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Rebekah Clements

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## A Cultural History of Translation in Early Modern Japan

The translation of texts has played a formative role in Japan's history of cultural exchange as well as the development of literature, and indigenous legal and religious systems. This is the first book of its kind, however, to offer a comprehensive survey of the role of translation in Japan during the Tokugawa period, 1600–1868. By examining a wide range of translations into Japanese from Chinese, Dutch, and other European texts, as well as the translation of classical Japanese into the vernacular, Rebekah Clements reveals the circles of intellectual and political exchange that existed in early modern Japan, arguing that, contrary to popular belief, Japan's 'translation' culture did not begin in the Meiji period. Examining the 'crisis translation' of military texts in response to international threats to security in the nineteenth century, Clements also offers fresh insights into the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate in 1868.

Rebekah Clements is a research associate in the Department of East Asian Studies at the University of Cambridge, and a research fellow at Queens' College, University of Cambridge.

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For Derek and Diana

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## A note on dates, transliteration, and names

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Japanese calendar years prior to 1872 do not correspond exactly to Western ones because various lunar calendars were in use until that point in Japan. Moreover, years were numbered as a sequence according to eras of varying length, which began and ended for auspicious reasons such as the death of a shogun or an emperor. Because eras start and finish suddenly, part of a single calendar year sometimes belongs to the last year of an old era and the first year of a new one. For the sake of consistency and clarity for the non-specialist reader, when giving dates I have therefore avoided era names and have used the Western calendar year corresponding most closely to the Japanese lunar year in question.

Japanese has been romanized according to the Hepburn system, and Chinese according to Pinyin. Pre-modern Japanese naming conventions are complicated by the fact that people were known at various times in their lives by different names: childhood names, family names, pen-names, etc. For consistency and ease of reference, where possible I have used the uniform name (*tōitsu chosha mei* 統一著者名) for each individual's entry in the *Nihon kotenseki sōgō mokuroku* (KSM) catalogue maintained by the National Institute for Japanese Literature, unless scholarly convention dictates otherwise or the reading of the name in catalogue is now considered incorrect. I have followed the Japanese convention of referring to individuals by their family name followed by personal name in the first instance, and their personal or pen-name thereafter due to the large numbers of scholars from family lineages who share the same surname. Characters for names are not included in the main body of the text. There is instead an index at the end of the monograph, which gives names, characters, and dates. Characters corresponding to the titles of works given in the main body of the text are also given at the end of the monograph (see the Index of names).