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A Reexamination of Song Period Agricultural History
: Dry Field Cultivation in Central China under the Southern Song Dynasty

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This article examines the significance of dry field cultivation in central China during the Song period, in order to reconstruct the image of agriculture at that time based on cultivation tasks. Since the research on Song agricultural history to date has tended to concentrate on two topics, the rice as the crops on the one hand and advanced technology of the farming as the method on the other, thus obscuring the existence of dry field crop cultivation from view, this article, by evaluating dry field cultivation in a more positive light, attempts to bring to the surface an appearance of Song agriculture quite different from the conventional image.

The author begins with an attempt to clarify the relationship of dry field cultivation to trends in migration and land development. During the Song period migration and land development tended to concentrate in the upper portions of river basins, and it was there that a mixed form of dry field and paddy cultivation was developed.

Next, the discussion turns to the level of agricultural technology during the period. The conventional opinion, based on the content of contemporary agricultural book, touts the achievement of a high level of paddy cultivation technology; however, those same sources contain statements casting doubt upon to what extent such technology was diffused. Moreover, the productivity of paddy cultivation at the time was not as high as generally thought, indicating a more important role of dry field crops in supplementing wet rice production.

Based on such findings, the author proceeds to investigate trends in the daily consumption of grain. The typical Song period meal included various

grains besides rice, indicating 1) difficulty in procuring a sufficient amount of rice of the latter year round and 2) related elements of seasonality and social stratification in grain consumption.

The author concludes that for the residents of central China during the Song period, dry field crops played a role in supplementing insufficient supplies of rice and were, consequently, indispensable to the maintenance of everyday life.

The Political Process in the Erection of Manchukuo's “Ancestor Temple of the Sun Goddess”

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The present article discusses the erection in July 1940 of the “National Temple of the Sun Goddess,” dedicated to Amaterasu Okami 天照大神, in order to discover its contribution to the psychological integration of the new state's citizenry.

Some research already exists on the process of the Temple's erection and its significance, which emphasizes such points as since the Temple was erected to worship the Sun Goddess, it was for all intents and purposes merely an attempt to import Japan's state Shinto religion into Manchukuo. The discussion then turns to the extent to which Japan was determined to “religiously infiltrate” Manchuria.

The author argues on the contrary that the fact of the Temple being erected as a national place of religious worship makes it necessary to raise the question of to what extent it furthered the spiritual integration of the new nation. Manchukuo being a state created almost overnight by the Japanese Guandong Army, it was divided with the memory of political events and trends of the previous Three-Provincial Government regime. Another point is how did Manchukuo intend to deal with the state's multi-ethnic population. Therefore, a plan for psychological integration by raising national identity and consciousness must have been an important issue for stabilizing the governance of the new state.

It is in this vein that the author reexamines the process of erecting the