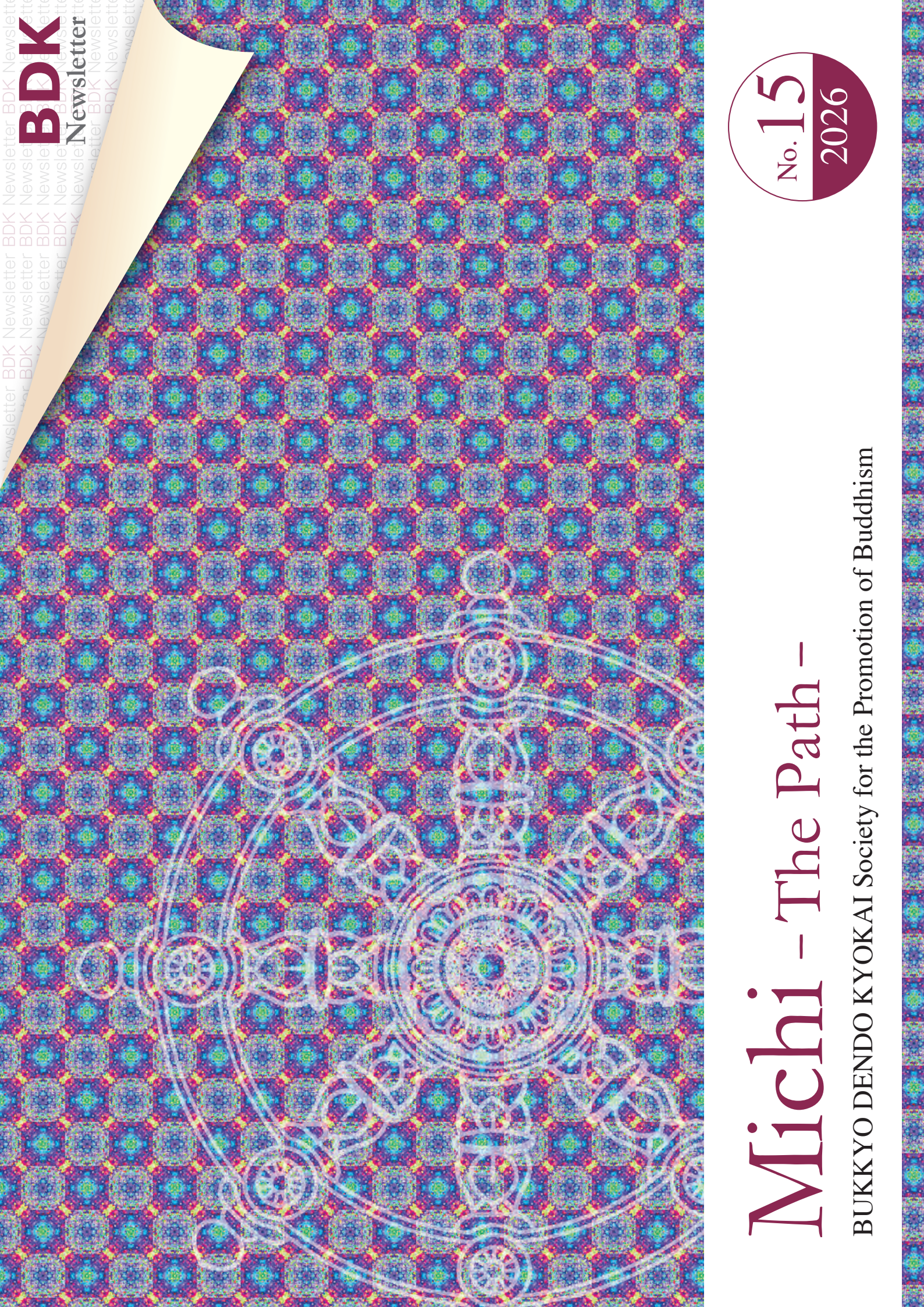


BDK Newsletter



No. 15  
2026

# Michi - The Path -

BUKKYO DENDO KYOKAI Society for the Promotion of Buddhism

# Michi

— The Path —

## 15

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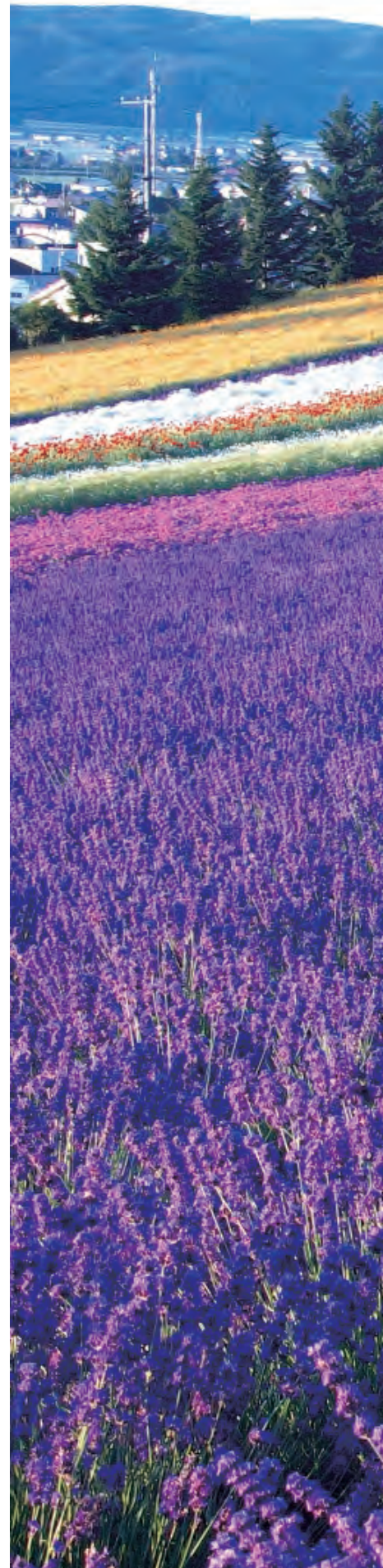


BUKKYO DENDO KYOKAI

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## Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Our Founding

In 2025, our organization marked the significant milestone of its 60th anniversary. We are pleased to report that the various commemorative projects undertaken on this occasion were brought to a successful conclusion. We would like to take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to all those with whom we share meaningful connections, and whose longstanding support has sustained our activities over the years.

Since its establishment, the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) has been dedicated to sharing the spirit of Buddhism with society at large. Through the dissemination of The Teaching of Buddha, along with a wide range of initiatives both in Japan and abroad, we have continually sought ways to bring the wisdom and compassion of Buddhist teachings into the lives of people today.

Over the past six decades, the global landscape, as well as people's values and views on religion, have undergone profound transformation. In recent years, amid repeated natural disasters and ongoing conflicts, feelings of uncertainty and isolation appear to be deepening. Taking these shifts in the human condition to heart, we have reflected on our journey thus far, carefully reassessing both our achievements and the challenges we face. As a guiding principle for the next stage of our activities, we have adopted the mid-term slogan: "Together We Connect. Together We Grow."

While cherishing the precious bonds we share with all of you, we remain committed to serving as a bridge for delivering the teachings of the Buddha to individuals and to society as a whole, and for steadily advancing our mission of conveying these teachings to people living in the present age.

We humbly ask for your continued understanding and support in the years ahead.

Gassho,



Seikoh-Kiyotaka Kimura  
Chairperson

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



Rev. Dr. Kimura, Chairperson



Mr. Numata, President



Prof. Dr. Matsumaru, Executive Director

# Report on the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Projects

## ◆Mid-Term Action Guidelines

With your continued support, Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) marked its 60th anniversary in 2025.

On the occasion of this significant milestone, we reflected on our past activities, and carefully reassessed both our achievements and the challenges we face. In today's world in which globalization and diversification coexist with increasing division and isolation, we have once again come to deeply recognize the universal value of Buddhist teachings and their relevance in the modern age. We feel a renewed responsibility to share these teachings with people facing anxiety and loneliness.

For our mid-term activities, we have adopted the slogan “Together We Connect. Together We Grow.”, and will advance our work based on the following action guidelines:

- Deliver teachings that resonate with people living in the present moment.

- Provide opportunities for all people to live with peace of mind.
- Create an environment where everyone can access the spirit of Buddhism.
- Collaborate with a wide range of organizations with a broad perspective.
- Address social issues and contribute to the realization of a peaceful world.

Our activities cannot be carried out alone. Moving forward, we will continue to strengthen collaboration with individuals across sectarian lines, academic institutions, and people from diverse fields, working together toward the realization of a better society.

We sincerely ask for your continued understanding and warm support.

## ◆60th Anniversary Commemorative Projects

To mark our 60th anniversary, we carried out a series of

commemorative initiatives. A special “BDK 60th Anniversary” page was created on our official website, featuring a message from our President, Mr. Yoshiaki Numata, a timeline outlining our 60-year history, and an introduction to our future initiatives. (This webpage was available through December 2025.)

On September 27, 2025, we held a commemorative symposium titled “We Love Buddhism” at the Main Hall of Tsukiji Hongwanji, with approximately 400 participants attending both in person and online. The program featured a keynote lecture, “Buddhism for Those of Us Who Do Not Practice Asceticism,” by Mr. Ichiro Furutachi (media personality/host), followed by a panel discussion, “Why I Fell in Love with Buddhism,” with Rev. Dr. Tesshu Shaku (religious scholar), Ms. Hiromi Ito (poet), and Prof. Dr. Takeshi Nakajima (political scientist and historian).



Newly Installed Pipe Organ

In line with the theme “We Love Buddhism,” each speaker shared their personal perspectives on the appeal of Buddhism, offering participants new insights and discoveries, and providing a meaningful opportunity to share the richness and attractiveness of Buddhist teachings.

#### ◆60th Anniversary Commemorative Reception

On October 28, 2025, a 60th anniversary commemorative reception was held at the Mandarin Oriental Tokyo.

Approximately 200 guests including representatives from various Buddhist sects, organizations, and business partners were in attendance. We were honored to receive congratulatory remarks from Rev. Gisho Sato, Vice President of Japan Buddhist Federation and Mr. Shigeyuki Sasaki, Director and Senior Managing Executive Officer of Mitutoyo Corporation.

The program included a commemorative video presentation and a quiz related to BDK and concluded in a lively and warm atmosphere. With the generous cooperation of Mitutoyo Foods Corporation, we produced a special BDK original package of Shojin Yuba, which, together with custom-designed hand towels, was presented to guests as commemorative gifts.

We would like to once again express our sincere gratitude for the many

warm messages of congratulations received on this occasion.

#### ◆Pipe Organ Dedication Ceremony and New Year Concert

On November 5, 2025, a dedication ceremony was held at Tsukiji Hongwanji to unveil the newly installed pipe organ in the Main Hall. This initiative traces back to the late Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata, BDK founder who was deeply moved by the sound of a pipe organ he heard in a church in the United States and aspired to donate such an instrument to a Buddhist temple. In 1970, BDK donated a pipe organ manufactured by a German company, which has been cherished for 55 years. Due to aging, it was decided in 2019 that BDK would once again donate a new pipe organ. Despite delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was successfully completed.

The new organ was crafted by an Italian manufacturer and features 2,566 pipes, with three manuals and a pedal keyboard. Its design includes 48 front pipes symbolizing the Forty-Eight Vows of Amida Buddha, six mountain-shaped motifs representing the sacred phrase, and a wooden frame inspired by the gesture of Gassho (palms together). During the ceremony, performances including the Four Great Vows and Johann Sebastian Bach’s Prelude in



Commemorative Frame Display



New Year Concert

G Major were offered.

On January 30, 2026, a New Year Concert was held, marking the first full-scale performance following the dedication. Approximately 1,300 people attended the daytime and evening performances combined. In addition, Tsukiji Hongwanji presented BDK with a commemorative framed display featuring 18 pipes from the original organ.

Making full use of the new organ’s rich tonal range, a wide repertoire ranging from classical pieces to familiar melodies and Buddhist hymns was performed, filling the hall with its renewed resonance.

#### Performers:

- Organ: Hikari Nakano, Takako Hanabusa, Keiko Itagaki, Eri Niiyama
- Vocal: Tsunemitsu Ando, Mariko Yoneyama
- Choir: Tsukiji Hongwanji Choir “Gakuyukai”

## Exploring The Teaching of Buddha(TTOB) With Gratitude for Longstanding Support -Certificate of Appreciation Presented to Toyoko Inn Co., Ltd.

Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) has long regarded the distribution of The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB) as one of its principal initiatives, carrying out this work continuously as a central pillar of its publishing activities. In addition to its placement in hotels and other accommodations, the text has in recent years been utilized in a variety of settings, including temples, medical facilities, and educational institutions, where it is also used as a teaching resource.



Toyoko INN headquarters buildings

On the occasion of our 60th anniversary, we took the opportunity to reflect on the history of our donation efforts to lodging facilities, the longest-standing channel in the distribution of TTOB. Among the many accommodation organizations in Japan and abroad that have kindly made the book available in guest rooms and other spaces, the Toyoko Inn Co., Ltd., which operates the well-known “Toyoko INN” hotel chain, has placed the largest number of copies in their rooms. Since the start of donations in the 1990s through to the present, the book has been placed in all of their 361 locations (as of February 2026), creating opportunities for guests of diverse generations, nationalities, and travel purposes to encounter Buddhist teachings. In recognition of their longstanding cooperation with the distribution



Ms. Kuroda, President of Toyoko INN Co., Ltd. (left) and Rev. Dr. Kimura (right)

of TTOB, and in celebration of the company’s 40th anniversary in January 2026, a Certificate of Appreciation was presented by Rev. Dr. Seikoh-Kiyotaka Kimura, Chairperson of BDK, to Ms. Maiko Kuroda, President and Representative Executive Officer of the company. In February 2026,

the company achieved expansion into all 47 prefectures across Japan and continues to operate in five countries overseas, with further expansion actively planned. Steadily advancing its growth, the company’s future development is being met with ever greater expectations.



# BDK Publications



## 01 Activity Distribution of The Teaching of Buddha(TTOB) in Fiscal Year 2025

In fiscal year 2025, a total of 1,859 copies were donated to hotels within Japan, and 26,623 copies to Buddhist-affiliated educational institutions and childcare facilities. Following the publication of a revised Japanese edition in 2024, sample copies were provided to educational institutions, resulting in numerous requests to distribute them to students at events such as entrance and graduation ceremonies.

In addition, the supplementary volume, Reading the Wisdom of Enlightenment is increasingly being utilized in many schools as a teaching resource that interprets Buddhist teachings from a contemporary perspective, thereby expanding opportunities for younger generations to engage with Buddhist wisdom.

Currently, The Teaching of Buddha is primarily available through bookstores and online platforms such as Amazon, as well as at well-known temples that attract large

numbers of visitors. In 2025, against the backdrop of a historically weak yen, the number of international visitors to Japan exceeded a record 40 million people. Reflecting the growing number of overseas visitors to temples, those that offer the book have reported a notable increase in sales of the English edition.

At present, we are focusing our efforts on producing a revised English edition of TTOB. We hope that this newly updated version will continue to resonate deeply with people from diverse cultural

backgrounds.

Through TTOB, we remain committed to sharing the wisdom of Buddhism with as many people as possible, continuing our activities across countries and regions.



## 02 Activity Donation of the Marathi Edition of The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB) in India

From October 1 to 7, 2025, a total of 10,000 copies of the Marathi edition of The Teaching of Buddha(TTOB) were distributed in Nagpur.

Nagpur, with a population of approximately 2.4 million people, is a region where an estimated 15–20% of residents are Buddhists. It is also the historic site where, on October 14, 1956, B. R. Ambedkar, the first

Minister of Law of India, led a mass conversion to Buddhism among people who had been oppressed under the caste system. In this context, Buddhism has taken deep root in people’s lives as a symbol of

social liberation and human dignity. Marathi, the native language of the people of Maharashtra, serves as an essential foundation for nurturing Buddhist faith in daily life.

BDK published the Marathi



Conversion Ceremony



Donation at a Kindergarten



Donation to Students at a School

edition of TTOB in 2023. Through the dedicated efforts of Rev. Dr. Chandrakitti, a locally based monk, along with Ms. Yayoi Tsuruoka and Mr. Neeraj Puri of Rumi Impex, we were able, for the first time, to carry out local printing and distribution in India.

On October 1 and 2, observed as “Conversion Day,” a booth was set up at Deekshabhoomi, a sacred site in Nagpur, where many pilgrims gathered and received copies of the Marathi edition of TTOB. In the following days, through the introduction of Rev.

Dr. Chandrakitti, copies were also donated at a variety of locations, including temples, educational institutions, hospitals, and ceremonial halls.

The opportunity to distribute TTOB in collaboration with local monks carried significant meaning for the community and was covered by local newspapers and television. On the final day, a closing ceremony was held at a monastery, where we expressed our sincere gratitude to the many individuals who supported the distribution efforts.

This initiative played an important

role in conveying Buddhist teachings in the local language. Furthermore, by printing the books locally, we were able to avoid the burdens associated with customs clearance and transportation, thereby reducing costs and environmental impact.

There remains a strong demand for Buddhist publications in Marathi. We hope to continue this initiative as an example of the connection-centered activities that BDK values, further expanding opportunities to share the teachings of Buddhism.

## 03 Activity Publication of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Update for 2025

The BDK English Tripiṭaka translation project has now completed approximately 79% of

the initially planned 139 texts and continues to make steady progress toward its targeted completion in

2027.

In fiscal year 2025, four new volumes were published in the

BDK English Tripiṭaka series. These include Volume 1 of the Treatise on the Ten Stages (Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā), covering Chapters 1 through 18, and Volume 2, containing the latter portion from Chapter 19, “Chapter on the Four Dharmas,” through the final Chapter 35, “Chapter on Karmic Retribution.”

In addition, Volumes 1 and 2 of The Great Cessation and Contemplation were published. This work records lectures by Zhiyi (538–597), transcribed by

his disciple Guanding. Together with the Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sūtra (Fahua xuanyi) and the Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sūtra (Fahua wenju), it is known as one of the “Three Great Works of the Lotus” and has long served as a foundational text of Tiantai Buddhist thought, exerting a profound influence on later generations.

The Great Cessation and Contemplation is traditionally regarded as consisting of ten chapters; however, it remains an

unfinished work, as teachings beyond Chapter 7 were never delivered. In this English translation, Volume 1 contains Chapters 1 through the first section of Chapter 7, while Volume 2 includes the remainder, beginning with the second section of Chapter 7 through the end of the extant text.



## 04 Activity Let it Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Award 2025

The Let it Shine! Temple Bulletin Board Award program was held once again in 2025. The initiative received wide media coverage across television, radio, newspapers, and other outlets, and during the three-month submission period, a total of 3,408 entries were received.



Grand Prize-Winning Work



Official Website

The Grand Prize was awarded to the entry titled “The Poverty of a ‘Me-First’ Mindset” from Kenshoji Temple (Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha), located in Kagoshima Prefecture.

While it is important to first reflect

on Buddhist teachings in relation to oneself, the spirit of compassion in Buddhism does not necessarily place oneself first. This work was selected for the Grand Prize in the hope of fostering a society enriched by tolerance, where many people act

with consideration and compassion toward others.



Official Website  
QR code  
(Only Available  
in Japanese)



## 05 Activity The 12th “Heart of the Buddha” Photo Contest

First launched in 2014, this annual contest is now in its 12th year. This year, we received 510 submissions, totaling 2,280 photographs.

The selection committee convened on September 18, 2025, and selected 32 award-winning works, including the cover image. Certificates and prize money were presented to the winners. A photo book featuring the selected works was published in March 2026, and it is available for free viewing on our official website.

### Photo Exhibition of the 11th “A Wise Teaching A Day” Calendar Photo Contest Winners



*Exhibition at Zuiganji Temple*

A photo exhibition featuring the winning works from the 11th “A Wise Teaching A Day” Calendar Photo Contest was held at three venues: the Main Hall of Zuiganji Temple from April 11 to May 26, 2025; the Byodoin Museum from May 29 to September 7; and the Main Hall of Tsukiji Hongwanji from September 12 to November 6.

The total number of visitors across all three venues reached approximately 300,000, the highest ever recorded. A total of 61,007 copies of our publications were distributed at the venues. The exhibition provided many visitors with an opportunity to engage with Buddhist teachings and sayings that resonate with the photographs.



*During the Selecting Process*

# Financial Assistance and Honoring Recipients

## BDK Fellowship

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 contributing to the future promotion of Buddhist scholarship.

In the 13th round of fellowship competition, recipients for the year 2026 were selected in October 2025 by the BDK Fellowship Committee. As of March 2026, the fellowship grants have been awarded as follows:

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### The 13th Awardee (2026)

**Name** : Akihisa Kotani

**Fellowship Term** : 36 months (May 2026–April 2029)

**Affiliation** : Rangjung Yeshe Institute, Kathmandu University, Nepal

**Research Topic** : The relationship between Hinayana and Mahayana in Tibet

**Academic Advisor** : Dr. Julia Stenzel

**Name** : Akito Yokoyama

**Fellowship Term** : 6 months (September–March 2026)

**Affiliation** : Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austria

**Research Topic** : A Study on the Part–Whole Theory in the Pramāṇasiddhi Chapter of Prajñākaragupta’s Pramāṇavārttikālaṅkāra

**Academic Advisor** : Dr. Patrick McAllister

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### Reflections from a BDK Fellow

We are also pleased to share reflections from the scholarship recipients who completed their fellowship period in fiscal year 2025, each looking back on their time abroad by responding to the following three questions.

**1** What inspired you to apply for the BDK Fellowship?

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



# BDK JAPAN NEWS 2025

**3** What did you enjoy the most about life in the country where you studied? Was there anything that surprised you?

## The 10th Awardee (2023-2025)

**Name** : Keiki Nakayama

**Fellowship Term** : Third year of a 3-year term (April 2023–March 2026)

**Affiliation** : Institute for Indology and Central Asian Studies, Leipzig University, Germany

**Research Topic** : A Study of the Paryāyasaṃgrahaṇī in the Yogācārabhūmi: Yogācāra's Interpretation of Scriptural Phrases

**Academic Advisor** : Professor Jowita Kramer

**1** I had been familiar with the BDK Fellowship since my undergraduate years when I would see their posters displayed on student common room doors each year. Several colleagues who had previously received the fellowship all spoke highly of it and encouraged me to apply. I was also drawn to the program's practical benefits of offering a family allowance, which was important as my wife would be accompanying me, and the flexibility to choose a funding period of up to three years.



*Dr. Nakayama (left) Prof. Kramer (right)*

**2** The greatest benefit of receiving the fellowship was the opportunity to fully dedicate myself to my studies and research over a sustained three-year period with financial support from the fellowship and the kind and prompt assistance of the BDK staff whenever needed. I had previously studied abroad for one year, but I remember how the first few months were consumed by finding housing and adjusting to a new environment — and before I knew it, it was time to return home. This time, whenever a problem arose, I was able to consult the BDK staff and receive a

swift response, which gave me great peace of mind. Having three years also allowed me to grasp the rhythm of the seasons and the academic calendar, and to establish a stable life both personally and professionally.

In terms of research, I was fortunate to build meaningful relationships with students and scholars I met through various connections, which led to opportunities such as co-authoring papers and being invited to give lectures. At my host institution, I also gained valuable experience by teaching courses and organizing

multiple workshops, which allowed me to develop a broad range of skills as a researcher. Through all of these activities, my research advanced considerably, and I feel that I grew as a person as well. Looking back, the path my time abroad took was entirely different from anything I had imagined before departing, and I am deeply grateful for the many lessons and experiences it brought me. The three years I spent alongside Professor Kramer, her students, and the staff of the institution were truly irreplaceable.

Going forward, I aim to publish the research outcomes from this fellowship as a book, and to continue pursuing scholarly activities that bridge Japan and the international academic community, drawing on the networks cultivated during my time abroad.

**3** Leipzig is a compact city that is well connected by trams and buses and is rich in culture and history. Many old buildings that escaped wartime destruction still stand throughout the city, while in recent years the number of young people has begun to grow and new restaurants, cafes, and shops are steadily emerging. With its fine balance of old and new, good public

safety, and abundant greenery, it is an exceptionally livable place, one that both my wife and I found so charming that we were reluctant to leave. The circular old town at the heart of the city has virtually everything one needs for daily life, and the university itself is located there as well. As a result, I often found myself in the research office well past midnight.

In terms of the academic environment for Buddhist studies, despite the trend toward downsizing at many universities, the institute to which I belonged housed independent departments of Indology and Tibetology, and the nearby Saxon Academy of Sciences hosts a research center dedicated to

Buddhist art with a focus on Central Asia. In this sense, Leipzig is, I believe, one of the finest places in the world to pursue Buddhist research.

One thing that never ceased to surprise me was the way in which people responded to sunny days in Germany. With its short winter daylight hours and frequent overcast skies, a clear day is cause for celebration, and when the sun finally appears, people pour outside to bask in it, filling parks across the city to capacity. It is my sincere hope that many more Japanese scholars will make use of this fellowship to pursue their research abroad over an extended period. I am truly grateful for this invaluable opportunity.

## The 12th Awardee (2025)

**Name** : Shiori Ijuin

**Fellowship Term** : 6 months (April–September 2025)

**Affiliation** : Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria

**Research Topic** : A Study of Ānandagarbha's Vajrajvālodayā

**Academic Advisor** : Dr. Nina Mirnig

**1** I had been aware of this scholarship program, but I had assumed that studying abroad with a child would be difficult and I had not seriously considered applying. When my husband was granted a sabbatical leave and planned to spend it abroad, I began to consider studying overseas more realistically and decided to apply for this program.

**2** The scholarship has reduced my financial concerns and enabled



*Dr. Mirnig (left) Ms. Ijuin (right)*



# BDK JAPAN NEWS 2025

me to maintain a stable research environment. Interacting with researchers abroad also led me to reassess my own abilities and reflect on my future direction. In addition, I gained a clearer sense of conducting research overseas with my child. I hope to continue developing my

research and sharing its results, while keeping open the possibility of undertaking another period of research abroad.

**3** I have been impressed by the excellent research environment and open access system of the University

of Vienna Library. It is available to all residents in Austria and includes access to electronic journals. Vienna is often known as a historic cultural capital, but it is also rich in nature and offers many outdoor activities, which allowed me to refresh myself during breaks from research.

## BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars

BDK established the “BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars” 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.

The 35th round of fellowship recipients, for the year 2026, was held in October 2025 by the BDK Fellowship Committee. As of March 2026, the following recipients have been awarded fellowships:

## The 35th Awardees (2026) In the Order Applications Are Received

**Name** : Jacob Mortimer

**Fellowship Term** : 1 year (September 2026–August 2027)

**Affiliation** : Kyoto University, Institute for the Future of Human Society

**Research Topic** : Dharmakīrti on knowledge of other minds: a study of the Santānāntarasiddhi in dialogue with contemporary philosophy of mind

**Academic Advisor** : Prof. Yasuo Deguchi

**Name** : Shaashi Ahlawat

**Fellowship Term** : 1 year (September 2026–August 2027)

**Affiliation** : Mie University

**Research Topic** : “Building Mahāvihāras: Monastics, Lay Networks, and the Rise of Medieval Buddhism in Eastern India”

**Academic Advisor** : Prof. Taiken Kyuma

## Reflections from a BDK Fellow

We are also pleased to share reflections from the scholarship recipients who completed their fellowship period in fiscal year 2025, each looking back on their time abroad by responding to the following three questions.

**1** What inspired you to apply for the BDK Fellowship?

**2** What has been the most beneficial part of receiving the fellowship, and what are your future goals?

### 3 What do you like most or find most surprising about your life in Japan?

## The 33rd Awardees (2024)

**Name** : Jackson Cole Macor

**Fellowship Term** : 1 year (September 2025–August 2026)

**Affiliation** : Komazawa University

**Research Topic** : The Zhongguanlun shu by Jizang and the Sanlun School in East Asia

**Academic Advisor** : Prof. Mitsuyoshi Okuno

**1** One of my senior students at Berkeley, Max Brandstadt, received the BDK Fellowship several years ago, so it was my intention, even while studying at Berkeley, to apply for the BDK Fellowship myself so that I could conduct my research in Japan.

**2** Since I was able to stay in Japan for two years, having previously spent a year studying at the Stanford Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies in Yokohama, I feel that I have been able to absorb the research methods of Japanese academia, especially in Buddhist Studies. This has allowed me to undertake more historically rigorous research and has opened up new questions for future research, such as the Japanese Three Treatises School and text-critical research on



*Mr. Macor (left) Prof. Okuno (right)*

early Tiantai. I will be submitting my dissertation in spring 2027 and intend to start applying for positions in spring 2026, primarily, though not necessarily exclusively, in North America.

**3** As for matters of lifestyle,

since Japan is safe and has high-quality infrastructure, it has been a comfortable place to live. As for the culture of Japanese academia, since scholars often read and comment on each other's publications, the field of Buddhist Studies feels more coherent than in Europe and North America.

## The 34th Awardees (2025)

**Name** : Bo Pang

**Fellowship Term** : 1 year (April 2025–March 2026)

**Affiliation** : Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia, The University of Tokyo

**Research Topic** : A Study on Jizang's Theory of Causality in His Commentary on the Middle Treatise

**Academic Advisor** : Prof. Mikiyasu Yanagi



# BDK JAPAN NEWS 2025

**1** I am a doctoral student at Peking University, and my research focuses on Chinese Buddhist thought, especially the idea of “dependent conditions” in Jizang’s Commentary on the Madhyamakaśāstra. As my research progressed, I increasingly felt that in order to think more deeply about this topic, it was important for me to engage directly with Japanese scholarship while continuing my work in Japan. Japan has a rich body of previous research and source materials relevant to this field, and I believed it would provide an especially suitable environment for pursuing my research questions in greater depth.

It was through a senior student who had studied in Japan that I learned about the BDK Fellowship. I felt that this program, which supports international students engaged in Buddhist studies, would not only help provide a stable research environment, but also make my period of study in Japan more meaningful and productive. For that reason, I decided to apply.

**2** What I appreciated most about receiving the BDK Fellowship was that it gave me the support necessary not simply to continue my research, but to reconsider it within a broader perspective. During my stay in Japan, it was important not only to continue my daily work of reading texts and meeting with my academic advisor, but also to gradually build up the materials and perspectives that my research genuinely required. With BDK’s support, I was able to



*Mr. Pang at the Fellowship Gathering*

do so in a stable and focused way.

As a result, I was able to extend my attention to related sources and surrounding areas that I had previously not been able to engage with fully. This gave me an opportunity to rethink not only particular points within my dissertation, but also the overall structure of the project and the way I formulate its central questions. At the same time, through living in Japan and observing things on site, I came to think in a more concrete and multidimensional way about Japanese Buddhist culture and about the historical forms of exchange between Chinese and Japanese Buddhism.

Looking ahead, I hope to deepen my doctoral dissertation on the basis of these experiences in Japan. In the longer term, while also pursuing an academic career, I would like to continue my work on Jizang and to clarify more comprehensively how Chinese Madhyamaka thought, as represented by Jizang, should be

understood in terms of its distinctive structure, place, and significance within the broader history of Nāgārjuna’s Madhyamaka tradition.

**3** What left the strongest impression on me during my life in Japan was that Buddhism is not limited to explicitly religious settings, but continues to live quite naturally within everyday life and local society. By actually living here, I often felt that Buddhist culture quietly permeates people’s habits, annual events, and even their general ways of perceiving things.

At the same time, I found it especially interesting that such



*The Akamon Gate at the University of Tokyo*

traditions are not merely preserved unchanged, but continue to be carried forward while seeking new forms in response to the transformations of modern society. This is something that would have been difficult to understand fully through texts alone, and it became

much more tangible through lived experience in Japan.

I was also impressed by Japanese Buddhist studies itself. It seemed to me to have an openness toward different approaches and methods, while at the same time maintaining a careful and serious attitude toward

individual scholarly problems. Through both everyday life and academic study in Japan, I feel that I gained many important insights into how Buddhism can be understood as both a living cultural presence and a subject of rigorous scholarship.

**Name** : Amina Sabyr

**Fellowship Term** : 1 year (April 2025–March 2026)

**Affiliation** : Hiroshima University

**Research Topic** : Bhāviveka’s thought through the prism of Tibetan thinkers: an analysis of the Drang nges ‘jug ngogs by ‘Jigs med dam chos rgya mtsho

**Academic Advisor** : Prof. Hiroshi Nemoto

**1** At the time I applied for the BDK Fellowship, I had already completed three years of my doctoral program at Hiroshima University. As my research progressed, I realized that I would need additional time to complete my dissertation, and my academic advisors—my supervisor, Professor Nemoto Hiroshi, and Professor Yoshimizu Chizuko—introduced me to the BDK Fellowship. I am deeply grateful for the generous and invaluable support provided by the BDK, which allowed me to fully devote myself to my research and successfully complete my thesis as planned.

**2** My research focuses on Indo-Tibetan Buddhism, and Japan is undoubtedly one of the leading countries in this field. This is what initially brought me to Japan to pursue my doctoral studies in Tibetan Buddhism, specifically a textual and philosophical study



*Prof. Nemoto (left) Dr. Sabyr (right)*

of a relatively recent yet rich and insightful commentary on Tsong kha pa’s Legs bshad snying po, one of the most influential works in Tibetan Buddhist philosophy.

During my PhD program, I participated in several academic conferences in Japan, including those organized by the Japanese

Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies (JAIBS) and the Japanese Association for Tibetan Studies (JATS), among others. In addition to these conferences, I also took part in numerous workshops organized by Japanese institutions, which provided valuable opportunities to engage with both Japanese and international



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scholars. The intellectual exchange gained through these opportunities, together with the supportive yet academically rigorous environment at Hiroshima University, greatly contributed to the development of my research.

The BDK Fellowship played a crucial role in this process. Its generous support allowed me to deepen my understanding of the subject by dedicating an additional year fully to my research. This invaluable opportunity enabled me to bring together the knowledge and insights I had gained over the course of my doctoral studies and to complete my dissertation as a culmination of four years of intensive work.

For my future career, I hope to continue my research in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism and, with time and further experience, to pursue a teaching position. I would be grateful for the opportunity to contribute to

the field through my research and to share, in whatever small way I can, what I have learned with the next generation of scholars.

**3** My campus at Hiroshima University is located in the small town of Saijō, and I lived in a quiet rural area just behind the university. I could not have imagined a better place to live, and I cherished it for all that it was: cycling through the rice fields, watching the colors of the crops shift from spring to autumn, gazing at countless stars in the clear night sky, and listening to the chorus of frogs in the surrounding paddies. I still remember the fresh air carrying the faint scent of dry grass being burned. The countryside of Japan, and Hiroshima in particular, will always hold a special place in my heart. More broadly, what I have come to appreciate most about Japan is its nature, and I have traveled to

many rural areas in search of its breathtaking landscapes.

Beyond nature, I have also been deeply impressed by many aspects of Japanese society—such as the rich diversity of local cultures that vary from region to region, a deep appreciation for art and philosophy, and the kindness and trust among people. In particular, I was deeply touched by my host family, who welcomed me warmly, surrounded me with care and support, and truly became my family here in Japan.

For more information on the “BDK Fellowship for Japanese Scholars” and the “BDK Fellowship for Foreign Scholars,” including past recipients and details on upcoming application opportunities, please visit our official website.

# 01 Activity

## The 59th BDK Cultural Award Ceremony Bukkyo Dendo Center Building, Tokyo – March 16, 2026

On March 16, 2026, the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK) held the 59th BDK Cultural Award Ceremony and celebratory reception at the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building in Tokyo. A total of 55 guests gathered to honor this year's award recipients, who were selected by the committee in July 2025.

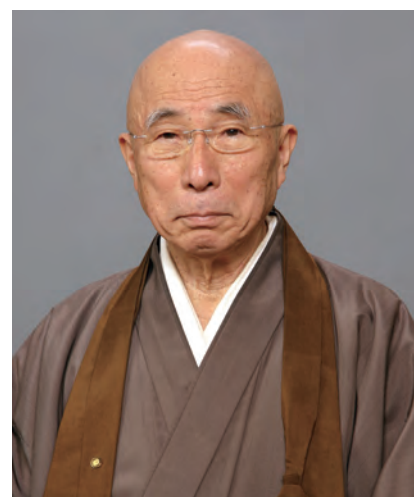


*Award Recipients and Participants at the Ceremony*

Ven. Taitsū Kōno, former Chief Abbot of the Myoshinji Branch of the Rinzai Zen School, was awarded the Bunka-sho, the BDK Cultural Award, in recognition of his lifelong dedication to memorial services for those lost in war, his humanitarian efforts, and his post-disaster recovery work. His life stands as a powerful example of what it means to live as a Buddhist practitioner in today's world. Representing Ven. Kōno at the ceremony, Rev. Taiki Ogawa, Director General of the Hanazono Association Headquarters, shared his message, noting that the award is not only a personal honor, but also a meaningful encouragement for the role Buddhism can and should play in

contemporary society.

The Shorei-sho, the Numata Encouragement Prize, was presented to Rev. Ryosei Oya, President of the Social Welfare Corporation Bukkoen. He was recognized for his pioneering work in creating an inclusive "Gochamaze" (mixed and integrated) model of community welfare, where people of all generations, abilities, and nationalities can live together in mutual support. In his remarks, Rev. Oya expressed his gratitude, saying that through his daily work he continues to learn from a wide variety of people about the path of the Buddha, and that he hopes to carry this recognition forward as motivation to deepen his practice.



*Ven. Taitsū Kono, Recipient of the BDK Cultural Award*

The ceremony served as a meaningful occasion to celebrate the recipients' achievements, while also inspiring continued efforts toward the advancement of Buddhist culture.



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## Activity 02

## 2025 Financial Assistance Programs

BDK provides financial assistance to individuals and organizations in Japan and abroad whose activities align with the objectives of the Foundation’s public-interest mission.

For 2025, BDK received 32 applications. Following a fair and thorough review process, financial assistance was awarded to 18 applicants. For more information on BDK’s Financial Assistance Program, please visit our official website: <https://www.bdk.or.jp/bdk/jyosei/jyoseikin.html>

### B. Support for BDK Affiliated Organizations

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

### C. Support for Groups

Name of Group	Project
The Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies	Promoting international academic exchange and cultural contribution through digital initiatives.
NPO Kamakura Terakoya	Revitalizing the local community through collaboration between universities, temples/shrines, government, and civic volunteers.
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation The Nakamura Hajime Eastern Institute	Research, grant-making, recognition, and outreach activities as a public interest foundation.
NPO National Terakoya network	Terakoya Network Program

### 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)	Chaplain training programs.
H1 Dharma Talk Grand Prix Organizing Committee	H1 Dharma Talk Grand Prix 2025
“Otera to Kyokai no Oyanaki Ato” Consultation Office	Building community support networks through temples and churches to address the “life after parents” issue.
The 47th All Japan Buddhist Conference Osaka Convention Organizing Committee	The 47th All Japan Buddhist Conference Osaka Convention
Shanti Volunteer Association	Disaster preparedness and mitigation utilizing religious facilities.
The Buddhist Society	100th Anniversary Memorial Lecture Series on Japanese Buddhism.

### D-2. Promotion of Buddhist Academic Learning

Name of Group	Project
Ryukoku Museum	Special Autumn Exhibition 2025: Buddhism and Dreams
Japanisch-Deutsches Kulturinstitut	Japanisch-deutscher Workshop Buddhistische Compassion und die gegenwärtige Welt
Hawaii Buddhist Cultural Heritage Research Association	Research, preservation, and transmission of cultural assets from Japanese Buddhist temples in Hawai’i.
Japanese Association for Buddhist Nursing and Vihāra Studies, 21st Annual Conference Organizing Committee	The 21st Annual Conference of the Japanese Association for Buddhist Nursing and Vihāra Studies
Numata Center for Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg	Operation of Buddhist Studies courses at the Numata Center.

### D-3. Preservation of Buddhist Cultural Heritage

Organization Name	Project Summary
Laboratory of Conservation of Buddhist Sculpture, Graduate School of Conservation, Tokyo University of the Arts	Training project in preservation and restoration through research on Buddhist sculpture.

# Buddhist Lectures and Seminars

## 01 **“Saturday★Night Buddhism” on FM Osaka** Activity Now in its eighth year on air

The radio program, “Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai Presents: Warai Meshi Tetsuo’s Saturday★Night Buddhism,” which broadcasts every Saturday at 12:15 a.m., has entered its eighth season. Each month, a Buddhist priest and a distinguished guest are invited to join Tetsuo for engaging conversations through which listeners are encouraged to experience Buddhism as something familiar and accessible.

In addition to its radio broadcast, the program is also distributed via podcast and YouTube, allowing it to reach an even wider audience. Many listeners both in Japan and abroad have said that the program inspired them to learn about Buddhism and incorporate its teachings into their daily lives. Furthermore, after messages from listeners undergoing medical treatment were aired, an

outpouring of supportive responses followed, demonstrating how the program has grown into a unique



Tetsuo and Rev. Mitsunaga

space for connection fostered through Buddhism an experience distinctive to radio.



Tetsuo and Rev. Koike

### Guest Appearances for FY2025 (Titles as of time of broadcast without honorifics)

April	Jikisai Minami (Osorezan Bodai-ji, Soto Zen)
May	Mika Horii (Media Personality)
June	Missei Shirakawa (Eifuku-ji, Koyasan Shingon Buddhism)
July	Ichiro Furutachi (Media Personality / Host)
August	Tesshu Shaku (Nyorai-ji, Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha)
September	Kyoko Koizumi (Singer / Actor)
October	Endo Mitsunaga (Daijo-in, Enryaku-ji, Mt. Hiei)
November	Chance Oshiro (Comedian)
December	Yonin Koike (Suma-dera, Shingon Buddhism Suma-dera School)
January	Nobuyuki Sakuma (TV Producer)
February	Satoshi Hiraoka (Buddhist Scholar)
March	Yayako Uchida (Essayist)

## 02 **“BDK Hanamatsuri 2025”** Activity Bukkyo Dendo Center Building, March 21 – April 8, 2025

Hanamatsuri, or the “Flower Festival,” is a traditional Buddhist celebration commemorating the birth of the Buddha, widely observed in Japan on April 8.

A total of 20 original prize-winning works selected in the “8th Hanamatsuri Design Competition” organized by the Japan Buddhist



Winning Works of “8th Hanamatsuri Design Competition”

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Federation were exhibited in the first-floor lobby of the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building.

In addition to the vibrant display of artworks, each filled with the

creators' heartfelt wishes and aspirations, flower seeds were generously provided by the All Japan Buddhist Women's Federation, and "Sakuma Drops" candies featuring

the poster grand prize design were donated by Daiwa Securities Co., Ltd. These items were distributed to visitors, further enriching the Hanamatsuri celebration.

## 03 Activity

### The 53rd Jissen Fukyo Kenkyukai BDK Buddhist Missionary Seminar

Daihonzan Hoko-ji Temple, Rinzai School Hoko-ji Branch, Shizuoka, June 10–12, 2025



Temple cleaning



Zazen Meditation



Participants in the Seminar (Ven. Yasunaga, Center)

The 53rd BDK Buddhist Missionary Seminar was held at Daihonzan Hoko-ji Temple of the Rinzai School Hoko-ji Branch in Shizuoka Prefecture. A total of 33 participants, including priests and temple family members from across different Buddhist traditions, gathered to deepen their study under the theme: "The Buddhist Path of Zen Master Rinzai: Learning from the Teachings of Zen."

At the opening ceremony, participants received words of encouragement from Ven. Sodo

Yasunaga, Chief Abbot of the Rinzai School Hoko-ji Branch, followed by a zazen session led by Rev. Zendo Oshima, Director of the Department of Doctrinal Affairs of the same branch.

On the second day, participants attended the morning service and practiced zazen in the meditation hall. This was followed by lectures by Prof. Dr. Mikiyasu Yanagi, of the University of Tokyo on "The Lineage of Zen and Its Teachings," and by Ven. Nanrei Yokota, Chief Abbot of the Rinzai School Engaku-

ji Branch, on "The Future of Buddhist Teaching and Outreach." After lunch, participants attended a Teisho (formal Zen lecture) on the Rinzai-roku delivered by Ven. Sodo Yasunaga and later toured the temple under the guidance of Rev. Koshu Noriyama, Secretary General of the Rinzai School Hoko-ji Branch. During the breakout session, participants actively exchanged ideas on the theme, "Buddhist Teaching and Outreach in the Age of AI," making the seminar both meaningful and highly engaging.

# 04

Activity

## Calligraphy Performance 2025

Byodoin Temple, Uji, Kyoto, June 27, 2025



Calligraphy Performance of “Oubaitori” by Mr. Suzuki

During the photo exhibition held at Byodoin Temple in Uji, Kyoto Prefecture, a live calligraphy performance was presented by Mr. Mori Suzuki, a renowned calligrapher. First launched in 2017, this annual event marked its ninth edition this year

and has become a cherished early-summer tradition at Byodoin.

In the morning session, Mr. Suzuki dynamically inscribed the phrase “Mufunbetsuchi” (Non-discriminating Wisdom), while in the afternoon session he presented “Oubaitori”

(Each Blossom in Its Own Way).

Both performances captivated and energized the audience.

A video of the calligraphy performance is available on the BDK’s official YouTube channel.

# 05

Activity

## Supplementary Educational Booklet for Elementary Schools: “Discovering the Historic Buildings in Our Town”

June–September 2025

As a first step toward launching an outreach program in which specialists visit schools to offer on-site lessons, a supplementary educational booklet was developed for third- and fourth-grade elementary school students. Using familiar historic buildings as an

entry point, the booklet is designed to spark children’s interest in temples and Buddhism. A total of approximately 20,000 copies were distributed to 204 schools, primarily in the Kanto and Kansai regions.

The booklet was utilized in social studies classes in such units as



Supplementary Booklet Cover



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“Our Town” and “Things That Have Been Preserved Over Time.” Feedback gathered through surveys from participating students and parents confirmed the potential of implementing in-school outreach

lessons related to Buddhism. Building on these results, BDK will further explore the development of outreach programs that not only address the historical aspects of Buddhism covered in

school curricula, but also provide opportunities for elementary school students to learn about the relationship between Buddhism and Japanese culture, and to encounter its teachings in a meaningful way.

## 06 Activity “ButsuPi!” Launch of a Video Streaming Platform

In FY2025, BDK launched a new online video streaming platform, “Butsupi!” Through this service, a wide range of video content is delivered, offering insights into Buddhist teachings and ways to incorporate them into everyday life. After registering as members, viewers can access purchased content on their computers, smartphones, and other devices at any time for a period of 30 days.

The original video series, “A Guide to Understanding My Mind,” explores everyday worries and emotional struggles from a Buddhist perspective. Featuring a diverse group of speakers, including media personality Ms. Mika Horii, the program presents discussions in a conversational format. It offers viewers practical guidance and an opportunity to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings.

In addition, recordings of past

events such as the 60th Anniversary Commemorative Symposium, “We Love Buddhism,” the lecture series, “Learning Japanese Buddhism from the Basics” and “Learning Buddhism in English,” are made available for purchase for a limited time following their conclusion. This allows those who were unable to attend, as well as those who wish to deepen their understanding, to engage with Buddhist teachings at their own pace.

BDK will continue to expand its

offerings by delivering a variety of new programs through the platform.



*Butsu Pi! Character*

## 07 Activity “Buddhism Through English” Update for 2025 Held at the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building April–December 2025 (9 sessions total)

“Buddhism Through English” was launched in 2011 and has since provided many participants with opportunities to study Buddhism through the English language in a variety of formats.

In FY2025, lectures were delivered by Dr. Alexander O’Neill, Dr. Makoto Ito, and Dr. Matthew McMullen, each offering a series of three sessions.

Across the nine sessions, participants gained an overview of Buddhism, from the teachings of the Buddha to the development of Japanese

Buddhism. The program provided an opportunity to learn the broader historical flow and key teachings of Buddhism in English. All lectures in

FY2025 were conducted entirely in English, and English-language texts were used to create an environment in which participants could read in English and think in English. Although there were initial concerns that reading English translations of Buddhist scriptures might be challenging, participants reported a deeper understanding through the instructors' clear explanations and the effective use of visual materials. Many also commented that the content was, in some cases, easier to understand in English. BDK will continue this program in FY2026 and beyond, sharing the enjoyment of learning Buddhism in English with a wider audience.

For the latest information, please visit BDK's official website and social media channels.



*Dr. O'Neill*



*Dr. McMullen*

## 08 Activity “Symbolic Letter of Hope for 2026” Contest Zojoji, Head Temple of the Jodo Sect

Following last year's success, the “Symbolic Letter of Hope for 2025” Contest was held once again with participants invited to express their wishes for the New Year in a single Chinese character (application period: October 15–December 15, 2025).

From approximately 60 submissions, the character “Gentleness” (柔) was selected. This choice reflects a heartfelt aspiration to let go of attachment and rigid thinking, and to share with society the importance of flexibility of mind and harmonious living. On January 5, 2026, the selected character, “Gentleness” (柔) was

officially announced at the plaza in front of the Main Hall of Zojoji Temple. The calligraphy was rendered by Mr. Mori Suzuki. During the ceremony, Rev. Zuiki Nakamura introduced a Buddhist passage expressing the idea of “softening both body and mind through encountering the Buddha's light,” and offered remarks with the

hope that the year would be filled with gentle smiles. The calligraphy was displayed within the temple grounds until the evening of the event day, and many visitors enjoyed taking commemorative photographs with the work. It is currently exhibited in the first-floor lobby of the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building.



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“Gentleness(柔)” Display at Zojoji Temple



Calligraphy Performance by Mr. Suzuki

## 09 Activity

# Elementary Course of Buddhist Lectures on “Japanese Buddhism – Learning from Scratch” Update for 2025

In 2025, the “Japanese Buddhism – Learning from Scratch” course was held in Sendai. This introductory lecture series, designed for beginners, explores the fundamental teachings and the lives of the founders of each major Buddhist school in Japan, focusing on one tradition per session.

Previously held in Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya, the program has reached new audiences in each location and received highly positive feedback. The 2025 program marked its first time in the Tohoku region, attracting an even broader range of participants from across the area.

Participants shared enthusiastic feedback, such as: “Even as a beginner, I found learning about

Session	School	Lecturer (name listed without honorifics)
1	Tendai	Jokan Ono, Chief Priest, Fugenji Temple
2	Shingon	Yonin Koike, Executive Director, Sumadera Temple
3	Jodo	Ryosho Shoji, Chief Priest, Unjoji Temple
4	Jodo-shin	Michio Sugiura, Chief Priest, Shomyoji Temple
5	Ji	Masayuki Shibuya, Chief Priest, Chotokuji Temple
6	Nichiren	Washo Oyamada, Chief Priest, Hoeiji Temple
7	Rinzai	Daiko Hoshi, Chief Priest Zennoji Temple
8	Soto	Koji Chiba, President, Tohoku Fukushi University



Rev. Shibuya



Rev. Chiba

Buddhism enjoyable and engaging with moments of laughter,” “I learned many things that cannot be found online,” and “The PowerPoint presentations were well-designed and made the content easy to understand.”

For the latest information on the 2026 program, please visit the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK)’s official website and social media channels.



Rev. Ono



Rev. Hoshi

## 10 Activity “Wellness Project”: Sharing Buddhism Through the Body

“Wellness” is a broader concept than “health,” referring to a way of living that nurtures well-being socially, physically, and spiritually.

Launched in fiscal year 2025, the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (BDK)’s “Wellness Project” offers opportunities for learning and experience that encourage participants to engage with Buddhist wisdom while reflecting on their health, mind, diet, and daily life, fostering a more balanced and comfortable way of living.

### “Buddhist Yoga” Update for 2025 Held at the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building

The “Buddhist Yoga Course,” led by MOMO, a priest of the Koyasan Shingon tradition and an Ashtanga yoga instructor, marked its fifth year.

Each session begins with the chanting of the Threefold Refuge, followed by a Dharma talk presented in an accessible manner, even for those unfamiliar with Buddhism. Participants then move into Ashtanga yoga practice. The course begins with basic postures and gradually increases in difficulty; however, participants

receive attentive guidance throughout, making it accessible even for beginners and a popular

program with many returning participants.



“Buddhist Yoga” session by Momo



## “Special Zazen Retreat at Eiheiiji”

Held at Eiheiiji Temple, Head Temple of the Soto Zen School; August 30–31, 2025



*Special Zazen Session by Mr. Watamoto*

A two-day “Special Zazen Retreat,” offering experiences in yoga, zazen meditation, and Shojin (Buddhist vegetarian) cuisine, was held at Eiheiiji Temple.

With Mr. Akira Watamoto serving as the yoga instructor, the program attracted participants from across Japan. In the serene and inspiring setting of Eiheiiji, attendees experienced a variety of activities, including yoga sessions, guided tours of the temple buildings, Shojin cuisine, Zazen practice, a Dharma talk by Rev. Shobo Nishida, and the temple’s early morning service.

## 11 Activity

## “Enjoy! Kabaddi”

Held at Asakusa Elementary School Gymnasium and other venues; five sessions from April 2025 to March 2026

As part of the “Wellness Project,” the “Enjoy! Kabaddi” experiential program was held for the first time at the gymnasium of Asakusa Elementary School in Tokyo.

Although kabaddi is still relatively unfamiliar in Japan, it is an official sport of the Asian Games and is widely enjoyed in India as a national sport. It is also said that Shakyamuni Buddha practiced a form of the game during his youth as a prince, suggesting a deep historical connection with Buddhism.



*Participants at Enmanji Temple*

This program introduced a new perspective of “Buddhism × Sports.” Under the guidance of Rev. Shojun Shimizutani, a former member of the Japan national kabaddi team and Chief Priest of Zenryuin, Sensoji Temple, four sessions were held throughout the year. Participants engaged in enjoyable physical activity while naturally encountering

the spirit and values of Buddhism. In addition, on February 7, 2026, a special hands-on session for children was held on the grounds of Enmanji Temple, a distinguished temple of the Tendai tradition. The event was filled with smiles and cheerful voices. Centered around the temple, the event became a place for intergenerational interaction,



*Kabaddi game at Asakusa Elementary*

bringing together people of all ages and fostering new connections among participants.

## 12 Activity “Learning Buddhism through Food” Enriching the Heart with Shojin Ryori Japanese Buddhist Vegetarian Cuisine

First launched in 2023, this workshop was held twice in 2025 with added elements from the Wellness Project. Through a collaboration between Buddhist priests well versed in Shojin cuisine and professional chefs, the program provided an opportunity to reflect on the well-being of both mind and body through food.

The first session focused on sweets, marking the program’s first theme dedicated to desserts. Rev. Yuken Kihara, a popular sweets-making monk from Komyoji Temple of the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji tradition, was invited as the lecturer. Following a talk on the meaning of Shojin cuisine, participants observed a live cooking demonstration of three original recipes by Mr. Goki Sakaida, Executive Chef of Mita Bodaiju, and enjoyed a tasting of warabi mochi.

In the latter half, participants listened to a talk on mindfulness while eating, took part in an optional consultation session, and enjoyed an afternoon tea featuring creative Shojin style sweets.

The second session welcomed, for the first time, a lecturer from the Obaku Zen tradition. Rev. Soshi Hata, Vice Chief Priest of Hozenin Temple and

Tenzo at Manpukuji Temple, led the session. In the first half, participants observed a live demonstration of three original recipes by Mr. Minoru Sugiyama, Executive Chef of Western Cuisine at Tokyo Grand Hotel, followed by a tasting of grated yam porridge.

In the latter half, participants practiced seated meditation on chairs to calm the mind, followed by a talk on the principles of Shojin cuisine. The session concluded with a creative course meal inspired by Fucha cuisine, arranged in a Western style.

Participants ranged widely in age from their 20s to their 80s, and the workshop fostered a warm and welcoming learning environment for both first time attendees and those with prior experience. Many participants commented on the unique combinations such as sweets and Shojin cuisine



*Cooking Performance by Mr. Sugiyama at Tokyo Grand Hotel*

and Fucha cuisine and Western style cooking, as well as the rare opportunity to learn from both Buddhist priests and professional chefs, making it a deeply enriching experience.

For the latest information on the 2026 program, please visit the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai BDK official website and social media channels.



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## Session Details

### Session 1: January 24, 2026

Bukkyo Dendo Center Building Mita Bodaiju  
Lecturers: Yuken Kihara, Goki Sakaida

◆ Recipes: Brown sugar caramelized walnuts, Zenzai sweet red bean soup, Warabi Mochi

◆ Afternoon Tea Set:

Ume Modoki Bodaiju-style, Shiratama Zenzai, Yuzu citrus scented agar jelly with strawberries, kumquats, white wood ear mushrooms, soy milk almond jelly with kiwi sauce, apple boat fruity Ohagi with osmanthus aroma, sesame dumplings with red bean paste, brown sugar caramelized walnuts, mango coconut dumplings, crispy lotus root and Yuba chips, daikon rice cakes with burdock



### Session 2: February 21, 2026

Soto Zen Administrative Headquarters Tokyo Grand Hotel  
Lecturers: Soshi Hata, Minoru Sugiyama

◆ Recipes: Apple Tempura, Unpen Obaku style dish, grated yam porridge

◆ Course Menu:

Apple beignets with salad mesclun, fresh spring rolls with tofu and zucchini peanut sauce, Unpen style soup, Goma tofu prepared in a Western style



## 13 Activity “Tokyo Temple Run”: Discovering the Appeal of Temples through Running

Following “Enjoy! Kabaddi,” the “Tokyo Temple Run” was launched in 2025 as a new initiative under the Wellness Project. This running event, which takes participants on a tour of temples in Tokyo, featured an approximately 10 kilometer course with four temples in Minato City serving as checkpoints. Participants ran together in groups under the guidance of an instructor, making it a unique and engaging experience.

The program was led by Rev. Yuji Komatsu, a popular priest runner and Chief Priest of Takeibo Temple of the Nichiren tradition. Participants gathered at the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building, where they first learned key points for mindful running. After warming up, they set off on the course, visiting Zojoji Temple, Komyoji Temple, Kongobuji Tokyo Betsuin, and Sengakuji Temple as checkpoints. At each location, participants took hydration breaks before continuing on the route. The run concluded back at



Sengakuji Temple (Check point4)

the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building with a cool down session and a

Dharma talk.

On the day of the event, participants

ranging in age from their teens to their 60s, joined beginners and experienced



Rev. Komatsu Giving Pre-Run Advice

runners, all running together as one group. It was especially memorable to see participants encouraging one another with smiles even on uphill sections. Blessed with favorable weather, the event offered not only opportunities for temple visits but also a chance to discover the unique charm of Minato City, where many temples are located throughout the area. Many

participants expressed their desire to run the same course again.

For the latest information on the 2026 program, please visit the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai BDK official website and social media channels.

## Activity 14 Symposium on Life and Death

### Session 1 : What Happens After We Die

(Held at the Bukkyo Dendo Center Building; July 25, 2025)



From left : Rev. Dr. Takase, Prof. Dr. Hasegawa Mase, and Rev. Ikeda

As part of the Wellness Project, a three-part symposium was held to explore the theme of death and allow participants to reflect on how to live more meaningfully.

The first session, titled “What Happens After We Die,” introduced perspectives on the afterlife and related cultural views from Shinto, Christianity, and Buddhism, offering participants a valuable opportunity to consider the topic

from multiple angles.

Following the presentations by Rev. Natsue Ikeda, a Shinto priest of Yayoi Shrine, and Prof. Dr. Emi Hasegawa Mase of J F Oberlin University, a cross-talk session was held with the participation of Rev. Dr. Akinori Takase of Taisho University. This discussion enabled participants to share and reflect on differing views of life and death across religious traditions, as well

as the individual perspectives of each speaker.

Participants commented, for example, that “encountering each speaker’s unique perspective on life and death reminded me of the importance of continuing to reflect on these questions,” highlighting the meaningful impact of the symposium.



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## Session 2 : When We Long to Meet Again (November 28, 2025)

As part of the ongoing Symposium on Life and Death, the second session was held under the theme “When We Long to Meet Again.” Focusing on how to come to terms with the grief of losing a loved one and seeking ways to navigate through periods of deep sorrow, the session invited two leading experts in grief care in Japan: Prof. Dr. Yukihiro Sakaguchi of Kwansei Gakuin University and Rev. Dr. Yoshiko Takaki, Honorary Director of the Grief Care Institute at Sophia University. Drawing from their respective



From left : Rev. Dr. Takase, Rev. Takaki, and Prof. Dr. Sakaguchi

fields, they presented multifaceted perspectives spanning religion, medicine, and psychology. Their reflections on life and death, illustrated through concrete examples, offered participants profound insights and guidance.

Participant feedback included comments such as “I found a sense of hope even in death” and “I felt that reunion may be possible,” highlighting the deep impact of the session.

## Session 3 : Choosing Life (March 27, 2026)

As part of the ongoing Symposium on Life and Death, the third session was held under the theme “Choosing Life.” To encourage participants to reflect on the ethical and social issues surrounding euthanasia and death with dignity as matters of personal relevance, the session featured Prof. Dr. Atsuko Kobayashi of Kitasato University and Rev. Jessie Shaku Hokai, Chief Priest of Kounji Temple of the Shinshu Otani-ha, who has personal experience with a family member choosing euthanasia. Through presentations from these differing perspectives, participants engaged with the principles of



Rev. Shaku

medical ethics while reflecting on the emotional and moral challenges of how to respond to the choices of loved ones. The session concluded with a shared reflection on the question, “What would I do in such a situation?” Participant feedback included comments such as “I realized that there are nuanced differences in how



Prof. Kobayashi

situations described as euthanasia are defined” and “I would like to continue learning about death with care and thoughtfulness,” highlighting the depth of engagement. All three sessions of the Symposium on Life and Death are now available on the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai BDK’s video platform “ButsuPi!”.

Take a Break



## Personalized Editions of The Teaching of Buddha

We are pleased to introduce a new service offering personalized editions of The Teaching of Buddha (TTOB), with the name of your temple or organization printed on the cover.

These customized copies have been well received by many temples as commemorative or gift items, particularly for significant occasions such as temple dedication ceremonies and memorial services, helping to deepen connections with temple members and supporters.

By sharing both the teachings of Buddhism and the heartfelt message of your temple, these personalized editions of TTOB offer a meaningful way to create a special bond. We warmly invite you to take advantage of this service, and we look forward to receiving your applications.

◎For more details and estimated pricing, please visit the dedicated page on our official website.  
(Only Available in Japanese)





## BDK Affiliated Organization Activities

BDK AMERICA

BDK HAWAII

BDK CANADA

BDK MEXICO

BDK SOUTH AMERICA

BDK ASIA

BDK TAIWAN

BDK THAILAND

BDK EUROPE

BDK UK

BDK POLAND

# BDK Affiliated Organization Activities

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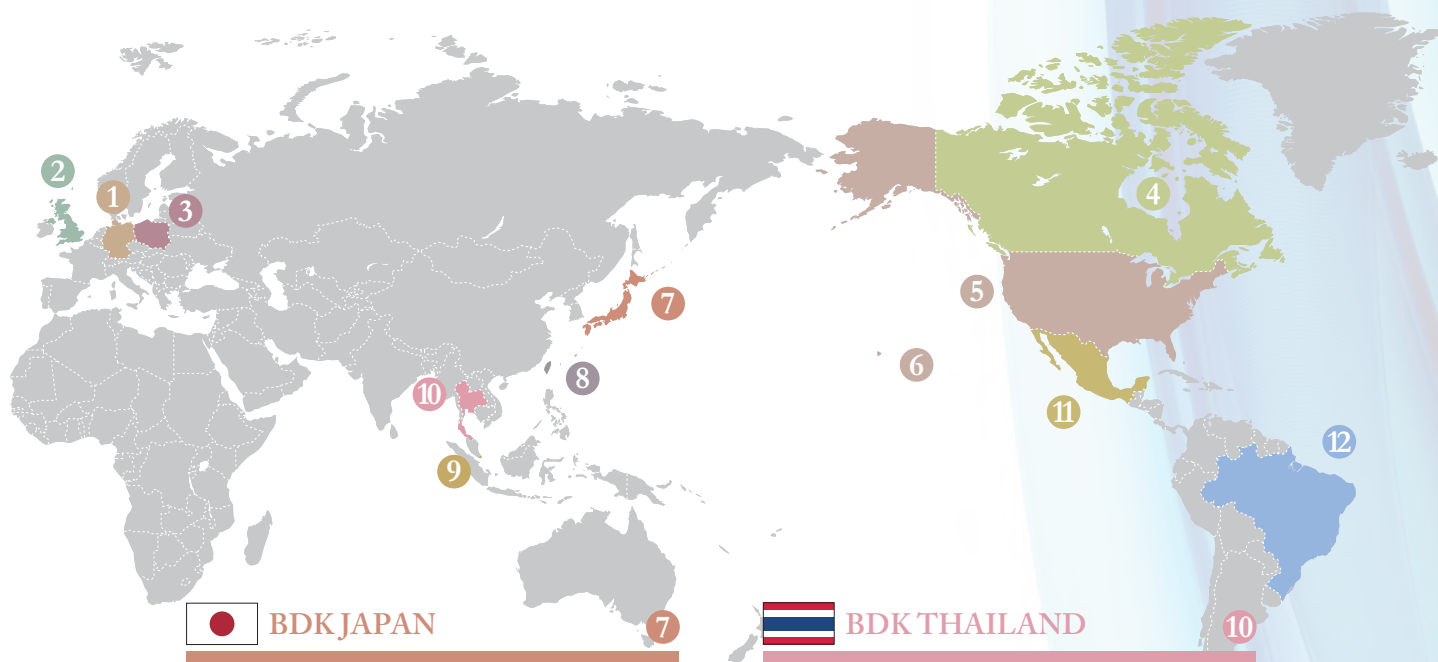
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*Tour Participants at Sakuramoto, Nara (Rev. Saile, Center)*

BDK America had a busy year in 2025 as we launched several new initiatives. The most ambitious project was a 3-week study tour in Japan designed to encourage graduate students to study Japanese Buddhism. Five students were selected for the study tour that introduced them to temples, universities, and other sites to give them inside views of many aspects of Buddhist life and activities in the Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara areas. Prominent Japanese and American scholars gave talks in their areas of expertise, and the students were able to engage the scholars in depth. The entire program was organized by Brian Nagata, who also introduced the participants to the everyday pleasures of great food and scenic sights.

We also established a much closer relationship with BDK Canada that will allow BDK America to provide substantial support to our northern neighbors. Canadian universities in Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, and Calgary have active Numata Programs in Buddhist Studies. After extensive consultation with legal and financial experts, we created a new agreement that we signed in Toronto in August.

The Numata Programs at American, Canadian and European universities continue to produce excellent scholars in the study of Buddhism. These programs were established piecemeal over the years, and we are working closely with BDK Japan to review and update the agreements we have with the



*Prof. Cox (left), Recipient of the Toshi Award*

universities. As usual, the Numata Program coordinators met at the annual American Academy of Religion conference held in Boston in November.

In response to the need for books aimed at a general audience, we

published a new book called *Making Belief: Stories on the Formation of Shinto and Buddhism in Japan*. Written by George Tanabe, the book retells the many stories that are told about religious leaders and the beliefs that underlie the institutions they founded. It also has chapters on popular practices associated with this-worldly practical benefits (*genze riyaku*) and Buddhist funeral rites.



*Obon Festival at Ekoji Temple, Washington DC*

We continue to publish translations of Tripitaka texts. In 2025, we published four books: Nagarjuna's *Treatise on the Ten Grounds* (Vol. 2), *The Great Cessation and Contemplation* (2 vols.) and *The Discourse to Prince Candraprabha*. This complicated project has always been a collaborative effort between the Tokyo Editorial Committee and the Publication Committee of BDK America, and together we are investigating the use of AI translation programs to help increase our output. This is an exciting but rapidly changing technology that we hope to use for our purposes.

The 2025 winner of the Toshi Award for the best Buddhist book of the year was awarded to Professor Collett Cox (Professor Emerita, University of Washington) for her publication, *A Gāndhārī Abhidharma Text: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragment 28* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2025). The award ceremony and symposium were held on December 5 at the Jodo Shinshu Center in Berkeley.

BDK America continues its active support of Ekoji Buddhist Temple in

the Washington DC area. BDK staff members regularly visit Ekoji to help with their Hanamatsuri service, assist with their Obon events, and give talks and seminars. We also assisted the Denver Buddhist Temple's Sakura Festival held in June. Other temples on the West Coast regularly invite BDK staff persons to give Dharma talks and help with their activities.

We look forward to continuing our work in 2026 of promoting Buddhism through our wide range of activities.

## BDK Hawaii



The year 2025 was a major milestone for BDK Hawaii since we moved into our new office at 1750 Kalakaua Avenue on the edge of Waikiki. Due to increasing costs of maintaining our previous office in an old apartment building, we sold it and purchased a new office.

The dedication ceremony of our new office was held on February 21, 2025, and was attended by representatives of all of the Japanese Buddhist

denominations in Hawaii. Following a native Hawaiian chant performed by Kumu Hula Lehua Matsuoka to welcome our guests, Rev. Seikoh-Kiyotaka Kimura, Chairman of BDK Japan, conducted a dedication ceremony. Special guests included Prof. Hisao Matsumaru (BDK Japan), Satoshi Shaku (BDK Japan), Brian Nagata (BDK America), Mikio Yamashita (BDK America and Hawaii), and Abbot Yul Otani and his wife Ayako (Higashi Hongwanji

Japan). We ended the event with a luncheon at which guests socialized and enjoyed a special chiffon cake baked by Bishop Kosen Ishikawa of the Jodo Mission of Hawaii. We were all delighted to discover what a talented chef he is.

On the following day, February 22, we had our annual BDK Hawaii board meeting. Mr. Satoshi Shaku presented a report on BDK Japan, and he told us about their Tokyo



*BDK Hawaii Board Meeting Participants*

Temple Run in which participants ran on a course that visited several temples in Tokyo. We thought it was such a great idea, and so we organized our own version of it. Since we expected mostly older people to participate, we called it a Temple Walk in which we did a walking tour of four temples in Honolulu. Everyone enjoyed the exercise and fellowship and particularly appreciated the chance to visit temples and learn about them.

BDK Hawaii also co-sponsored the production of a documentary film about several Native Hawaiian women who became influential Buddhists. At the center of this fascinating and little-known story is Mary Mikahala Foster (1844-1930), a prominent Native Hawaiian woman who converted to Buddhism after meeting Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933), the famous Sri Lankan monk who was a leader of modern global Buddhism. Mary Foster was from a wealthy family and

supported many Buddhist causes in Asia and Hawaii. Most significantly for Hawaii, she donated the land on which the Honpa Hongwanji main temple was built on Pali Highway.

BDK Hawaii is involved in a project to tell another little-known story about Buddhism in the West. This story lies at the heart of BDK and Mitutoyo because it is about how our founder, Yehan Numata, who began his career in propagating Buddhism in 1916, when he left Hiroshima as a 19-year-old young man and came to Waialua Hongwanji temple on the North Shore of Oahu to serve as an assistant minister. In 1918, the head minister, Rev. Chien Shimosako, died and Rev. Numata led the Waialua congregation until he left for California in 1919 for further schooling. After graduating from UC Berkeley, he returned to Japan and founded the Mitutoyo Corporation and BDK.

The Waialua Hongwanji congregation recently decided



*Documentary on Native Hawaiian Women*

to close the temple because of a lack of members, and the Waialua Historical Society is planning to restore the temple as a heritage and community center with the help of BDK and other organizations. While Waialua Hongwanji will no longer be an active temple, it will continue into the future as the first and only museum about the history of Buddhism in Hawaii and will preserve the memory of Yehan Numata's life in Waialua.

# BDK Mexico



In 2025, we further deepened our connections with approximately 20 Japanese-descendant communities across Mexico. In addition to the annual Obon memorial services held in Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Culiacán, we newly conducted services in the northern cities of Saltillo and Parras. In November, we also held a memorial service in Acacoyagua, Chiapas, which is recognized as the first Japanese settlement in Central and South America, and we expressed our gratitude to the pioneers who contributed to its development. Requests for Buddhist services from local Japanese-descendant communities have steadily increased, and we will continue to respond to each one with care, honoring the sincere wish of those who seek to carry on Japanese

traditions.

Our longstanding collaboration with Mexico's Ministry of Culture and the Alba Edison School has also continued to expand. Through lectures as well as various forms of engagement such as Kamishibai, a traditional Japanese form of paper storytelling, and theatrical performances, we share aspects of Japanese culture rooted in Buddhist teachings with a wide range of audiences from children to educators and community leaders.

As part of EKO Publishing's activities, in 2025 we participated in two international book fairs and held publication events at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the Japanese Mexican Cultural Center, and government-run bookstores. In addition to the Spanish editions of BDK



*Ambassador Matokiyo Visiting the EKO Boothe at the Acacoyagua Japan Festival*

publications such as Reading the Wisdom of Enlightenment and Buddha as Teacher, we introduced original EKO titles including Sutra del corazón and Bichismo, attracting interest from many



*Kamishibai at the Children's Salon of the National Library*

visitors. We place great importance on personally handing The Teaching of Buddha to each recipient, and in

2025 we were able to share it with approximately 3,300 individuals. BDK Mexico and Ekoji Temple will

continue to walk alongside people, offering support and wishing for the happiness of all living beings.

## BDK Thailand



TTOBs to Be Sent to the Department of Skill Development



BDK Thailand Staff Preparing TTOBs for the Department of Skill Development

In 2025, BDK Thailand achieved a significant milestone in its efforts to share the wisdom of the Buddha more widely throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. In particular, a successful collaboration with the Department of Skill Development (DSD) under the Ministry of Labour marked an important step forward.

Mr. Kawee Boonsuwan, Chairperson of BDK Thailand, had the privilege of meeting with Mr. Decha Pruekphattanak, Director-General of the Department of Skill Development, to discuss the distribution of The Teaching of Buddha to vocational training institutions nationwide. Recognizing the importance of spiritual grounding in professional development, and with the generous support of the Department, copies were successfully distributed to all 89 affiliated institutions across the country.

By the end of the year, a total of 3,560 copies had been delivered. These books are now being widely utilized



Mr. Pruekphattanak (left) and Mr. Kawee (right)

by staff members, instructors, and trainees, serving as a source of insight, mindfulness, and ethical guidance as they engage in their daily studies and work.

We believe that planting these “Dharma seeds” within the field of skills development will contribute

to greater harmony across society as a whole. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Department of Skill Development for their kind cooperation, as well as to BDK Japan for their continued support.



*Symposium*

On September 13, 2025, the Ekō Center held its largest annual event, the Garden Festival, welcoming more than 1,000 visitors. Guests enjoyed a rich variety of Japanese cultural expressions, including taiko drumming, koto and shamisen performances, and a kimono show.

From September 26, a three-day hybrid academic symposium was held under the direction of Prof. Franziska Ehmecke, Professor Emerita at the University of Cologne. Ten scholars presented on themes of sensory experience across a wide range of fields, including traditional Japanese arts such as Kōdō (the Way of Incense), Sadō (the Tea Ceremony), Gagaku court music, and kimono, as well as fine arts and popular culture.

On November 29, a hybrid Hōonkō memorial service was held, bringing together Jōdo Shinshū ministers and followers from across Europe. An English Dharma talk was delivered by Rev. Louella

Matsunaga, offering an opportunity to reflect on the virtues of Shinran Shōnin.

On December 31, the year-end Joya-e service was held. Despite rainy weather and temperatures around 0°C, approximately 400 people visited the temple throughout the evening. The hall quickly reached full capacity with around 60 attendees, and the service was conducted with the accompaniment of Gagaku music. Following the service, participants proceeded to ring the New Year's Eve bell (Joya no Kane), which was struck approximately 130 times over the course of three hours. Warm refreshments such as miso soup and sake, as well as zodiac-themed items, were also offered, creating a lively and welcoming atmosphere.

In addition, beginning in September 2025, Ms. Sara Hirota, a doctoral student at Kyoto City University of Arts, has been conducting her research at the Center as an Ekō



*Hōonkō*



*Ms. Sara Hirota*

scholarship recipient. Her research focuses on the concept of Ma, the expressive space or interval between sounds—in the works of composer Toshio Hosokawa. A concert program featuring his compositions is also planned as part of her research activities.

# Dantai (Group)

We call large numbers of people assembled to make a group, or two or more people grouped together with a common objective, “Dantai.”

It is written in The Teaching of Buddha that there are three kinds of groups in the world:

First, there are those that are organized on the basis of the power, wealth or authority of great leaders.

Second, there are those that are organized because of the conveniences of the members, which will continue to exist as long as the members satisfy their conveniences and do not quarrel.

Third, there are those that are organized around some good teaching as its center and harmony as its very life.

Among these three, it is made clear that the third kind is the true group and sets forth its wonderfulness in the following way:

In it, the members live in one spirit, from which the unity of spirit and various kinds of virtue will arise. In such an organization, there will prevail harmony, satisfaction, and happiness.

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