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# National Diet Library Newsletter

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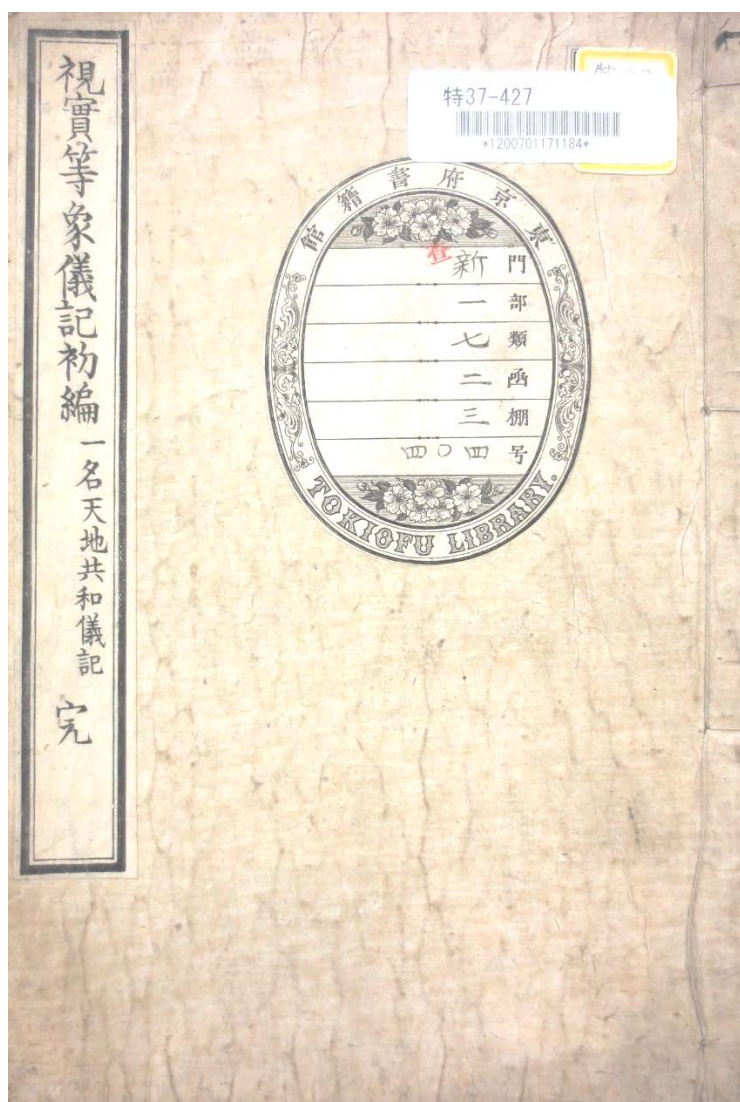
No. 196, October 2014

Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan (16):  
"Dreams of Space, from the ancient view of the universe to the Hayabusa Project"

From July 17 to September 16, the Kansai-kan of the National Diet Library (NDL) is holding a small exhibition entitled "Dreams of Space, from the ancient view of the universe to the Hayabusa Project".

The twinkling of the stars has been a source of wonder and amazement for humans since ancient times. Nowadays, we are able to travel into space, land on the moon, and even bring back soil samples from other celestial objects. Space is the final frontier, and it continues to fascinate us. This exhibition introduces a variety of materials, categorized by topic, including ancient views of the universe, newspaper stories about the first lunar landing, and old science fiction novels.

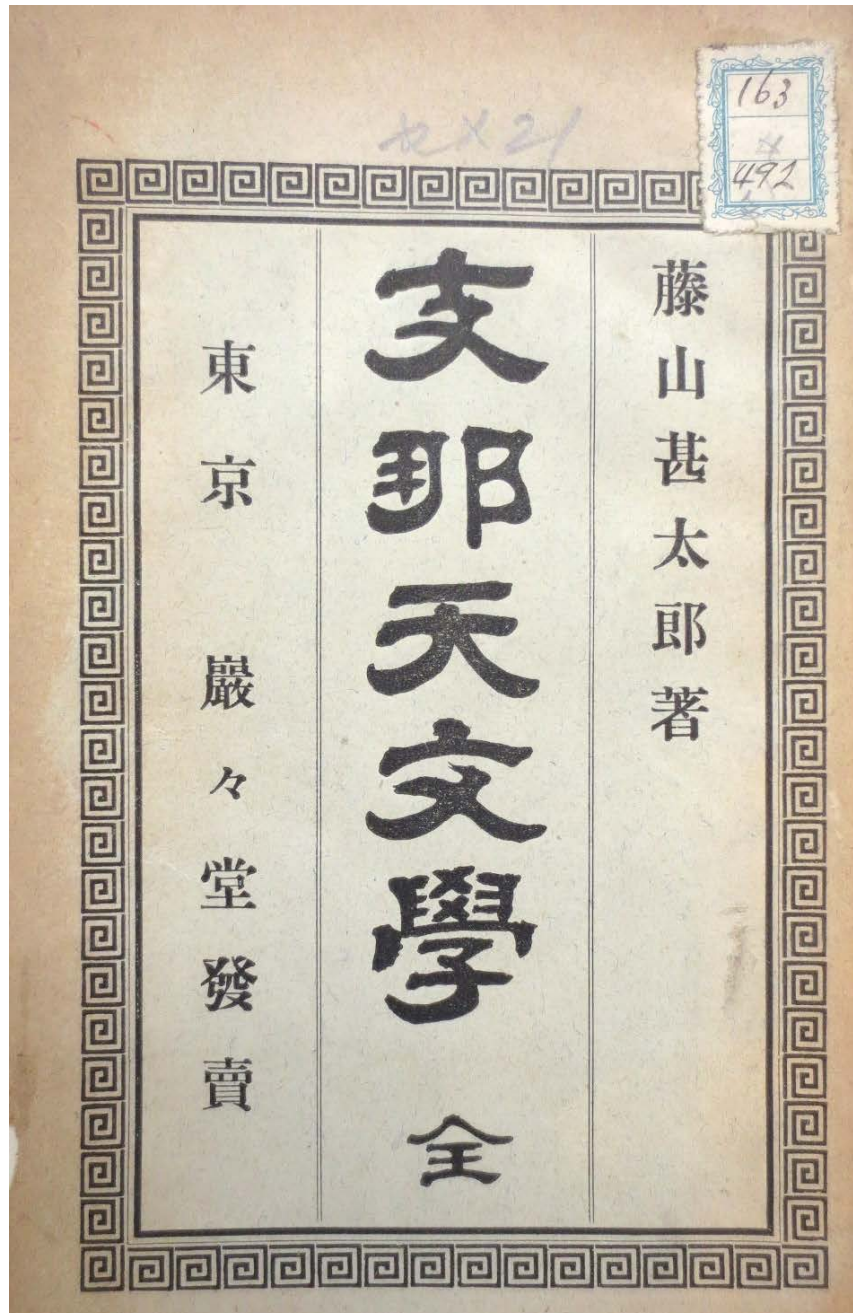
- *Shijitsu toshogi ki: ichimei tenchi kyowagi ki*  
(Handbook of a Buddhist Model of the Universe) [NDL Call no.: 244-379]



<<Shijitsu toshogi ki: ichimei tenchi kyowagi ki>>

*Shijitsu Toshogi* is a cosmographical model of the Buddhist universe, made in 1877. The *shijitsu toshogi ki* is a handbook describing the model, including illustrations and part names. The Buddhist universe is centered on the sacred mountain, Mount Meru (須弥山 or *Shumisen* in Japanese), around which the sun and the moon revolve. It is said that Mount Meru is surrounded by the sea and eight other mountains, and that humans live on an island floating in the sea. The author is a Buddhist astronomer who objected to the western view of the universe that was disseminated in Japan during the Meiji era and insisted that the Buddhist view of the universe was factual.

- *Shina tenmongaku* (Chinese Astronomy) [NDL Call no.: Toku 29-935]



<<*Shina tenmongaku*>>

This book presents typical views of the universe in ancient China, including *Gaitian* cosmography (蓋天說) which describes a land mass covered by a hemispherical space, *Huntian* cosmography (渾天說) which says that land floats on the center of an oval space, like an egg yolk, and *XuanYe* cosmography (宣夜說) insists that space is insubstantial.

• *Kujushichiji nijippunkan gessekai ryoko*

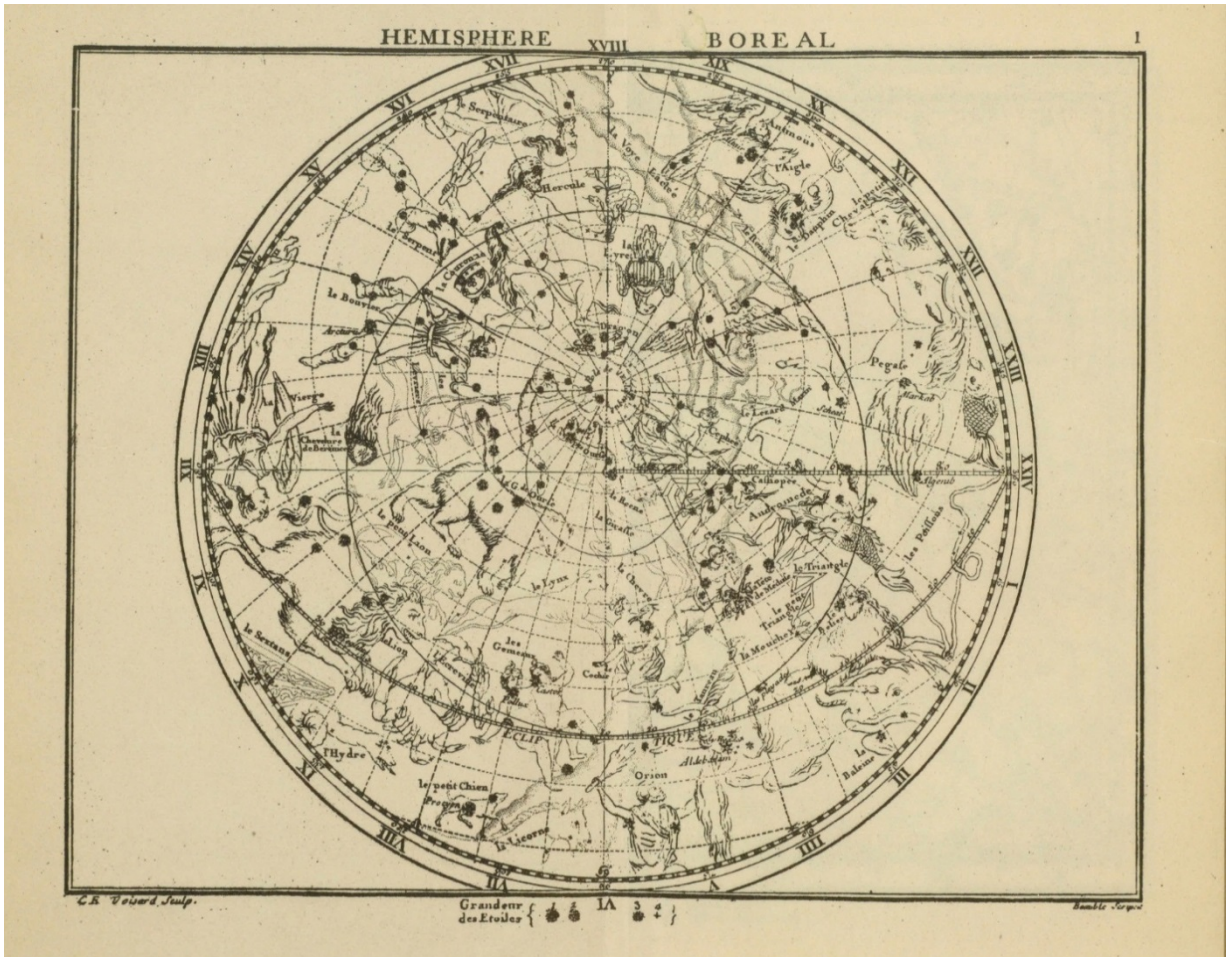
(To the Moon and Back in 97 Hours and 20 Minutes) [NDL Call no.: Toku 13-603]



<<*Kujushichiji nijippunkan gessekai ryoko*>>

This book is a Japanese translation of Jules Verne's science fiction classic *From the Earth to the Moon* by INOUE Tsutomu. It is written in a turgid style and includes a copperplate print illustration. The characters in the story travel to the moon and back, riding a huge cannonball.

- *Furamusuchido tenkyu zufu* (Framstead's Atlas Coelestis) [NDL Call no.: 443.8-cF58f]



<<*Furamusuchido tenkyu zufu*>>

This star chart contains spectacular illustrations of constellations made from astronomical data observed by John FLAMSTEED, the First Astronomer Royal and head of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich. The book displayed at the exhibition is a reprint of the second edition published in Paris in 1776.