

A Probe into the Causes of Tea Culture in Tang Dynasty of China

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Abstract

There are many articles discussing the formation of the tea culture in the Tang Dynasty. The understanding of the reasons for the formation of the tea culture in the Tang Dynasty can be summarized in several aspects: first, the promotion of Buddhism. The author believes that the formation and development of a culture should not be separated from three aspects: the first is the foundation, the second is the condition, and the third is the need. Then we study the formation of tea culture in Tang Dynasty from these three aspects.

Keywords

Tea, Buddhism, Tang Dynasty.

1. Introduction

The economic foundation of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty—the development of tea and the popularity of tea drinking

The level of social productivity is a fundamental factor restricting the development of tea production in ancient China, as well as a fundamental factor restricting cultural development.

The first is the development of agriculture, especially the development of grain production in the south, to promote the development of tea. The second is the expansion of tea consumption and promotion of production development. The third is the prosperity of tea trade, which promotes the development of tea production. Li Ting was quoted by He Lili in "A Brief Talk on the Reasons for the Rapid Development of Tea Production in the Tang Dynasty": "Tea as an excellent drink has been known and used long before the Tang Dynasty. But the prosperity of the tea industry It was a matter of the Tang Dynasty; and pointed out that due to the lack of agricultural productivity at that time, it was impossible to produce large quantities of economic crops such as tea, so the tea drinking style had appeared in the Six Dynasties, but it was not promoted.[1] Therefore, only when tea can gain considerable manpower and land from the production of food crops can tea be developed accordingly. The author thinks this statement is correct. Before the Tang Dynasty, China's tea production areas—the Yangtze River Basin, Zhejiang, Guangdong and Guangxi, and the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau—were sparsely populated, and the level of productivity was relatively low. Only in the Tang Dynasty did great development. In particular, food production has been more than self-sufficient. The South has become a grain export destination, and a large amount of grain has been transported to the North. In this way, it is possible to expand the scale of tea production in the south.

The consumption of intergenerational tea has gradually expanded. Especially in the Kaiyuan period, the tea drinking custom was formed in the north. After the "custom expensive tea", the consumption of tea increased greatly, which stimulated the development of tea production.[2] With the production and consumption of tea, there is bound to be a commercial trade in tea. Commercial development in the Tang Dynasty is also an important reason for promoting tea development.

Social conditions for the formation of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty: poetry flourishes, Buddhism flourishes, government advocates tea

First of all, the prosperity of Tang poetry is the social condition that formed the tea culture. There are many poets in the Tang Dynasty, and there are countless poems. Only in the Poems of Tang Dynasty, there are more than 2,000 poets and more than 48,000 poems. According to incomplete statistics,

there are 391 tea poems in the Tang Dynasty and 113 authors. [3]The tea poems of the Tang Dynasty cover all aspects of tea, describing the growing environment of tea trees, tea-making technology, cooking skills, tea tribute, famous tea, tea politics, trade, tea tasting, customs, etiquette, tea ceremony and tea party, etc, which full of rich content. The prosperity of Tang poetry is the condition for the formation of tea culture, and it is also an important manifestation of the prosperity of tea culture.

Secondly, the prosperity of Buddhism promoted the development of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty. The great development of Buddhism in the Tang Dynasty contributed to the formation of tea culture. And the role of Buddhism in tea culture is only helping to fuel the situation. It will not be that the prosperity of Zen as taught by agronomists has directly promoted the widespread popularity of tea drinking customs. Tea interacts Zen, absorbing and promoting each other, and tea culture is produced.[4] Why? The reason is simple. The collaboration of tea and Zen, together with mutual promotion and complementation are unquestionable facts, but it does not mean that there is no tea without Buddhism, in fact, there is no Buddhism without tea. Tea and Buddhism are two different things, and there is no necessary connection between them.

In addition, the imperial court advocated the important social conditions for the formation of the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty in the tea market: the amount of tea used by the imperial court increased year by year, and the amount of tribute tea was increased. Nobles have become the object of tea giving, and those who have been rewarded by the emperor are also grateful, as an honor. The promotion of the imperial examination system adopted from the Tang Dynasty became driving force too. The court sent tea to the examination room as a sign of care, and everyone called tea as *grass*.

2. The need for tea culture in the Tang Dynasty

Tea culture was created because of the need for people, but also exists and develops for the need. As mentioned above, in the Tang Dynasty, different tea culture groups and group members formed in China because of their like-mindedness. In fact, their respective hobbies are similar. For example, some literati have a hobby for tea, and hobby becomes a need for the society.

When Yan Zhenqing was appointed as the Huzhou governor, he often invited nearby friends to drink tea, including Yan Shiqing, Yan Zhenqing, Lu Yu, Jiao Ran, Lu Shixiu, Li Yan, and others to discuss social affairs.[5] They also left the famous poems for the descendants, which are the treasures of human history and culture.

"The Book of the New Tang Dynasty" contains: "Lu Yu, another last name is Hongjian Yu is addicted to tea, and has three classics. A pottery maker in Gongxian county, mostly making porcelain dolls, had an idea of making the face of doll look like Mr.Lu Yu. The ordinary citizens buy dozens of tea ware because of it. The merchant-made Lu Yu porcelain that sells tea and tea wares to promote tea and tea wares is, of course, a cultural phenomenon that arises because of business needs.

These are two superficial examples of society's need for tea culture, apparently because of popular demand. In fact, people's needs for tea culture are multi-level, there are direct needs, and indirect needs to be initiated too. And there is a need from spiritual level and material aspect. To make more friends and to memorize ancestors, through the medium of tea is the spiritual need. To make a living and to do business through tea horse trading is material need.

The role of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty

Tao Dechen, a renowned Chinese scholar studied the historical status of the tea culture in the Tang Dynasty. In fact, the three aspects he summarized were part of the functions of the tea culture in the Tang Dynasty or part of the role played by the tea culture.

First, the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty was an innovation based on the ideas of inheritance and development of ancient tea culture, which was highly integrated, systematic, and operable. The tea culture of the Tang Dynasty has its foundations; it has greatly influenced the trend of the tea culture of the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Second, the tea culture in the Tang Dynasty was extremely open and dynamic. The outstanding elements of different thoughts and cultures are open-minded and integrated into the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty, so that the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty has a strong vitality. It is because of compatibility that the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty has an openness and broad affinity. At the same time, the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty was also an extremely driving force, strengthening the exchanges and cooperation of various nationalities and strata is conducive to enhancing feelings, dissolving conflicts and enhancing cohesion.

Third, the tea culture of the Tang Dynasty has a strong radiation. Tea tree and tea drinking customs are special products of China, which spread to the surrounding countries such as Japan and Korea along with tea culture during the Tang Dynasty.

3. Conclusion

In the introduction part, the author talked about the function of tea culture. Generally, it has three functions: first, tea culture promotes the development of tea; second, tea culture promotes social civilization; third, tea culture promotes international exchange. These three functions are also important functions of tea culture in the Tang Dynasty.

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