In accordance with an agreement concerning scholarly exchanges between Peking University and Tokyo University, I accepted an invitation from Tokyo University and spent four weeks—March 10 through April 6, 1985—visiting Japan. Although this was my fourth trip to Japan, it was an unusually rich four weeks that I spent there. Twenty-eight days would not be considered a long time, but I used the opportunity to advance friendship and scholarly ties with Japanese scholars as much as I could. I also used this opportunity to advance my own understanding of Japanese history and culture. In the old Chinese adage, one “learns from the past to understand the future,” and this trip could well be summarized by that turn of phrase. I was able to deepen friendships with old friends and make a significant number of new friends. This trip afforded me the chance to learn through fresh experiences what I had spent the last few decades acquiring from books.

Let me first address scholarly exchanges. My duties at the Center for Medieval Chinese History at Peking University concerned arranging and doing research on Dunhuang manuscripts and ancient letters. Japanese scholars were also quite interested in Dunhuang documents, and it was already a developed field there. Thus, at a seminar run by Professor Ikeda On 池田温 (b. 1931) at Tokyo University’s Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo 東洋文化研究所 (Institute for Advanced Studies on Asia), I gave a lecture on questions concerning these Dunhuang materials. At a seminar run by Professor Enoki Kazuo 榎一雄 (1913–1989) at the Tōyō Bunko 東洋文庫, I lectured on questions concerning popular marriage and funeral rites in the Tang period as seen through epistolary documents. At a seminar run by Professor Nagasawa Kazutoshi 長沢和俊 (b. 1928) at Waseda University, I summarized the contents of the previous two talks. At a seminar run by Professor Tanigawa Michio 谷川道雄 (b. 1925) at Kyoto University and another seminar run by Professor Fujiie Reinosuke 藤家禮之助 (1928–2010) at Tōkai University, I gave a lecture on issues arising out of recent Chinese publications on the history of the Six Dynasties period.
Since his retirement from Tokyo University, Professor Enoki Kazuo, a specialist in the history of East-West intercourse, was running the Tōyō Bunko. He and I were born the same year, and although this was our first meeting, we both mentioned that ever since our school days we had been reading each other’s writings. Professor Ikeda On’s book *Chūgoku kodai sekichō kenkyū, gaikan rokubun* (Studies of ancient Chinese household registers, overview and documents [Tokyo: Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo, Tokyo University, 1979]) had earned extremely high evaluations in China and the West as well, and there was a Chinese translation coming out (*Zhongguo gudai jichang yanjiu*, trans. Gong Zixian [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2007]). He began with his research on Tang legal institutions, and then expanded his range into Chinese legal history generally. I was amazed when he introduced me that he wrote my family genealogy on the blackboard all the way back to the Five Dynasties period, an indication of the meticulous and detailed nature of his own research. At the places where I lectured, a bibliography of writings by the lecturer would generally be provided to the audience. The thoughtfulness with which these were prepared was also astounding. It became clear to me from this just how thoroughly the Japanese scholarly world had amassed its materials over time, through the accumulation of basic writings and certainly not the attainments of a single day.

Professor Nagasawa was a specialist on the Silk Road who had on many occasions visited Xinjiang as he investigated the Silk Road spanning Eurasia. He had spent six months at Peking University on a scholarly exchange, and I presented him with a poem I transcribed onto a scroll written by Yang Changjun 楊昌濬 (1825–1897) extolling the virtues of Zuo Zongtang 左宗棠 (1812–1885). Its last two lines read: “The poplar and the willow newly grown three thousand li apart, the spring wind blows over them passing by the Jade Pass.” Zuo Zongtang’s actions in Xinjiang were already “implemented policy,” and Professor Nagasawa had many times traveled west of the Jade Pass (Yumenguan 玉門關) and the Southern Pass (Yangguan 陽關); and I thought he would be quite pleased to receive this poem.

I first met Professor Fujiie around 1972. He studies Six Dynasties history and the history of Sino-Japanese cultural interactions, both of them precisely my own fields of interest. In the subsequent ten years, he visited Peking University on many occasions, but for an assortment of reasons I thought it best not to receive him while at the same time being seen in public. Showing his concern for me, he published an essay in the Waseda University journal *Shiteki* 史滴 entitled “Shū sensei ni tsuite” 周先生につ