

Preservation of Traditional Cultural Heritage in East Asia from the Perspective of Religious Culture: The Case of Preservation of Tea Ceremony Culture in China and Japan

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Abstract: Tea originated in China, and after years of dissemination and development, it has gradually become a beverage widely consumed around the world, and tea culture has also become an important part of the world's cultural history. Japan, which is adjacent to China, occupies an important position in the field of global tea culture in terms of both quantity and quality due to its in-depth study and inheritance of tea culture. This paper will analyze the integration and preservation of the tea ceremony cultural heritage of China and Japan from three levels, namely, the position and role of religious culture in the tea ceremony culture of East Asia, the influence of Zen Buddhism on the tea ceremony culture of China and Japan, and the practical path for the integration and preservation of the tea ceremony culture and Zen Buddhism, by means of the research methods of literature study and fieldwork.

1 INTRODUCTION

The development of East Asian culture is mostly based on the traditional culture of the nation, which shows that the formation of a cultural phenomenon is based on the traditional culture of the nation and lays a solid foundation for the development of culture. There are many similarities between China and Japan in the development of tea culture, Chinese “Ru Shi Dao” and Japanese “Zen” culture together with the fusion of tea culture in China and Japan, for the formation and development of tea culture in China and Japan laid a solid foundation.

2 THE POSITION AND ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE TEA CEREMONY CULTURE

2.1 The Influence of Confucianism and Buddhism on Chinese Tea Ceremony Culture

Confucianism originated from the period of “Hundred Schools of Thought” and is the ideological foundation that has had the greatest influence on

Chinese society for thousands of years. Confucianism puts forward and advocates such spiritual pursuits as positive enterprising, self-improvement, self-improvement, and cultivation of one's character. Since Emperor Wu of Han Dynasty, Confucianism has formally established its dominant position and played a crucial role in the formation of Chinese tea culture. Along with the development of the times Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism were gradually integrated together, and the integration of the three schools laid the foundation for the development of traditional Chinese culture. The Chinese tea ceremony culture closely combines the ideas of “Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism” and integrates their concepts into the tea ceremony culture (Zhao, 2024).

Confucianism emphasizes the idea of mediocrity and harmony, the pursuit of a perfect personality, and a positive and optimistic attitude towards life, and the literati came into contact with these ideas and held them up as a model. Lu Yu, who was honored as the “Sage of Tea” by later generations, in the process of finishing and writing the “Tea Classic”, skillfully integrated the moral concepts advocated by Confucianism of restoring self-respect and cultivating one's moral character into the art of tea and put forward noble character requirements for tea tasters, in addition to the ten virtues of tea, which

were also put forward by the poet Liu Zhenliang of the Tang Dynasty. In addition, the “Ten Virtues of Tea” proposed by Liu Zhenliang, a poet in the Tang Dynasty, is a concrete embodiment of Confucianism's pursuit of social utility in Chinese tea culture (Cai, 2019). In the following two thousand years, these deeply influenced by the Confucian culture of the tea ceremony culture has become the core concept of Chinese tea people continue to promote, advocate and follow.

Taoism advocates the concept of “the unity of heaven and man”, believing that matter and spirit, nature and man are a harmonious whole, and advocating the integration of things and me, and the unity of situations. Lu Yu in the “tea scripture” cited a short story to explain the connotation of tea culture, the story tells of Xian Prince Luan invited Yuzhang Prince Shang together to visit the Bakong Mountain Tuanji Taoist, into the view of the Tuanji Taoist to the tea hospitality, the Tang Dynasty monk Jiao Ran in the “tea song Zheng Rong” in the vivid portrayal and praise of the Taoist tea ceremony, by the influence of Taoist thought, the ancient Chinese tea people to follow the Taoist ideology of unity between man and nature, this philosophical thinking into the tea ceremony (Li, 2018). Influenced by Taoist thinking, ancient Chinese tea drinkers followed Taoist thinking, focusing on the unity of man and nature, and integrated this philosophical thinking into tea culture, thus making Chinese tea culture a highly integrated cultural form of natural sentiment and humanism. When tasting tea, tea people encourage themselves with the lightness, bitterness and all-encompassing character of tea, not obsessing over the immediate gains and losses, and pursuing harmony with nature. This spirit of enlightenment through tea embodies the profound meaning of traditional tea culture.

The Buddhists, on the other hand, have mostly played a role in spreading the practice. In ancient times, monks would drink tea in order to prevent drowsiness while meditating and to keep themselves energized. In addition, Lu Yu, the “Sage of Tea”, also compiled the tea drinking culture learned in the temples into the “Tea Sutra” and passed it on to the general public.

2.2 Influence of Zen on Japanese Tea Ceremony Culture

Japanese tea culture was brought back to Japan by monastic monks around the 8th century A.D. after they had finished their studies in China, and thus Japanese tea culture has been associated with Zen Buddhism from the very beginning. Zen evolved

from the foundational roots of Japanese tea culture to its ultimate purpose.

The Japanese Tea Ceremony puts forward the concept of “Zen and Tea”, i.e. “Zen is Tea Ceremony and Tea Ceremony is Zen”, and people can achieve the purpose of Tea Ceremony through the practice of Zen (Chen, 2003). Specifically, the Japanese tea ceremony culture combines both spiritual and external aspects and pays more attention to external Zen while pursuing self-cultivation. One of the most important components of the Japanese tea room, the hanging scrolls placed in the niches, are derived from the statues or paintings of Buddha placed and enshrined in Buddhist temples. Therefore, the Japanese tea ceremony is classically and religiously organized as a form of hospitality (Li, 2013). By serving tea to the guests, it leads to a deep spiritual and spiritual connection. However, unlike the Chinese tea ceremony, the Japanese tea ceremony is not universal and is strongly class-based.

3 ZEN AND TEA CEREMONY CULTURE

3.1 The Origin and Spread of Chinese Tea Ceremony Culture

As the originator of the tea ceremony culture, China has a strong and important position, in which the ideas of “harmony, quietness, happiness and truth” have also played a decisive role in the formation of the tea ceremony culture ideas in other East Asian countries. Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, three schools of thought and theory on the formation and development of tea culture each played a unique role. Confucianism advocates treating guests with tea, inspiring people with tea, and promoting positive worldly and interpersonal relationships through the tea ceremony; Taoism seeks a transcendent realm away from the hustle and bustle, and emptiness through the tasting of tea; Buddhism combines tea with Zen, and enlightens the life with the help of tea feasts, in order to achieve the purpose of understanding the mind and seeing the nature of the world. The essence of these three schools of thought converge and merge in tea culture, forming a common core of harmony, calmness and sincere humanism, giving Chinese tea culture a unique depth and charm.

“Harmony, quietness, joy and truth” are the core ideas of Chinese tea culture. Among them, “harmony” is the soul of tea culture, representing the harmony and symbiosis between human and nature,

and between human and human; “quietness” is an important way to practice tea culture, and to achieve inner peace and serenity through the meditation of tea tasting; “joy” embodies the feelings of the heart in the practice of tea culture, referring to the pleasure and comfort obtained in the process of tea tasting; and “truth” is the core idea of the Chinese tea culture. “embodies the spiritual feeling in the practice of tea culture, referring to the pleasure and comfort gained in the process of tea tasting; “true” is the ultimate realm of tea culture, expressing the return to nature and the pursuit of sincere simplicity of the spiritual ideal.

It is worth mentioning that the Chinese tea ceremony culture can be compatible with different social levels. Among them, the “tea treasures” are multiple embodiments of tea culture from the perspective of different groups. Literati talk about tea culture, often pay more attention to the tea carried by the literary and emotional support, and then enjoy the “tea” fun; while the Buddhist monks through the tea to inspire the reasoning, Zen enlightenment of the Taoist; Taoism is more important to the efficacy of the tea, that it has a health and longevity role. The common people are more concerned about the role of tea, which is to clear the heat. From this, we can see that Chinese tea culture can provide different people with physical and mental pleasure and fulfillment, and it is precisely because of its popularity that it has been enjoyed by people from all walks of life.

3.2 Japanese Tea Ceremony Aesthetics and Zen Philosophy

Influenced by the Chinese tea ceremony culture, Japan has also developed a tea ceremony culture centered on the ideas of “harmony, respect, purity and silence”, which represents the basic philosophy of the Japanese tea ceremony and is known as the “Four Noble Truths” or “Four Rules” of the tea ceremony. It is known as the “Four Noble Truths” or “Four Rules” of the tea ceremony. This spirit was first proposed by Murata Jumitsu as “honor, respect, purity, and silence”, and later changed to “harmony, respect, purity, and silence” by Chirikyū, and was established as the basic spirit of the Japanese Tea Ceremony. Dr. Teng Jun pointed out in “An Introduction to the Japanese Tea Ceremony Culture” that “the core of the tea ceremony is ‘nothing’, and ‘harmony, respect, purity and silence’ are four figurative phenomena derived from ‘nothing’. and the four figurative phenomena of ‘peace, respect, and tranquility’ are derived from ‘nothing’ and become the tangible embodiment of ‘nothing’.” These concepts

further give rise to the various forms of the art of the tea ceremony, such as tea utensils, tea snacks, tea rooms, tea ordering, and sencha.

In Japanese, the word “Wo” means harmony, harmony, peace and harmony. As early as 604 A.D. in the “seventeen constitutions”, Prince Sentoku clearly put forward the concept of “peace is precious”, in the Japanese tea ceremony, “and” is mainly manifested in harmony and harmony, emphasizing the harmony between people and the harmony between man and nature, and the balance between man and nature, this spirit throughout every detail of the tea ceremony has become an important cornerstone of tea ceremony culture. In the Japanese Tea Ceremony, “Wo” is mainly expressed as harmony and harmony, emphasizing the harmony between people and nature, and the harmonious balance between people and nature. Jing” is the idea of Zen Buddhism, ‘Qing’ means that the place for drinking tea should be clean and tidy, and ‘Silence’ can be regarded as the deeper realm of the tea drinker, i.e., the ‘emptiness’ in Buddhism. The “emptiness” of Buddhism. These ideas established the non-downward compatibility of the Japanese tea ceremony, which is strongly class-oriented.

3.3 The Cultural Heritage of Tea Ceremony and Zen Buddhism

The Chinese tea ceremony has a long history of cultural development, but has not been able to form a unified inheritance system. On the contrary, Japan, as a “learner”, has developed a system of tea ceremony and passed it down to the present day because of its unique “family system”. The Iemoto system of the Japanese Tea Ceremony is an important factor in its continued development. The Iemoto system is a form of hereditary transmission that ensures that the skills, knowledge and spirit of the tea ceremony are passed down from generation to generation. In this system, the Iemoto is the inheritor of the tea ceremony school, and is not only responsible for teaching the skills, but is also responsible for establishing the teachings and norms of the school. The Iemoto of each school has the right to pass on the core techniques and philosophies, while maintaining the independence and character of the school. In Japan, the tea ceremony culture has evolved into the “Omotesenka”, “Satsuki Senka”, and “Musha Koro Senka” schools. The Iemoto system ensures the continuity and unity of the tea ceremony by passing it down from one generation to the next, enabling the tea ceremony to develop steadily in Japanese society and avoiding the fragmentation of the tea ceremony schools. Chirikyū

was one of the most important figures in the history of the Japanese tea ceremony. By organizing, simplifying, and standardizing the rituals of the tea ceremony, he was able to transform the tea ceremony from a recreational activity for the court nobility into an art form with unique spiritual connotations. In addition, Sen Rikyu's concepts of the tea ceremony were so far-reaching that they even became the guiding philosophy of future generations of tea ceremony schools, facilitating the transformation of the Japanese tea ceremony from an art to a cultural tradition and providing a theoretical framework for the transmission of the tea ceremony.

The inheritance of tea ceremony culture in China and Japan shows different dynamics. Although China is the origin of tea culture, it has not developed the tea ceremony culture into a complete cultural system. This is mainly because Chinese tea culture has been deeply influenced by a variety of ideas such as Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, which have different cultural connotations and ways of practicing. For example, Confucianism emphasizes etiquette and harmony, Buddhism stresses meditation and contemplation, and Taoism focuses on nature and health maintenance. These different cultural elements make Chinese tea culture local and diversified, lacking unified norms and systems. As a result, the tea ceremony culture has not formed a fixed and unified tea ceremony system as in Japan. Besides, Chinese tea culture is mainly based on daily tea drinking and socializing, tea is not only a Confucian art, but also carries multiple functions such as socializing, eating and medicine. In China, tea is a widely everyday drink, almost every family will drink tea, and in different occasions, the use of tea is also different (such as "Kung Fu Tea" ceremony, family gatherings in the tea, tea banquets, etc.), this daily routine and practical characteristics of tea culture is not easy to form a fixed rituals and strict system, such as the Japanese tea ceremony. This everyday and practical character makes it not easy for tea culture to form a fixed ritual and strict system like the Japanese tea ceremony (Hou, 2012).

4 PRACTICAL PATH OF TEA CEREMONY CULTURAL PROTECTION

4.1 Protection of Tea Ceremony Cultural Heritage

With the advance of modernization and globalization,

traditional lifestyles and cultural forms have encountered profound changes. The tea ceremony, as a traditional cultural form with a deep historical and cultural background, faces an increasingly changing social environment and the alienation of the younger generation (Li, 2019). The fast-paced lifestyle and the pressure of busy work and study in modern society have gradually weakened young people's interest in the traditional tea ceremony, and the inheritance of the tea ceremony culture is facing unprecedented difficulties (Huang, 2010). In addition, the popularity of modern beverages and the rise of commercialized tea culture have gradually marginalized the traditional tea ceremony culture, creating a conflict between traditional culture and modern consumer culture.

The transmission of the techniques of the tea ceremony relies mainly on oral transmission between masters and disciples. However, as the problem of intergenerational transmission of craftsmen and skills has become more and more prominent, many traditional tea ceremony skills are facing a crisis of disappearance. Especially under the impact of modernized production methods, many fine handcraft skills have gradually been replaced by mechanized and industrialized production methods, and the inheritance path of traditional skills is gradually broken (Teng, 1992). The disconnection of the ritual and ceremonial culture of the tea ceremony is also an important issue. Many young people lack understanding of and interest in the ceremonial requirements of the tea ceremony, leading to difficulties in passing on the important cultural connotations and spiritual values of the tea ceremony culture.

The commercialization of tea ceremony culture is another major challenge. With the spread of tea culture, the tea ceremony has gradually entered into a commercialized mode of operation. As a time-honored art form, the connotation and value of the tea ceremony culture is not fully adapted to the drive of the market economy (Mori, 1991). The over-commercialized tea ceremony often focuses on the external form of decoration and consumption, ignoring the Zen thought and cultural spirit contained behind it, resulting in the alienation and loss of tea ceremony culture. Therefore, how to protect the original flavor of the tea ceremony culture while rationally responding to modern market demand has become a difficult problem in the protection of cultural heritage.

4.2 Practical Path of Integration and Protection

The inheritance and teaching of traditional tea ceremony techniques. The teaching of traditional tea ceremony is not only teaching techniques, but also the transmission of the spirit and culture of the tea ceremony (Shynkaruk, et al., 2019). Therefore, the content of the tea ceremony should include the history of tea culture, the spirit of the tea ceremony, the use of tea utensils and tea ceremony performance and other aspects.

Virtual Reality (VR) technology can present the tea ceremony culture and Zen spirit to the global audience in an immersive way. VR technology is not only able to reproduce the traditional tea ceremony scenes, but also to display them innovatively according to different tea culture backgrounds and tea art styles, thus promoting the popularization and dissemination of tea ceremony culture.

The wide application of digital technology makes the protection and inheritance of tea ceremony culture have a more scientific way (Li, 2023). Through the construction of digital archives, the classic documents, paintings and calligraphy, tea utensils and tea ceremony performances of the tea ceremony can be preserved and disseminated in digital form. Multimedia communication platforms such as web videos, social media, and online museums enable the tea ceremony culture to spread globally across geographical boundaries.

China and Japan have deep historical ties in the transmission and preservation of tea ceremony culture. Japan's tea ceremony culture, especially the fusion of its Zen ideology with the tea ceremony, is deeply influenced by the Chinese tea ceremony. China and Japan can have more in-depth cooperation and experience exchange in cultural heritage protection.

5 CONCLUSION

Tea ceremony culture is an important cultural symbol in East Asia, especially in China and Japan, which originated and developed in China, and has been well inherited and developed in modern Japan. Tea ceremony culture is an excellent material cultural heritage, which has been inherited through the integration and development of religion and has not only brought cultural wealth to the people of China and Japan, but also left a spiritual connotation. By analyzing the origin, historical development, and current problems of the tea ceremony culture to

promote the development and inheritance of today's tea ceremony culture, we can not only leave a splendid tangible cultural heritage for future generations, but also transmit the essence of the nation to the world.

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