



Two volumes, 8vo (265 by 165mm), woodcut illustrations throughout, two volvelles, two folded leaves of adverts for books published by Nakanishi, original wrappers, slight marginal worming to second volume, original block printed title label to each upper cover, new stitching.

ONE OF THE EARLIEST JAPANESE BOOKS WITH VOLVELLES

Konten min'yo seu Benran [trans.: Practical Introduction to Meteorology].

Author

NAKANISHI, Takafusa

Publication date

1767

Publisher

Nakanishi,

Publication place

Kyoto,

Physical description

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Dimensions

Notes

The Kyoto issue of the first edition of this rare work on meteorology, astronomy, and astrology for laymen (the book was also issued in Osaka in the same year). It is the earliest attempt to present a

scientific account of the meteorology of Japan based on local observations (and therefore, not entirely based on Chinese meteorological theories). The book is also especially notable for being one of the earliest Japanese books to contain volvelles.

The first section of the book is astronomical and geographical; there are depictions of an armillary sphere, comets, constellations, and numerous diagrammatic maps. The second part is devoted to meteorology and extreme weather conditions: Nakanishi explains how to predict the weather. The second volume also deals with the potential to predict both natural and political events from the stars, rainbows and severe weather. One of the most interesting features of the book is how the author explains the relationship between landscape and weather. There are numerous maps of regions of Japan — especially Kyoto, Tokyo, and Osaka — where Nakanishi describes in great detail the local weather patterns and how they have formed the landscape of the area.

Nakanishi (fl.1754-72) was a disciple of the Seki school of mathematics. He was an astronomer, mathematician, and calendar maker; he was also active as a publisher of science and medical books as well as literature.

There is a copy of the Osaka issue in the Burndy Library, MIT, and a copy of the Kyoto issue in the Waseda University Library, Tokyo.

Bibliography

Provenance

Price:

Inventory reference: 2430