

Preface

In 1978, with backing of the publishing house Kodansha, the Center for Resources on Traditional Medicine (日本古医学資料センター, est. 1972) was reborn as the Noma Research Archives for Science and Medicine. For 25 years the Noma Research Archives contributed importantly to the promotion of Japanese research in the history of medicine of science through public lectures, a scholarly newsletter, and above all its collection of works on the history of Western medicine. When the Archives closed its doors in 2003, the foundation generously donated its entire holdings to the library of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies.

The Noma Collection contains approximately 7,000 volumes related to the history of medicine. Particularly noteworthy among them are the over 2,800 rare books in Dutch, English, French, German, Latin and other languages. In 1975, Kodansha purchased the personal library of medical classics assembled by the American medical researcher and bibliophile, Herbert McLean Evans. This subsequently became the original core of the Noma Collection. The collection grew significantly in subsequent years, as the Archives continued to purchase rare medical texts, and also received major book donations from prominent Japanese medical historians such as OGATA Tomio, OGAWA Teizo, NAKAMURA Teiri, and Yoshio KAWAKITA.

The Noma Collection has brought to the Center one of the most extensive collections of sources on Western medical history in Japan. The Center is also blessed with the Soda Collection, a treasure house of books and prints related to the history of medicine in Japan. It is our hope that scholars from the world over will use these two collections to open up new comparative perspectives on the evolution of medicine.

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