

# The Contribution of Buddhist Scholars toward the Friendship of China and Japan

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**B**EING geographically close to each other, China and Japan have shared a history of amicable exchanges for over 2,000 years, which has had many important influences on the economy, politics, and culture of both countries. Since the normalization of the diplomatic relationship of the two countries in 1972, the governments of both China and Japan have placed great importance on the development of their bilateral relationship, and have continuously developed their good relationship since then. In 1998, the leaders of the two countries agreed to a joint declaration to establish the concord for their peace and development. In 2008, the two countries further reached the Chinese-Japanese joint statement that promoted a full-scale strategic reciprocal relationship. It upheld a lofty long-term goal which aimed to accomplish a peaceful coexistence, a friendship from generation to generation, and a mutually beneficial collaboration for shared development.<sup>1</sup>

On the occasion of the academic conference “Modern Society and Religion” co-sponsored by the Institute of World Religions of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy in Japan, I wish to discuss the appropriate attitude and responsibility of Buddhist scholars in both countries for the sake of peaceful coexistence and ever-lasting friendship between both countries from the view of a Buddhist researcher.

## **I. Buddhism was Once the Important Bond and Bridge of the Cultural Exchanges between China and Japan**

According to the records in the history books of China, exchanges between China and Japan can be traced back to the Western Han period in the second century B.C. It was in the first century A.D., during the reign of Emperor Guangwu of the Eastern Han period, that China and Japan began their direct exchanges. Then, during the Wei dynasty of the Three Kingdoms in the third century, there were frequent exchanges between the dynasty and the Yamatai-koku of Japan. Since the fourth

century, the unified Yamato dynasty of Japan has maintained close contact with the Southern dynasties of China. During the periods of the three dynasties of Song, Qi, and Liang, there were as many as twelve exchanges of diplomacy and imperial correspondence between the two nations.<sup>2</sup>

Since then, throughout the time of the following dynasties, such as Sui and Tang, the exchange between China and Japan was continuously developed through promoting an exchange in various areas of both governmental and non-governmental levels, such as economics, politics, culture, and religion. These multi-aspect exchanges created deep and far-reaching influences in the society, history, and cultures of the two countries.

Among these cultural exchanges between China and Japan during the ancient time periods, we should note that Buddhism had once played an important role as a bridge and bond. According to the chronological record of Japan, during the mid-sixth century, Buddhism was transmitted to Japan via two channels—governmental officials and non-governmental agents. When Prince Shotoku (574–622) was a Regent during the reign of Empress Suiko and implemented new policies, Buddhism was already very popular. Prince Shotoku enthusiastically brought the advanced culture from the Chinese continent- and strengthened the centralized polity through establishing the “Twelve Levels of Cap Rank” system, which allowed the Emperor to appoint retainers of different ranks for official posts in order to weaken the hereditary clan system, which previously controlled the imperial court. He also promulgated the “Seventeen-Article Constitution,” which included both political and ethical principles and demanded all subjects pledge loyalty to the Emperor. It proposed that “Harmony is to be valued.” and “make decorous behavior their leading principle.” With this constitution, which stipulated that a subject should “sincerely reverence the three treasures,” Prince Shotoku strongly promoted Buddhism, as he considered the establishment of Buddhism as the fundamental guideline to rule the state and to educate the subjects. It continues as follows:

“The three treasures, viz. Buddha, the Law, and the Priesthood, are the final refuge of the four generated beings (the classification of all living beings in Buddhist cosmology, such as the womb-born, egg-born, moisture-born, and metamorphosis-born), and are the supreme objects of faith in all countries. What man in what age can fail to reverence this law? Few men are utterly bad. They may be taught to follow it. But if they do not betake them to the three treasures, wherewithal shall their

crookedness be made straight?" (W.G. Aston, trans., *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, 2 vols., London: Keagan and Co., 1896, pp. 128–133.)

This clause means that Buddhism is the final resort for all living beings, the highest principle of the state, which a subject should universally revere. In other words, this quote indicates that Japan should also uphold Buddhism as fundamental to ruling the state and teaching its people.

During this time of the greatest flourishing of the Sui dynasty, Prince Shotoku sent emissaries to Sui and established official diplomatic relationships with the country. Students and priests were sent twice to Sui to study and they directly brought Buddhism and other elements of culture, such as politics and education, back from China. According to statistics in *Nicchu Bunka Koryu shi* (The History of Japan-China Cultural Exchanges) by Yasuhiko Kinomiya (Chinese translation: *Ri-Zhong Wenhua Jiaoliushi* by Wu Shenien, Beijing: the Commercial Press, 1980), the names of thirteen visiting scholars (*rugakusho*) and priests are recorded as those who were dispatched to China during the Sui dynasty.

Among them were eight priests, who comprised about 62% of the total number. They stayed in China for as long as 15 years, 24 years, and some even more than 30 years. Although they were Buddhist priests, they had not only mastered advanced levels of Buddhist studies, but had also had acquired a systematic knowledge of Confucianism, politics, the law, culture, and education in China.

When Emperor Kotoku of Japan assumed political power in the year 645 and appointed key retainers for administrative positions, he appointed a learned priest Min (Somin) and a returned visiting scholar Takamuko no Kuromaro, who had stayed in Sui Tang for 25 and 32 years respectively, as the national academicians (*kunihakase*), and he implemented reformative measures to follow the political system of the Sui Tang dynasties. He established a centralized government during his reign, with the Emperor as the summit of the state system; under the Emperor there were two major ministries, eight governmental departments, and one administrative inspection office (*gyoshidai*).

During this time, Buddhism had been placed in an important position, and was further propagated. In order to adjust to the swift spread of Buddhism, the Japanese government had followed the examples of the Worship Department (*Chongxuanshu*) in the Office of Rites (*Honglusi*) of the Sui dynasty, and the Religious Department (*Cibu*) in the Ministry of Rites (*Libu*) of the Tang dynasty, which administered both Buddhism and Daoism. The imperial court administration in Japan set up the

Office of Monastic and Foreign Affairs (*genbaryo*) in the Department of Civil Affairs (*jibusho*) and constituted *the Law of Priest and Nun* (*soniryō*) to strengthen its control and management of the Buddhist community. During this reformation, the returned visiting scholars and learned priests who had studied in Sui Tang China played important roles.

From the second year of Japanese Emperor Jyomei (630 A.D.) to the sixth year of the Kanpyō era of Emperor Uda (894 A.D.), altogether 19 missions were sent to Tang China; since three of the deployments were abandoned for unknown reasons, sixteen missions were actually deployed. When the missions were sent to Tang China, visiting scholars (*rugakusho*) and priests were also sent to travel together to Tang for further studies. According to the statistics in the previously mentioned work, the *Nicchu Bunka Koryū shi* by Kinomiya, among the total 138 emissaries who entered Tang China from Japan, 105 were priests, which is as much as 76% of the total and was much more than the number of lay visiting scholars. As marine technology advanced, the number of trade vessels of China, Silla and Japan sailing between China and Japan began increasing.

Priests in both China and Japan also sailed on the trading vessels traveling between the two countries. During the Nara period (710–794) of Japan, the six Buddhist schools: Sanron (Three Treatises) school, Jōjitsu (Establishment of Truth) school, Hosso (Dharma Characteristics) school, Kusha (Dharma Analysis Treasury) school, Kegon (Flower Garland) school, and Ritsu (Precepts) school were brought to Japan from China, either directly or through the Korean peninsula, and they established the foundation of the later development of Buddhism in Japan. During the Heian period (794–1185), many Japanese priests entered into Tang China to learn about the Tiantai school and Tantric Buddhism. After Saichō (767–822) and Kūkai (744–835) returned to Japan, they established the Tendai (Tiantai) school and Shingon (Tantric) school of Japan, respectively, which became the most influential Buddhist schools during the Heian period. Cultural exchanges between China and Japan not only promoted the widespread development of Buddhism in Japan, but also introduced the politics, economics, literature, philosophy, history, architecture, art, and medicine, among others, of China to Japan.

In the Kamakura period (1192–1333) in Japan, Buddhism as an originally foreign religion became fully assimilated into Japan, and Buddhist schools that included distinctive Japanese characteristics, such as the Jōdo (Pure Land) school, the Jōdo Shin (True Pure Land) school, the Ji (Time) school, and the Nichiren school, were established one after the

other. The founders of these Buddhist schools had never been to China, but they established their own schools based on their interpretation of Chinese Buddhist texts, as well as of the commentaries by Chinese Buddhists, corresponding to the social circumstances of Japan and the psychological need of the people for religion. At the same time, the Hosso, Tendai, and Shingon schools were also gradually taking a similar route of assimilation.

Moreover, the Rinzai school and the Soto school of Zen, Chan in Chinese, which were transmitted from the Song Yuan dynasties of China, spread swiftly under the great support of the Kamakura Shogunate and those in the Samurai class. As the Zen priests of the Song Yuan dynasties were all proficient in Confucianism, they played an important role in the propagation of the Song studies (Neo-Confucianism by Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi) in Japan.

The Buddhist cultural exchanges between China and Japan continued throughout the Ming Qing dynasties, and continued further during modern times. It was mostly Zen priests who were the main and assistant envoys of the tally (*kango*) trading between Japan and the Ming dynasty. They also engaged in Buddhist or other cultural and art exchanges during their stays in China. At the time of the late Ming and the early Qing dynasties, the high priest Yinyuan Longqi (1592–1673) of the Linji school (the Chinese counterpart of the Japanese Rinzai school), responding to an invitation, visited Japan to spread Buddhist teachings. He then established the Obaku school in Japan, while restoring the existing Rinzai and Soto schools. At the same time, he introduced Ming Qing culture to Japan.<sup>3</sup>

Even in ancient times, the cultural exchanges between China and Japan had been bilateral. The Japanese priests who studied abroad in China had introduced Japanese history, culture and customs, among other things, to the Chinese people during their stay in China while seeking Buddhist teachings. Japanese priests exchanged what they had learned about Buddhist teachings with Chinese priests on various occasions. Some of the Japanese priests who studied abroad even donated their assets in support of renovating and constructing temples in China. Japanese Buddhist circles, in turn, had presented gifts, such as Buddhist scriptures which had been lost in China, to their Chinese counterparts. Here are a few well-known examples: Ennin (794–864), as a successor of Saicho, entered Tang accompanied by Ensai to seek Buddhist teachings. Encho, a head abbot of Mount Hiei at that time, asked Ennin to bring a letter with 30 questions concerning the Tiantai doctrines to the priests of the Guoqing Temple on Tiantai Mountain. After entering into

Tang, because Ennin's title was "*gengakusho* (a priest who is supposed to return in the same boat in which he came)," he was not able to go to Tiantai Mountain. Therefore, it was Ensai who brought the letter of the questions to Tiantai Mountain and obtained the answers, one of which is extant, the *Direct Answers of the Thirty Questions*. Thereafter, Enchin (814–891) entered Tang to seek Buddhist teachings. While he was visiting Tiantai Mountain, he contributed funds to re-construct the tomb of Master Tiantai Zhiyi and the Main Hall of Guoqing Temple. He also renovated the monastic residence, which Saicho had originally built in the Temple. There is a tablet, "Japanese Monastic Residence of Great Virtue in Tiantai Guoqing Temple," autographed by Enchin.

Having learned that many of the texts of the Tiantai school were lost, Emperor Qian Liu of Wuyue of the Five dynasties dispatched people to Japan with gold to purchase the copies of the texts extant in Japan. In the first year of the Yongxi period (984) of Emperor Taizong of the Northern Song dynasty, Chonen and others entered Song. They paid tribute and offered the texts, "*Shikiin ryo* (Regulation of Officials)" and "*Nihon nendaiki* (Chronological Records of Japan)," one volume each, introducing the history, natural conditions, and cultures of Japan. The explanation regarding Japan includes the information that there were five zones, seven areas, three islands, altogether 3,772 cities, 414 posts, 883,329 *kacho* (men liable to taxation); the Emperor's lineage was of one inheritance, already handed down for 64 generations.

Based on this "*Nihon nendaiki*," Yang Yi wrote the "*Riben zhuan* (the Record of Japan)", which was a succession of "*Songshi Ribenzhuan* (the Record of Japan in the Chronology of Song)" compiled during the Yuan dynasty. Eisai (1141–1215), the first person who initially spread the Rinzai (Ch. Linji) school in Japan, had financed three million (a monetary unit unknown) to repair the *Sanmen* Gate and the Corridor of the Wannian Temple of Mount Tiantai during his stay in the Song dynasty. He had also renovated the Guanyin, Dabei, and Zhizheta monasteries. After returning to Japan, Eisai sent people to deliver giant lumber logs and assisted the Zen master Haichang of the Tiantong Temple in rebuilding the Pavilion of the Thousand Buddhas which was originally built by Hongzhi Zhengjue (1091–1157). During the Yuan dynasty, the Japanese priest Shogen (1305–1374), who lived in China for as long as 21 years, was once the high priest of the Shaolin Temple. Having a fluent and elegant command of the Chinese language, Shogen accepted the invitation to write an epigraph on the pagoda for Fazhao, the former abbot of the Shaolin Temple. He also wrote an epigraph of the stone monument for the Zen master Xian. In the seventh year of Hongwu

(1374) of the Ming dynasty, Japanese Zen priest Musho Tokushi (?–1429), accompanying Sen keibun, an emissary of Japan, entered Ming. He inherited the Buddhist lineage from the Zen master Quanshi Zongle at the Tianjie Temple in Jinling. He later became the abbot of the Dasui Temple in Chengdu. After being recommended by Yao Guangxiao (Daoyan), who was revered by Emperor Hongwu of the Ming dynasty, Musho tokushi, then, became the abbot of the Tanzhe Temple (Longquan Temple) in Beijing in the tenth year of Yongle (1412) and continued for almost 19 years, until his passing. He made outstanding contributions to the construction of the Tanzhe temple. In modern times, Japan has applied Western research methods to the study of Buddhism and accomplished numerous achievements.<sup>4</sup> These achievements, as well as the Buddhist texts that were once lost in China, were continuously passed back to China, creating significant influences in Buddhist studies, along with the notable research works in humanities in China. In short, Japan also made important contributions to the development of Buddhist culture in China.

From the above introduction, one can see that although Buddhism played an important role as the bond and bridge in cultural exchanges between China and Japan during ancient times, its influence was not limited to the Buddhist community, but it has also exerted far-reaching influences in social politics, economics, and culture.

## II. The Close Ties between Chinese and Japanese Buddhism

Buddhism in Japan is a transplant and a form of development of Buddhism in China, so naturally there exists a very close kinship between the Buddhism of the two countries. In today's Japan, where Buddhism has already been introduced for 1,400 years, what is the current situation? In 2007, Japan's population stood at 127,288,419. According to the 2007 *Shukyo Nenkan* (Religious Yearbook) of the Agency for Cultural Affairs of Japan, 106,817,669 were Shinto believers; 89,177,769 were Buddhists; 3,032,239 were Christians (including Catholics and Protestants); and 9,817,752 were believers of various other religions (religious groups established by absorbing Shinto, Buddhism or other religious elements, yet not belonging to the denomination of any of these religions). As there were people who concurrently practiced more than one religion or were duplicated in the statistics, there were 208,845,429 religious believers in the entire country, which far exceeded the total population of the entire country. According to this statistical report, the largest group of followers in Japan belongs to Shintoism, the

next group is Buddhism, followed by the “various groups” of Japanese new religions (Tenri-kyo, Ennou-kyo, Seicho-no-ie, Sekai-Kyusei-kyo and so forth), and the last one comprises the various sects of Catholicism and Protestantism. From the aspect of professional preachers (teachers), Buddhism has the most, 313,659 persons, followed by the “various (religious) groups” with 223,831 persons.<sup>5</sup>

Currently, existing Buddhist schools in Japanese Buddhism include: Tendai-line schools, Shingon-line schools, Jodo-line schools (which includes the Shin schools), Zen-line schools (including the Rinzaï school, the Soto school and the Obaku school), Nichiren-line schools, Nara Buddhist-line schools (including the Ritsu school, the Hosso school, the Kegon school and so forth). These schools also include the new religions relating to Buddhism. The new religions relating to the Nichiren school whose memberships were over one million people were Reiyu-kai, Busshogonen-kai, Risshokosei-kai. However, *Shukyo Nenkan* did not include the statistics of Soka gakkai which is said to have over ten million members.

From the aspect of the history, lineages, texts, and teachings of these Buddhist schools in Japan, one should say that they all have very close kinship with Buddhism in China. While they each have their own respective, distinctive characteristics, they possess the same or similar elements as Chinese Buddhism. For example, both the Tiantai School of China and the Tendai School of Japan which regarded Master Tiantai Zhiyi as the founder, and Tiantai mountain as the founding temple, embraced the *Lotus Sutra* as well as Zhiyi’s three major works: *Great Concentration and Insight*, *The Profound Meaning of the Lotus Sutra*, and *The Words and Phrases of the Lotus Sutra*. The Shingon school reveres Vajrasattva- Nagarjuna- Nagabodhi- Vajrabodhi-Amoghavajra and so forth, as great patriarchs, and regards the *Mahavairocana Sutra* and the *Vajrashekhara Sutra* as their primary texts, and the Daxingshan Temple and the Qinglong Temple in Xian as their founding temples. The Jodo schools regard Tanluan of Northern Wei, Daochuo, Shandao of the Tang dynasty as the patriarchs, and the Shanxi Xuanzhong Temple and the Xian Xiangji Temple as their founding temples. The Rinzaï School of Zen regards Linji Yixuan as the patriarch, and the Linji monastery in Zhengding in Hebei province as its founding temple. The Soto school regards Liangjia of Dongshan and Benji of Caoshan together with Daoying of Yunju during the Tang dynasty as patriarchs, and Dong mountain, Cao mountain, and Yunju mountain in Jiangxi as its founding temples. The Obaku school (which originally belonged to the Rinzaï school), regards Yinyuan Longqi who immigrated to Japan during the end of the



Ming and the beginning of the Qing dynasties as the founder, and the Huangbo mountain Temple at Fuqing in Fujian province as its founding temple. As for the Ritsu school in Nara, they regard Jianzhen (Jp. Ganjin) of the Tang dynasty as the founder, and the Daming Temple in Yangzhou as their important temple. The Kegon school regards Fazang of the Tang dynasty as the founder, the *Avatamsaka Sutra* as its fundamental sutra, as well as Fazang's "*Delving into the Profundity of the Flower Garland Sutra*," and "*The Five Teachings on the Flower Garland Sutra*" as important doctrinal texts. Even though Nichiren, founder of the Nichiren school, had never been to China, he absorbed and fully utilized the subjects and concepts of the Tiantai school, such as the classification of Buddhist teachings, "True Aspect," the *Lotus Sutra*'s "theoretical teachings" and "true teachings," and established a doctrinal system whose core existed in the title of the "*Lotus Sutra*." Therefore, the Nichiren-line schools regard the Caodong Temple in Xian, a temple in which Kumarajiva, the great translator of the *Lotus Sutra* from Sanskrit into Chinese, had once lived, as their important temple. Buddhism in both Japan and China belongs to the Chinese systematization, and the Buddhist texts used in various Japanese Buddhist schools are mainly Chinese translations. Of course, in turn, sutras translated into Japanese are also available and prevalent.

Therefore, we can say that to this day the close kinship between Buddhism in both China and Japan did not break off, but still firmly exists. Buddhism is not only a religion connecting both China and Japan, but it is also a part of the formation of the traditional culture of the two countries. Therefore, Buddhist culture has been a great influence in the various strata of the societies of the two countries. This is one of the very important foundations necessary to develop the good-neighbor relationship between the ordinary citizens of China and Japan for generations to come.

### **III. The Significance of Contemporary Buddhist Cultural Exchanges between China and Japan**

Since ancient times, both China and Japan have continued an amicable exchange and a bilateral relationship. Although this relationship was gravely damaged by Japan's military government and its invasion of China in the last century, after the war, especially after resuming the diplomatic relations between China and Japan, the relationship has gradually recovered. And, a new form of good-neighbor friendship has been established under the principles of mutual respect for sovereign rights

and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs, as well as bilateral and peaceful coexistence. The exchange between the two countries relating to economics, politics, and culture has developed continuously, and has been a critical influence in the establishment of business, finance and trade, science and technology, and even the national economy and the people's livelihood of both countries.

In today's world, because of China's swift and peaceful rise, both China and Japan have come to be among the world's powerful nations, holding important responsibility and influence towards peace, stability, and development in the Asian-Pacific Region and even to the world. The Chinese-Japanese relationship is one of the most strategically meaningful relationships among all the bilateral relationships of China's foreign relations.

Statistics from the Chinese Ministry of Commerce showed that until 2006, Chinese-Japanese trade achieved 207.36 billion in US dollars. According to the statistics from Japan's Ministry of Finance, although Chinese-Japanese trade decreased by 0.3% in 2008, when compared with the previous year, it still reached the amount of 27.7836 trillion Japanese Yen. For eleven consecutive years Japan was China's largest trade partner. However, since 2004, Japan declined to the third largest trade partner, following the European Union and the United States of America. Yet, to this day, China still remains as Japan's largest trade partner. Moreover, Japan is China's second largest source of foreign investments. In 2007, there were 1,914 direct investment projects. Until the end of 2007, the accumulated investments in China came to 39,628 projects, amounting to a total of 61.72 billion in US dollars. The Japanese government promised to offer a loan of about 3316.486 billion Japanese Yen (about 33 billion US dollars). By September 2007, China had utilized about 2520.733 billion Japanese Yen of the loan on 255 special construction projects. Among the utilized loans from foreign governments to China, Japan is credited with as high as 50% of the loans to China.<sup>6</sup>

Since the normalization of diplomatic relations between China and Japan, especially after China implemented its Reform and Open Policy, exchanges between the Chinese and Japanese governments and all kinds of non-governmental institutes in both countries have developed in all areas, which has brought tremendous achievements in research in the areas of natural science, humanities, social science, sports, education, literature and art, medicine and so forth. Exchange students in both China and Japan played an important role in promoting mutual under-

standing and common development in both countries. From 1978 to the end of 2007, there were 1.21 million Chinese students studying abroad; among them were a total of 900,000 students who went to Japan. Japanese students who studied in China also constantly increased. By 2004, the total had reached over 100,000 students.<sup>7</sup> Taking up positions in industry, agriculture, commerce, trade, education and various levels of governmental departments, students who returned to China from Japan have contributed tremendously to the various developments of China, and have also performed a positive role in further strengthening the good-neighbor relationship between China and Japan. One can see that the relationship between the two countries has become so close that the continuation of this relationship creates fundamental benefits for both of the countries and for of the people of China and Japan. As Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao declared in his speech “For the Sake of Friendship and Collaboration” at the National Diet of Japan in April 2007: “China and Japan, if in peace, they will be mutually beneficial, if against each other, they will cause damages on both sides. To actualize the good-neighbor friendship of both countries from generation to generation is totally in accord with the trend of history and the wishes of the people of the two countries. It is also the ardent expectation of Asian and international societies.”

While, generally speaking, the relationship of the two countries seems to have obtained unprecedented development since the recovery of the diplomatic relationship between China and Japan, we should point out that there were times when a certain amount of twists, turns, and difficulties have come to the surface concerning the viewpoints about the previous Japanese invasion of China (such as during official visits by Japanese administrative leaders to the Yasukuni Shrine). In addition, there have been frictions relating to the territorial land and waters, and economy and trade. These difficulties have caused damages to the feelings and mutual trust of the people of both countries, bringing negative effects to the multiple aspects of association and collaboration of both countries.

This impels people to realize that the focus on only expanding only economic and business trading exchanges is insufficient; we must expand the cultural exchange of the two countries through continuously widening academic exchanges in the humanities in order to increase heart-to-heart communication and to promote mutual trust and friendship between the peoples of the two countries. In his article “Don’t use misunderstanding to cover up the issues of China and Japan,” Chinese scholar Lui De said,

“The foundation of the sense of the people in China and Japan towards each other is not solid; therefore, the relationship is unstable. As such, one should advocate multi-dimensional exchanges between the two countries; that is, the exchange of culture, art, education and other areas of both parties should be regarded as highly as economic exchange. ...Humanistic political diplomacy must place importance in cultural exchange. Promoting the Chinese-Japanese relationship requires formidable political power to propel the two wheels of economy and culture. These two economic giants need intense cultural inspirations. Therefore, politicians of both sides should all give more attention to the cultural exchanges between the two countries. Only by acting in this way will we be able to actualize a balanced development of relationships between the two countries.”<sup>8</sup>

I agree with this viewpoint. On 7th of May last year (2008), President Hu Jintao of China, and Japanese Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda signed the “China-Japan Joint Statement on All-round Promotion of Strategic Relationship of Mutual Benefit” in Tokyo. This historically significant joint statement proposed the establishment of an all-round strategic bilateral relationship between the two countries through the framework of dialogue and cooperation in the following five aspects: (1) Enhance mutual political trust, (2) Promote cultural and people-to-people exchanges to enhance friendship between the two peoples, (3) Enhance mutually beneficial cooperation, (4) Work together for the development of the Asia Pacific region, and (5) Work jointly to address global issues.

In considering the above, the second point clearly states as follows: “The two sides affirmed that increasing mutual understanding and friendship between the two peoples, especially between the young people, is conducive to consolidating the foundation of Chinese-Japanese generational friendship and cooperation. To this end, the two sides made the following decisions: Carry out extensive exchanges between the media, twin cities, sports and non-governmental groups of the two countries, and promote diversified cultural and academic exchanges; Make sustained efforts to carry out youth exchanges.”

According to this statement, there are great prospects in the launching of many different kinds of cultural exchanges, with multiple channels and multiple levels, between China and Japan, all of which possess much room for broadening activities. I consider it is natural that they will include among them the exchanges of Buddhist culture.

History has proven that the mutual understanding and sense of closeness between the peoples of the two countries has already been

promoted through the exchanges of Buddhist culture between China and Japan. It also means that promoting the exchange of humanities and social science, including Buddhist studies, will further support continuous economic and political exchange, as well as providing a broader range of cultural exchange for the mutual trust, friendship, and strong vitality of the people in both countries.

#### **IV. Chinese-Japanese Buddhist Scholars Should Contribute More for Developing Friendship from Generation to Generation of the Two Countries**

To sum up the above, in the long course of the history of cultural exchange between China and Japan Buddhism had once played a very important role, and there is a close kinship between Buddhism in the two countries. In contemporary times when both countries are promoting an all-rounded strategic, mutually beneficial relationship to actualize the amicable coexistence from generation to generation, as well as a bilateral relationship, ceaselessly advancing the Buddhist cultural exchanges between the two countries is an important link, which still holds practical and positive significance.

Such being the case, to what meaningful things can the China-Japan Buddhist scholars contribute? I would like to propose the following points for your consideration.

(1) To increase the research on the history of Buddhism in China and in Japan, and to introduce the history of transmitting and developing Buddhism in both the countries since ancient times through writing about various related topics, such as the comprehensive, as well as the specific time-period history of Buddhism in China and Japan, and the history of the Buddhist cultural exchange between the two countries. There should also be consideration in commending the people who have contributed to the history of the Buddhist cultural exchanges of the two countries and their remarkable achievements. Among them are those who traveled from China to Japan to propagate Buddhist teachings, such as Jianjin in the Tang dynasty, Daolung, Zhoyuan of the Song dynasty, Yinyuan of the end Ming dynasty and those who traveled from Japan to China to seek Buddhist teachings, such as Saicho, Kukai, Ennin, Enchin, Eisai, and Dogen. Through these literary works, scholars in China and Japan can help the people of the two countries to have a better understanding of the status of Buddhism in the ancient history of Chinese-Japanese cultural exchange, as well as of the close kinship of

Buddhism in the two countries, and can contribute to the furtherance of mutual understanding and friendship between the people of these two countries.

(2) To conduct academic exchange, such as to jointly organize a Chinese-Japanese Buddhist Academic Conference and to exchange academic papers of various kinds of expertise. This can impel the Buddhist cultural research and academic level to further advancement, and also offer opportunities to expand a direct exchange of the scholars of both countries, which will open the path for continuing development of academic exchanges of the two countries. One of the examples that obtained extremely good results was the Chinese-Japanese Buddhism Academic Conference jointly organized by the Institute of World Religions of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and by the Chugai Nippoh of Japan. It has already been conducted ten times and there were in total over a hundred participants who shared their papers on extensive propositions. Moreover, there was the academic conference jointly organized by the Institute of World Religions in China and the Institute of Oriental Philosophy in Japan and the academic conference concerning "Buddhism of Dun Huang" that was jointly organized by the Buddhism Research Centre of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and both the Zen Institute of the Komazawa University and the International Research Institute for Zen Buddhism of the Hanazono University in Japan. Furthermore, the twelve sessions of Chinese-Japanese Buddhism Academic Exchange Conferences jointly organized by the Research Institute of the Buddhism Culture of China under the Buddhist Association of China and the Bukkyo University of Japan and the three sessions of Chinese-Japanese Buddhist Studies Conferences which gathered Chinese-Japanese scholars by the invitation of the Renmin University of China, all obtained successful results and contributed to the promotion of research on Buddhism and enhanced the friendship between the scholars of both countries. We should bring about the means to continue holding such academic conferences in the future.

(3) To facilitate both Chinese and Japanese scholars' reciprocal visits through Governmental or non-governmental channels, which includes visiting and attending seminars at universities or research institutes of the other country in order to collect research materials or write academic papers and organize joint research projects. After China implemented the Reform and Open Policy, a number of scholars have received subsidized funding from organizations, such as the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science and the Japan Foundation, to conduct research in

Japan, which will promote the studies of the history of Buddhism in Japan, as well as the studies of Buddhist culture and art. At the same time, there are also many Japanese scholars who went to China to carry on their research about Buddhist culture.

(4) To continue and to expand student exchanges in the two countries. Both Japanese and Chinese Buddhist scholars should mentor the exchange students of the two countries in both undergraduate and graduate levels whose major is Buddhist studies. The Buddhist scholars should make an effort to promote the next generation of scholars who are capable of carrying on and developing studies of Buddhist culture in both countries.

The first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is about to end. We believe that through the joint endeavors in all fields of the two governments of China and Japan, we definitely can establish a strategic bilateral relationship between the two countries, and bring to fruition our lofty goals of peaceful co-existence, ensure friendship from generation to generation, and further mutual development through cooperation. Through working on advancing the studies of Buddhist culture, we believe that the scholars of Buddhism in both China and Japan will be able to contribute not only to the prosperity and happiness in both countries but also to the peace, harmony, and development of Asia and the world.

July 4th, 2009 at an official residence in Huaweixili, Beijing

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> According to the Xinhua News report, President Jiang Zemin of the People's Republic of China went on an official State Visit to Japan by the invitation of the Japanese Government from 25 to 30 November, 1998. On 26<sup>th</sup> November, he met with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi of Japan and issued a joint declaration "On Building a Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation for Peace and Development (China-Japan Joint Declaration)." During his State Visit on 6 to 10 May, 2008 to Japan, President of China Hu Jintao signed the "China-Japan Joint Statement on All-round Promotion of Strategic Relationship of Mutual Benefit" with Prime Minister of Japan Yasuo Fukuda on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> See "the Records of Wo" in *Houhan Shu* (the History of Houhan), "the Records of the People in Wo" compiled in the History of Wei in *Sanguozhi* (the Records of Three Kingdoms), and "the Record of Wo" in *Song shu* (the History of Song) and *Liang shu* (the Records of Liang), etc. These descriptions are included in *Zhongri guanxishi jiliao huiben* (the Compilation of the Materials for China-Japan Relationship) edited by Wang Xiangron and Xia Yingyuan, Zhonghua Publisher 1984.

<sup>3</sup> See "the Records of Wo" in *Houhan Shu* (the History of Houhan), "the Records of the People in Wo" compiled in the History of Wei in *Sanguozhi* (the Records of Three

Kingdoms), and “the Record of Wo” in *Song shu* (the History of Song) and *Liang shu* (the Records of Liang), etc. These descriptions are included in *Zhongri guanxisi jiliao huiben* (the Compilation of the Materials for China-Japan Relationship) edited by Wang Xiangron and Xia Yingyuan, Zhonghua Publisher 1984.

<sup>4</sup> See the related chapters of *Riben fojiao shi* (The History of Japanese Buddhism) by Yang Zengwen, and sections 13 & 14 of *Yang Wengong tanyuan* (the Discussion of Yang Wengong) recorded by Song Huangjian, arranged by Song Yang, Shanghai Guji Press 1993. Also, see “the Record of Japan” in *Songshi* (the History of Song); “Japanese Priest who wrote an epigraph in China” by Kamata Shigeo in Japan in *Zai Zhongguo zhuanxie beiwen di Riben seng* (the Collection of Papers in the Academic Conference of Buddhist Studies in China and Japan) edited by Yang Zengwen and Kamata Shigeo, The Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Press 1997; and “the Record of Deshi” in *Buxu gaozeng zhuan* (the Supplemental Sequential Hagiography) Volume 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Shukyo Nenkan* (A Yearbook of Religion 2007) edited by Japan Agency for Cultural Affairs, Gyosei Publisher 2008

<sup>6</sup> Statistics mainly quoted from The People’s Republic of China Ministry of Commerce website; report from Sina website 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2007; The China-Japan Year 2006 Trade Report in Sohu website; “Current situation and a prospect of development of China-Japan Relationship in 2008” reported in *Baibu Zhidao wang* website on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Based on the reports, such as the Aoji Study Abroad website of China Ministry of Education, Study Abroad website in Liuxue Services Center.

<sup>8</sup> Recorded “*Can Kao Xiao Xi*” in China on 26th June, 2009.