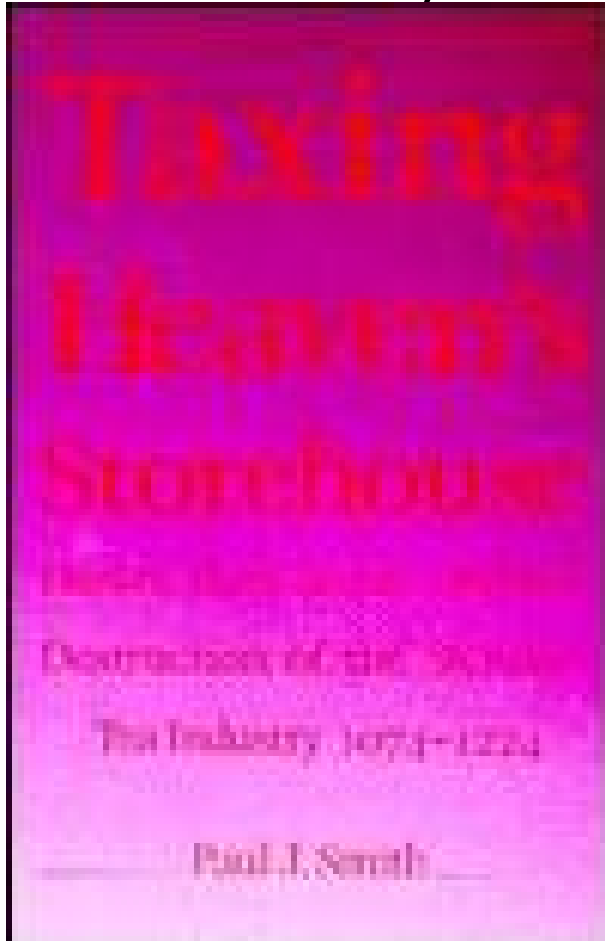




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by Paul Jakov Smith



Title : Taxing Heaven's
Storehouse: Horses,
Bureaucrats, And The
Destruction Of The Sichuan
Tea Industry, 1074 1224

Author : Paul Jakov Smith

ISBN : 9780674406414

Page : None

Language :

Synopsis :

Tea-growing was a prosperous industry in Sichuan when Wang Anshi's New Policies created a Tea and Horse Agency to buy up Sichuanese tea and trade it to Tibetan tribesmen for cavalry horses. At first the highly autonomous Agency not only acquired the needed horses but made a profit. After the



Jurchen conquest of North China, however, market realities changed and the Agency's Tea-growing was a prosperous industry in Sichuan when Wang Anshi's New Policies created a Tea and Horse Agency to buy up Sichuanese tea and trade it to Tibetan tribesmen for cavalry horses. At first the highly autonomous Agency not only acquired the needed horses but made a profit. After the Jurchen conquest of North China, however, market realities changed and the Agency's once-successful policies ruined tea farmers, failed to meet quotas for horses, and ran a deficit. The Agency made entrepreneurs out of bureaucrats but ultimately became ruinously tyrannical as the system of state rewards and punishments drove its personnel to actions that crippled key sectors of the economy.

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