



EKŌ-Haus der Japanischen Kultur e.V.

社団法人 ドイツ「恵光」日本文化センター

Greetings from the Director

The tasks of the EKŌ Center of Japanese culture (abbreviated as EKŌ Center) is mainly to make known and spread Japanese culture based on Buddhism in Germany and Europe and thereby deepen the understanding of the Buddhist teachings. In this way, we would also like to contribute to peace for as many people as possible throughout the world.

The idea of establishing the EKŌ Center originated from his view of life of NUMATA Yehan himself. When Yehan was diagnosed with a disease that was considered incurable in those days while studying in California, USA, he felt completely depressed by loneliness and despair and was close to death. It was Shinran Shōnin's words "When you are alone, remember that you are two. When you are two with someone, remember that in reality there are three present. For I, Shinran, am always with you" (*Gorinmatsu no gosho*), which saved him from complete hopelessness.

NUMATA Yehan realised that this experience of relief was due to Shinran Shōnin's teaching and thus to the teaching of Buddhism. Moreover, Buddhism is in principle a religion in which respect is to be shown to all living beings and life is to be valued. Out of this awareness, NUMATA Yehan inaugurated a company for precision measuring instruments, MITUTOYO, at first for raising funds for setting up a center for the dissemination of Buddhism. Then he founded the "Society for the Promotion of Buddhism" (Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai, BDK) in order to awaken understanding for Buddhism in more and more people all over the world and to support the realization of peaceful coexistence worldwide. Thus, the EKO Center was established in Germany as a foreign branch of the BDK.

The tasks of the EKŌ Center comprise four main areas: Buddhism at the EKŌ Temple as the centre, culture in the main building of the EKŌ Center, scholarship in Kyōsei-kan annexe and education in EKŌ Kindergarten. These four areas cooperate with each other to make Japanese culture and its underlying Buddhist spirit tangible and to spread them. In this way, the EKŌ Center aims to contribute to deepening knowledge about Japan while providing opportunities for practical experience. In order for the EKŌ Center to fulfil its tasks successfully, your understanding and cooperation are indispensable components of our work. We would be very pleased if you would continue to support us!

Professor Dr. MATSUMARU Hisao

Director of the EKŌ Center of Japanese Culture