

## Panel Abstract:

### “New 'Communities of Practitioners' and Emerging Forms of Medical Writing in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Japan”

The ‘journal’ is a vehicle that serves to identify 'communities of practitioners' within the larger community. Medical journals report the experiences, controversies, and conclusions of medical professionals interested in solving problems of general interest in medicine. In the nineteenth century, medical journals transformed 'communities of practitioners' into what we can recognize today as the various fields of the medical and health professions; the ensuing translation of journal articles into vernacular languages advanced the transmission of practical clinical knowledge to medical practitioners everywhere. Our papers examine the ways in which Japanese practitioners of medicine tapped into this international flow of medical knowledge by experimenting with the journal form of writing, and adapting other forms of medical writing to meet their own needs

**Ann Jannetta, University of Pittsburgh: Abstract**  
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### “Transforming Communities of Medical Practitioners in Nineteenth Century Japan”

Medical and scientific societies were communities in which practitioners of medicine could present and critique the findings and views of their colleagues; they frequently published journals which extended this forum to interested non-members. Before the nineteenth century, such societies did not exist in Japan; rather, medical lineages and schools sought to limit knowledge of their successful therapies to lineage members and students. The 1830s witnessed the formation of new communities of practicing physicians interested in experimenting with foreign medical therapies – both Chinese and Western – in which physicians engaged in collaborative translation projects and publications of various sorts. This paper examines the composition of these groups, surveys the kinds of medical writings they produced, and compares Japan’s first medical journal, *Taisei mei-i-ikō* (Articles by Renowned Western Doctors), with its foreign prototype, the Dutch journal *Practisch Tijdschrift voor de Geneeskunde*.

**Ellen Nakamura, University of Auckland, NZ: Abstract**

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“Translating Western Knowledge in Nineteenth-century Japan:  
Psychiatry in the Medical Journal *Taisei mei-i-ikō* (Articles by Renowned  
Western Doctors, 1837)”

*Taisei mei-i-ikō* was published in eight volumes from 1836-1842 by the rangaku (Dutch learning) scholar, Mitsukuri Genpo. The writings covered a wide range of topics that were chosen for their contemporaneity and their potential usefulness to practicing Japanese doctors. Mitsukuri did many of the translations himself, but he also engaged the skills of associates and students in what was an important collective enterprise. This paper explores the significance of translating such medical works into Japanese in the 1830s by taking as an example a psychiatric case study that appeared in Volume Six of the journal. This study was translated from an original work by the Dutch neuro-anatomist Jacobus Schroeder van der Kolk (1797-1862), who pioneered humane treatments of the insane in the Netherlands. The present study questions why such an article might have been selected for translation, and how the knowledge of Western psychiatric approaches was interpreted within the Japanese context.

**Aya Homei, University of Manchester: Abstract**

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“Medical Journal, Health Economy, and the Urban Midwife in Modern  
Japan”

For midwives in Japan in the modern period, journals served not only to shape a professional identity based on western-derived medical knowledge, but also to create a virtual space in which the midwives’ *raison d’être* could be articulated *vis-à-vis* ideas of modern childbirth and childcare. During the Taisho period (1912-1925), practices related to these ideas increasingly were linked to health merchandise. My paper analyzes the articles and the advertisements for health products published in *Saniku Shinbun* (Childbirth and Childcare Newspaper), a bimonthly newspaper published for the Osaka City Midwives Association. This journal advanced the political, economic, and professional standing of urban midwives – a new community of practitioners – in the early twentieth century Japan.