical wholesalers began to purchase the drugs brought by Dutch merchant ships. Under the national isolation policy, customs officers were required to conduct strict inspections of all imported products in Nagasaki, and the government needed interpreters for translating cargo manifests. Therefore, the recognition of Western herbal drug names became essential for interpreters. Interestingly, the manuscript contains an illustration of mandrake (54 Mandragorae (sic)). Perhaps the author had heard some legendary story about this mystical plant from a Dutch doctor.

Type 3 consists of newly introduced plants to Japan: 28 Cijclaminis, 47 Jalappa (Mirabilis jalapa L.), 61 Keijkens (carnation), etc. These are more valued as ornamental plants than for their medicinal benefits. For instance, Jalappa, commonly known as the four o’clock flower, is a widespread invasive plant native to South America. It was introduced into Europe in the sixteenth century, and it soon spread to Japan. The manuscript contains a Japanese commentary on this plant, which explains that “a vernacular name in Nagasaki is Oshiroi-bana (長崎方言/白粉花/ヲシロイ花).” The existence of a vernacular name implies that it was already popular and cultivated or, possibly, even naturalised in the Nagasaki district by that time. It seems that the author was also interested in new ornamental plants.

As shown above, since 1659, which was the year when Cruydt-boeck first appeared in Japan, the Yoshio family made an indispensable contribution to the understanding of the contents of Cruydt-boeck, and Kōgyū himself put great effort into translating the book. However, over eighty years were required from the initiation of work to the completion of the 1823 translation. During this time botanical knowledge was developing rapidly in Europe, and the contents and knowledge of this sixteenth-century herbal became unsuitable for the actual practice of Western herbal medicine and

(nari) looks very similar to ‘之’ (kore), but this can be distinguished by the non-broken line of the last stroke. The comment can then be translated as follows: “[This plant] is commonly called Hachichiyau-sou 八丈草, but it is incorrect.” Coincidentally, exactly the same comment appears in Dodonesu e’iri 鐸度涅烏斯絵入.

39 Foeniculi: The Japanese comment “イノンド/是ヲ小茴香ト/云ハヤマリ也” can be translated as “Inondo. It is wrong to call this [plant] Sho-iikyo (i.e. fennel).” Inondo is a Japanese phonetic transcription of ‘eneldo’, a Spanish (perhaps Portuguese) word for dill.

8 For details, see Miyashita 1997.
botanical work. In addition, unfortunately, the 1823 translation was partly damaged by a fire in 1829. In the 1850s, political unrest was increasing, and the Shogunate that had decided to discontinue the national isolation policy finally collapsed in 1867. This allowed Japanese access to the latest Western books without strict political controls. As a result, *Cruydt-boeck* was no longer vital to Japanese medicine and science. However, the long-term measures undertaken to translate *Cruydt-boeck* are significant in Japan’s history of Western studies, and this manuscript is considered an evidential milestone in this regard. Therefore, I am sure that this reproduction will interest a wide range of readers.

**References**


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