

The comparative research of rice-growing culture between south China and southern part of Japan

----Guangxi province in china and Okinawa in Japan as examples

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Abstract. China is one of the most ancient countries to grow rice, and also be known as the origin country of Asian rice. While Japan as the neighbouring country of China, also has long history about rice-growing culture. Now it is generally believed that the rice-growing culture in Japan is originated from China. By comparing the rice-growing culture and the cooking culture between Guangxi province in china and Okinawa in japan, we could promote the understanding and deepen the friendship between those two countries.

Introduction

China and Japan are separated by sea, and has a long history of cultural communication. While compared Guangxi province at south china and Okinawa at southern part of japan, those two regions have similar latitude and climate, and have quite a lot of overlap in history, so there are many similarities in the rice-growing culture and cooking culture.

The rice-growing culture of those two countries has been widely researched. YAN in the 'Expound Japanese Rice-growing Culture' indicated that Japan's unique rice-growing culture, not only refers to the rice planting, management, harvesting, processing, storage and consumption, but also includes the production mode and life style which generated from the rice-growing culture. Through the study of Japan's rice-growing culture, the production mode and life style and the group consciousness of rice-farming society could be reflected. [1] PENG indicated that it is a big event that the introducing of China's rice-growing culture to Japanese culture, and in this cross the Dulai people has played a key role in the whole process. [2] WANG in 'Rice and Diet-culture of Guangxi' indicated that the special natural ecological environment of Guangxi determines the rice-growing agriculture is the foundation of the economy, while the economy foundation of rice-growing agriculture determines all aspects of social life of Zhuang ethnic group. [3] XUAN and YOU emphasized that the Japanese has indissoluble bound to rice. For the Japanese, the best cooking that can arouse their homesick is a bowl of delicious rice. Although for a long time rice is a luxury for most Japanese people, but their rice-growing culture began since Yayoi era. [4] LU pointed that the diet culture could reflect many features of a country or a nation, by comparing the diet culture can explore the national character of the two countries. [5] China and Japan both have traditions of rice eating, rice-growing culture throughout the history of China and Japan. By comparing the rice-growing culture and the cooking culture between Guangxi province in china and Okinawa in japan, we could have a better understanding of both the similarities and differences on food culture of china and japan, and promote the

communication of cooking-culture and deepen the friendship between those two countries.

This study is divided into six parts: the first part is the origin of rice-growing culture in China and Japan, the second part is the analysis of rice-growing culture in Guangxi, the third part is the analysis of rice-growing culture in Okinawa, the fourth part is the comparison of those two, the fifth part is the analysis of present status of rice culture between China and Japan, the final part is discussion of the future of rice culture between China and Japan.

The origin of rice-growing culture in China and Japan

Rice is native to tropical Asia, after widely planted in China, it has been gradually spread to all over the world. About the origin area of rice in china is still debated. Professor Yan thinks that the rice-growing culture in our country mainly originated from the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River, his deduction about the origin of rice-growing was based on the study of the age of rice-growing in archaeology. The study of professor You Xiuling on the origin of rice-growing culture was very influential in the world. He suggested to extend the origin of research to Southeast Asia, and he thinks that the domestication of rice is a continuous and decentralized process from India to China.

Japanese scholar Watabe puts forward a different East Asian rice origin theory, "Assam-Yunnan origin theory", and outline the spread line of the East Asian rice. [6] According to archaeological data, the growing of rice in Japan began since Jomon era. On the coarse pottery of sites in Yayoi culture, repeatedly found the indentation of rice and carbonization of rice grains which means the occurrence of rice agriculture.

There are many discussions about the time and path of the introduction of rice in Japan, there are three main arguments: the theory of north road, the theory of middle road and the theory of south road. [7] The north road is the earliest and most widely cited one, according to the theory of north road, many scholars think that the introduction of Japanese rice farming is from north to northeast China, and through the Korean peninsula to Kyushu in Japan. The middle road theory thinks that the rice-growing culture spread to japan directly from the middle and lower reaches of the Yangtze River region. However, the south road theory thinks that the rice-growing culture was first introduced to Taiwan and the Ryukyu Islands from Mainland China, then through the Okinawa to Kyushu are. Those three kinds of theory all have their reasons and weaknesses.

The rice-growing culture in Guangxi

The overview of Guangxi. The Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region is located in the south China coast, located in east longitude 104 ° 26 ' - 112 ° 04', north latitude 20 ° 54 ' - 26 ° 24', belongs to subtropical monsoon climate zone. The climate of most part of the area is warm, and rain a lot, the seasonal variation is not obvious. The high temperature and wet climate is very suitable for rice planting, so the rice has become the main food in Guangxi.

The rice-growing culture in Guangxi. The rice agriculture of Zhuang. In the language of Zhuang nationality, people call the paddy field "NA". So in Zhuang nationality, the paddy rice culture can also be called the NA Culture. In the previous archaeological research, Guangxi had not put as one of the birthplace of rice, while professor Tan studied the origins of rice agriculture from the perspective of cultural linguistics, expounds the culture connotation of the word "NA", and estimated the long history of the paddy field in Zhuang region, and speculated that the Zhuang is one of the new origin of rice.

The rice cooking-culture of Zhuang. The population of Zhuang is the largest compared with other

ethnic minorities in China, as such a big nationality, the cooking-culture of Zhuang is the important part of Zhuang and Guangxi culture. In Guangxi, as the staple food rice is eaten almost in every meal, so there has developed a colorful diet culture of rice-growing.

(1) The rice. People in Guangxi are very fond of eating rice. In daily life of Zhuang people, there are many ways to cook rice, like fried, boiled, stewed and steamed. Moreover, in order to add the characteristic of rice, they also add different ingredients in rice or use different tableware. (2) The rice wine. The rice wine is the extension of rice-growing agriculture, it is produced in the case of adequate supplying of rice. There are two kinds of wine in Zhuang, one is called sweet wine which is direct fermentation by starter, the other is made by steaming after fermentation which is called the rice wine. (3) The rice noodle. The most popular food made by rice in Guangxi is the Guangxi rice noodle. The Guangxi rice noodle has rich nutritional value and is very convenient to cook, so it becomes one of the most indispensable dishes of Guangxi people. (4) The festive dishes. There are many kinds of festive foods in Zhuang, each has unique flavor. Those festive dishes are the reflections of Zhuang diet culture connotation and characteristics. Among all the dishes, the sticky rice is the important holiday staple food and the gifts for family and friends, and also be used as ritual foods.

The rice-growing culture in Okinawa

The overview of Okinawa. Okinawa is located in the middle of the Ryukyu Islands, between Japan and Taiwan, is the largest island in Ryukyu Islands. The area of Okinawa is about 1208 square kilometers and the population is about 1.22 million. It is the only place with subtropical oceanic in Japan climate, similarly with South China, has a warm and moist winter and humid summer.

The rice-growing culture in Okinawa. The rice agriculture of Okinawa. Similar to other farming culture region at East Asia, rice is the staple food of Okinawa. The rice-growing has the central status in the agricultural production structure of Okinawa. In the formation process of the culture of Okinawa, the biggest turning point is the introduction of rice-growing culture. For a long time, the production of the traditional culture of Okinawa is based on rice farming, and the custom and beliefs based on rice farming forms the core of the traditional culture.

The rice cooking-culture of Okinawa. Rice farming is the foundation of the Okinawa economy since ancient times, the folk customs have a close relationship with rice farming in Okinawa. Rice is as the most important ritual foods in sacrifice. The rice in Okinawa is short grain rice called japonica rice, the taste of japonica rice is soft and sticky. Similar to Chinese people, rice has an important status in Okinawa people's diet, in addition to rice, sushi and rice porridge, also breeds many kinds of pastries. Besides rice, Okinawa people also prefer rice wine, there are two kinds of wine in Okinawa. One is Hairen rice wine the alcohol content of which is around 30 degrees, the other is Haisheng rice wine the Alcohol content of which up to 60 degrees or so.

The comparison of rice-growing culture between Guangxi and Okinawa

The similarities of rice-growing culture. (1) The same production tools and the production process. The harvesting tools in Guangxi and Okinawa are the same according to the unearthed tools in the Yayoi period in Japan. The air-dried pattern of rice in both area is very similar, both use the stilt style architecture. The threshing way is similar, in ancient days, people in both area used pestle and mortar made by woods and stone to get rid of the chaff of rice. (2) The same way of rice cultivation. The rice-farming culture in Okinawa have a deep kinship with ancient China. During the warring states period of China, to escape the war and famine many people across the sea, arrived in Japan. During this process, a lot of people stay at Ryukyu as a transit point, greatly influencing the way of

local rice cultivation. (3) The similar folk activities about rice-farming. In some mountain area in Guangxi, there is the cattle feast custom on lunar April 8th, before the busy farming, let the cattle have a good rest for a day. There is also similar folk activities in Japan, commonly in Shikoku and Kyushu in Japan. What more, similar to the worship of the dragon king in ancient China, similar ceremonies are also very common in Okinawa.

The differences of rice-growing culture. (1) The different evolution of the harvesting tools. Chinese steel sickle is developed on the basis of stone sickle, while the iron sickle is developed on the basis of steel sickle, the relationships between the three is very clear. However, the iron sickle in Japan is developed on the basis of stone one, and in the meantime it is also influenced by Chinese iron sickle. (2) The different storage architecture. Compared the pole-railing barn in China and the high bed barn in Japan, although both belong to the same language family, but there are also many differences. Firstly, the door position is different. During the Han dynasty in southern China, the barn doors are located in the front of the barn, while in the Yayoi period the positions of the barn door are located in the side of the barn. Secondly, in southern China barn is tile roof, while Japanese barns mostly thatched roof. What's more, the height of the wall of barn is also different.

Conclusion

It can be seen by the comparison above that although the Japanese rice farming is the same with the rice farming of Han dynasty of southern China on the big rice farming family, but there still have many differences. Firstly, there are two kinds of different cultural factors in Japanese rice-growing culture, one is from the rice-growing culture of south China, and the other is dry farming culture originated in western China. Secondly, after the introduction to Japan, in the process of adapt to the environment and culture in Japan, the rice-growing culture also has made some changes, and appeared some unique factors of Japanese rice-growing culture.

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