

History of the "Yakushoku-dogen" Concept II

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Summary

This journal (Vol.208, No4, 2003 "The History of the *Yakushoku-dogen*: The development of *Yakuzen*-I") describes the history of medicinal foods in China as well as the formation of the idea of *Yakushoku-dogen* (medicine and food are of the same origin) and the development of *Yakuzen* (dishes specially prepared for medical purposes) which puts this idea into practice. In China, a concept similar to modern functional foods has existed since time immemorial. The ideas of "Food as a Nurturing Element" and "Food as a Restoring Element" were born and these developed into practical applications as *Yakuzen*. "Food as a Nurturing Element" is based on the concept of "Disease Prevention" through a daily diet to prevent illnesses and to nurture a healthy mind while "Food as a Restoring Element" is based on the concept of curing illness with food.

This publication will examine the history of medicinal foods in Japan and identify how the above historical developments in China were adopted in Japan in order to describe the historical background of modern *Yakuzen* and the evolution of the idea of "Food as a Nurturing Element" in Japan.

Medical books and drugs have been introduced from the continent to Japan through the Korean peninsula since the fifth century and medical/pharmaceutical documents were introduced directly from China since the sixth century. It is evident that the introduction of numerous documents on medicinal foods since the eighth century has led to the adoption of the concept of *Yakushoku-dogen* in Japan.

In the Edo era, in addition to Japanese translations of Chinese documents on medicinal foods, original Japanese books were published and concept of medicinal foods became firmly established in Japan at the end of the seventeenth century.

Furthermore, Kaibara Ekken wrote "Yojokun (Rules for nurturing health)" and proposed a health diet which is the aim of modern *Yakuzen*.