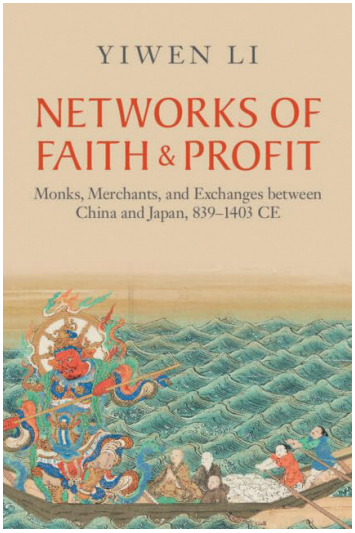
Book Review



Yiwen Li. *Networks of Faith and Profit: Monks, Merchants, and Exchanges between China and Japan, 839–1403 CE*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023. 245 pp.

Networks of Faith and Profit: Monks, Merchants, and Exchanges between China and Japan, 839–1403 CE by Yiwen Li argues that monks and merchants in China and Japan cooperated in organising trade and networks of exchange during the centuries when official diplomatic relations between the two countries were suspended. This interaction is understood as a 'monk-merchant network' (22) that Li argues emerged from around the mid-ninth century. The book suggests that 'merchant–monk networks like this became indispensable to sustaining the exchanges between China and Japan' following the end of formal diplomatic ties between the two countries (35). These informal systems of social and commercial interactions carried on in later centuries, a point that highlights the significance of Buddhist monks in Sino-Japanese relations in the premodern period. Li argues that this network was responsible for the transmission of messages and material objects (58). Later, 'the smooth functioning of this network led to a mutual understanding between China and Japan, so that by the 1070s the unofficial network had become the primary channel connecting the continent and the archipelago' (61). Later, Chan/Zen institutions were important in facilitating exchanges

between China and Japan, and 'by the fourteenth century, when almost all the trade expeditions were supported by religious institutions, the religio-commercial network clearly predominated the Sino-Japanese exchanges' (182).

This is a readable and interesting monograph with coverage of several centuries of history. This study makes an interesting proposal—and provides sufficient evidence—that monks and merchants collaborated for both commercial and religious purposes in ways that modern scholarship has not necessarily recognised or appreciated when writing about premodern Sino-Japanese relations. For example, rather than focusing on hagiographies and doctrinal works to describe Sino-Japanese Buddhist relations, we get a more realistic view 'from the ground' by studying trade and transport as it involved monks. The impetus for certain developments in Japanese Buddhism, such as the rise of Zen, for instance, might be explained—at least in part—with reference to commercial relationships. *Networks of Faith and Profit* demonstrates the value of considering merchants in the histories of Japanese and Chinese traditions of Buddhism. Li utilises a diverse array of primary sources, from archaeological evidence to letters, among other items, to create a chronological history. I appreciated the use of letters and other documents that might not otherwise receive so much attention.

I feel that *Networks of Faith and Profit*, overall, is a good book. I believe that this book would be valuable reading for an undergraduate or graduate seminar dealing with premodern Sino-Japanese relations or East Asian Buddhism. The significance of Chan/Zen in material and commercial exchanges, as highlighted in the book, would be worth introducing in a course dealing with Chan/Zen Buddhism, especially since this sort of relationship is not normally imagined in the popular conception.

While reading the book, I wrote down a number of things which I hope will be received less as criticism and more as a reader's response. To start, reading the introduction, which frames and contextualises the book, I encountered statements that I think we could further discuss. For instance:

> While monks in both lands sought to spread Buddhist doctrine at home and abroad, merchants from the continent and the archipelago were also concerned with accumulating spiritual merit. While merchants pursued economic profits, monks also aspired to gain wealth for their monasteries. (2)

I wondered: is it really true that *all* monks were keen on spreading Buddhist doctrine? These statements in the introduction of the book orient the whole monograph toward a specific perception and characterisation of monks and merchants. One can think of counter examples to the ideal that monks were primarily interested in proselytisation, such the traditions connected with Mikkyō 密教 (esoteric Buddhism), which were exclusive and closed to most people apart from a few initiates. Kūkai 空海 (774–835) in the popular imagination is celebrated for bringing those teachings to Japan after receiving training from Huiguo 惠果 (746–806), but a more nuanced look at the primary sources from his time reveals that he returned to Japan because he was facing financial struggles together with his compatriot Tachibana no Hayanari 橘逸勢 (d. 842), not because he was adamant about spreading the teachings to Japan. They were basically like broke students who found themselves living abroad without sufficient support. Matsumoto Bunzaburō 松本文三郎 (1869–1944) pointed out these issues in 1928.[1]

I wonder, therefore, whether figures like Ennin 圓仁 (794–864) and Enchin 圓珍 (814–891) also had mixed motivations, ambitions, and issues in their travels. I would not doubt the religious sincerity of Kūkai, Ennin, and Enchin, but their respective careers were directed by challenging and shifting circumstances in both China and Japan. I think that we should avoid framing monks as a general category of people who uniformly seek to spread the Dharma. Even in the present day, having been a monk myself, I can attest to the fact that many monks I know are not necessarily intent on spreading Buddhist doctrine. This sort of image of monks devoted to spreading the

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[1] Matsumoto, 'Daishiden ni tsuite no ichi kenkyū', 76–77. See my comments in Kotyk, 'The Medieval Chinese Vision of Japan', 372.

Buddhadharma is generally retrospectively assigned to them by sympathetic devotees (e.g., Kūkai was titled Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師, the 'Great Master who Spread the Dharma'). This is a prescriptive view, rather than descriptive. In other words, indeed, monks according to Buddhism *should* spread the Dharma, but it is misleading to suggest that they were consistently motivated by this aspiration historically.

Similarly, we can further discuss the statement that 'merchants from the continent and the archipelago were also concerned with accumulating spiritual merit' (2). This frames merchants and monks as having a mutually beneficial relationship oriented around religious experiences. On this point, we also read, 'Monks in both lands, for their part, provided spiritual guidance as the merchants weathered high-risk voyages, and more importantly, they opened up their networks to the merchants' (3). What exactly does spiritual guidance mean here? This implies a sort of pastoral care—some sense of emotional or psychological comfort afforded through rituals or preaching—that resulted in reciprocation from the merchant class. On the reverse, Li states that 'merchants also tried to take advantage of their connections with the monks to generate economic profits' (35). Again, I think we need to consider multiple factors in the relationships that formed between the different communities. Monks could engage in mercantile activities, and similarly merchants could engage in Buddhist practices. The categorical labels of 'monk' and 'merchant' must be contextualised in a nuanced and realistic way.

The book commences with a discussion of Sino-Japanese relations in the Tang period (618–907), when the *kentōshi* 遣唐使 (Japanese missions to Tang China) were sent to China. One of the arguments of the book is that these tributary missions were initially the main source of 'continental products' that aristocrats in Japan desired, but in the final decades of the Tang period, merchants and monks collaborated out of necessity to build a new network for the purposes of trade. Li argues that 'between 839 and 900, the merchants and monks were actively establishing a new network in the absence of official diplomatic ties, but the continuous presence of authorities meant that merchants felt compelled nonetheless to cultivate good relationships with powerful people' (48). This development occurred, Li argues (44), because of the suspension of tribute vessels.

The evidence in support of these claims is based largely on the careers of Japanese Tendai 天台 monks, who are said to have been instrumental in facilitating the development of this system. Their successes on the mainland, in turn, were beneficial to their home institution in Japan. Li states: 'Both Ennin's and Enchin's successful pilgrimages elevated Enryakuji's reputation, and more importantly, contributed to building the unofficial network of Japanese monks and Chinese merchants that would grow over the coming centuries' (27). Ennin's travelogue (*Nittō guhō junrei kōki* 入唐求法巡禮行記, *Record of the Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Dharma*) is frequently cited in *Networks of Faith and Profit*, but there are no direct quotations of the source lines in Chinese. We are only provided with page numbers in a printed edition. Without the original Chinese prose (Ennin wrote exclusively in Chinese) somewhere in the book, the reader is left to either trust that the author's interpretation is correct, or otherwise look up the important citations on their own. This is burdensome, and I found myself having to guess at probable keywords in Chinese to find a given passage in the digitised version on CBETA. This is not a fatal flaw by any means, but as a Sinologist, I prefer to see the Chinese text on the same page where an English translation is provided. Also, I think that some discussion of the generation preceding Ennin and Enchin, namely that of Kūkai and Saichō 最澄 (767–822), would have been helpful to explain what the established 'tribute trade' meant for these figures, whose lives are well-documented.

The introductory chapter makes some statements that appear based more on impressions than on primary sources. For example:

> During Ennin's time, when the court was so eager to adopt Buddhist teachings from the continent, material objects became even more important. Buddhist sutras, most of which were originally written in ancient Indian languages, were accessible to the learners in Japan only in translation, a process that required linguistic expertise and spiritual knowledge and occasionally caused concepts to be distorted. Buddhist ritual objects, on the other hand, could be put directly into use after they were imported to Japan, so they offered devotees direct access to the Buddha's power. Buddhist clerics and lay believers alike believed that they thus had contact with the originals. (5)

East Asian Buddhist texts were primarily in Chinese, but by Ennin's generation, literacy was not an issue for Japanese monks and the aristocracy. One need only look at the body of Chinese literature produced by the Japanese saṃgha by the mid-ninth century. I do not see the connection between the challenges of reading texts and the accessibility of ritual objects. A new text brought to Japan would have been immediately accessible to any number of readers. Although nobody in Japan, it would seem, capably read Sanskrit prose, many still understood the Indian script Siddhaṃ (Jp. *Shittan* 悉曇). The idea that Buddhist paraphernalia would have been more usable is questionable in my mind, since generally the instructions for how to use ritual objects are found in written texts. I am also confused about what 'Buddha's power' means—is it *kaji* 加持, liberation (*gedatsu* 解脱), or something else? The referent of 'originals' is unclear in the sentence 'Buddhist clerics and lay believers alike believed that they thus had contact with the originals'.

Li argues: 'An authentic ceremony in Japan incorporating ritual objects from China would have prompted patrons to make donations in exchange for merit, which they hoped would bring them either earthly happiness or a better afterlife' (6–7). Why the emphasis on ritual objects specifically from China? We have various extant specimens of ritual objects that were produced in Japan from around the time of Ennin. For example, in their relatively recent metallurgical analysis of copper-based objects, the Nara National Museum and the Gangōji Institute for Research of Cultural Property list two 'three-pronged vajras' (*sanko sho* 三鈷杵) that were produced in Japan in the eighth or ninth century, with another two that could be from either Tang China or Japan in the same period. Various Mikkyō-related objects made primarily of copper were produced in Japan in later centuries.[2] This imagined scenario, in which patrons would have felt more compelled to make donations simply because of imported ritual paraphernalia, ought to acknowledge the domestic production of the same types of objects. Were those ceremonies that used locally

[2] Naitō, 'Zaishitsu yori mita Mikkyō hōgu: Shōrai hōgu wo chūshin ni', 11–12.

made objects 'inauthentic'? Would patrons have been aware of the differences between Japanese-made and Chinese-made ritual objects?

The time period that Li primarily deals with commences from 839, when the last Japanese envoy was dispatched to the Tang. Li argues that '839 to 900 represents a transition era in which a new pattern to sustain Sino-Japanese exchanges took shape in the absence of formal diplomatic relations'. Li also states, 'Japan scheduled an embassy in 894 but eventually canceled it: the weakening of the Tang dynasty was one reason, but the more important reason was probably the increasing alternative opportunities for obtaining continental products' (21). This statement implies that Japanese missions to China were primarily motivated by a state interest in obtaining foreign goods. This position stands in stark contrast to what Japanese records themselves relate. As is well known, the monk Chūkan 中瓘 (fl. 862–881), while in China, sent a letter advising the court not to proceed with a mission. Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845–903) was scheduled to lead the envoy, but upon deliberation, the court decided to cancel the endeavour. This was clearly a very serious matter of interest to the state. To suggest that the availability of an alternative market mechanism was the 'more important reason' for cancelling the mission is problematic in my opinion.

Li describes a 'monk-merchant network' that existed outside of a system of 'tribute trade'. She argues that the former facilitated the transport of what were contraband items during the persecution of Buddhism under Emperor Wuzong: 'Among all the scriptures and sacred objects that Ennin industriously collected, mandalas – cosmic paintings for esoteric Buddhist ceremonies– stood out. Ennin gave them much space in his diary: he recorded thoroughly how much he paid for each mandala and how they survived the persecution of Buddhism only via the protection provided by the monk-merchant network' (22). At this point in the book, however, this network has not been demonstrated to have really existed. Ennin's travelogue relates that, indeed, he had to smuggle some of his possessions, but an alternative explanation for his success is that the persecution of Buddhism was not extensively carried out beyond the capital region. Wuzong's decrees were evidently not popular, since after he died there was not continuation of them. Li continues and states:

> More interestingly, the records in Ennin's diary regarding obtaining mandalas were probably often altered, sometimes by Ennin himself, sometimes by a later cleric, to enhance Ennin's fame and bring distinction to his monastery, Enryakuji. These doctored records again demonstrate the significance of certain Chinese objects to Japan at the time and therefore the value of a network that could help to secure them. (22)

This is a significant proposition, but there is no evidence cited. One would hope to see a philological discussion of the exact documents involved in this purported doctoring of documents. I am also left wondering about the connection between these records and the value of Chinese objects to Japan. Li states that 'the Buddhist community surrounding Ennin considered his success in bringing back mandalas a highly laudable achievement [...]' (24), but again the readers are left without any sources. Who in the Buddhist community celebrated the success of his trip? Are there modern scholars who write about this somewhere?

This part of the book would have benefited from detailed reference to the *Zenrin kokuhōki* 善鄰國寶記 [Account of Good External Relations as a Treasure for Our Country], a history of Japan's foreign relations written in 1470 by the Rinzai 臨済 Zen monk Zuikei Shūhō 瑞渓周鳳 (1391–1473). The text narrates many details about Ennin, Enchin, and Li Yanxiao 李延孝 (d. 877). This was translated into English by von Verschuer.[3]

Li in chapters 1 and 2 makes an extended case for an emerging network that constituted a major shift in trade relations between China and Japan. This arrangement necessitated the cooperation of merchants and monks starting in the ninth century. Chapter 2 is thus titled 'Replacing Tributary Relations: The Reciprocal Collaboration between Monks and Merchants, 839–900'. Although I do not reject the proposition that such a network would have facilitated the transport of people and material objects, we can conceive of a somewhat more complex scenario in which exchanges *also* occurred

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[3] See von Verschuer, 'Japan's Foreign Relations 600 to 1200 A.D.'.

even outside official tributary missions and merchant-monk relationships. Luxury goods and other commodities did not enter Japan exclusively through state officials and other related persons—such as monks—going to the mainland and back. Setting aside merchants operating at sea, plenty of people outside the Japanese court went back and forth over the sea. For example, the *Shinsen Shōjiroku* 新撰姓氏錄 [New Compilation of the Register of Families], compiled in 815 by Manda Shinnō 萬多親王 (788–830), in its extant form lists over three-hundred families of foreign origin, most of them from the Korean kingdoms. These sorts of migrations of clans from the mainland to Japan are evidence enough that people (and presumably their material possessions) arrived in Japan outside tributary missions and mercantile activities.

We must also acknowledge that people from Silla and Balhae 渤海 arrived in Japan in various capacities. Ennin in his travelogue, for example, records that 'the Commissioner Chang went to Japan in the first year of Tenchō 天長 (824), and when he returned, [Sinhye] came back to China on his ship. At present he lives on the monastery's estate. Since he understands Japanese, he acts as an interpreter' (張大使天長元年到日本國. 廻時付船却歸唐國. 今見居在寺庄. 解日本國語, 便為通事).[4] That fact that such professionals existed would indicate that there was sufficient civil traffic going back and forth between Japan to warrant their professional services as translators. Rachel Lung discusses this matter of professional translators in relation to Ennin's travelogue.[5] The point I want to make is that significant exchanges between Japan and the mainland occurred, but this included not only China: Silla and Balhae were also players in maritime affairs. There were multiple opportunities to exchange goods, letters, and people apart from tribute missions or even a network of monks and merchants during the late Tang period.

Chapter 3 is titled 'Not Only for the Dharma: Pilgrim Monks as Intermediaries between China and Japan, 900–1100'. This chapter

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[4] English translation from Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, 387. CBETA 2023. Q3, *B* no. 95, 18: 112b12–13.

[5] Lung, 'Sillan Interpreters in 9th-century East Asian Exchanges', 238–55.

looks at Japanese monks in Song China, especially Chōnen 奝然 (938–1016), Jakushō 寂照 (962–1034), and Jōjin 成尋 (1011–1081). Li argues that 'the Japanese monks' reactions to Chinese authorities were a decisive factor in reflecting and even helping to redefine the Sino-Japanese relationship for the new era of Song rule' (51). I think that this chapter better demonstrates the existence of a monk-merchant network operating outside of official channels. Li argues in this chapter that the unofficial network of mercantile exchange established in the late Tang carried over into the early Song, and that the Chinese side did not indicate to the visiting Japanese monks that tributary missions ought to resume. The Song emperors 'did not try through these encounters to force Japan to return to the China-centred tribute network' (50). I wonder, though, should we expect that the Chinese would have demanded a return of envoys when meeting Japanese monks? A learned monk from Japan would have been a person of interest to the Chinese court, especially after Japanese students stopped coming to China to study on state missions, but without some sort of official documentation from Japan, they would have been treated as visitors, not as representatives. This was simply standard operating policy, which is attested by at least one recorded incident. The history of the Song (Ch. *Song shi* 宋史) records that 'in the twelfth month of year four of Tiansheng [1026], Mingzhou communicated that the *Dazaifu* of the country of Japan sent people to offer as tribute local items, but they did not carry the documentation of their country, and they were ordered to return. Afterward, there were no further communications or tributary missions' (天聖四年十二月, 明州言日本國太宰府遣人貢方物, 而不持本國表, 詔卻之. 其後亦未通朝貢).[6] This might have been, in reality, an official envoy from a regional authority in Japan, acting on behalf of the court. Li, however, interprets this event differently: 'Since tribute gifts were exempted from customs duties, in several instances Chinese merchants tried to take advantage of the suspended Sino-Japanese diplomatic relations and claimed to be envoys sent by Japanese authorities to bring tribute gifts to the Song court' (57). In the above case, this seems like

[6] *Song shi*, 491.14136.

a strained interpretation. Why should we read the above instance as one of merchants pretending to be envoys? The designation of *Dazaifu* would indicate an official regional office.

Li translates *dao yi* 島夷 as 'barbarians living on islands', suggesting that 'except for still calling Japanese people "barbarians," Emperor Taizong did not convey much cultural superiority but expressed his admiration instead' (53–54). The translation of 'barbarian' for *yi* 夷 implies that the Chinese term is a pejorative like the word 'barbarian' in English. Sinologists often uncritically translate this and other words like *man* 蠻, *hu* 胡, and *di* 狄 as 'barbarians', but this fails to encapsulate the nuances and shifting meaning of these words over the centuries. The term *dong yi* 東夷, for example, originally referred to the various non-Han peoples to the east of China. To translate *yi* and the other terms as 'barbarians' introduces connotations that are not necessarily present in the original context. The sense of Taizong's meaning might have been more like a neutral 'easterner' if we loosely translate the sentiment into English, rather than a negative 'barbarian'.

It is suggested on page 65 that 'it is worth noting that Jōjin did not use many humble words in his answers to Emperor Shenzong, nor did he try to disguise that Japan had already stopped paying tribute to China'. This statement is based on a reading of Jōjin's travelogue (Jp. *San Tendai Godaisan ki* 參天台五台山記, *Record of a Pilgrimage to the Tiantai and Wutai Mountains*), but we should observe that the recorded conversations with officials and the throne are not necessarily verbatim transcripts. Jōjin wrote down what was said, but it is in *his* form of Chinese, not that of the native Chinese speakers. To read what he wrote down as a precise record of what was said is problematic, unless the record is a copy of something that was written by the other party. For instance, Li translates '日本自來為甚不通中國入唐進奉'[7] as follows: 'Why has Japan not contacted China and come to pay tribute for so long?' (65). The word *nittō* 入唐 ('to enter the Tang') is Sino-Japanese. Chinese speakers themselves in the Song period would not have referred to their country as Tang 唐.

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[7] *San Tendai Godaisan ki*, CBETA 2023.Q3, *B* no. 174, 32: 369a25–26.

This sentence is also irregular in that it uses the colloquial interrogative *weishen* 為甚 ('why') alongside the formal verb *jinfeng* 進奉 ('to offer tribute'). This sort of 'irregular Chinese' (often called *henkaku kanbun* 変格漢文 in recent Japanese scholarship) is typical of Japanese authors who wrote in Chinese, but did not carefully distinguish between formal and colloquial registers. Any argument about Jōjin's posture toward the Song court based on these recorded conversations is therefore fragile.

I was surprised to see in the bibliography only one study on Chōnen, who was quite an instrumental figure in Sino-Japanese relations. He furnished a lot of data about Japan to the Chinese court through Yang Yi 楊億 (974–1020), which was then used in the national history.[8] There are at least twenty articles in Japanese concerning Chōnen indexed on CiNii (https://cir.nii.ac.jp/), and over thirty in Chinese indexed on CNKI (https://www.cnki.net/). Although the author need not cite everything, more engagement with the secondary scholarship would have been beneficial.

This chapter could have also benefited from discussion of the Japanese monk Nichien 日延 (d.u.), who visited China after the Tang but before the Song. Nichien was an important figure in the history of Japanese astronomy, having brought a copy of the *Futian li* 符天曆 to Japan. The *Futian li* was a popular calendar—rather than something official—that was apparently used by astrologers. It was devised by Cao Shiwei 曹士蔿 initially sometime between 780–783. In a previous study, I wrote the following:

> Sometime around the mid-tenth century, the Onmyōji Kamo no Yasunori 賀茂保憲 (917–977) voiced his concerns that the *Senmyō reki* 宣明曆 state calendar (brought to Japan in 859 and adopted from 862) had been in use for well over a century and that a new calendar probably had been adopted on the mainland. He recommended that Nichien be sent to acquire and study a new calendar. Nichien departed in 953. He arrived in the state of Wuyue 吳越

[8] I discussed Chōnen in brief in Kotyk, 'The Medieval Chinese Vision of Japan', 366–67.

> where he studied a version of the *Futian li* and ephemerides (*licheng* 立成), which he brought back in 957.[9]

The *Futian li* was an instrumental element in the development of Sukuyōdō 宿曜道 in subsequent decades (a lineage of astrologer-monks unique to Japan). Court astronomers also consulted it. Nichien's voyage to China was recorded in the *Dazaifu jinja bunsho* 大宰府神社文書—dated to around 1053—which was rediscovered and then critically edited by Takeuchi Rizō 竹内理三 (1907–1997) between 1954–1955.[10] Momo Hiroyuki 桃裕行 (1910–1986) also wrote an important study on Nichien and the *Futian li*.[11] Nichien also brought Tiantai texts with him following the written request of Deshao 德韶 (891–972), a topic that was addressed by Momo, and later Brose.[12] The maritime vessels and individuals responsible for Nichien's transportation could have been explored in *Networks of Faith and Profit*.

Chapter 4 is titled 'Building a Base for Trade: The "Chinese Quarter" in Hakata, 1100–1200'. This is an interesting overview of the Chinese community—predominately comprised of merchants with consistent ties to coastal China—in Kyushu. Here, Li argues that 'the deliberately constructed image of Chinese merchants in Buddhist narratives suggests that the collaboration between sea merchants and monks reached an unprecedented level: the monks viewed the merchants not merely as providers of transportation but also as partners in spreading new Buddhist teachings' (73). The growth of Chinese merchants in Kyushu followed the loosening of earlier regulations that prevented them from permanently settling, especially from the mid-eleventh century. As Li demonstrates, textual sources about

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[9] Kotyk, 'Japanese Buddhist Astrology and Astral Magic', 55–56.

[10] The biography of Nichien is presented and discussed in Takeuchi, '*Nyū Goetsu sō Nichien den*', 58–63.

[11] Momo, 'Nichien no *Futenreki* seirai', 395–420.

[12] Momo, 'Nichien no Tendai kyōseki no sōchi', 102. Brose, 'Crossing Thousands of *Li* of Waves', 26–28. Kotyk, 'The Medieval Chinese Vision of Japan', 374.

this community are limited, but archaeological evidence is available, which she explores in a highly instructive way. Attention is paid in particular to Eisai 榮西 (1141–1215), who went to China with the assistance of the Chinese merchant community in Kyushu.

Chapter 5 is titled, 'Transporting Goods and Faith: The Economic Privileges of the Religious Network, 1200–1270'. This chapter examines an understudied letter that documents the transport of wooden planks from Hakata to China, which involved monks from Japan providing timber after a fire had destroyed a Chinese temple in 1242. This is a noteworthy and datable example of Buddhists on both sides of the sea communicating and interacting in a very concrete way. Li states that 'the transmission of Zen Buddhism from China to Japan continued into the thirteenth century, when more Zen monasteries were established in Hakata. The Chinese merchant community in Hakata participated even more diligently in promoting Zen Buddhism in Japan' (96). It is argued that commercial and religious connections complemented one another. We also read about the significance of Japanese timber in the Song economy. It is well demonstrated that Buddhist monasteries in China used and appreciated Japanese woods because of the heavy costs and scarcity of domestic wood, in part due to deforestation and the heavy use of it in the building of the capital. In this chapter, the discussion of the development of social relations in the spheres of trade and religion through the maritime route during the thirteenth century is very important. The many details about maritime trade and the laws governing it are informative, especially as they show how Chinese merchants sought connections with Japanese monasteries. This chapter surprisingly does not discuss Dōgen Zenji 道元禪師 (1200–1253), who visited China between 1223 and 1228. I would have liked to know whether his trip and stay in China were ever facilitated by merchants.

Chapter 6 is titled 'Sending Ships to China to Finance Monastery Construction: Trade between the Mongol Empire and the Japanese Archipelago, 1270–1368'. This chapter importantly points out that despite the conflict between Japan and Khubilai Khan, trade nevertheless continued. Li discusses an important item of archaeological evidence: the Sinan 新安 shipwreck discovered in 1976. This wreck sheds much light on Sino-Japanese relations because 'the key

participants in the voyage of the Sinan ship were all connected with the Jōtenji monastery' (129). The significance of the Mongol attack on Japan in 1281 is also highlighted, especially the effect that it had on Hakata, where Chinese merchants resided (132). This chapter discusses the significance of Zen Buddhism as an intermediary between the *bakufu* 幕府 governments and China. This is arguably a less appreciated aspect of Zen in modern scholarship, so it is valuable information.

An important figure between Japan and Yuan China was the Linji 臨濟 monk Yishan Yining 一山一寧 (1247–1317), who had been sent in 1299 by the Mongols to Kamakura (130). I did not know about this figure, so more details would have been desirable. No primary sources are cited on this page that might discuss him and his career, as well as his relations with the Japanese leadership. This left me having to search for data on this figure on my own in the history of the Yuan (*Yuan shi* 元史).[13] The relevant citations in the *Yuan shi* then appear on page 134! This arrangement of the data and citations is confusing. While searching for information on Yining, I discovered (through Japanese Wikipedia) that Yining is mentioned in an important Japanese source: the *Hōjō kudai ki* 北條九代記 [Chronicles of Nine Generations of the Hōjō Family] (also titled *Kamakura nendai ki* 鎌倉年代記 [Chronicles of the Kamakura Era]) interestingly records that 'The Monastic Head, Zitan Yining, of the Song court, arrived in Kamakura. Yining carried a letter from the Great Yuan Country' (宋朝僧正子曇一寧參着鎌倉，一寧持大元國書).[14] The wording of this suggests that Yining was considered to have come from Song China, but had been ordered by the Mongols (Yuan) to carry a letter to Japan—clearly, the Japanese court did not view the Yuan as a legitimate ruler of China. The Song court had been terminated in 1279. These sort of details in the relevant documents would have gone a long way in explaining why the Japanese leadership accepted (or perhaps even welcomed) Yining as a monk, letting him travel to the capital, but did not treat this as cause for commencing diplomatic

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[13] *Yuan shi*, 20.426–427

[14] The English translation is mine. See *Hokujō kyūdai*, 58.

communications with the Yuan court, which they might not have viewed as a true representative of China.

Finally, Chapter 7 is titled 'Resuming Tribute Relations and the Aftermath of the Religio-commercial Network, 1368–1403'. This chapter shows the sudden shift in diplomatic and trade policies between China and Japan from the Ming period, when tributary relations resumed. At the same time, tribute trade was restored, which required reconfiguring trade practices and the distribution mechanisms of profit among the interested parties (warlords, monasteries, nobles, etc.).

Minor Issues

Finally, there are some minor issues in the book that might be discussed.

- There is mention of 'the pair of mandalas brought back from China in 804 by the great master Kūkai ...' (24), but Kūkai returned to Japan in 806.
- There is a mix of traditional characters (*fantizi* 繁體字) and Japanese *jōyō kanji* 常用漢字 throughout the book: for example, 'Deyuan 德圓' (32) vs. 'Ennin 円仁' (1). The kanji 円 is a Japanese variant of 圓. It is better to uniformly use one form or the other in the body of the study. Traditional characters are preferable, even in a Japanese context, if the subject matter concerns premodern East Asia, as *jōyō kanji* were not used until the twentieth century. The decision to use *jōyō kanji* for premodern Japanese names, terms, and book titles, while using simplified or traditional characters for people and things from China, leads to an inelegant presentation. Searching for things using the digital version of the book is also complicated by having to switch between different character sets. Modern characters of the PRC also sometimes appear throughout the book. For example, on page 58, we see 'Ding Wei 丁谓': the latter character is simplified (*jiantizi* 簡體字) and is out of place. On page 59, 'regulation (*nenkisei* 年纪制)'— 纪 ought to be 紀. On page 129, 'Chōjaku'an 钓寂庵': 钓 is a simplified Chinese character, not *jōyō kanji*. On page 154, 'Elezhetu 諤勒哲图': 图

should be 圖.

- On page 53 there is mention of 'mammoth bone (*longgu* 龍骨)', which is a curious translation for what is literally translated into English as 'dragon bone[s]'. This choice of 'mammoth bone' as a translation ought to have been explained, as this is not immediately evident based on the literal meaning of this word. This item is common in East Asian *materia medica* (*bencao* 本草). Daniel Hanbury long ago in 1862 concluded that 'dragon bone' is fossil ivory based on specimens available in the Chinese markets of his time. Hanbury might be the source for how some later dictionaries define the word. However, in illustrated versions of Chinese pharmacopeia, we see skulls and other bones that could not be ivory.[15] A comparable term is 'dragon teeth' (*longchi* 龍齒), which Hanbury, with the assistance of a specialist, identified as the molars of various species, including rhinoceros, mastodon, stag, and bear, among others.[16] 'Mammoth bone' without an explanation is a problematic translation.

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Abbreviations

B *Dazang jing bubian* 大藏經補編 [Buddhist Canon: Supplementary Sections]. See Lan et al., comps.

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[15] See Japanese (Edo Period) reprint of the *Bencao gangmu*. See also the depiction of 'dragon bones' in in the *Jinshi kunchong caomu zhuang*, in which one of the bones appears less like a tusk and more like the antler of a stag.

[16] Hanbury, No*tes on Chinese Materia Medica*, 40.

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