

BDK
Newsletter

Michi - The Path -

BUKKYO DENDO KYOKAI Society for the Promotion of Buddhism

No. 13
2024

Michi

— The Path —

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"Sasaeatte"「Kairyo(Improvement)」



BUKKYO DENDO KYOKAI

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We truly appreciate your generous understanding and continued support for all of Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK)'s activities as we report our 2023 news and updates in this issue. In 2023, Rev. Shoryu Katsura retired as president in June. Rev. Katsura succeeded the late former chairperson, Rev. Toshihide Numata, as president, and during his tenure, he made significant contributions to the Society, such as leading the revision of "The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)," promoting the BDK English Tripiṭaka series, and enhancing the development of the Numata Program in Buddhist Studies. I am pleased to announce that Mr. Yoshiaki Numata has succeeded as the new president.

The Society will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 2025. This milestone occasion will be an opportunity for us to reflect on our past activities and reaffirm the wish of our founder, the late Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata, to "spread Buddhism to the world in some way." We will work together with board members and staff to find new themes, challenge ourselves, and reconsider how to respond to the changing times. We sincerely ask for your continued support and guidance.

With Gassho,

Seikoh-Kiyotaka Kimura
Chairperson
Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK)
Society for the Promotion of Buddhism



I have assumed the position of president, succeeding Rev. Shoryu Katsura. I feel deeply connected to Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK), just as my grandfather and father did, and I am grateful for this opportunity. I humbly ask for your guidance.

While also overseeing the management of Mitutoyo Corporation, I keenly feel the necessity for new ideas and initiatives to adapt to the ever-changing business environment. I believe the religious and Buddhist communities face similar challenges. Adaptation to changing times, tools, and diverse needs requires a broad approach to Buddhist promotion activities. On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of our establishment, I intend to work with all board members and staff to set medium- to long-term goals and strive for their achievement.

I sincerely ask for your continued warm support.

With Gassho,

Yoshiaki Numata
President
Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK)
Society for the Promotion of Buddhism



Interview



Minobu-san Kuonji Sanmon Gate

Exploring “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” Series Interview

“TTOB Volunteers” ~ Living in the Local Community with TTOB

Special Thanks to Ven. Tengen Hamajima from the Head Temple of Nichiren Shu, Minobu-san Kuonji

Location: Head Temple of Nichiren Shu, Minobu-san Kuonji in Minobu-cho,

Minamikoma-gun, Yamanashi Prefecture

Interviewer: Masayuki Masuda (BDK)

Editor and Photography: Kaoru Eguchi (BDK)

Interview in March 2024



BDK has been consistently engaged in the distribution of “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” as one of its main projects. These scriptures are not only made available in lodging facilities such as hotels and inns but also in temples, medical facilities, and educational institutions. Despite the significant impact of the global spread of Covid-19 in recent years, as daily life gradually returns to normality, BDK is actively supporting individuals who serve as “TTOB Volunteers” in their respective regions to share “TTOB” with as many people as possible. As of the present year of 2024, we are grateful to have the cooperation of 90 Buddhist priests in this endeavor.

“TTOB Volunteers” are those dedicated priests who assist in the distribution of “TTOB” to hotels and tourist destinations in their respective regions. They not only provide the scriptures but also promote their merits on behalf of BDK, spreading Buddhist philosophy and culture. In this edition, we visit the Head Temple of Nichiren Shu, Mt. Minobu (Minobu-san) Kuonji, which celebrated its 750th anniversary in 2023, and we interviewed Ven. Tengen Hamajiima, who serves as the executive priest of the temple and actively participates as a “TTOB Volunteer,” to learn about his motivations for joining this initiative.

Situated amidst the scenic beauty of one of “Japan’s Five Great Cherry Blossom Spots,” the area surrounding Minobu-san Kuonji, the head temple of Nichiren Shu, is a charming town with longstanding traditional inns and shops that warmly welcome visitors.

Masuda (hereinafter referred to as M) : Thank you very much for your continued cooperation. First, could you briefly introduce your denomination and your Head Temple to our readers?

Hamashima (hereinafter referred to as H) : Thank you as well for your ongoing support. Nichiren Shu was founded by Nichiren Shonin in 1253, and Minobu-san Kuonji serves as the Head Temple of Nichiren Shu. Due to the emphasis placed on lineage since ancient times, there are currently 57 main temples nationwide (including one Head Temple, Minobu-san Kuonji, and seven chief temples). Nichiren Shonin faced continuous persecution after presenting the “Rissho Ankoku Ron” (a document submitted to Hojo Tokiyori, the fifth regent of the Kamakura shogunate in 1260, criticizing other denominations and warning of disasters and foreign invasion if the situation persisted, which led to attacks by followers of Jodo Buddhism and his exile to Izu Province the following year). I believe that Minobu-san was the only place where he could truly find peace amidst such adversity.

Over the 14th and 15th centuries, Minobu-san Kuonji gradually developed into its current form as a place for disciples’ education.

Despite its remote location, we are deeply grateful for the many visitors, especially from overseas, who have made pilgrimages here, but we regret that there are no casual dining or refreshment facilities within the temple grounds for them to enjoy. In the future, we hope to explore plans that leverage the beauty of this scenic mountain area and create new attractions so that Minobu-san can become a beloved destination where people from different backgrounds can find happiness together, always bearing

in mind the principle of “living and prospering together.”

M : I see. Your history of mutual support in protecting this land, utilizing the power of nature, is evident. It seems like Minobu-san is poised to become an even more accessible and cherished destination in the future.

H : Especially during spring, when the cherry blossoms in the mountain are splendid, on clear days, visitors can also enjoy views of Mt. Fuji from the inner sanctuary, so I highly recommend taking the opportunity to visit there.

M : It sounds wonderful to be able



TTOB placed in Yamadaya Ryokan guest room

to enjoy the mountain's beauty in different seasons! Now, Minobu-san Kuonji has already captivated many people, and you yourself, Hamajima Sensei, are actively promoting Buddhist spirituality and culture. Could you share with us why you chose to support BDK's "TTOB" initiative?



Ven. Tengen Hamajima

H : The reason is that BDK, which is working to spread the "TTOB," is wonderful (laughs). I've heard that it's currently published in 47 languages around the world, and I can see that it's truly a laborious task, so I feel a deep respect for it. Even though we say "Buddhism" in a broad sense, it's complicated! For those of us involved in Buddhism, sutras are familiar, but since they are originally not in Japanese, there are transliterations and interpretations, so it's very difficult for those who are not familiar with them to understand accurately in a short time. I think it's amazing that they are being made accessible and that they are being distributed not

only in Japan but all over the world, so I wanted to contribute to that effort.

M : We truly appreciate your understanding and support of our activities. Thanks to your assistance, more people in need are receiving the "TTOB." As you pointed out, we mainly donate them to accommodation facilities, but in addition, why do you also contribute to educational institutions?

H : This applies not only to BDK but also to Mitutoyo Co., Ltd., which strongly supports the organization. Firstly, while financial resources are important for continuing such activities over the years, I believe that human resource development is the most crucial aspect. I hope that young people will study abroad more and learn various things from around the world. In Christianity, institutions like Harvard University have established theological departments to provide students who will lead the future with ample opportunities to learn, right?

M : That's correct. Building connections between people and educating the younger generation are crucial.

H : When the books are distributed in educational institutions, everyone is happy to receive them, and we also use them at university graduation ceremonies, for example. And what I particularly like is that the "TTOB" have English translations, so you can learn both Japanese and English at the same time (limited to the Japanese-English Comparative version)! Compact booklets like "Guide to

Buddhism" and "Messages from the Buddha" are also easy to pick up and read. I would like to place them at the ropeway station of our temple. The number of foreign visitors has increased, and it has become routine for people from various countries to participate in morning services. There are also many inquiries about Buddhism in English, and although it's simple, I sometimes greet people in English myself.

With the world becoming more accessible and convenient, there are unfortunately many sad events such as conflicts escalating into wars due to mutual animosity. I believe that now is the time for the spirit of Buddhism embodied in the phrase, "Do not repay hatred with hatred," to be alive. Therefore, I think it's important to utilize them actively in the field of education, especially for younger students.

M : That's very true. We sincerely hope that this spirit will be conveyed to the world. Thanks to your efforts, donations of "TTOB" to universities have increased, especially to younger generations.

H : I believe that Buddhism has a spirit that everyone must be saved, regardless of who they are. In recent years, we hear about issues such as declining birth rates, an aging population, a lack of successors, and poverty no matter where you are in Japan. Even at Minobu-san, there are lodging temples without successors, and it's already becoming a problem. We also want to overcome this by working closely with the town, but the impact of declining birth rates is significant,

and it's quite a difficult situation. Even in such circumstances, in Minobu-cho, Chairman Sano of the Tourism Association and the entire town warmly support us, and we are implementing various projects together as a community. In August of 2022, we even held a performance of the opera “Nikko’s Universe, Mandala World” at the New National Theatre Opera Palace in Shibuya, Tokyo to commemorate the 750th anniversary of the founding of Minobu-san, which was an unprecedented initiative.

M : Collaborative efforts with the community and the opera performance are innovative and fantastic.

H : Thank you. The opera vividly portrays the heroic life of Nichiren Shonin and his efforts to propagate the Lotus Sutra, and it was very well received. In other denominations, there are places that attract many tourists regardless of nationality, and we also want to learn from them. To begin with, it's important to involve young people actively in revitalizing the community together with local residents and to maximize the use of tools related to Buddhism, such as the “TTOB.”

The “TTOB Volunteer” activities are spreading in various places, but BDK hosts a historic training seminar called the “Buddhist Missionary Seminar” for Buddhist priests, monks and temple families (as of fiscal year 2023, 51 sessions have been held: see page). Young people from various denominations gather at the forefront, where they can train and discuss without hesitation, transcending sects, and



“TTOB” and other BDK booklets placed in Tourist Information office



“TTOB” placed in a bookshelf at Daikoku cafe

this is an irreplaceable opportunity. I hope that BDK will become an entity that challenges established sects to unify Buddhism as a whole.

M : Thank you for your kind words. How do you feel about the “TTOB Volunteer” activities?

H : When I was young, there were more opportunities for teachers from various denominations to interact and discuss, but lately, it seems that there are fewer opportunities to gather across sects. Since there is a growing momentum for diversity throughout Japan, I consider it a valuable opportunity to connect with people from various denominations, industries, and regions, and I hope that more young people will join this activity. Although I might not be articulating it well, I feel that if Buddhist priests/monks continue to

isolate themselves without looking outward and receiving stimuli from the outside world, Buddhism will continue to decline. Therefore, it's important to actively break out of one's shell, go out into the world, and learn about society, especially from a young age.

M : I appreciate your advice for those who are considering joining the “TTOB Volunteer” activities. Finally, what do you think is necessary for the future of Buddhism, according to your thoughts, Hamajima-sensei?

H : I believe we should recognize diverse values and never forget to keep learning, and this applies not only to Buddhism but to everything else. And I hope that various activities will be an expression of everyone's sincere faith. By knowing Buddhism, I hope to

create a time of relief and bring peace of mind to people, and I hope for a world where people have room in their hearts.

This time, we heard from Ven. Tengen Hamajima, who is working together with everyone in the temple precincts and the community. With the bright prospects emerging

primarily in the tourism industry, it was a good opportunity to recognize the wonderful connections fostered by a “TTOB Volunteer” and to feel new possibilities, prompting us to reconsider what is needed now. In addition to “TTOB,” BDK provides other popular publications such as the red booklet “Guide to Buddhism” for free to temples

participating in the “TTOB Volunteer” activities.

For inquiries regarding the “TTOB” and other publishing activities, please visit the official website of the BDK: <https://www.bdk.or.jp/english/>

Introducing the main facilities providing publications issued by our association such as “TTOB,” “Guide to Buddhism,” and “Messages from the Buddha” at the entrance of Minobu-san:



Minobusan Tourism Association

(Chairperson, Mr. Yoshikazu Sano)

“The booklets are especially easy for tourists to pick up, so we would like to continue utilizing them at tourist information centers and other facilities at the entrance.”



Daikoku Café by Kanyotei Kawaki

(Chairperson, Ms. Terumi Ikegami)

“Since you’ve come all the way to Minobu, we hope you can also feel the essence of Buddhism.”



Yamadaya Ryokan Family

“We hope to provide comfort to our guests who come to Minobu.”



Ven. Tengen Hamajima

Executive officer of Administration, Minobu-san Kuonji Temple, Headquarters of Nichiren Shu, Honorary Professor at Minobusan University

Date of Birth: 1951 in Mie Prefecture

Published Works: “Contemporary Nichiren Studies” (Shunjusha), “Walking with Gohonzon” (Nichiren Shimbunsha), “The Man of Poverty: Toshio Doi” (Daibukkankaku), “Lectures on the Lotus Sutra: All Twenty-eight Chapters” (Daibukkankaku), etc.



BDK Publications



Activity
01

“The Teaching of Buddha” – Update for 2023

From the fiscal years 2020 to 2022, the distribution activities of the “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” were significantly impacted by the global spread of Covid-19. However, as of 2023, the negative influence of this situation has gradually diminished.

In 2023, a total of 8,875 copies were donated to hotels within Japan, while 30,806 copies were contributed to Buddhist schools, childcare facilities, and similar institutions. Recently, there has been an increasing number of requests for donations via telephone or fax from schools, and the distribution of “TTOB” has become a regular feature during events such as entrance and graduation ceremonies at numerous educational institutions.

Furthermore, in September 2023, in collaboration with the International Association for the Visually Impaired, we issued a Braille version of a brochure titled “Messages from the Buddha,” which summarizes the contents of “TTOB.” This Braille version was donated to 135 visually impaired libraries and welfare facilities nationwide.

Previous Braille versions of “TTOB” consisted of three thick volumes, making casual reading

challenging for visually impaired individuals. It is our hope that this newly issued publication will serve as an accessible means for visually impaired individuals to engage with Buddhist teachings.

Additionally, BDK is planning to publish a revised edition of “TTOB” in Japanese in 2024. We remain committed to continuing our efforts to deliver “TTOB” to as many individuals as possible, both domestically and internationally.

Activity
02

Newly Published BDK Publications in 2023

We are pleased to announce the release of the latest installment in our annual series of dharma talks, “Michishirube: The Six Paramitas Series.” Following the inaugural volume, “Fuse - The Spirit of Offering,” the second volume was “Jikai - Living a Better Life,” and the third volume was “Ninniku - Embracing Truth.” We have now published the fourth volume, “Shojin - Unwavering Effort,” in June. This work, authored by Dr. Kenneth Tanaka (Jodo Shinshu



“Shojin”



“Lighten Up! Himekuri Buddha Seikatsu”



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Hongwanji-ha), Rev. Ryutai Suzuki (Nichiren Shu), and Rev. Shinsuke Hosokawa (Rinzai Shu Myoshinji-ha), offers gentle elucidation of the daily teachings from the “A Wise Teaching A Day Calendar” from the perspectives of various Buddhist schools.

Additionally, as the second installment of our humorous illustrated series introduced in 2019, we are delighted to present “Lighten Up! Himekuri Buddha Seikatsu, Living Daily with A Message A Day from Buddha 2,” following the success of the first one.

Authored by Mr. Makoto Miyashita and illustrated by Ms. Naoko Kagawa, this selection of Buddha’s teachings, suitable for readers of all ages, promises to uplift spirits. Both publications are available for purchase through the online store of our official website.

03 Activity Publications of the BDK English Tripiṭaka -Update for 2023

The translation project of the “Taisho Tripiṭaka” has steadily progressed with the completion of approximately 77% of the translations for the first series comprising 139 texts. Our aim is to complete all of the 139 texts by 2027.

In the fiscal year 2023, three volumes were published as part of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series: “Madhyama Agama Volume III” (scheduled for 4 volumes in total), “The Hundred Records of the Temple of National Purity,” and “The Diamond Needle/Treatise on Doctrinal Distinctions of the Huayan One Vehicle/The Key to the Secret of the Heart Sutra.”

“Madhyama Agama Volume III”

includes 50 scriptures ranging from the “Larger Wisdom Sutra” to the “Bahudhātuka Sutra.” “The Hundred Records of the Temple of National Purity” is a collection of 104 letters and documents related to Zhiyi, compiled to honor his legacy, and bear the name of the document collection at Mount Tiantai’s Guoqing Temple. The “The Diamond Needle/Treatise on Doctrinal Distinctions of the Huayan One Vehicle/The Key to the

Secret of the Heart Sutra” contains three texts: “The Diamond Needle,” which critiques the authority of Brahmanism and the caste system from a Buddhist perspective; the “Treatise on Doctrinal Distinctions of the Huayan One Vehicle,” which discusses ten topics related to the Avatamsaka Sutra compiled by Faxian; and the “The Key to the Heart Sutra,” in which Kukai annotates the Heart Sutra from the perspective of esoteric Buddhism.



04 Activity “Let It Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Award 2023”

We held the 6th annual “Let It Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Award 2023.” This time, we received 4,107 entries, which was the highest number of submissions received despite the fact that the application period was the shortest to date.

The winner of the grand prize was the entry from Myoenji Temple in

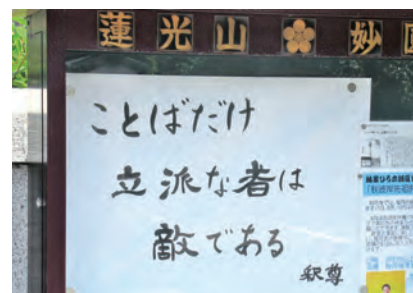
Tokyo: “One who is only noble in words is an enemy.” This is a

phrase from Shakyamuni’s words found in the Singalovada Sutra. In

today's age, with the convenience of the internet, anyone can easily disseminate words to the world. However, this also brings about numerous conflicts and issues. Words have the power to hurt others, and we should ask ourselves: am I splendid only with words?

This message, urging self-reflection, resonated with the judges, leading to its selection as the grand prize winner.

We are planning to host the 7th "Temple Bulletin Board Award" from July 1st in 2024.



"One who is only noble in words is an enemy"

05 Activity The 10th Annual Photography Competition for the BDK Calendar "A Wise Teaching a Day"

The contest, held annually since 2014, celebrated its 10th year. We received a total of 755 submissions, comprising 2,574 photos.

On September 19, 2023, the Calendar Photography Contest Selection Committee convened, selected 32 images including the cover, and awarded certificates and cash prizes to the winners. Selected works will be featured in the 2025 calendar and will also be viewable on our association's website.



Calendar Photography Contest Selection by the committee

The Ninth Photo Exhibition of the BDK Calendar "A Wise Teaching a Day" at Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple, Byodoin Temple, and Zuiganji Temple

From April 11 to June 4, 2023, the photo exhibition of selected works from the 9th edition of the "A Wise Teaching A Day Calendar Photography Contest" took place at the main hall of Tsukiji Hongwanji Temple. From June 7 to August 27, 2023, it was held at the Byodoin Temple Museum, and from September 1 to October 23, 2023, at the main hall of Zuiganji Temple. The total number of visitors across

the three venues was 493,688, allowing many to enjoy the photos

alongside Buddhist teachings and inspirational quotes.



Exhibition at Zuiganji Temple



Financial Assistance and Honoring Recipients

BDK Fellowship

Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) has established the “BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars” and the “BDK Fellowship for Japanese Scholars” to support individuals aspiring to pursue Buddhist studies.

BDK Fellowship for Japanese Scholars

The BDK Fellowship for Japanese Scholars was established in 2012 with the aim of fostering young Japanese researchers who can broaden their perspectives by studying abroad and contribute to the future promotion of Buddhist academia.

In 2022, this program celebrated its 10th anniversary and has since accepted scholars up to the 11th round. Recipients of the scholarship have gained diverse experiences worldwide and are dedicated to advancing their respective research endeavors.

The 10th Awardee (2023)

Name : Keiki Nakayama

Scholarship Period : 2nd year (3 years in total)

Affiliation : Institute for South and Central Asian Studies, University of Leipzig

Academic Advisor : Prof. Jowita Kramer

Theme of Research : A Study of the Paryāyasamgrahaṇī of the Yogācārabhūmi: Yogacara’s Interpretation of Scriptural Phrases

The 11th Awardee (2024)

Name : Mayu Yasukawa

Scholarship Period : 1 year

Affiliation : University of Vienna, The Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies

Theme of Research : The Study on the additional part of the Mahāparinirvāṇa-mahāsūtra translated by Dharmakṣema

Academic Advisor : Assistant Professor Christopher V. Jones

Please note that the information for the 10th and 11th awardees are currently being updated, and their introductions will be provided upon the completion of their term.

BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars

The BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars was established in 1991, and aims to promote international cooperation and mutual understanding in Buddhist studies. It is intended to enable researchers to engage in advanced research on Buddhism while in Japan.

Currently, the program has accepted scholars up to the 33rd round from various countries. This time, we would like to introduce two scholars who completed their scholarship periods within the fiscal year 2023.

BDK Fellowship Q&As

The 30th Awardee (2020)

Name : Jonathan Edward Thumas

Tenure : September 2022 - August 2023

Theme of Research in Japan : Buddhist Hermitage Communities in Medieval Japan

Affiliation in Japan : Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo

Academic Advisor in Japan : Prof. Hiroki Kikuchi

1) What made you apply for the 2021 BDK Fellowship?

My research focuses on a topic for which little previous research exists, with only select experts in these materials working at Japanese universities. All of the primary sources that I use – both manuscript and archaeological – are also housed in archives in Japan. In 2019 I had reached a point in my research that made it necessary to study in Japan, specifically with Professor Kikuchi Hiroki at the Historiographical Institute. His work on popular Buddhism and mountain beliefs shares strong intersections with my own research, and the Institute's archival holdings include manuscripts of great importance for several of my dissertation chapters. My advisor, Professor Ryuichi Abe, suggested that I apply for the BDK fellowship to support a year of research in Tokyo. I was at first a



Mr. Thumas talks about his research

bit nervous due to the prestige and selectivity of this fellowship. At the same time, I was excited by the idea of being able to study with a faculty member in Japan while being part of an organization involved in the growth of Buddhist Studies in Japan and beyond. I also learned that BDK offers incredibly generous support for fellowship holders with families, which was an important factor for

me. In the end, I applied and was equally surprised and thrilled when I received notification that I had received the fellowship.

2) What is/are the best thing(s) about being a BDK Fellowship holder and what do you think about your future career?

One of the things that immediately comes to mind for me is the



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consistent support that I received from BDK and its staff. At various points during my time in Japan, I had opportunities to do field research. On several occasions, I was able to join Professor Kikuchi on trips to Kōyasan, where I learned how to make rubbings of stone inscriptions. Towards the end of my trip, I also made regular trips to the village of Hanase in Kyoto, where I studied archaeological sites and materials with members of the local community, and even presented my own research on this area's religious history at a community event. The generous research funding provided by BDK made it possible for me to take full advantage of these opportunities to expand my exposure to different research methods and professional networks. In addition to generous financial support, BDK was also flexible through my extended process of entering Japan, which was delayed for two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the ongoing assistance and patience

of BDK, my family and I were able to enter Japan in 2022. The BDK staff – notably the wonderful Kaoru Eguchi – were helpful at every step. The support of BDK gave me the chance to finish my dissertation, and in doing so, produce a contribution to the study of Japanese Buddhism. I believe that this has positively impacted my future career prospects in giving me a foundation for publishing and teaching the many things that I have learned through my research.

3) What did you like the most about life in Japan? (or anything you were surprised about?)

Living in Japan – and particularly Tokyo – was an unforgettable experience both professionally and personally. I enjoyed being able to live in such proximity to my research, from my daily morning walk from our apartment in Yushima to my office at the Historiographical Institute, to my sometimes-weekly bullet train rides to research sites in Kyoto.



Prof. Kikuchi teaches how to make rubbings of stone inscriptions

I was pleasantly surprised at the convenience of life in Tokyo, both for my work and for excursions. My family and I enjoyed several trips to areas throughout the archipelago. Indeed, another thing that I truly enjoyed about life in Japan was being able to share the experience with my family. Through attending our local neighborhood school in Tokyo, our daughter was able to learn Japanese, and has continued using and learning the language since we arrived back in the United States. The BDK fellowship has given my family and me a lasting connection to Japan that I look forward to continuing and deepening in the future.

The 32nd Awardee (2023)

Name : Hee Eon Pak

Tenure : April 2022 - March 2023

Theme of Research in Japan : A Comprehensive Study of Atiśa's Mantrayāna Theory: In Relation to Pāramitāyāna Thought, Practice, and Ethics

Affiliation in Japan : Tsukuba University

Academic Advisor in Japan : Prof. Chizuko Yoshimizu

1) What made you apply for the 2021 (2023?) BDK Fellowship?

I came to Japan as a student

of the Japanese Government Scholarship and began studying Buddhism at the graduate school of

Tsukuba University. However, the Japanese Government Scholarship is limited to the third year of



Sumounding Prof. Yoshimizu

a doctoral program, and I was unable to complete my doctoral dissertation within this period, which caused me concern about my financial situation. It was at this time that I was informed of the BDK Fellowship through the recommendation of my academic advisor, Prof. Yoshimizu. With the help of Prof. Yoshimizu, I applied for the BDK Fellowship with the expectation that this scholarship would allow me to continue my research without financial difficulties.

2) What is/are the best thing(s) about being a BDK Fellowship holder and what do you think about your future career?

The best thing about being a BDK Fellowship holder was that I was able to focus on my research without financial worries. The fellowship allowed me to dedicate myself solely to my research for a year and complete the dissertation to the best

of my abilities. In addition to this, it was also an invaluable experience to interact with other BDK Fellowship recipients who are researching diverse areas of Buddhism.

As for my prospects for the future, I have focused on Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, but in the future, I would like to expand my research to East Asian Buddhism, including Japan, and conduct comparative research on the connection and originality of Buddhist cultures in various countries.

3) What did you like the most about life in Japan? (or anything you were surprised about?)

I think the most memorable thing about my stay in Japan was the kindness of many people. Right after I came to Japan as a foreign student, I faced many difficulties because I could not even understand Japanese properly, let alone Sanskrit or Tibetan, which was necessary for my research. I was able to finish

the doctoral program at Tsukuba University with the great support of many professors, seniors, and friends who patiently taught and helped me whenever I encountered difficulties. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of them, especially Prof. Yoshimizu and BDK.



Mr. Pak and Prof. Yoshimizu



01
Activity

The 57th BDK Cultural Awards Ceremony on October 19, 2023 at the BDK Center Building

The 57th BDK Cultural Awards, Bunka-sho ceremony and congratulatory reception for the 57th BDK Cultural Awards were held on the 8th floor of the BDK Center Building.



The 57th BDK Cultural Awardees

The recipient of the Cultural Award for Promotion of Buddhism, Dr. Yoshiro Imaeda, was honored for his outstanding achievements in the field of Tibetan and Bhutanese historical literature, as well as for his dedication to cutting-edge Buddhist research both domestically and internationally. Reflecting on his 60 years of activity, he remarked, “I feel fortunate to have dedicated my life to this path. The more I read the words left by the Buddha, the more I realize how great a person he was.”

Rev. Issho Fujita, recipient of the Numata Innovation & Visionary

Award, was recognized for his long-standing leadership in Zen meditation, both in the United States and upon his return to Japan, where he continued to spread Zazen meditation to people regardless of nationality. He expressed, “After experiencing Zazen meditation, I realized I wanted to pursue spiritual practice more than academic studies and decided to become a monk. I had planned to take it easy after reaching the year of Koki, 70 years of age, but receiving this award inspires me to continue my Zen research happily for another 10 years.”



Dr. Imaeda



Rev. Fujita



Dr. Imaeda receiving the grants

2023 BDK Financial Assistance Programs

BDK supports individuals and groups that agree with the purpose of our non-profit activities and contribute to the promotion of Buddhism and its culture with high quality public programs.

For 2023, we received 20 applications and the BDK Financial Assistance Committee selected 14 groups and granted them financial assistance as listed below. For more information about BDK financial assistance programs, visit our official website at <https://www.bdk.or.jp/bdk/jyosei/jyoseikin.html>

A. Support for Numata Program in Buddhist Studies

Name of Group	Project
University of California, Berkeley	Reserve funds for establishment of Numata Center

B. Support for BDK Affiliated Organizations

Name of Group	Project
BDK Asia	Distribution of "The Teaching of Buddha"
BDK Taiwan	Distribution of BDK publications

C. Support for Groups

Name of Group	Project
The Japanese Association of Indian Studies	International academic and cultural exchanges through digital correspondence
NPO Kamakura Terakoya	Promotion of temple communities through volunteer activities by universities, temples, local government, and individuals
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation the Nakamura Hajime Eastern Institute	Research investigation, support of research, etc. as a public interest incorporated foundation

D. Support for Projects: D-1. Buddhist Spiritual/Cultural and Humanitarian Activities

Name of Group	Project
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation Zenkoku Kyokaishi Renmei (Japan Buddhist Chaplain Union)	Training/education of Buddhist chaplains
H1HOUWA Grand Prix Executive Committee	2023 H1 HOUWA Grand Prix
Zenkoku Nichirensu Seinenkai	Buddhism and Sexual Minority Mutual Understanding Promotion Project to participate in "Tokyo Rainbow Pride 2023"

D. Support for Projects: D-2. Promotion of Buddhist Academic Learning

Name of Group	Project
Ryukoku Museum	2023 Special Spring Exhibition, "Shinshu Buddhism and Prince Shotoku"
Japanisch-Deutsches Kulturinstitut	"Concept of Nature in Buddhism and Christianity" co-sponsored workshop conducted by three research institutes in Japan and Germany
Verein für Komparative Philosophie und Interdisziplinäre Bildung /KoPhil	KoPhil Lecture Series: Buddhist Philosophy in Dialogue with Contemporary Sciences
Verein für Komparative Philosophie und Interdisziplinäre Bildung /KoPhil	KoPhil Project B: The Comparative Philosophy of Buddhism
Numata Center for Buddhist Studies at Hamburg University	Funds for the Numata Program at the Numata Center of Hamburg University



Buddhist Lectures and Seminars

01
Activity

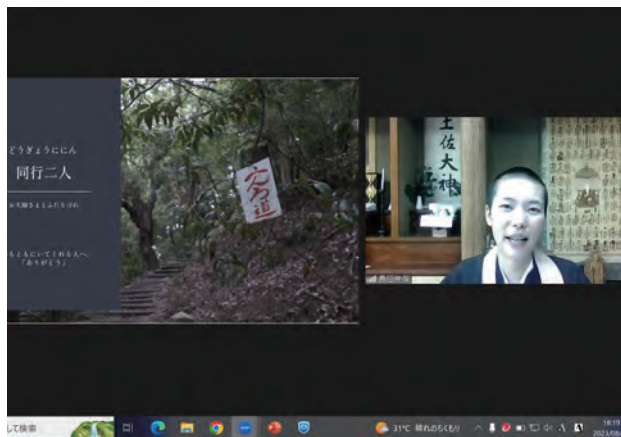
BDK Online Station: “Weekly Dharma Talks” Live Streaming Every Week



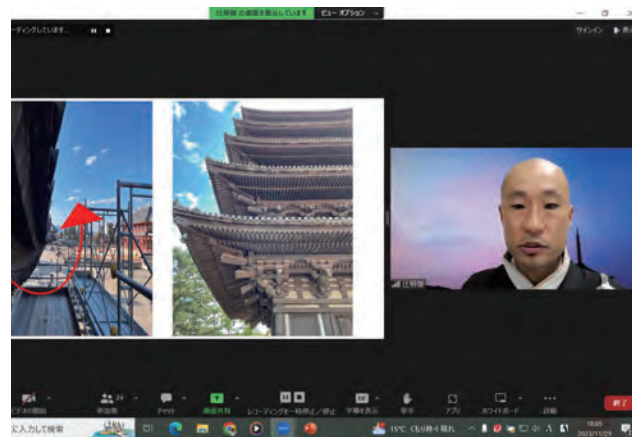
Rev. Honda (May)



Rev. Miyajima (September)



Rev. Shimada (August)



Rev. Tsuji (November)

The online dharma talk program “Weekly Dharma Talks” began in January, 2021. A monthly theme is set, and a variety of Buddhist priests from different denominations deliver talks based on that theme, one each week. As of March 2023, we have

surpassed our 150th broadcast, and the number of people looking forward to this time on Wednesday evenings has been increasing. Additionally, the talks are being uploaded to our association’s YouTube channel gradually,

garnering a significant amount of views. Continuing into 2024, we will keep streaming in order to make the concept of “dharma talks,” which may seem intimidating, more accessible and familiar to a wider audience.

Speakers for the fiscal year 2023 (Name listed without honorifics)					
April 2023 Connection	Renka Haseo Soshuku Shibatani Shinsho Shigeeda Yuho Uemura	August 2023 Localization	Joji Yokomizo Hironobu Shoji Kiho Shimada Shinyu Okamoto	December 2023 Laughter	Shunko Masuda Takuro Sayama Zuiju Adachi
May 2023 Pleasure	Yoshiyuki Takeda Shokan Honda Soo Iwayama Mahito Mukai	September 2023 Exercise	Tomoya Fukuoka Kunimitsu Suwa Shunkei Miyajima Sodo Kawamata	January 2024 Dreams	Kakudo Miyamoto Hoko Kajiura Bushi Yoshida Tadato Wakabayashi
June 2023 Medical Care	Noriyuki Nanba Koga Wada Taiko Kaneda Ryo Takahashi	October 2023 History	Shogo Sakuraba Keisuke Mori Koen Oyama Kazuhiro Sekimoto	February 2024 Emotion	Tomoaki Akai Reisai Kaneko Gosho Kodani Junshin Nakaya
July 2023 Globalization	Ryoei Nanjo Kosai Mochizuki Soin Fujio Joshin Kamuro	November 2023 Science and Technology	Gyoun Taniji Ryogen Yasuoka Seisho Kobayashi Sonko Osawa Myoshun Tsuji	March 2024 Offering	Motoo Noda Hironori Tsukada Shinko Kawano

02 Activity The Weekly Radio Program “WARAIMESHI TETSUO’s Saturday Night Buddhism”by FM Osaka enters its 6th season

The radio program “BDK Presents WARAIMESHI TETSUO’s Saturday Night Buddhism,” which broadcasts every Saturday night from 0:15 to 0:30am, celebrated its 6th season in 2023. Featuring a different celebrity and Buddhist priest guest each month, the show, hosted by Waraimeshi Tetsuo, aims to make Buddhism more accessible to listeners through engaging discussions. The listener base has been expanding annually with posts on social media featuring the hashtag #SaturdayNightBuddhism becoming increasingly numerous.

In the fiscal year 2023, for the first time since its inception, the program invited a Christian pastor as a guest, providing a new perspective on Buddhism.



Tetsuo and Ven. Nanrei Yokota



Tetsuo and TOMOCHIKA



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Special public recording event held at the front mirror-pond stage of Todaiji Temple, Nara, in front of the Great Buddha Hall! (October 21, 2023)

To provide an opportunity for direct interaction with the program's listeners, a public recording event was held for the second time in four years at the front mirror-pond stage of Todaiji Temple in Nara, the hometown of WARAIMESHI

TETSUO. Approximately 40 listeners, selected by lottery from numerous applicants, gathered for the event. The guests for this special occasion were Norito Yashima (actor), a native of Nara Prefecture, and Kohei Hashimura (Head Priest, Kegon Sect

Chief Priest of Todaiji Temple), who shared insights about Todaiji Temple and addressed concerns raised by the listeners. The recording of the public event was broadcast as a one-hour program on November 19th from 7 pm and reached a wide audience.

Guests for the fiscal year 2023 (Name listed without honorifics):

April	Shoyo Yoshimura (Deputy Head Priest, Fumonji Temple)
May	THANK-YOU Tatsuo (Entertainer, Japanese language scholar, university professor)
June	Shizuka Sasaki (Special Professor, Hanazono University)
July	TOMOCHIKA (Entertainer)
August	Nanrei Yokota (Head Priest, Rinzai Zen Engakuji-ha)
September	Ken Yokoyama (Musician)
October	Shunmyo Masuno (Head Priest, Kengonji Temple)
November	A Masso (Comedy duo)
December	Tomoshi Okuda (Pastor, Higashiyahata Christian Church)
January	Masumi Yagi from SAVANNAH (Entertainer)
February	Monsho Kamii (Head Priest, Byodoin Temple)
March	Jun Miura (Illustrator)

Activity 03 BDK Flower Festival for the Vesak Celebration 2023 March 24 – April 10, 2023 at BDK Center Building

To promote familiarity with Buddhism through the celebration of Buddha's birthday with the "Hanamatsuri Flower Festival," the All-Japan Buddhist Association organized the "6th Annual Hanamatsuri Design Contest," showcasing 14 selected original artworks at the first-floor lobby of the BDK Center Building.

During the event, visitors were provided with "flower seeds" from the All-Japan Buddhist Women's Federation and "Sakuma Drops" from Daiwa Securities Co., Ltd.



Artworks displayed at the BDK Center Building

Additionally, the Chinese restaurant, Mita Bodaiju, located within the BDK Center Building, offered a special menu, the "Hanamatsuri

Special Vegetarian Curry," allowing guests to enjoy it alongside the selected artworks, each imbued with its own sentiments and wishes.

Activity 04 Studying “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” for Business/Daily Life



Rev. Chiba and seminar participants



Rev. Chiba



Rev. Natori

Studying TTOB for Business

This is a monthly seminar aimed at learning Buddhist principles and applying them to business management. Rev. Makoto Ichiraku (President of Otani University)

and Rev. Koji Chiba (President of Tohoku Fukushi University) were invited, and the sessions were held once a month (every 4th Friday at 6pm, totaling 10

sessions). Following the lectures, a social gathering was held with the teachers.

Studying TTOB for Daily Life

This is a monthly study group aimed at applying Buddhist principles to everyday life. Rev. Hogen Natori (Chief Priest of

Mitsuzoin Temple) and Rev. Chiryo Matsumoto (Former Chief Priest of Enryuji Temple) were invited, and the sessions were held once a month

(every 4th Tuesday at 1:30pm, totaling 10 sessions). Following the lectures, a tea party was held with the teachers.

Joint Seminar (Day Trip Bus Tour) on April 17, 2023

Titled “Journey to Yoro Valley Visiting Horin-ji Temple on the Kominato Railway Trolley”, we visited Horin-ji Temple (located in Ichihara City, Chiba Prefecture), which is the personal temple of Rev. Koji Chiba, a lecturer from the

Study Group of TTOB for Business. Twenty-seven participants engaged in activities such as practicing zazen and experiencing the nature of Yoro Valley, making it a fulfilling training seminar.



Zazen experience at Horinji temple



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05
Activity

The 2021 “Toshihide Numata Book Award in Buddhism” Commemorative Lecture at the University of Tokyo on April 8, 2023

Dr. Christopher V. Jones, the recipient of the “2021 Toshihide Numata Book Award in Buddhism” for his book, “The Buddhist Self: On Tathagatagarbha and Ātman,” was invited to deliver a commemorative lecture on April 8, 2023, organized by the University of Tokyo and sponsored by BDK.

“The Buddhist Self: On Tathagatagarbha and Ātman” is a monograph that examines the concept of Tathāgatagarbha (or Buddha nature) as a persistent quality

existing within sentient beings, taking into account the assertion that there is no eternal, unchanging self (Ātman) in Buddhism. It has been praised by the external selection committee (Numata Center for Buddhist Studies at the University of California, Berkeley) as a “remarkable achievement” and a “masterpiece,” receiving high acclaim.

During the lecture, special attention was given to the descriptions of Buddha nature in various scriptures, and Dr. Jones explained



Lecture by Dr. Jones at the University of Tokyo

the relationship between these descriptions and the concept of Ātman.

06
Activity

Kosetsu Nosu Exhibition at Kitano Cultural Center

Kitano Cultural Center (Nagano City, Nagano Prefecture) co-hosted the “Kosetsu Nosu Exhibition” in collaboration with the Nagano City Buddhist Association.

The exhibition featured underdrawings of murals depicting the life of Shakyamuni Buddha, which were originally housed at the First Turning of the Wheel Temple in Sarnath, India (now preserved at Eiheiji Temple, the head temple of the Soto Zen school), as well as seven original paintings from the “Biography of Shakyamuni Buddha” (held by BDK), and other works created by the artist Kosetsu Nosu in Nagano Prefecture. The exhibition attracted over 1,600 visitors.



Exhibition

As part of the opening event, a commemorative lecture was held on May 13th at the same venue, featuring Rev. Monsho Kamii (Head Priest of Byodoin Temple). (You can view the lecture on our official YouTube channel.)



Kitano Cultural Center

07 Activity “Tips from Masters of Buddhism” 2023

Starting from the 2022 fiscal year, we launched an interview series titled “Tips from Masters of Buddhism” featuring Buddhist scholars, priests, etc. In this series, participants shared their own heartfelt beliefs as Buddhists and the words they hold dear, accompanied by anecdotes, allowing readers to

delve deeper into their personalities. In addition to the three individuals featured in the 2022 fiscal year, we have published articles and digest versions of videos for three more individuals on our official website: <https://www.bdk.or.jp/read/sengaku/main.html>

2023 Fiscal Year Releases (Name listed without honorifics):

4th Edition: Seikoh Kiyotaka Kimura

(Professor Emeritus, the University of Tokyo)

5th Edition: Koseki Yoshida (Professor Emeritus, Taisho University)

6th Edition: Tensei Kitabatake

(Professor Emeritus, Ryukoku University)



Ven. Kimura



Ven. Yoshida



Ven. Kitabatake

08 Activity The 51st Jissen Fukyo Kenkyukai, BDK Buddhist Missionary Seminar, at the Shingon shu Zentsuji sect Head Temple Zentsuji: June 28-30, 2023



Seminar participants with Ven. Suga



The 51st BDK Buddhist Missionary Seminar (BMS) was held at Zentsuji Temple in Kagawa Prefecture,

the head temple of the Shingon Zentsuji school. It was the first time this seminar was held in

the Shikoku area, and despite their denominational differences, 34 Buddhist priests and temple



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members participated. Under the theme “The Buddhist Way of Kobo Daishi - Learning from Pilgrimage,” attendees delved into their studies.

At the opening ceremony, Ven. Chijun Suga, the head priest of Zentsuji Temple, delivered encouraging words. Led by Rev.

Koken Nakajima, participants went on a pilgrimage to seven temples from the 71st to the 77th stations of the Shikoku Pilgrimage. Additionally, they had the opportunity to explore various halls of Zentsuji Temple under the guidance of Rev. Seikei Ando, and

they practiced Ajikan meditation under the instruction of Rev. Kanjun Akiyama. In subgroup sessions, discussions on “Missionary Work for People with Disabilities” further enriched their seminar experience.

09 Activity The Picture Story Show and Calligraphy Performance at Byodoin Temple on August 4 and 5



Calligraphy performance by Mr. Suzuki

During the “A Wise Teaching A Day Photo Contest Selected Works Exhibition” held annually at Byodoin Temple in Uji City, Kyoto Prefecture, calligrapher Mr. Mori Suzuki performed calligraphy demonstrations. In the morning session, he gracefully wrote the

characters for “Isshidojin” (一視同仁), while in the afternoon session, he presented the characters for “Reidanjichi” (冷暖自知), captivating the audience with his skillful brushwork. Following the performances, there was a signing event where attendees could request



Writing a letter to make their own fan

Mr. Suzuki to write their favorite characters on a round paper fan. On the preceding day, children from local kindergartens in Uji City were invited to attend a Kamishibai, a picture story show presented by artist and performer, Ms. Chikako Honda. She delighted the young audience with her original kamishibai stories, “U-chan, Sa-chan, Gi-chan” and “The King of Monkeys and the Monsters,” making it a delightful experience for everyone who attended. (You can watch the lecture on our official YouTube channel.)



Picture story show performed by Ms. Honda

10 Activity “Buddhism Through English” Update for 2023

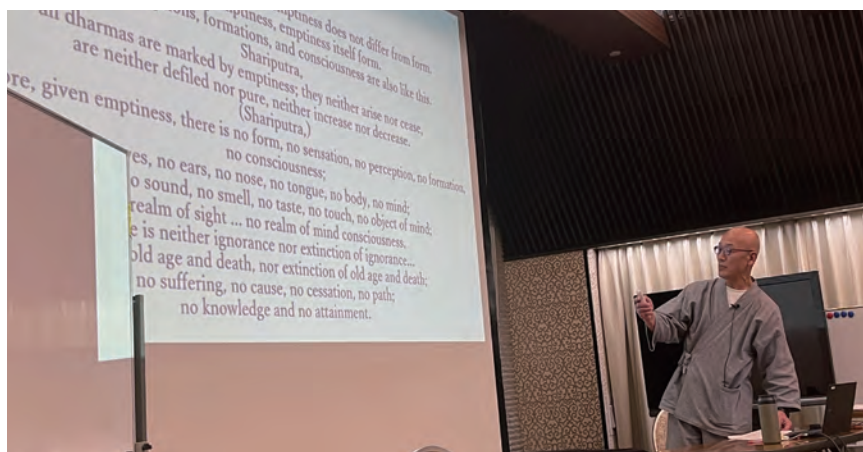
We launched a renewed version of “Buddhism Through English 2023” following the success of the former programs that have been attended by numerous participants since the start of the program in 2011. A significant change in this new iteration is the introduction of different themes for Parts 1 through 3, with each part featuring three different instructors. In Part 1, Rev. Shojun Ogi, head priest of Choshoji Temple and translator, elaborated on “Learning Buddha’s Teachings in English,” providing explanations on fundamental Buddhist concepts in English. In Part 2, Dr. Lisa Grumbach, lecturer at Ryukoku University, lectured on “Japanese Buddhism in English,” covering the beginnings of Mahayana Buddhism and discussing Pure Land and Zen

Buddhism within the context of Japanese Buddhism. Lastly, in Part 3, Rev. Issho Fujita, Soto Zen priest, delivered a lecture on “Studying the Heart Sutra in English,” focusing on the English translation of the Heart Sutra.

We received a total of 110 registrations for Part 1, 122 for Part 2, and 180 for Part 3, across both in-person and

online platforms that allowed us to accommodate a larger number of participants than ever before.

Moving forward, we aim to continue delivering the joy of learning Buddhism in English, and for the latest updates, please refer to our official website and social media channels.



Lecture by Rev. Fujita



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11
Activity

“Buddhist Yoga” Update for 2023

Popular Course for Advanced and Beginner Participants to Enjoy Challenging Poses and Meditation Together

Entering its third year, the “Buddhist Yoga Course” led by MOMO, a priest of the Shingon denomination of Koyasan who instructs yoga to approximately 1,000 individuals monthly, features

a blend of challenging yoga poses and meditation. Before each yoga session, there’s a 10-minute Dharma talk designed to be accessible even to those unfamiliar with Buddhism. This course boasts high participant

retention rates and is one of the most popular offerings of our association with LINE benefits being among the highest utilized within our courses.



Regular Yoga session by Momo



Special yoga experience at Sojiji temple

“Special Zazen Meditation Session” at Soto Zen Head Temple, Soji-ji Temple, on June 18, 2023

Since 2016, the “Special Zazen Meditation Session” has been held at the head temple of the Soto Zen denomination, Sojiji Temple, offering participants the chance to experience yoga, zazen meditation, Dharma talks, and Shojin Ryori, which is traditional Japanese Buddhist vegetarian cuisine. In its sixth iteration, the event welcomed Mr. Akira Watamoto, a leading figure in the Japanese yoga

community as the yoga instructor, and also featured a Dharma talk by Rev. Zenchi Uno, a permanent researcher at the Soto Zen Research Center. The program included yoga and Dharma talks at the Zuio-do Hall; a historical lecture about Sojiji Temple by Rev. Komyo Hanawa, Director of the Sojiji Temple Meditation Hall; zazen meditation at the Shuryo meditation hall; and Shojin Ryori (only available to

interested participants). Although the majority of the roughly 90 attendees were yoga enthusiasts with limited exposure to Buddhism, they had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of Zen over the course of half a day.

For the latest information on this year’s events, please visit our official website and social media channels.

12 Activity “Nourish Your Heart with Japanese Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine -Learning Buddhism through Food”

After a three-year hiatus due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, we finally resumed our “Food-related Seminar,” which was held over four sessions. This provided a fantastic opportunity to explore new possibilities with Shojin Ryori, Japanese Buddhist vegetarian cuisine.



Spring (Rev. Asao)



Summer (Rev. Inuma)



Fall (Rev. Sawada)



Winter (Rev. Midorikawa)

For each season, we invited a different Buddhist priest knowledgeable in Shojin Ryori to join forces with Mr. Goki Sakaida, executive chef of Bodaiju, a Chinese cuisine restaurant in Minato-ku, Tokyo, to conduct cooking classes featuring dishes made from seasonal ingredients.

During the first half of each session, participants listened to talks by the priests about the essence of Shojin Ryori. Then, they observed Mr. Sakaida's cooking demonstration of three to five Shojin Ryori recipes devised by the priests, and enjoyed tasting the freshly

prepared dishes. In the second half, the monks shared insights about the mindset necessary for partaking the meals, followed by activities like seated meditation and meditation practice. After focusing their minds, participants enjoyed a creative Shojin Ryori course that incorporated professional culinary techniques based on the recipes learned earlier.

The seminars attracted a wide range of participants from their twenties to eighties, including many who experienced Shojin Ryori for the first time. Everyone was highly engaged, taking notes, asking

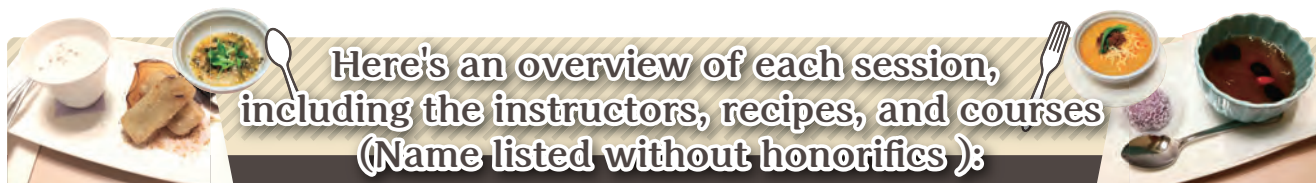
questions of the instructors, and engaging in lively discussions with fellow participants. Participants praised Mr. Sakaida's creative dishes, expressing surprise at the vibrant flavors despite the absence of animal products. They thoroughly enjoyed every bite.

On page 33, we introduce one of the recipes learned during these sessions, and we invite readers to try them at home!

For the latest information on this year's events, please visit our official website and social media channels.



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Here's an overview of each session,
including the instructors, recipes, and courses
(Name listed without honorifics):

Cooking Instructions for All Four Sessions: Goki Sakaida, executive chef, Bodaiju Chinese cuisine restaurant.

Spring: March 9, 2024

- Risho Asao, Shinshu Takada-ha priest.

◆ Featured Recipes: cherry blossom tofu, stir-fried bamboo shoots and shiitake mushrooms, nanohana and yuba ohitashi, strawberry soy milk agar (matcha sauce), black rice ohagi (tasting: stir-fried bamboo shoots and shiitake mushrooms)



◆ Creative Shojin Ryori Course: assorted spring appetizers (cherry blossom tofu, nanohana and yuba ohitashi, colorful vegetable tempura with creamy strawberry sauce),

Summer: June 3, 2023

- Koyu linuma, Tendai-shu priest.

◆ Featured Recipes: tomato and basil congee, vegetarian deep fried oysters, grilled whole broccoli (tasting during demonstration: tomato and basil congee)



◆ Creative Shojin Ryori Course: assorted colorful appetizers (grilled whole broccoli, taguri yuba with carrot sauce, sweet and spicy tofu nuggets), mock oyster fry with Bodaiju special Shojin tartar sauce, tofu noodle sesame noodles, assorted desserts (almond tofu with apricot sauce, coconut jelly with quai mochi)

Autumn: September 9, 2023

- Shuon Sawada, Rinzaishu Kokutaiji-ha priest.

◆ Featured Recipes: umami dashi with mushrooms, hiriyudo (dragon head), roasted sake (tasting: umami dashi with mushrooms)



◆ Creative Shojin Ryori Course: assorted colorful appetizers with a hint of summer (mock eel Bodaiju-style, pressed tofu with roasted sake, refreshing konnyaku and Chinese cabbage salad), mushroom Shojin shark fin soup, pumpkin and fried ancient rice, transition to autumn dessert assortment (jasmine agar jelly with ai yu, purple sweet potato mochi with coconut)

Winter: December 2, 2023

- Myosei Midorikawa, Tendai-shu priest.

◆ Featured Recipes: eight treasure porridge, tofu in soy milk sauce, winter Shojin spring rolls, enoki mushroom fry (tasting: eight treasure porridge)



◆ Creative Shojin Ryori Course: amuse-bouche: bite-sized tofu in soy milk sauce, early winter assorted appetizers (Shojin spring rolls, pickled chinese cabbage, vegetable terrine), five-spice stir-fried gluten with enoki mushroom fry, Shojin jajangmyeon, winter dessert assortment (coconut milk agar with white fungus, sweet potato fry with sesame sugar flavor)

13 Activity Workshop to Make Your Own Incense Sticks at BDK Center Building on July 8, 2023



Ms. Imai

We held a workshop for handcrafting incense sticks, an essential part of Buddhist rituals.

Incense is deeply intertwined with Buddhism and is a familiar item used not only for offering at gravesites and altars but also as a hobby for enjoying fragrances in daily life. However, the fact that it can be handmade is not widely known. Therefore, we organized a workshop-style session to encourage participants to use their handmade incense for Bon Festival offerings.

We invited Ms. Mamiko Imai, who specializes in promoting Japanese scents in various forms, as the instructor. Initially, Ms. Imai provided an explanation of the history of Buddhism and fragrances, as well as an introduction to various aromatic ingredients such as agarwood, sandalwood, and cloves. Then, participants formed groups to decide on the desired fragrance and proceeded to mix and knead the aromatic ingredients before shaping them into sticks. This process

required considerable effort, but participants enjoyed the activity, helping each other along the way.





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14 Activity “Experiencing Buddhism” at Temples in Kamakura, Kanagawa on December 2, 2023



Engakuji Temple

We held the “Experiencing Buddhism” event on December 2, 2023, with the aim of bringing Buddhism closer to people through firsthand experiences. Blessed with clear skies, this event took place in Kamakura, following the previous session held in Meguro in 2022, and marked the fourth installment in this series.



Event participants at Kenchoji Temple

The first part took place at the main temple of the Rinzai denomination Engakuji Temple, where Rev.

Shokuyu Hasunuma, Head of the Education Department of the Rinzai denomination Engakuji Temple, provided explanations about the history of Engakuji Temple and Zen meditation. All participants then engaged in Zen meditation under Rev. Hasunuma’s direct guidance. The second part was held at Kenchoji Temple, the main temple belonging to the Rinzai denomination Kenchoji branch. We had lunch in the lecture hall while Rev. Somei Nagai, Head of

the Education Department of the Rinzai denomination Kenchoji Temple, explained the origins of Kenchin soup. Following this, we were guided by Rev. Nagai and were given the opportunity to visit places such as the inner gate, which are usually off-limits to the public.

(For the latest information on this year’s event, please check our official website and social media channels.)

15 “Symbolic Letter of Hope for 2024” Contest Activity at Jodoshu Head Temple Zojoji



2024 character “On”



Mr. Suzuki

Continuing from 2022, we held a contest to select a single Chinese character representing people’s wishes for the new year. The contest was open for submissions from October 15th to December 15th in 2023.

Reflecting the uncertain domestic and international situations, the character “穏” (read as “on”), meaning “peace” or “tranquility,” was chosen to represent the societal

conditions and the wish for inner peace.

On January 5th in 2024, the selected character was announced by calligrapher Mr. Mori Suzuki in front of the main hall plaza of Zojoji Temple. With each stroke carefully imbued with prayers, Mr. Suzuki used his entire body to write the character, eliciting applause from the audience.

Rev. Koki Ito, the temple steward

of Zojoji Temple, expressed his wish during the event, saying, “We hope that many people encounter the teachings of Buddha and spend their days peacefully.”

The written character was exhibited within the temple grounds until 5 pm, allowing many visitors to take commemorative photos with it as a backdrop.



16 Activity Elementary Course of Buddhist Lectures on “Japanese Buddhism -Learning from Scratch” – Update for 2023

The Elementary Course “Learning Japanese Buddhism from Scratch” was held in Osaka for the first time!

To provide an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of Japanese Buddhism, a beginners’ course, “Learning Japanese Buddhism from Scratch,” was held in Osaka. Participants learned about the doctrines, origins, and founders of each denomination of Japanese Buddhism. In the fiscal year of 2023, the venue was moved from Tokyo to Osaka, and online participation was also offered, resulting in an increase in new participants and allowing more people from various regions to join



Rev. Tagai (November)

the course.

Participants expressed various responses such as, “I learned a lot not only about the teachings but also about the historical background

and why such teachings were imparted,” and “It was enjoyable to learn not only about history but also from the words based on the teacher’s experiences.”

Special Edition: “Comparing the Teachings of Pure Land Buddhism” Held on February 22, 2024

Comparative Seminar on the Three Pure Land Buddhist Schools of Japan: Jodo Shu, Jodo Shinshu, and Jishu

Offering a deeper understanding of the closely related three schools of Pure Land Buddhism - Jodo Shu, Jodo Shinshu, and Jishu - we hosted a comparative seminar at the Modern Temple. The event took place at the Kobe Betsuin of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha with simultaneous online streaming.

In a panel discussion format, we explored the teachings of Pure Land Buddhism, delving into the differences in practices such

as Nembutsu, recitation of the Buddha’s name, the concept of attaining rebirth in the Pure Land, and the emphasis on different sutras among the three schools. This provided participants with a deeper understanding of the thoughts of each school’s founder, the faith of each school, and the philosophical systems and histories cultivated by each denomination.

The seminar was well-received, with participants expressing



Rev. Kudo, Rev. Inoue, and Rev. Iwata (from left to right)

appreciation for the rare opportunity to hear discussions among clergy from different schools. It underscored the significance of cross-denominational activities in fostering greater understanding and cooperation.

17 Activity 2023 BDK Symposium

The 32nd BDK Symposium “The Charm of Stone Buddhas and A Dharma Talk with Photography” at BDK Center Building on July 13, 2023



Rev. Takahashi



Mr. Umemura

We hosted a lecture titled “The Charm of Stone Buddhas and A Dharma Talk with Photography” featuring speakers Mr. Shuji Umemura, photographer, and Rev. Naoki Takahashi, Buddhist priest of the Koyasan Shingon denomination and also a photographer.

Mr. Umemura shared insights on “The Charm of Stone Buddhas –

Tips for Capturing Them,” drawing from his extensive fieldwork experience and knowledge. He presented his talk with slides showcasing actual photographs, providing detailed guidance on how to capture the essence of stone Buddhas.

Rev. Takahashi delivered a presentation titled “A Dharma Talk

with Photography – Capturing Life,” displaying dynamic photographs capturing the raw essence of various living creatures, particularly insects. As both a monk and a photographer, he not only shared photographic techniques but also discussed the spiritual aspects and mindset behind his photography.

The 33rd BDK Symposium “The Signpost of Life” At BDK Center Building on January 27, 2024

BDK invited Rev. Tesshu Shaku, the author of “Michishirube: Fuse,” which is published by our association. He is also the president of Soai University, and he gave a lecture titled “Signposts of Life: Words that Support Buddhists.” Approximately 100 participants attended both in person and online. Rev. Shaku introduced seven words

that have been pillars of support in his life and passionately emphasized the power of words, incorporating personal anecdotes.

In conclusion, he remarked, “Buddhism offers words that serve as guiding principles in life. I hope you encounter many such words and visit places where you are likely to encounter them.”



Rev. Shaku



BDK JAPAN NEWS 2023

Report on the Lecture Series “Understanding New Buddhist Schools” at the BDK Center Building

The lecture series “Understanding New Buddhist Schools” was held in a hybrid format!

To provide an opportunity to learn about Buddhist sects established in Japan during the Meiji era, we organized a series of lectures titled “Understanding New Buddhist Schools,” in which scholars of religion

provided an overview, and leaders of each Schools shared their doctrines and developments. With the use of online platforms, we had many participants from outside the Tokyo metropolitan area, allowing them to learn from the unique lectures that provided insights into the connections and differences between traditional Buddhist sects.

The series was well-received with participants commenting, “The lectures provided a dynamic historical perspective on the emergence of lay Buddhist Schools and the factors contributing to the decline of existing sects, making it easy to understand,” and “It’s fascinating to learn about the diversity of Buddhism.”

Date	Theme	Lecturer (Name with No Honorific Titles)
October 12	New Buddhist Schools	Susumu Shimazono, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo
November 9	Kodokyodan	Shojun Okano (Kodosan Buddhist Fellowship)
December 14	Rissho Kosei Kai	Munehiro Niwano (Rissho Kosei-kai)
January 11	Shinnyoen	Seiji Nishikawa (Shinnyo-en)
February 8	The 34th BDK Symposium	All four speakers above

The 34th BDK Symposium “Understanding New Buddhist Schools” at Hamarikyu Asahi Hall on February 8

All the speakers who participated in the lecture series gathered together to discuss “What do the New Buddhist Schools inherit from traditional Buddhism and what are their distinctive features

(continuity and uniqueness)?” taking into account their previous presentations. Additionally, each speaker explained their views on what the afterlife is and what happens after death, which helped to

clarify the differences between the various Schools. They emphasized the importance of respecting each other’s faith and discussed what values could be shared based on different perspectives.



Dr. Shimazono, Rev. Okano, Rev. Niwano, and Rev. Nishikawa (from left to right)

Take a Break: Buddhist Vegetarian Recipe

Let's Try "SHOJIN Life" Once A Month
with the Recipe of Rev. Myosei Midorikawa
from "Nourish Your Heart with Japanese
Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine"



Recipe by Myosei Midorikawa

A Tendai Buddhist priest. Trained at the Hieizan Gyojin temple in 1989, she advocates for a healthy lifestyle through experiences in Buddhist culture such as calligraphy, Zen meditation, and shojin cooking. She has also completed the macrobiotic cooking course at the Lima Cooking School and is a certified chef.

Traditional Shojin cuisine enjoyed in temples, and animal-free dishes served in cafes and restaurants represent just a fraction of the diverse array of offerings under the umbrella of "Shojin cuisine" in recent years.

For those leading busy lives, finding the time to enjoy meticulously prepared meals while considering nutritional balance can often be challenging. In the 2023 fiscal year, our association hosted a series of events titled "Nourish Your Heart with Japanese Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine: Learning Buddhism Through Food" (see page 25 for details), offering participants the opportunity to familiarize themselves with Buddhist culture through the lens of Shojin cuisine over four sessions. From these events, we would like to introduce recipes that can be easily prepared at home. By cherishing each ingredient and expressing gratitude with each meal, even if it's just once a month, we can contribute to the maintenance of both mental and physical well-being. We highly recommend it.

Winter Shojin Harumaki



Introduced at the 2023 cooking class, this is the "winter" version, but by incorporating your favorite seasonal vegetables, it can easily become a roll for any season.

Ingredients (for 10 rolls):

- 2 Napa cabbage leaves
- 50g carrots
- 2 dried shiitake mushrooms
- 5g dried wood ear mushrooms
- 1 aburaage (fried tofu pouch)
- 30g cellophane noodles (bean threads)
- 120g bamboo shoots
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 4 tablespoons dashi broth
- Ginger, to taste
- Cornstarch, a small amount
- Wheat flour, as needed
- Frying oil, as needed
- 10 spring roll wrappers (thawed at room temperature)

Instructions:

- 1 Boil the cellophane noodles and cut them into small pieces. Soak the wood ear mushrooms in water until soft, then slice them thinly.
- 2 Julienne the shiitake mushrooms, bamboo shoots, and carrots. Separate the Napa cabbage leaves and stems. Slice the leaves thinly and cut the stems into 2-3 sections before slicing them thinly along the fibers.
- 3 Cut the aburaage into thin strips and simmer in dashi broth and a little soy sauce.
- 4 Heat a frying pan with sesame oil, add ginger and the ingredients from step 2, including the Napa cabbage stems. Stir-fry.
- 5 Add the cellophane noodles from step 1, the Napa cabbage leaves, and the aburaage from step 3. Stir-fry, then add dashi broth and soy sauce.
- 6 Add the cornstarch mixture to thicken the mixture, then spread it out on a plate and let it cool.
- 7 Roll the filling in the spring roll wrappers, sealing the edges with a paste made from water and wheat flour.
- 8 Heat frying oil to a low temperature and fry the spring rolls until golden brown, flipping them occasionally. Drain well.



2023 cooking class by Rev. Midorikawa



BDK Affiliated Organization Activities

BDK AMERICA

BDK HAWAII

BDK CANADA

BDK MEXICO

BDK SOUTH AMERICA

BDK ASIA

BDK TAIWAN

BDK EUROPE

BDK UK

BDK POLAND

BDK Affiliated Organization Activities

World Map & Contact Information



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BDK AMERICA

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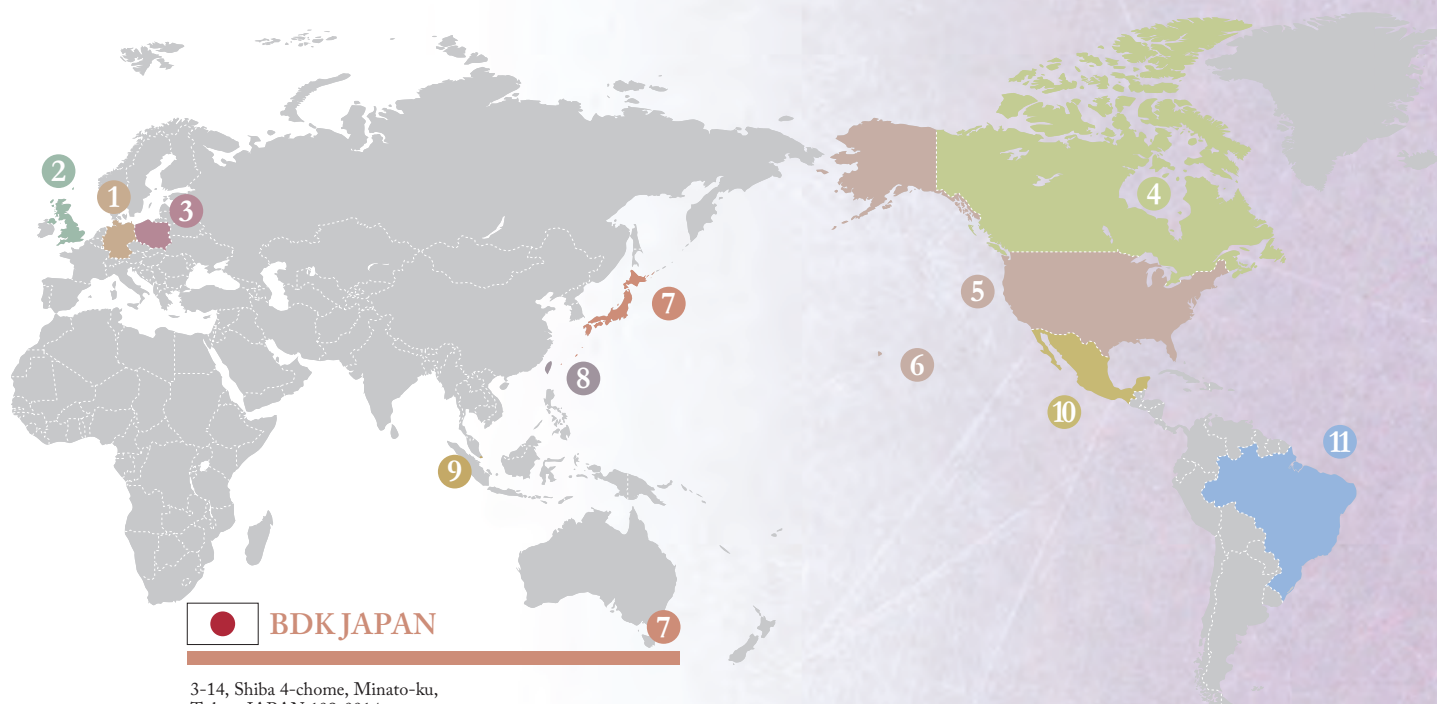
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“BDK Global Meeting” Returns after Four Years at BDK Center Building on October 26 - 27, 2023



Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (referred to as “BDK”) has affiliates in 10 locations across 9 countries outside Japan, and they collaborate with BDK in Tokyo to disseminate “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” and promote Buddhist spirituality and culture.

Previously, every two years, the “BDK Global Meeting” was held in Japan with the aim of building cooperative relationships between the BDK affiliates in various countries. However, due to the global spread of the COVID-19, the event could not be held after the inaugural year of 2019.

After a hiatus of four years, the conference resumed, and was conducted over a two-day period. Discussions were held on the activities of each organization during the pandemic and the future direction of activities in the post-pandemic era. The conference emphasized the importance of



“BDK Global Meeting” participants

flexibility in activities, adapting to the changing times and regional circumstances, rather than adhering rigidly to past approaches. BDK will continue to collaborate

with partner organizations worldwide, combining tradition and innovation to respond to the challenges of the global society.

As we continue to recover from the Covid pandemic, we are returning to our normal activities. After several years of holding our Board of Directors meetings by email, we were delighted to have our 2023 meeting in-person on April 7 at our office in Berkeley, CA. We reelected our board members and added Prof. Paula Arai of the Institute for Buddhist Studies as a new advisor.

While the distribution of “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” to hotels remained low due to the lingering effects of the pandemic, we are committed to increasing hotel distribution in 2024 and have resumed attending regional trade shows of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association. Distribution of non-TTOB books, such as “Messages from the Buddha”, remain strong because people like to read shorter and easy-to-understand materials.

The Tripiṭaka translations of Buddhist scriptures continue to be popular with over 2,000 print copies distributed and another 11,000 copies downloaded from our website. In conjunction with the BDK Global Meeting held in Tokyo in October 2023, our Publication Committee met with the Tokyo Editorial Committee and established plans to increase publication to complete the First Series and start to think about the next series of Tripiṭaka translations. The annual Toshihide Numata Book Award is now recognized as one of the most prestigious honors a scholar can receive in the field of



Rev. Nagata, Prof Kieschnick, and Prof. Sharf (from left to right)

Buddhist Studies. An independent committee appointed by the Numata Center for Buddhist Studies at UC Berkeley selected Professor John Kieschnick of Stanford University as the 2023 winner for his book, “Buddhist Historiography in China” (Columbia University Press). The Award ceremony and symposium were held at the Berkeley Jodo Shinshu Center on December 1, 2023.

The faculty coordinators of the Numata Programs established at American and Canadian universities met in San Antonio, Texas on the occasion of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. We were happy to welcome Professor Stephan Licha, who was appointed as the first holder of the Numata Professorship of Japanese Buddhist Studies at the University of Chicago Divinity School. With the support of BDK America,



Ekoji Temple in Washington D. C.

Ekoji Temple in Washington, D. C. has completed much needed repairs and renovations. Ekoji also installed a state-of-the-art audio-visual system that allows it to broadcast its services over the internet and to host speakers digitally from all over the world. As many temples struggle with declining congregations, Ekoji may become a model for other temples to follow in the use of technology to reach a wider audience and recruit members for their growing cyber sangha.



Board members of BDK Hawaii

2023 marked our continuing return to normalcy after the Covid pandemic, and we were happy to convene our annual board meeting in-person rather than by email. To celebrate our progress toward a new future, we added two new members to our Board of Advisors: Rev. Yuika Hasebe of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission and Bishop Kosen Ishikawa of the Jodo Mission of Hawaii. Our distribution of “The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)” is recovering slowly, and we managed to disseminate over 2,000 copies for the year. As temples started to resume having their Obon celebrations in-person, we supplied them with TTOB. The other BDK books, especially “Messages from the Buddha”, were still popular, and we distributed over 4,000 copies. Our apartment building is getting old, and the costs of repair and

renovation keep rising. The Board of Trustees made the decision to sell the building and to acquire office space suitable for our distribution operation. We plan on completing this important transition sometime in 2024.

We were deeply saddened by the loss of three historic Buddhist temples in the Lahaina, Maui wildfire of August 8, 2023. Temples belonging to the Shingon, Jodo and Hongwanji denominations were completely destroyed. The recovery will take years, and BDK Hawaii is prepared to assist.

We continue to partner with other community organizations in sponsoring public programs. In response to the Lahaina wildfire tragedy, the BDK-Fujitani Interfaith Program organized a program on “Faith and Resilience: Rising from the Ashes”. One of the panelists

was Sherman Thompson, a longtime native Hawaiian member of Lahaina Hongwanji.

Our 2022 Zoom program featuring Vanessa Sasson and her book on Yasodhara, the Buddha’s wife, was so popular that we partnered with Honpa Hongwanji and the Hawaii Book and Music Festival to bring her to Hawaii in 2023 for a series of in-person presentations on her second book, *The Gathering*, which is a novel about the first women who became disciples of the Buddha. Professor Sasson, who teaches at Marianopolis College in Montreal, Canada, is a gifted speaker and made the Buddha’s female followers, who are often overlooked and forgotten, come alive through her vivid descriptions.

BDK Hawaii sponsored another talented storyteller, Jeff Gere, who retold a few Jataka Tales, which are

stories of the Buddha's previous lives, at the annual Hanamatsuri service held at the Jodo Mission in Honolulu. Jeff was accompanied by a masterful violinist, Lesley Kline, who matched the stories with amazing sounds of sadness, joy, anger or fear according to the changing emotions of Jeff's narration.

We are looking forward to another year of promoting Buddhism through book distribution and community programs.

**Faith & Resilience:
Rising from the Ashes**

How can we emerge from destruction stronger, wiser and more powerful than before?

November 5, 2023 / 2-4PM

Mystical Rose Oratory, Chaminade University

A free BDK-Yoshiaki Fujitani Interfaith Program Event

For more information:
Dr. Mallia D. Wong, O.P.
mwong2@chaminade.edu

To Register:
<https://tinyurl.com/yxe23byu>



*Background still from Hawai'i DLNR, vimeo

Panelists



Ray Carbullido
Martial artist, Artist, Teacher



Meleanna Aluli Meyer
Visual artist, Arts educator, Activist



Kahu Sherman Thompson
Retired chaplain, Member of Lahaina Hongwanji Mission

BDK Mexico



The Obon ceremony performed by Rev. Todaka in Culiacán

In 2023, we expanded our activities to include translation and publishing projects, as well as collaboration with Japanese communities and educational institutions, aiming for a broader range of initiatives.

Among the various activities conducted throughout the year, the highlights of 2023 were the Obon ceremonies held in four cities across Mexico in August and the Peace Week events conducted at five

schools in Mexico in September. The Obon ceremonies held in various Japanese communities in Mexico were filled with pure and warm feelings towards ancestors. Despite many being third-

generation Japanese descendants born and raised in Mexico, there is still a trace of Japan in their hearts. The term “Japanese community” encompasses diverse situations depending on the region. Particularly memorable was the visit to Piedras Negras, a town near the American border. It was remarkable how a project initiated by a Japanese cultural anthropologist to explore their roots brought together Japanese descendants to contribute to a better society, leveraging the strengths of both Japan and Mexico. As part of this movement, the Obon ceremonies organized by BDK Mexico provided an opportunity for many to reflect on how they live their lives and to renew their commitments. It was a meaningful time for all involved.

In commemoration of the International Day of Peace on September 21 and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on September 26, we hosted a lecture by Yasuaki



Mr. Yamashita communicates with students

Yamashita, a survivor of the atomic bombing in Nagasaki who now resides in Mexico. Visiting five schools from the elementary to the university levels, we reached approximately 1,400 individuals, predominantly young students, and delivered a message of peace. It was impressive to see many students attentively listening to Mr. Yamashita’s experiences,

and they were often moved to tears. In today’s world where wars continue in various regions, it was a valuable opportunity to reaffirm the senselessness of war and contemplate what can be done to eliminate it. While it may not be easy, BDK Mexico remains committed to promoting peace from local communities onwards.

BDK Canada - Special Edition



BDK Canada established the “BDK Canada Graduate Fellowship,” a scholarship program aimed at researchers enrolled in graduate programs in Canada (or Canadian citizens) who wish to conduct research and study related to Buddhism in Japan. The fellowship was established in 2004 with the objective of promoting research and understanding of Buddhism. It is awarded to outstanding graduate students who then go to Japan to focus on research and study related to Buddhism.

In this special edition, we have the privilege of hearing from Professor Susie Andrews, who was the first recipient of the fellowship in 2004 and is currently active at Mount Allison University in Canada. Professor Andrews led a group of students from the same university on an extracurricular study trip to Kyoto. She kindly shared her experiences from this trip, reflecting on her own time studying in Japan.

The 2023 launch of Mount Allison University’s Kyoto Field School ignited both a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience for our

undergraduate students and, for me, the realization of a long-held dream. Indeed, my life changed dramatically for the better when I received the

inaugural BDK Canada Graduate Fellowship in 2004, because it allowed me to live and learn about Buddhist practices and perspectives

in the Kansai and Kanto regions. This extraordinary opportunity profoundly shaped my research interests and thus my career trajectory, and, significantly, was made possible through the kindness of Prof. Shoshin Ichishima at Taishō University. The topic of my Ph.D. dissertation and first publications—the textual construction of the Mountain of Five Plateaus (Wutai shan, Godai san 五臺山) as an important place in China and Japan—developed directly out of experiences I had at sites such as Hannyaji (般若寺) and Tanzan Jinja (談山神社). And, it's only a slight exaggeration to acknowledge that from the very moment I began my BDK fellowship, I harboured the hope of becoming a university professor who could one day learn about Buddhism from and with her own students in Japan.

One of three Mount Allison University field schools piloted with a three-year (2021–2024) Global Skills Opportunity grant secured with my colleague Robin Walker and other colleagues, the fully funded Kyoto Field School offered 11 undergraduates from diverse disciplines (e.g., Commerce, International Relations, Psychology)—but with a shared excitement about and background in studying Buddhism—a rare chance to explore the ways Buddhists past and present have inspired innovative approaches to making the Buddha's teachings enduringly relevant for present-day individuals and communities. From studying the making and use of Butsudan at Wakabayashi Co. and learning about Buddhist vestments created at Satsumaya Robe Makers, to participating in the tea ceremony, exploring landscape principles

and practices at the Nanzenji, and spending an adventure-full day at the BDK Tokyo Office, every aspect of this program was co-imagined, co-designed, and brought to life with the support of our BDK “family”—including Kaoru Eguchi, Yasuo Honjo, my dear friend Satomi Tabatha Kobata, and, especially, Brian Nagata.

Among our varied experiences, the focal point for our course and its highlight was the celebration of the 850th Anniversary of Shinran Shonin's birth and the 800th Anniversary of Jodo Shinshu's founding. The reflections shared by students about this event captures

some of its significance for our group. “Being invited to participate in this once in a generation celebration was a true honour ... I will forever remember the atmosphere during the ceremony we attended yesterday. Participating in significant ceremonies and events is just one way field schools like ours are superior to traditional classroom learning. I am grateful to have shared this moment.”

Ryan Kent Friars

The impact of experiences like this one for our participants has been as rewarding as it has been influential. Ryan Friars, for example, has been awarded a prestigious \$10,000 Mansbridge Internship to study what



Student delegation visited BDK headquarters in Tokyo (with the Canadian flag)

Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata's life and the work of the BDK and Mitutoyo organizations he founded can teach us about compassion-centred commerce. Thinking forward to my return to Kyoto with a new cohort of undergraduate students this May 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the positive impact of Rev. Dr. Numata's vision and the generosity of the organization he inspires have had and continue to have at our university, and for me personally. For 20 years, my research, teaching, and lifestyle have been sustained and elevated by BDK's generosity and the growth I have experienced because of it, and

it is a privilege to have the fortune to try in my own (perfectly) imperfect way to share some of the lessons at

the heart of the Buddha's teachings in my community and beyond.



At Hongwanji temple in Kyoto



Prof. Dr. Susie Andrews

A full professor at Mount Allison, the inaugural recipient of the BDK Canada Graduate Fellowship in 2004. A member of the Royal Society of Canada's College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists (2022–2028), in 2023 she was honoured to be named 1 of 10 3M National Teaching Fellows, "Canada's most prestigious recognition of excellence in educational leadership and teaching at the post-secondary level."

BDK Asia



During November 22 to 25, 2023, Mitutoyo (Thailand), which manages the activities of BDK Asia in Thailand, distributed 1,728 "The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB)" books to visitors who visited the Mitutoyo (Thailand) booth at the Metalex Exhibition organized at BITEC (Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition Center). Mitutoyo (Thailand) regularly sponsors a booth to exhibit metrology instruments and provides a display counter to promote "TTOB" to visitors.

From December 16 to 17, 2023, Mitutoyo (Thailand) attended a

rehearsal and graduation ceremony and donated 1,602 copies of "TTOB" to the graduates and their relatives who attended this event. This



"TTOB" distribution at Metalex in Thailand

was the fourth time we attended this event and we will continue to sustain our donations to Mahamakut Buddhist university every year.





Japan Day

In January, we began holding a monthly sutra (Buddhist scriptures) copying session after the monthly Buddhist service to give people the opportunity to become more familiar with Buddhism and the sutras. A variety of people from various backgrounds participated in this session, including those who have been personally copying sutras for some time, those who are learning Japanese, and even a few young children who like to write kanji (Chinese characters).

Japan Tag (Japan Day) was held on May 13, and the EKO-Center held its special Open House that had not been held since 2019 due to the pandemic. We enjoyed good weather, and two exhibitions were held in the center along with a sutra chanting session in the temple. It was the first time that so many people had come to the EKO-Center since the pandemic with an estimated 1,000 visitors coming to our EKO-Center on that day.

On September 1, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of the EKO-Temple. Before the service, a commemorative camellia

tree was planted by the 25th Head Priest Ohtani Kojun, Gomonshu of the Hongwanji Temple of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji School, who traveled from Kyoto, Japan for the anniversary observance. 40 children from EKO-Kindergarten paraded in a "Chigo" procession accompanied by the beautiful Gagaku music of the Tsukiji Hongwanji Gagaku-kai from Tokyo. The Commemorative Service was then officiated by Gomonshu Ohtani Kojun, who also presented a special Dharma Message in honor of the anniversary. Over 50 honored guests were invited to the commemorative service, including government officials from the NRW state and the city of Düsseldorf, as well as those engaged in the promotion of Japanese culture in Germany, representatives from the Buddhist community and academia, as well as those involved with the EKO-Center. After a short break, Gomonshu Ohtani conducted a special Kikyōshiki (Buddhist Name Confirmation) Ceremony in the temple, with 18 Buddhists from Germany and Spain participating



Hongwanji Gagaku Kai concert

in the special ceremony where the Gomonshu touched the head of each participant with a ceremonial razor symbolizing the shaving of one's head (Okamisoru) to formally receive a Buddhist Name (Homyō) from the Gomonshu.

The day after the Anniversary Services, a commemorative Gagaku concert was given by the Tsukiji Hongwanji Gagaku Kai at the Robert-Schumann-Hall in Düsseldorf. An audience of some 400 Germans as well as others from several neighboring nations enjoyed the concert, which had everyone enchanted by the wonderful sounds and solemn dance pieces. The first half of the concert featured an introduction to Gagaku instruments with Japanese-German commentary, followed by the performance of two classic pieces, "Etenraku" and "Bairo." During the second half of the concert, two traditional dance pieces, "Ranryō-Ō" and "Ninnaraku," were beautifully performed and were well received by the audience.



Kairyō (Improvement)

When we come to a dead end, we wonder where the problem lies and seek a way out.

Usually, we think about ways and means of improving the situation. However, there are often cases where the improvements worsen the situation.

Improvement means eliminating defects or making them better. But in our case, mistaking our strong points as weak points, we erroneously manipulate our strong points. Thus, our intention to improve the situation make matters worse.

The most important thing about improvement is to eliminate our prejudices.

Furthermore, however valuable past experience might be or however important knowledge might be, put them aside and start from the very beginning, remembering your original intention. As you go around thinking about the problem, you will discover points which you would never have noticed if you had stayed in the same place.

Taken from “Sasaeatte” authored by the late Rev. Toshihide Numata, former chairperson of BDK