A happy ending for Urashima Taro

This is a picture scroll of the popular Japanese fairy tale "Urashima Taro." However, the story line differs from the version that is widely known in Japan today.

The story of Urashima Taro is very old, appearing in Japanese classics such as Nihon Shoki and the Man'yoshu. Many adaptations of the story have been made as the legend was passed down from generation to generation in different parts of the country. This picture scroll depicts one such adaptation.

In this version, Taro catches a turtle but lets it go free. Out of gratitude, the turtle returns to invite him to Ryugu-jyo (palace of the Dragon God) under the sea, where he is welcomed and entertained by Princess Otoshime. He returns home with a box called "tamatebako," which he was advised never to open. However, after discovering that 300 years has passed, he absent-mindedly opens the box and turns into an old man. Realizing what had happened to Taro, Otoshime changes into a turtle and rushes to his side. The aged Taro is then transformed into a crane, and in the end, the crane and turtle are worshipped as Shinto gods.

As you can see from the scenes on the right, the vividly-colored illustrations are breathtaking. One cannot help but be captivated by the gorgeous robes of Otoshime and the court ladies as well as the decorative interior. This is a splendid example of illustrated books of short stories called "Nara Ehon" (Nara Picture Books), which were made in the early Edo period.
More than just geography

Novus Atlas Sinensis was one of the 11 volumes of Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Novus Atlas (Atlas Major), which was published by the renowned Dutch cartographer Joan Blaeu and his kin. On the right is a map from Atlas Novo de la Extrema Asia, the Spanish edition of the Novus Atlas Sinensis, which was originally published in Latin.

The maps in this atlas were drawn by an Austrian Jesuit missionary named Martino Martini (1614–1661). He arrived in China in 1643 amid the turmoil of the rebellions of the late Ming period. Martini conducted many field surveys on the hinterlands of the Chinese continent while referring to various geographical treatises and maps including Kung Fu Wang's Quants (A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World) by his predecessor, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610). Martini completed 14 maps of China, including one of the entire country and various regional maps. His atlas also contained maps of Japan and detailed accounts of how he assembled the maps along with geographical descriptions.

Let us take a closer look at the map. North is at the top of the map. Note the decorative cartouche in Latin on the upper left indicating the title of the map, "Xensi, Imperii Sinarvm Provincia Tertia" (Xensi, the third province of Imperial China). The cartouche is ornamented with two figures: an angel disguised as a Chinese child and one of the Twelve Heavenly Generals who protect the Bhaisajyaguru (the Medicine Buddha), glaring sternly towards Mongolia and Samarkand in the northwest corner of the map. An exaggerated depiction of the west end of the Great Wall of China can be seen extending from the northeast corner all the way down to the center of the map.

When you follow the angel’s finger pointing to the bottom right, your attention will be led to the second province of Imperial China, Xian (formerly known as Chong'an), and a missionary post of the Society of Jesus to its north. Moreover, through the Qining Mountains on the southwest side of Xian, there is an escape route stretching towards Hanzhong, which was used in times of war.

Notice the animal with saber-like tusks in the bottom left corner. This is a musk deer, which was first introduced to Europeans by Marco Polo in his book Il Milione. Male musk deer were valued in the West for their musk glands, which secrete an odorous substance used as a perfume fixative.

As you can see, a quick glance at this map only reveals a portion of the information it contains, but if you take a closer look, it is bound to tell you many things.

Keywords: the Great Wall of China, the Society of Jesus, Marco Polo.
East meets West: Friendship of two intellectuals

The figure on the left is Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), an Italian Jesuit also known by his Chinese name, Li Madou. After arriving in China in 1582, he played a significant role in founding the Catholic mission in China as well as introducing and translating many Western texts into Chinese. Among his most famous publications are Tianzu Shiyi (The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven), Jihe Yuanben (Euclid’s Elements) and Kanyu Wangguo Quantu (A Map of the Myriad Countries of the World).

The figure on the right is Xu Guangqi (1562–1633), a bureaucrat and scholar of the late Ming dynasty. Deeply impressed with the map of the world drawn by Ricci, Xu began studying under him in 1598. In 1607, he published Euclid’s Elements, the first half of which he co-translated with Ricci. While devoting himself to translating Western astronomy texts, Xu is also known to have made great efforts in reforming the Chinese calendar. As a summation of his studies, he co-wrote Chongzen Lishu (Chongzen Almanac), in which he introduced the concept of a spherical Earth.

Note the writing in the background, which includes Romanized readings of the Chinese characters, added by the Western painter. The five vertical characters on the right side represent Xu’s name and title, while the two vertical characters indicate his Christian name, “Paulo.”

At the time, waves of missionaries from the Society of Jesus were arriving in Xujiahui, an area in the Xuhui District of Shanghai, known as the home of Xu and his family. Xujiahui became the center of western culture in China as churches, an astronomical observatory and other facilities were constructed on lands donated by Xu and his descendants. The prosperity of this area lives on today as a leading commercial district in the global city of Shanghai.
What happened to Francis Xavier?

Francis Xavier arrived in Goa, India, in February 1552, after finishing his mission in Japan. At the time, Goa was at the height of its prosperity as the capital of the Portuguese Empire in the East. It was the center of Portuguese-Asian trade as well as the base for the propagation of the Society of Jesus, which was supported by the Portuguese.

In September of the same year, Xavier set out for China, determined to spread Christianity on the mainland. However, when he reached the island of Sancian (present-day Shangchuan Island) near the coast of Guangdong Province, he was stricken with fever and died on December 3, at the age of 46.

This book, published in Beijing in 1700, was written by Gaspar Castner, a German Jesuit missionary in China. It gives detailed information on a cenotaph to Francis Xavier built on the island of Sancian. The book has three illustrated pages including the floor plan of the grave and a map of the island.

Keywords: Francis Xavier, Christianity, the Society of Jesus.
Could this version be the closest representation of Buddha’s original teachings?

The Lotus Sutra is one of the most influential scriptures of Mahayana Buddhism. After the death of Gautama Buddha, his disciples gathered and consolidated his various teachings, which they had learned by heart. Various teachings attributed to Buddha were passed down to his followers by oral tradition, and over the course of time, these were compiled into writing as the Buddhist doctrine.

Shown on the right is a hand-written Tibetan version of the Lotus Sutra presumed to be a work from the 17th or 18th century. Kawaguchi Ekai, a famous Japanese Buddhist monk and explorer, received it from a high-ranking Tibetan monk during his second expedition to Tibet. Kawaguchi’s hand-written account of how it came into his possession is shown at the top of the page. This copy of the Lotus Sutra was specially made for a woman from a wealthy household who believed in rebirth and life after death in paradise. It is said that she used this to recite the sutra daily.

This work is notable for its elaborate decoration and outstanding craftsmanship. Each page is reinforced with several pieces of paper that have been glued together. Tibetan script is written horizontally from left to right, with each page containing 3 to 8 lines. The text alternates from page to page between gold and silver script. The work contains a total of 239 leaves, which are not bound, but rather stacked and sandwiched between two thick wooden boards. The intricately engraved surface of the top board was originally gilded with gold.

Keywords: Gautama Buddha, Mahayana Buddhism, paradise, Kawaguchi Ekai, Tibet

Description: Discourses of Buddha (Saddharma-pundarika-sutra) collected by Ananda and others. Hand-written in Tibet around the 17th or 18th century. One case, 19.3 x 70.5 cm.
An exquisite map of Edo by Ochikochi Doin

After the Great Fire of Meireki in 1657, the Tokugawa Shogunate ordered that the city of Edo and its surrounding areas be measured and a map of Edo be drawn on a scale of 1:3250. A publisher named Kyojiya Kahei subsequently obtained permission from the Shogunate to make a revised edition. Between 1670 and 1673, he published Kanbun Gomai Zu, in which the entire city of Edo was drawn on five sheets. The maps were drawn by Ochikochi Doin (1628–90), a highly-skilled surveyor and cartographer. The accuracy of the maps, both in terms of scale and orientation, was groundbreaking at the time.

By the Genroku era (1688–1703), colorful and visual guide maps of Edo had begun to gain popularity. Rather than drawing precise maps on a reduced scale, emphasis was deliberately placed on famous sights. However, as a surveyor, Doin firmly believed in the importance of precision and thus stuck to his policy of producing accurate maps.

Doin later received permission from the Shogunate to combine the five maps into one large map on a reduced scale of 1:6500. The map entitled Kaisen Edo Ozu was published by Itaya Yahei in February 1688. It became a best-seller and was reprinted at least 16 times over the next 20 years.

The map on the right was printed in May 1701. It is a foldable map, oriented with north to the right. An aerial view of the entire city is accurately delineated with exceptional detail around Edo Castle in the center of the map.

The ruling shogun at the time was the fifth shogun Tokugawa Tsunayoshi (reign: 1680–1709). As part of his policy to protect Buddhism, he constructed temples and shrines such as Gokoku-ji which stands today in Tokyo's Bunkyo Ward. From 1685 onwards, he repeatedly issued regulations known as “Shorui Awaremi no Rei” (Edicts on Compassion for Living Things), which banned the abuse and killing of animals, especially dogs. In November 1695, large kennels called “Nakano Goyo Oyashiki” were built in Musashi-Nakano (present-day Nakano Ward in Tokyo), where an estimated 100,000 stray dogs were said to have been housed. There are illustrations of dogs and many kennels in the upper center of the map, which is enlarged in the square next to the title above.
Light reading from the Edo period

*Otogi Zoshi* is a popular genre of short story written during the Muromachi period and up through the early Edo period. Specifically, it refers to a collection of 23 stories entitled *Otogi Zoshi*, which were published in Osaka by Shibukawa Kiyoemon during the Kyoho era (1716–36). Shorter than works from previous periods, these stories were noted for being easy to follow and having many illustrations.

*Issun Boshi* (The One-Inch Boy) is one of the collection’s most well-known stories. It is said to have derived from a popular folk tale about the success of a miniature boy who sets out on a journey to seek his place in the world, much like Tom Thumb in English folklore. *Otogi Zoshi* also contains famous stories such as *Urashima Taro and Monogusa Taro*. Having been passed down from generation to generation, these stories continue to be widely enjoyed by Japanese children today.

The copy of *Issun Boshi* at Toyo Bunko is a Kyoho era edition. The illustration on the right depicts Issun Boshi and his fiancée, the daughter of a wealthy daimyō (feudal lord). In his right hand, Issun Boshi holds the legendary “uchide no koduchi” (lucky mallet).
Robinson Crusoe has drifted to Toyo Bunko!

The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner is a fictional autobiography of Robinson Crusoe written by the English novelist Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) based on the actual experiences of a castaway named Alexander Selkirk. The copy at Toyo Bunko is from the fourth edition published in 1719 (the same year as the first edition).

The story is about an English mariner, Robinson Crusoe, who was shipwrecked during a slave trade expedition from Guinea in Africa to Brazil. He drifted ashore on a fictitious desert island in the Atlantic near the mouth of the Orinoco River in Venezuela.

The frontispiece is an illustration of Robinson Crusoe dressed in a fur jacket and knee-length trousers, with a wide-brimmed conical hat and a belt made from goatskin obtained on the island. Although he is carrying two rifles on his shoulders and a sword on his waist, Crusoe's gloomy expression denotes the hardships of his solitary existence on the island.

The plant to the right of his right foot is aloe. Halfway up the hill in the background is his residence, a hut which also serves as a watchtower. The mixture of black and white clouds above symbolizes the misfortunes and joys of his life.
A western anatomy book contributes to the origins of Japanese anatomical terms

In 1722, a German doctor named Johann Adam Kulmus wrote a book on anatomy entitled *Anatomische Tabellen*. The work became so popular that it was translated into Latin, French and Dutch. *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*, known in Japan as the original text of *Kaitai Shinsho*, is the book’s Dutch title, meaning “anatomical charts.”

Sugita Genpaku and Maeno Ryoutaku both acquired copies of the Dutch edition soon after it was first brought to Japan. Being doctors and scholars of *ranga* (Dutch studies), they took on the task of translating it into Japanese and contributed to the publication of *Kaitai Shinsho*.

The illustration on the right page depicts a scene from a dissection that is just about to begin. The right side of the corpse is the dissector, posed as if soliciting applause, and on the left is an assistant, drawing the curtain like the opening of a show. At the time, dissections were regarded as spectacles in Europe and this trend is reflected in the illustration.

Keywords: *Kaitai Shinsho*, Dutch, *ranga* (Dutch studies)
A testament to the travails of translation

*Kaitai Shinsho* is the first Japanese translation of a western language anatomy textbook, based on *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*, a Dutch version of Johann Adam Kulmus' *Anatomische Tabellen* (shown in the previous selection). It was translated by Sugita Genpakku, Maeno Ryoutaku and other scholars of *rangaku* (Dutch studies).

The idea of translating the Dutch text was triggered when Genpakku and his fellow doctors visited the Kozukkappara execution ground in the vicinity of Edo (present-day Minami-Senju in Arakawa Ward, Tokyo), where they observed the dissection of an executed criminal. Comparing their findings with *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*, they were amazed at its accuracy and immediately set out to make a Japanese translation. They gathered at the home of Maeno Ryoutaku in Tsukiji to do the translation. In his book *Rangaku Kotohajime* (Dawn of Western Science in Japan), Genpakku recounts the various difficulties they faced in completing the translation.

*Kaitai Shinsho* was the first serious attempt by medical specialists to translate a Dutch medical textbook. Not only did it contribute to the advancement of medicine in Japan, it also stimulated progress and wider interest in *rangaku*.

The illustrations were done by Odano Naotake, an artist from the Akita clan who learned western painting from Hiraga Gennai. It is believed that Naotake was asked to draw the figures for *Kaitai Shinsho* after being recommended by Gennai. Naotake is known to have reproduced several other anatomical charts besides *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*. When you take a close look at the illustrations, you will notice that he has added touches to the structure of the face and body in order to make them resemble the features of Japanese people.

*FUMISHIRO* Kanuiaka

Keywords: *Ontleedkundige Tafelen*, Sugita Genpakku, Maeno Ryoutaku, Odano Naotake
The beauty of an outstanding answer sheet

Keju was the civil service examination system of Imperial China, which was designed to select the best administrative officials for the state's bureaucracy. Established during the Sui dynasty, the system developed and matured during the Song dynasty and endured for 1,300 years until it was abolished in 1905 during the last years of the Qing dynasty. The system played a significant role in the recruitment of competent high-ranking officials from the general public irrespective of one's social standing or wealth.

In 975, the founder of the Song dynasty, Zhao Kuangyin (reign: 960–976), revised the Imperial civil service examination system. Until then, the examination had two stages: provincial examination called shengushi and the capital examination called shengushi. Zhao Kuangyin implemented a third stage called dianushi, which was administered in the court under the oversight of the emperor himself.

The Qing dynasty used a three-stage system carried over from the Ming dynasty. This system was comprised of xiangushi (provincial examination), jushushi (capital examination) and dianushi (palace examination). The first two stages of the examination covered three subjects: jingyi (interpreting Confucian classics), lunce (suggesting policies on current events) and shiju (composition of poems and poetic descriptions). Candidates advancing to the third stage, dianushi, were tested on lunce, which involved writing a policy essay addressed to the emperor. The essay had to be written in at least 1,000 words and had to be finished before sunset on the day of the examination. There were strict rules regarding the format of the essay as well.

In order to ensure objectivity and fairness, the names of the candidates were concealed before answer sheets were evaluated. Several examiners undertook the task of grading all of the essays on behalf of the emperor. The essays were graded according to five ranks and the grades of all the examiners were combined in order to determine the top ten essays. These essays were then presented to the emperor for a final evaluation. The results of the dianushi had a large impact on determining the posts of candidates. The successful candidates were ranked in three classes. The top three candidates of the first class were granted qualifications called jushushi jiad, and the top ranking jushushi was called shuangyunan.

The answer sheet shown on the right was submitted by Jin Bang (1735–1801) from the district of Shexi in Huizhou prefecture of Jiangnan province (presentday Shexian in Huangshan city of Anhui province). He received the top rank on the dianushi examination of 1772. The foldable answer sheet is ruled with vermilion lines and has six vertical lines on each page. Incidentally, all eight examiners gave this essay full marks. The evaluations are shown on the attached strip of paper. Jinbang is actually the name of the bulletin board used to announce the results of dianushi. It is an amusing coincidence that Jin Bang's name was listed on the Jinbang.

SHINOZAKI Yoko

Keywords: Imperial civil service examination, Qing dynasty, dianushi (palace examination), shuangyunan.
Copperplate engravings custom-made in Paris for the Qianlong Emperor

The prosperity of the Qing dynasty, which was initiated by the Kangxi Emperor (reign: 1661–1722) and the Yongzheng Emperor (reign: 1722–35), reached its height during the reign of the Qianlong Emperor (reign: 1736–95). After Qianlong’s succession, domestic policies began to stabilize and the dynasty’s territory was extended to its greatest limits by 1759, which led to the establishment of the Empire of the Great Qing. This remarkable expansion corresponds with the Ten Great Campaigns, a series of ten wars fought during Qianlong’s reign, all ending in triumph.

Two of the Ten Great Campaigns are considered great feats: the suppression of the revolting Dzungars along the northern part of the Tian Shan Mountains in 1755, which led to the conquest of Dzungaria and the Ili Basin, and the subjugation of the Uighurs along the southern part of the Tian Shan Mountains immediately thereafter. As a result, the whole area covered by today’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the Tuva Republic became the domain of the Qing dynasty.

In order to commemorate and preserve the memory of all ten victories, the Qianlong Emperor launched a project to make a series of copperplate prints. Shown on the right is Zhun Hui lianbu Pingding Desheng-tu, a collection of 16 illustrations depicting the campaigns of the Dzungars and the Uighurs.

The illustrations were sketched by Italian Jesuit artist Giuseppe Castiglione (1688–1766, who was also known by his Chinese name Lang Shining) and three other missionaries of the Society of Jesus who were serving the Qianlong court at the time. The sketches were sent to France for copperplate engraving and printing. The project proceeded under the supervision of Charles-Nicolas Cochin, the Younger (1712–90), a master of copperplate engraving in his day. The illustrations were completed in 1775, and were finally sent back to Beijing along with the original copperplate. In addition to the 16 illustrations, the copy at Toyo Bunko also contains woodblock prints made at the Qing court that feature a handwritten poem and a preface by the Qianlong Emperor as well as postscripts by his vassals.

When you take a close look at the energetic movements and the various facial expressions of individual soldiers in each scene, you can see that the work was created by the finest artists and engravers of the time and that it conveys the intricacy and the unsurpassable skill of French copperplate engraving in the 18th century.

SHINOZAKI Yoko

Keywords: Qing dynasty, the Qianlong Emperor, France, the Society of Jesus, Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining), copperplate engraving
The foundation of modern economics

Adam Smith (1723–1790) was a Scottish economist and philosopher of the late 18th century. Although The Wealth of Nations (originally entitled An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations) was the only book Smith ever wrote on economics, it has become one of the most influential books on economics. The book earned Smith enormous fame and he is widely referred to as "the father of modern economics."

In The Wealth of Nations, Smith criticizes the mercantilist views that held sway in the economic thinking of Europe. Mercantilism is a nationalist form of early capitalism that uses the state to advance national business interests abroad and holds that the wealth of a nation is increased through a positive balance of trade with other nations. Smith attaches great importance to the labor theory of value, which stipulates that the value of goods or services is dependent upon the labor used in their production. He emphasizes that increasing the productivity of labor is vital to the prosperity of a nation's economy. He also writes about a theory known as laissez-faire, which strongly opposes governmental intervention in the economy and stresses the importance of having individuals compete freely in markets.

Many of us are familiar with the term "an invisible hand," which is underlined in red on the right. This term, which was coined by Smith, is based on a theory that suggests that individuals who pursue their own interest and profit will ultimately bring profit and benefit to society via the free market.

The Wealth of Nations contains theories that form the earliest building blocks of modern economics, and it has greatly influenced economists as well as people from all walks of life. The book has been translated into many different languages and is widely read around the world even today. The copy at Toyo Bunko, shown on the right, is from the first edition published in London in 1776.

HARAYAMA Takahiro

Keywords: Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, the invisible hand