

# 2018 International Summer Seminar at Bukkyo University

【Lecture】

Aug.3 Fri

Buddhistic Life in Japan ①/②

President. Norihiko Tanaka

Since its acceptance in 552 Buddhism has been a foundation of Japanese culture. The fundamental principle of Buddhism is:“we acquire knowledge for the purpose of transforming and transferring it to an action applicable to various situations in everyday life.” Far from a spiritual law, this principle is very practical: It is considered to be an integration of forward-looking attitude, a spirit of adventure, and a spirit of innovation and experiment. Being grounded on this understanding I shall talk about Japanese life and mind.

Aug.4 Sat

Introduction to Japanese Pure Land Buddhism ③

Sadataka Ichikawa

When it comes to Japanese Buddhism, you may think of Zen, meditating in silence. The most popular Buddhist stream in Japan, however, is Pure Land Buddhism, whose practice is chanting the Buddha's name repeatedly. This lecture introduces Japanese Pure Land Buddhism focused on Hōnen, the founder of Jōdo-Shu school.

Aug.5 Sun

Bankei Zen ④

Reishi Tayama

Is Zen unique? Zen is certainly unique in its ways of training monks and expressing the experience of enlightenment. But the problems Zen has been facing are not limited to it. Some philosophy, for instance, has been asking the same questions. The lectures try to clarify the relationship between Zen and philosophy by referring to a Zen monk called Bankei (1623-97).

Aug.6 Mon

Japanese culture ⑤

Aishwarya Sugandhi

To foster cross cultural understanding, this short lecture shall introduce culture and religion in Japan. Japanese culture is multifaceted and deep-set with various traditions like the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and calligraphy (茶道・華道・書道) that emphasize a unique “path” in everyday life. With these central topics we will discuss how one understands and reflects upon one’s own culture when abroad.

Japanese religion is separate from the State and rarely discussed in everyday life. As such majority of the Japanese do not worship regularly or claim to be religious.

Shintoism is Japan’s oldest religion with a variety of rituals and celebrations throughout the year. Few interesting cherry-picked topics related to Shintoism shall be discussed to understand cultural values and moral codes of Japanese society. Buddhism which officially entered Japan in 552 CE, has ever since evolved into several popular schools like Jodo sect, Zen Buddhism, Nichiren Buddhism and so on. A brief introduction of these sects including their similarities and differences and the role Buddhism plays in the Japanese society shall be discussed. Lastly, students will be given a chance to experience Sutra writing or ‘*Shakyo*’ which is practiced as a mode of meditation and gain an introduction to brush writing techniques.

Aug.7 Tue

Japanese Literature ⑥

Koji Mochidome

There is a genre called “Light Novel” in Japanese literature now. Light Novels are mainly read by young Japanese people. Many animation films and comics are created based on Light Novels. I would like to articulate the problems that young Japanese people have right now by analyzing these Light Novels.

Aug.8 Wed

An Introduction to Buddhist Thoughts ⑦

Seitetsu Moriyama

The Buddha was born in India in 463 B.C. and died at age of eighty. It can be said that the Buddha was active some 2,400 years ago.

The Dhammapada (the verses on the Law) is important sources for the study of primitive Buddhism.

All things are primarily controlled and ruled by the mind, and are created by the mind. As the wheels follow the ox that draws the cart, so does suffering follow the person who speaks and acts with an impure mind. But if a man speaks and acts with a good mind, happiness follows him like his shadow.

These two verses can be interpreted as follows :

The influence of thought on human life and society is great. All that we are, is the result of what we have thought.

In one sense it is true that we live in world of hard facts, but in a more important sense we live in a world of thoughts. By changing our thought we change our life and indirectly we change the character of the world.

The first transmission of Buddhism to China probably did occur around the beginning of the common era.

Buddhism was introduced to Japan in 552 or 538 A.D.