

“Which vein shall be transected during the left upper lobe apical/posterior segmentectomy?” the question was put forward by Dr. Morihito Okada, representative of Japanese team during the postgraduate symposium Master Cup of the 2017 Annual Meeting of the European Society of Thoracic Surgeons (ESTS). Young representative thoracic surgeons from European and American countries seemed completely dazed on site. “v1+2^{b+c}”, their Chinese and Japanese counterparts vied to answer without hesitation on the other hand, thinking it too straightforward a question to answer. It is a young surgeon who shared the above episode with me in surprise. For him, and other Asian surgeons, it's hard to imagine such a basic anatomical question would turn out to be a big headache for surgeons in western countries. The generally lacking of anatomy knowledge for thoracic surgeons in European and American countries reveals the unpopularity and rawness of anatomical segmental resection among them. After all, theoretical knowledge and practical experience cooperated each other in surgery field.

It's been definitely established that China is trailing the West in medical sciences in the past century; however, unwavering efforts made by generations of Chinese doctors have earned us a good reputation in the international community of medical sciences, and had the “voice of China” heard. Specifically in the field of thoracic surgery, China is now basically on the same page with the advanced nations after two decades of blistering catch-up endeavors. We also improved the surgical technologies to satisfy people's growing demand in China for better healthcare. Thanks to a series of comprehensive training on standardized treatment for lung cancer and esophageal cancer, a large majority of minimally invasive thoracic surgeries have been successfully carried out even in small hospitals. As a result, patients no longer have to rush to big medical centers which are already overcrowded.

Within two decades, technology will remain the primary driving force in thoracic surgery and witness the establishment and maintaining of thoracic surgery an advantaged specialty with efforts of all thoracic surgeons. An advantaged specialty like thoracic surgery, which grows rapidly relying on technology, normally takes two steps to get there, technology adoption and popularization. It can be easily observed in the development of a specific surgery procedure, minimally invasive segmentectomy. Adopting and popularizing the technology smoothly and quickly, eastern countries now seem leading the trend in the field. Japanese thoracic surgeons have been well recognized and favored by their peers worldwide in translating and concluding their valuable experience as academic accomplishments. Chinese thoracic surgeons on the other hand would take over the task to transcend, enlarge the leading trend and converting it into a leading advantage.

Segmentectomy for Thoracic Disease, compiled by Drs. Qun Wang, Shugeng Gao and K. Robert Shen, is a primary achievement of Chinese thoracic surgeons in building thoracic surgery an advantaged specialty worldwide. The book covers a full range of information from basic settings, indications, technical essentials, to treatment of complications, in relation to anatomical segmental resection and encompasses a series of academic literature selected from journal titles published by AME Publishing Company over the years. It will definitely serve as a guidebook for thoracic surgeons and help popularizing segmentectomy.

If history is to be reviewed in the future, the current should no doubt make us proud. For this is the moment when we are fluttering our wings and ready to soar, clearing our throats and ready to sing. We are ready to transcend which is more significant than just to lead. As a book collecting experience of generations of surgeons, hopefully it will enlighten more surgeons and patients benefit eventually.

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