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『立正大学図書館 古今善本録 —蔵書が伝える図書館 150年の軌跡—』 Rissho University Library KOKON ZENPON ROKU - 150 years of the Library's History Through the Lens of the Book Collections -

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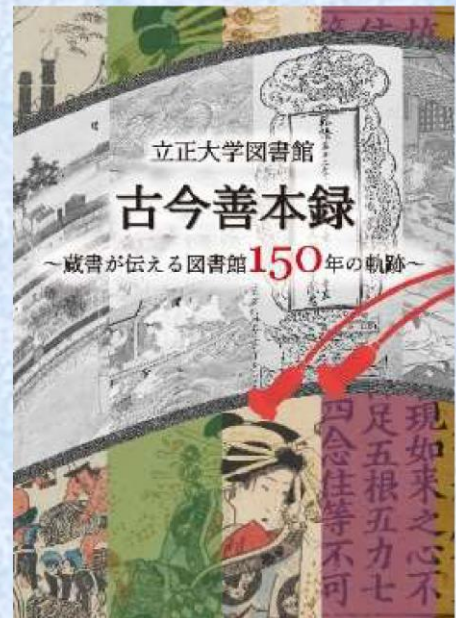
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Message from the President

Rissho University was founded in 1872 (Meiji 5) when a small Nichiren Shu teaching institute was established at Jokyo-ji Temple in Shiba Nihon-enoki (present-day Takanawa, Minato-ku, Tokyo). The small institute evolved into Daidanrin Institute and then into Nichiren Shu University before finally becoming Rissho University in 1924. The former institution was a college with only one faculty of literature, but today it is a university with nine faculties and seven postgraduate schools. The university celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding in 2022.

The university library is a mirror that reflects the character of the institution. Rissho University has previously published numerous bibliographical catalogs introducing the university library's collections, which include "Nichiren Shu Books", "The Mizonoguchi Soryuji Shimada Collection", "The Tanaka Keiji Collection", "Ming Dynasty Buddhist Scriptures", "The Ming Dynasty Nanzo Collection", and "Kawaguchi Ekai Materials from the Kawaguchi Ekai Collection. As these bibliographical catalogs have a narrow focus on very specific fields and collections, we thought it appropriate to introduce a selection of books from the entire library collection that have supported the foundations of education and research. The books included in this selection represent only a tiny fraction of the library's vast resources. The history of the library and the library's collection have also been chronicled.

It is our sincere hope that the publication of this book will serve to make more people aware of what the Rissho University Library has to offer and lead to increased utilization of the rare resources available here.

Eichi Terao
President, Rissho University

Testimonial

The collection of a university library strongly reflects the origins and history of that university. Rissho University was founded in Tenshō 8 (1580) as 'Idaka Danrin', an institution that taught Nichiren Buddhism. As a testament to this long history, the Rissho University Library houses a multitude of rare and classic books. The core of the library's collection consists of Buddhist scriptures that supported the Nichiren Shū faith; namely, the writings left by Nichiren himself and sutras related to the Nichiren Shū, introduced in Chapter 1. Another feature of the library's collection is the large number of old and valuable printed books. It was not until the Edo period (1603-1867) that a monetary economy developed in Japan and commercial publishing began. Before that time, publishing consisted of the production of Buddhist scriptures in temples. The publication of scriptures, like the copying of sutras, was considered important in disseminating the Buddha's teachings. In Chapter 2, a wide array of bibliographically important early printed books, including Song, Yuan, Ming, Kasuga, Gozan, and Kokatsuji (early movable type) editions, are introduced. These works illustrate in concrete terms the strength of the fascinating connection between printing/publishing and religion.

In a sense, it is unsurprising that the Rissho University Library houses a rich collection of such books. The collections introduced from Chapters 3 onwards, especially the materials introduced in Chapters 4 and 7, however, shatter the image of Rissho as a Buddhist university. From these collections we can glean societal perspectives held by Rissho, which has continued to develop as a university since its acceptance of Western academic systems in the Meiji period (1868-1912). In other words, if the acquisition of books by a university library corresponds to the embodiment of values espoused by that university, Rissho University Library is still firmly committed to this process, as evinced by its possession of a leaf from Gutenberg's 42-line Bible, featured at the end of Chapter 7. The above statement is no exaggeration, as the "History of Rissho University Library" featured at the end of this catalogue reveals. Although many catalogues of important books have been published by university libraries, few provide such a detailed history of the holding library itself. The current library staff's eagerness to build upon the work of its predecessors is powerfully conveyed, and the greatest attention has been paid to every detail of the catalogue's excellent design. This work truly encapsulates the history of Rissho University, which proudly celebrates 150 years since its founding.

Yoshitaka Ito

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