

Rice Production and Distribution in Southern Taiwan under Qing Rule

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ABSTRACT

In Qing historiography, “*shuang dong zao dao*” (雙冬早稻), a term referring to the practice of rice farming in southern Taiwan, did not mean double cropping per year, but paddy planted in the twelfth month of the lunar calendar and harvested in the fourth month of the following year. *Shuang dong zao dao* had its competitive advantages as a commodity in markets. This kind of paddy was harvested earliest in Taiwan, implying that it can timely satisfy the huge demand for rice in urban areas on the island and overseas markets. To a lesser degree, its importance derived from the fulfillment of local consumption. Indeed, the core meaning of *shuang dong zao dao* was its connection with the outer world instead of its relation to the unique culture of “*feng shan ba she*” (鳳山八社), or the local aboriginals in southern Taiwan, as previous research underscored. In addition, existing literature indicates that the traditional agricultural crop of *feng shan ba she* was not *shuang dong zao dao* which grew in irrigated paddy fields, but another variety which was cultivated in land without irrigation and harvested in autumn. It is safe to say that the production and spread of *shuang dong zao dao* in southern Taiwan revealed the process of incorporating a local practice into distribution networks of Taiwan island or even of southern China.

Keywords: Taiwan, Paddy, Civilized Aborigines, Hakka, Rice Trade