

Research of the Similarities between Tea and *Tai chi* in the Process of Cultural Development

Qilei Hei, Jianxin Kuang*, Jie Li

Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qingdao, China

* Corresponding author

Abstract: In the process of its cultural development, tea culture and *Tai Chi* culture, as representatives of Chinese traditional culture, have similar cultural nature, forms and experiences. With tea and *Tai Chi* as the research object and Chinese excellent traditional culture inheritance development project as the background, this article aims to provide some reference for the development and inheritance of traditional culture.

Keywords: tea; *Tai Chi*; tea culture; cultural development; cultural heritage

1. Cultural Similarities between Tea and Tai Chi

It is said that tea was found when Shennong (the father of agriculture in Chinese traditional legends) tried a wide variety of herbs and it is known by the west as the "magic oriental leaves". In the process of its development, tea is deeply nourished by the traditional Chinese culture and is endowed with multiple humanistic thought. Known as a philosophical boxing, *Tai Chi* is a traditional sport developed on the land of China and closely connected with the tradition of the Chinese traditional culture.

Tea culture, as an agent culture with tea as the carrier, embodies the Chinese traditional moral and cultural spirit. *Tai Chi* culture is also a kind of agent culture with boxing as the carrier. The Chinese traditional morality it contains has been widely researched and highly praised.

"The etiquette" is an important aspect of Confucian culture. It is a common way of life as well as a popular form of etiquette in interpersonal communication that we would offer tea to show our respect to the guests when they pay a visit. The etiquettes and customs in tea culture are not only indispensable for communication in tea activities but also a form of education in humanity with tea culture. People can learn etiquettes such as not pouring a full cup and treating guests with tea and also cultivate our taste with tea.

The "fist-palm salute" in *Tai Chi* culture, based on "respect", requires the basic "virtue" of practitioners and impart to them the socialist core values. In *Talk of Chen style tai chi chuan*, there are some warnings for the learners. For example, respect is indispensable in learning *Tai Chi*. Without respect, we are turning a cold shoulder to our teachers and friends on the surface. It would also stagnate our body physically. Without

restraints of our nature, how can we learn the art of *Tai Chi*? There are also some other suggestions such as learning etiquettes before learning skills, practicing virtues before practicing martial arts, not learning with immoral people and not teaching martial art to people without virtues. Both tea culture and *Tai Chi* culture recommend and inherit a lot of traditional culture, influencing the learners' values silently.

About "tea", in riddle-guessing, the most widely circulated riddle is "people in the grass". From the riddle, it can be seen that the harmonious combination of nature and human beings is the nature of tea culture. Through the ages, in the process of long development of tea culture, tea drinkers have endowed tea with a cool and morally lofty temperament, calming people down and concentrating people's attention. As a result, many people consider the combination of tea and philosophy is the highest level and pursuit of cultivating one's taste. The humanities education based on this can let people have better understanding of the "nature and humanity" and better comprehension of themselves. The harmony between man and nature in *Tai Chi* includes not only the natural rules that *tiao* begets one, one begets two, two begets three and three begets everything but also emphasizes guidance in the light of its general trend in a light, gentle and slow way to achieve fluency. *Tai ji* is mainly characterized by silence and softness, in which silence refers to a kind of ease and calmness and softness refers to solidness with softness and flexibility. We can build up our body as well as cultivate our quality and learn to appreciate life more by exercising *Tai Chi*.

2. Similar External Manifestation

Both have external carriers.

The external carrier of tea is tea ware. The choice of tea wares, whether they are gold or silver, expensive or cheap, should be better able to exhibit the characteristics of the tea itself. We should choose different kinds of tea wares according to different tea. Tea art is an artistic expression of tea using human body movements as a medium. The external support of *Tai Chi* is the practitioner's body. In the process of practicing *Tai Chi*, the movement style of *Tai Chi* is expressed through physical activities. Therefore, both tea and *Tai Chi* use the most natural support to express the simplest things.

The performance of the "art" and "technique".

"Tea art" is an important means to set off the theme of

tea. It can not only enhance the temperament of tea, but also enhance the artistic appeal. And "tea" is a way of making the body absorb the nutrients in tea by a life style of making tea and drinking tea, in order to achieve the effect of strengthening the body; "Yi" is to make tea and drinking tea to achieve higher spiritual needs, so as to soothe the body and mind and cultivate temperament. Tai Chi is a classic martial arts. The most fundamental basis is "wu" and "shu." The so-called "surrender people without force", in the era of cold weapons, was an important quality for people. It means that they should possess the courage to pick up weapons and the benevolence to lay down weapons. "Skill" refers to skills and methods. Through the guidance of skills and methods, practitioners can understand the objective laws of nature and society so as to acquire pleasant physical and mental self-cultivation. Whether it is "tea art" or "martial arts", the most fundamental is to use "tea" or "wu" to pursue "art" or "technique" in spirit.

Similar internal forms.

Silence.

Tea is a kind of mood and taste is a style. In the messy life, it is an enjoyment to make a cup of tea, watch the tea dancing in the water, sip the tea flowing between your lips and teeth, let the tea fragrance wash away the ups and downs, and settle your thoughts in the aftertaste. This kind of simple and elegant life style will make people more open-minded and optimistic. It is the so-called "half a cup of tea to view life, and a calm mind to see the world"! Therefore, tranquility is the prerequisite for entering the realm of tea art, and it is also the foundation of tea art cultivation.

Tai Chi is also a kind of exercise for tranquility. "Calm mind and relaxed body" are the basic requirement of Tai Chi practice. "Calmness" and "relaxation" are complementary to each other. Through the adjustment of breathing and the guidance of consciousness, the inner peace can be achieved to bring the "relaxation" of movements; similarly, only when the movement is relaxed and the breath sinks can the heart get rid of distracting thoughts, acquire calmness and concentrate on the spirit. This is the truth in Quan Yanzhong's "Calm mind can bring clear brain".

Harmony.

"Harmony" is the essence of tea culture.

It means harmony and integrity. Tea art performance requires quiet, elegant and beautiful Chinese classical charm, smooth and stretched rhythm, and matching music. In the communication process of tea art activities, participants will unconsciously adjust their physical and mental states to adapt to various exchanges and activities and express the overall beauty of tea art activities. This kind of harmony is promoted by environmental factors, and it is also the result of the influence of tea art activity itself, which enables the participants to achieve a perfect integration of body and mind, and get along with each other more harmoniously. The emotional exchange and communication between people can better promote the construction of a harmonious society.

It means peace and respect. In *Tea Classic* of Tang

Dynasty, Lu Yu put forward the saying that "tea is the kind of drink that is most suitable for those who practice frugality", which lifted tea from the necessities of everyday life of common people to a spiritual level. Therefore, whether it is Japan's "peace and respect and quietness", or South Korea's "peace and frugality", or the "incorruptibility and respect" proposed by Mr. Zhuang Wanfang, a contemporary tea expert in China, are the core of tea culture-the cultivation of morality. Tea culture classics such as "Ten Virtues in Tea Culture" and "Eight Virtues in Tasting Tea" are all about "tea virtues". "Harmony" means getting along with sincerity, humility and moderation; "respect" means respecting others and loving the people and keeping courtesy and respectful. Chinese tea art regulates the etiquette and quality of participants in tea events, exercises the politeness of receiving people and things, reflects the basic moral requirements of socialist core values, and conveys the spiritual civilization of Chinese tea ethics.

"Harmony" is also the pursuit of Tai Chi culture.

It means harmony and coexistence. Yin and Yang is the core idea of Tai Chi. It can be seen from the composition of the Tai Chi diagram that the Tai Chi diagram is composed of two fishes, yin and yang, which are connected end to end and transformed into each other. The yin fish has one eye of the yang fish, and the yang fish has one eye of the yin fish, which is the so-called "Yin in the Yang and Yang in the Yin". In the process of practicing Tai Chi, it is also necessary to keep movement in stillness and stillness in movement to achieve harmonious co-existence.

It means respect and harmony. The etiquette in Tai Chi originates from traditional martial arts education and is a manifestation of traditional Chinese ethics and morals. In traditional martial arts, under the ethical framework that "teacher and apprentice are like father and son", "filial piety" is the most important manifestation of "father and son morality". This traditional martial arts ethic has been continuously strengthened and inherited in the process of imparting skills, and gradually "from filial piety to respect, from respect to obedience, from obedience to knowing etiquette", it finally formed the ethical norms of traditional martial arts" and shaped the practitioners who follow the etiquette [1]. Therefore, the "harmony" in Tai Chi implies both respect and harmony. Although this kind of "harmony" has its limitations, it also has some effect of local social management, which has a certain positive significance for the construction of a harmonious society.

"Zen"

Zen is a Buddhist term that refers directly to the human heart, instantaneous enlightenment [2], instantaneous meaning generation, a concentrated expression of the beauty of life, the origin of beauty [3], and it emphasizes passing from heart to heart.

Blindly taste of Zen tea in tea art

With plain physical appearance, clear color and sweet yet slightly fragrant and bitter taste, tea is often compared to our life. Life is like tea with a mixed bittersweet taste. As a national intangible cultural heritage, tea art is not only a kind of art, but also a kind of culture; it is not only

a method of self-cultivation, but also a state of understanding life. When practicing tea art, the highest level of tea ceremony is to cultivate the body with tea, cultivate the heart with tea, and reach the original mind. Zen is the same. "Zen" is both a practice and a destination; it is both a method and a result. There is a saying in "Cha Zen Gossip": "During the leisure time of drinking tea, all the troubles of the world have disappeared. What is left between the teeth and the heart is only the quiet and elegant Zen." There is also a saying: "The burning of cigarettes inspires people to think and their thoughts would wander far away. Fun comes from quietness and we would feel ourselves different and rough. The same is true for tea." Zen is also a kind of artistic conception, and its state of mind is "quiet observation and active life" [4]. "Stone Lao Sansheng dreams, tea dry and tastes Zen", the combination of Zen and Chinese traditional tea culture has formed a unique Zen tea culture, which has a profound impact on the formation and development of tea ceremony cultures around the world.

The integration of Zen and Wu in Tai Chi

Tai Chi carries the essence of too many traditional national cultures. It is known as "Zhequan", which mainly shapes people's physical coordination, spiritual appearance and classical simplicity. The training process of Tai Chi is also a process of enlightenment, "from familiarity to understanding strength, from understanding strength to level and spirit" [5]; it is also a process of long-term practice in which everyday practice is necessary and without it, all the effort would be wasted. Therefore, the process of practicing martial arts is often referred to as a process of practicing Zen. In the process of "enlightenment", the "inner mind" can appreciate the changing law of things that Dao begets one, one begets two, two begets three, three begets everything and will understand the "Tao law of nature" and "the harmony of man and nature" better.

3. The Similar Inheritance Experience of Tea and Tai Chi

All are part of the traditional Chinese culture with unique national characteristics

In its long development process, tea not only exists as a drink; more importantly, it integrates with the traditional culture of the Chinese nation and has the attributes of the traditional Chinese culture. In 2008, tea art was approved by the State Council and included in the second batch of national intangible cultural heritage list. Tai Chi is also the same. It is rooted in the land of China. The traditional culture of the Chinese nation has endowed it with a unique cultural background, making it not only a national traditional sports with unique national characteristics, but also a traditional cultural treasure. In 2006, Tai Chi was included in the first batch of national intangible cultural heritage lists.

In the long years of immersion, the tea culture and Tai Chi culture have formed their unique national temperament under the strong influence of the Chinese nation's national genes, national cultural bloodline and

national spiritual lifeline, and both have become the Chinese national tradition with unique national characteristics. The traditional cultural inheritance and educational functions brought about by it are also in line with the core values of current socialism.

All are widely accepted by people all over the world

China is considered to be the birthplace of tea and has abundant tea resources since ancient times. Nowadays, tea is not only China's "national drink", but also ranks among the world's three major beverages. It has a large number of tea drinkers and is widely cultivated all over the world. At the same time, as a form of expression of traditional culture, tea culture has also been given various missions such as cultural inheritance and exchange, which enhances the emotional exchanges between participants and promotes the construction of a civilized and harmonious society. Tai Chi is the same. It is a traditional sport born and developed in China. With the ability to build physical fitness on the outside, self-cultivation on the inside, and the function of disseminating traditional Chinese culture, it is more and more loved by people all over the world.

The popularity among young people needs to be improved

In today's fierce multicultural conflict, young people between 18 and 25 are vigorous, open-minded, active in thinking, liable to accept new things, and pay more attention to their own feelings. With the accelerating pace of life, work, and study, young people seem to have no extra time to drink tea, chat, and practice Tai Chi; and with the rapid development of the Internet, they are also accustomed to communicating with each other by mobile phones, computers, etc. communicate with. Most common people are fond of wine and who can appreciate the fragrance of tea? In this general environment of seeking novelty, difference, and individual development, for most young people, intangible cultural heritage projects such as tea art and Tai Chi are words familiar to the young people and the culture in it, the connotation and rituals, whether in breadth or in depth, need to be further deepened. Therefore, How to make young people fall in love with tea culture, fall in love with Tai Chi, and consciously become promoters of the inheritance and development of traditional culture is a problem that needs to be solved urgently.

4. Conclusion

Both tea and Tai Chi are rooted in the fertile soil of the Chinese nation, deeply nourished by the traditional Chinese culture, and become a culture with unique national characteristics. Articles are used to express Tao and culture can influence people. Today, when we vigorously promote the inheritance and development of Chinese excellent traditional culture, studying the similarity of tea and Tai Chi in the cultural inheritance is conducive to discovering the problems of traditional culture in the inheritance and development, and summarizing them to better promote the dissemination of traditional culture. It enhances the soft power of national culture and realizes the Chinese dream of the great

rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

References

- [1] Chen Baolei, Wang Gang. A Sociological Interpretation of the Traditional Martial Arts Mentoring System from the Perspective of "Family Culture". *Journal of Shenyang Institute of Physical Education* **2020**, 39(4), 129-136.
- [2] Du Jiwen. Buddhism and Chinese. Culture//Editorial Room of Literature and History Knowledge. Library of Literature and History Knowledge. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company **1988**, 236.
- [3] Li Tiandao. Zen: the realm of life and the highest aesthetic realm. *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* **2000**, 37(6), 62-70.
- [4] Zong Baihua. A walk in aesthetics. Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing House **1981**, 65.
- [5] Wang Zongyue. On Taijiquan. The General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council. Opinions on the Implementation of the Inheritance and Development Project of Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture. **2017**, 1.