On the "Monjin-roku (Student Records)" of Shunrinnen

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This paper provides an introduction and study of Monjin-roku (student records), which contain details such as the years of study and places of origin for students who learned "Hanaoka style surgery" at the Shunrinnen. Shunrinnen is the name of a combined medical school and medical clinic that was established by Hanaoka Seishu. In 1804 Hanaoka Seishu (1760–1835) performed a successful operation for breast cancer using the general anesthetic called "Tsusensan" that he had developed. It was then that the so-called Hanaoka style surgery, which centered on breast cancer operations, was formed. Because Hanaoka style surgery was far superior to any other medical techniques at that time students from throughout Japan came to study medicine with him. Some 1,887 students came to Shunrinnen to study between 1788 and 1860. The Monjin-roku record the enrolment of students during this time. Shuzo Kure has already published information on these records in his book "Dr. Hanaoka Seishu and his Surgery" (Hanaoka Seishu Sensei oyobi sono Geka), though the Monjin-roku contained therein are classified according to province. This paper introduces and examines the student records in chronological order that are in the possession of Hanaoka Seishu's descendents. First, I suggest that it is quite likely that the Monjin-roku are original records from Shunrinnen and that they began around 1806 or 1807. With regard to their contents, I pay special attention to the student's guarantors and show that in the beginning the introduction of Hanaoka style surgery occurred with the help of Seishu's younger brother Jihee, but this was then carried out through the merchant class and, what is more, the organization of Shunrinnen and the entry route for students were facilitated through the merchant class. A look at the guarantors shows that they comprised of couriers, innkeepers and apothecaries, and I also show that in some of these cases the regions from where the students come are related to the business activities of these guarantors. I also use information in the Monjin-roku to describe the period when the medical clinic in Sakai, the forerunner of the branch school to Shunrinnen called the Gosuido, was constructed. I believe that it was built in 1811. The purpose behind its construction was to achieve a stable increase in students and it built a foundation for a collaborative school system for expanding Hanaoka style surgery.

The above is an introduction and examination of the Monjin-roku. By conducting future research, including the discovery of materials on the merchants mentioned in the Monjin-roku, I believe that I will be able to shed light on the relationship between Shunrinnen and the merchants and the relationship between the students and the merchants.