

English Summaries

The Origin of the Enthronement Ceremony of Japanese Emperors (*Daizyosai*): Focusing on the Harvest Festival in China's Yunnan Province

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The Hani people of China's Yunnan Province have long engaged in rice cultivation. Being profoundly impressed by the vitality of rice, I came to think that both the Hani people and the ancient Japanese people also had also been impressed by it, and began to understand the sacred and religious qualities of rice. This led me to the comparison of these two cultures of rice cultivation from the viewpoint of their religious nature. This is the topic of this paper.

Both the Hani people and the ancient Japanese people came to believe in the idea of 'rice as god' through its vitality, and since their lives were sustained by rice, they gradually began to feel that man and rice have the same ancestral origin. Moreover, they both believed that rice grain had a spirit (*Inadama* in Japanese), and they received it with much courtesy on the day of the annual harvest festival (*Ninamesai*) when they enshrined it and ate the first rice of the year. In this way, they tried to succeed to the *Inadama*. The Japanese Emperor or *Tenno* tried to demonstrate that he was a royal master of religious rites by performing his enthronement ceremony (*Daizyosai*) on the day of the annual harvest festival (*Ninamesai*).

Origin of the Japanese Population Viewed from DNA Data

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A genome analysis of the Jomon people has determined that their genetic structure is quite unique among East Asian peoples. Also, their mitochondrial DNA mixed together elements that originated from the southern parts of the Asian mainland with elements from the north. Based on this, it is believed that the Jomon people did not come to the Japanese archipelago from a specific part of Asia, but rather that over the course of a long history stretching back to the Paleolithic era people from a variety of regions on the mainland intermingled on the islands and through the subsequent process of isolation acquired unique genetic characteristics not apparent elsewhere on the continent.

Given that Jomon mitochondrial DNA has been passed down to the Japanese people of today, there can be no doubt that they are our forebears. However, the fact that it account for only a small proportion of our mitochondrial DNA suggests that present-day Japanese have developed under the strong genetic influence of groups who have come to the archipelago since the Yayoi period. The influence of migrant Yayoi peoples was not thought to have extended to Hokkaido, where it was believed that the Jomon people simply changed over into the Ainu population.