

Chapter 4

The Spirit of Chinese Tea Ceremony

People who have watched a performance of the Japanese tea ceremony often ask: Why is it called tea ceremony in Japan and tea art in China? Is it because China has no tea ceremony, or that the Chinese performance is not as qualified as the Japanese one? In fact, the order is **reversed**. A Japanese friend of tea culture circles said, "China is the birthplace of the tea ceremony. One of her children ran to Japan, and achieved **gratifying** results." The words are correct, for the tea ceremony really originates in China. The questions arise because of a lack of knowledge about the development of tea culture, but also because of the different understanding of "**dao**" among the Chinese and Japanese. According to the Chinese, "dao" is the nature, origin and law of a thing. "The way of Nature is invisible," so the Chinese do not name a thing "dao" easily. To the Japanese, "dao" means skills: flower arrangement is called "flower way," and **wresting** is called "judo." As a cultural activity, tea performance is also called "dao." We Chinese people believe that the artistic process of drinking tea is **merely** a form, which tends to be **superficial**, while the intent is to express the inner spirit. We also regard tea art and tea ceremony as different **aspects** of a problem. Tea art is a visible material activity, but only if spiritual force is aroused in the process can it be called dao. Therefore, I believe that the core of tea culture is the "visible art and

invisible dao.” In fact, Lu Yu,, the Saint of Tea Culture, and other experts of the past dynasties **manifested** the spirit through the process of tea culture. To explain it more clearly, I would like to introduce the spiritual concepts first.

The spirit of Chinese tea ceremony is a broad and profound system absorbing the cream of Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist thought which fully demonstrates the Chinese traditional idea of the close integration and interaction of the material and the spiritual.

Confucian Thoughts and the Spirit of Chinese Tea Ceremony

Each nation has its own unique cultural system and individual characteristics. Great differences exist in the orientation of culture and values between the East and West. The West advocates fire and power, while China is characterized as peaceful ,gentle and kind, firm and **tenacious**. These qualities are fully shown in the golden mean and harmony, the characteristics of Confucian thought. Tea, which is gentle and peaceful, accords with these characteristics. Though Taoism and Buddhism have played important roles in the development of tea culture, Confucian thought is regarded as the core of the spirit of Chinese tea ceremony, which is **demonstrated** in the following four aspects.

Tea's Gentle and Peaceful Characteristics Embody the Golden

Mean of the Confucian School

It is said that Westerners are open and enthusiastic, and their **dispositions** are like wine, while we Easterners, **sober**, sensible, gentle and **enduring**, are like tea. We also **advocate** getting along with each other in a friendly and harmonious way. Therefore, Westerners stress individual struggle; Easterners, **collectivism**. Easterners **attributes** in Chinese tea culture **prominently** reflects. We should get along with each other just as man and nature should be in harmony. The Confucianists introduced this thought into tea ceremony, advocating the creation of a harmonious atmosphere through the drinking of tea. The characteristics of tea and water are similar : though it seems to be delicate, water is very **magnanimous**; though tea is only an ordinary drink, people will learn to be **tolerant** and understanding through drinking it. Therefore, in ancient times, imperial courts entertained foreign **envoys** with tea, while in modern times, people still offer tea to guests to express their friendliness and to strengthen **solidarity**. In China, tea parties are held in institutions and factories and the end of a year. At these parties, managers drink tea together with staff, and have heart-to-heart talks to get to know each other's viewpoints better and to express their solicitude and understanding. Many disagreements can be solved at such parties.

The Confucianists advocated the **golden mean** : that is , people should approach problems from all angles so as not to go to extremes. The mean was

highlighted in tea culture. Although water and fire seem to be incompatible, Lu Yu stressed their unitarity. How could one boil water without fire? And how could a person make tea without water? Therefore, Lu Yu moulded wind animals, firebirds, fish and water on teapots, showing the unitarity of wind, fire and water. Fire is fanned by wind, water boiled by fire, and tea brewed by water. Lu Yu's viewpoint originated from the Book of Changes—"first of the five books." According to it, wind was xun(); fire, li() and water, kan(). The fire could only burn vigorously when wind blew under the teapot. Xun and li were jointly called ding (), which could brew food and drink. Fire and water were jointly called jiji(), expressing the idea that everything was ready. Fire rises while water falls. However, Chinese people exchange their positions. Our social ideal is to realize universal harmony in the world; Nature is made up of gold wood, water, fire and earth, which are called "the fire elements," and "harmonious five elements" is our conception of nature. Lu Yu advocated tea culture, and believed that the state would be unified only if people got along with each other harmoniously, and diseases would be eliminated only if the five elements were harmonious.

Under the guidance of such thoughts, the spirit of solidarity and harmony is carried out in each link of tea culture. The painting of 100 Children drawn by Hanchen depicted 100 lovely children drinking tea while playing, symbolizing that all Chinese ethnic groups get along with each other. Tea experts express the thought through a tea set. People call teapot "tea

mother,” and teacups , “tea son,” showing that our motherland cares for each of her children. In the Qing Dynasty, **Chen Mingyuan** made a teapot, whose body was made of the **tightly-bounded** roots of three old trees. The teapot shared three roots, a pot of water and a lid, expressing the idea that “it is impossible to break 10 pairs of chopsticks **simultaneously**,” and that all ethnic groups of China were linked together bby the same root. The Chinese regard it as the spirit of tea culturethat man’s nature is good at birth. People all over the world may draw inspiration from tea culture to improve their relations.

Chinese Tea Ceremony Is a Happy Cultural Activity

The Japanese tea ceremony mainly absorbed the elements of Buddhist thought in Chinese tea culture, and stressed bitterness and quietness. Chinese tea culture, however, is full of happiness, for it fully absorbed the magnanimous Confucian outlook on life.

The Chinese believe in **pantheism**, and regard all **mortals** that have made contributions to mankind as gods after they die. In other words, Chinese gods are **phantoms** of mortals, so we believe in the **self-perpetuating** strength of mankind. As history continues, we should place our hopes on the later generations to fulfill unaccomplished aims. We are always confident in the future, and have a deep love for life. Therefore, in the Chinese tea ceremony, imperial **concubines** and **princesses** in the imperial palace could

drink tea while appreciating music; scholar, drink tea while playing musical instruments, painting, **chanting** poems or appreciating beautiful natural scenery. Tea-drinking was also a happy family occasion. Even monks took pleasure in drinking tea. **Jiao Ran**, a famous monk of the Tang Dynasty who was a friend of Lu Yu, helped to create Chinese tea culture with Lu Yu and other scholars. Instead of stressing strict **ascetic** practices, he advocated drinking tea while appreciating fragrant flowers, the bright moon and beautiful music, which was full of the human touch. He was also a famous poet, and often composed poems in reply to friends at tea parties.

The Chinese believe that bitterness will not last long, and create an excellent opportunity for people themselves as nature is always in motion, and human life goes on without end, we should be optimistic. We drink tea to develop our vital spirit, and help others generously. The melody of the spirit of Chinese tea ceremony is composed of the sober, optimistic, enthusiastic, connected and tolerant spirit of the Confucian School.

Cultivate One's Honesty, Elegant taste and Active Attitude Towards Life with the spirit of Tea

Some people misunderstood tea as a **time-killer** for **idlers** and **hermits**. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, many tea **connoisseurs** were **pessimistic**. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, people of the "**Eight Banners**"

regarded tea as a plaything. However, one can realize that the active Confucian spirit has been the main trend of tea culture of he takes a panoramic view of the history of tea culture. Chinese intellectuals have a strong sense of responsibility and vocation, and always “regard it as their own responsibility to concern themselves with world affairs.” And “plead for the people.” Chinese tea culture absorbed this fine tradition. As far back as the Eastern and Western Jin, and the Southern dynasties, Lu Na, Huan Wen and several other politicians created the early tea culture, advocating the cultivation of one’s honesty with tea. Idle takers commented freely worldly affairs while drinking tea. Lu Yu formally created the system of Chinese tea culture in the Tang Dynasty, synthesizing Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist thought, with the Confucian active attitude towards life as his people. The chaos caused by the rebel leader, An Lushan, had just been put down when Lu Yu made tea stoves. He was taking refuge in Huzhou City and the good tidings that the country had become stable filled him with joy. He carved the words: “made in the Ming Reign when the Great Tang defeated Hu” on the stoves. Yan Zhenqing, with whom he studied tea culture, was a famous calligrapher and politician. An Lushan launched armed rebellions in the north, and soon led his troops to the south. The prefectures of Hebei fell successively; only Yan Zhenqing kept Pingyuan prefecture, as his battle field. When he was the Minister of the Ministry of Punishment, he offended the emperor and prime minister by using blunt words to remonstrate with them,

and was demoted by Huzhou City, where he became acquainted with Lu Yu. We can see, therefore, the founders of tea culture all had a strong sense of responsibility to their country and people. The boiler made by Lu Yu had a square handle, symbolizing honesty; wide edges, **lofty** ideals; and a long lower part, the **golden mean**. Most of the tea connoisseurs maintained the fine tradition of reflecting the principles of administering a country through specific tea sets. In the middle and later periods of the Ming Dynasty, most of the emperors were **fatuous** and **self-indulgent**; the tea connoisseurs therefore paid special attention to cultivating integrity by not associating themselves with undesirable elements. They wrapped stoves with bamboo and called them **kujiejun** (Mr. Painstaking Integrity), suggesting that they would learn from the **progressive** quality of bamboo. The **steelyard** used for measuring tea was called zhiquan. Quan was a part of an ancient weighing apparatus—the sliding weight of a steelyard. One small teaset showed the standard of measuring right and wrong, indicating that tea connoisseurs could distinguish truth from falsehood. Confucianists encourage the cultivation of one's moral character and putting one's family affairs in order, and then administering state affairs. However, instead of always keeping a straight face to show concern about the country, one should "alternate tension with relaxation, which was the principle of kings Wen and Wu." Therefore, it should not be regarded as negative behaviour for some tea connoisseurs to have brewed and sample tea in the wilderness.

Tea Ceremony Served as Rite

China has always been known as a land of propriety and righteousness. Modern people often mistake the rite system for the social estate system. Confucian rites not only **restrained** people's behaviours and established social order, but they also implied mutual respect and care and the virtues of showing respect for the aged and love for the young, the **comity** between brothers, respect for teachers and love for students. People become sober and sensible through drinking tea, and as a result, they can carry out the spirit of the rites easily.

Tea was first served during rites in the Song Dynasty. At that time, the tea ceremony was used on the grand feasts held by the court in the spring and autumn. The details were recorded in the History of the Song Dynasty. Tea would be "granded " when **imperial competitive examinations** were held, when the emperor interviewed officials and received foreign **envoys**, and on the memorial ceremonies of various holidays. Ethnic minorities were also affected by the system. At first, the State of Liao and Song imperial court confronted each other, and fought many battles. According to the **treaty** concluded after they became sworn brothers at Tanyuan Pool, they sent envoys to each other. A tea ceremony was held when the Song imperial court received the envoy from the State of Liao, and also at a send-off party. Though

the State of Liao was found by Qidan, the nomadic people, they appreciated the rite system of the Song Dynasty. Many details about the tea , ceremonies held on the birthdays of the emperor and queen mother, when offering a sacrifice to mountains, worshipping the sun, or on other important occasions were recorded in the history of the State of Liao.

According to Volume 115 of the History of the Song Dynasty, when a prince took an imperial concubine, he had to offer 100 jin of tea and other presents. Later, it became **customary** to hold tea ceremonies at weddings. The rites of tea-drinking originated from buddhism, which later affected families and society. The Families Rites written by Qiu Jun in the Ming Dynasty provided the details of tea ceremony , which greatly affected the common people , and spread to Korea. South Korea has paid great attention to tea cereomony even to today.

The Spirit of Taosist Tea Culture

The social influence of Chinese tea culture is mainly reflected in Confucian thought , while its aesthetic viewpoint, skills and practical spirit are mainly influenced by Taoist thought.

The Taoist School and Taoism are entirely different. The Taoist School appeared much earlier than Confucian thought.the spirit of Confucian thought focused on administering the society, while Taoist thought stressed

the relationship between man and nature. Lao Zi, the founder of Taoist thought, was born in the State of Chu more than 2700 years ago. No one knew how many years he had lived—some people say 200 years, while some even say 600 years. Lao Zi advocated looking at things **dialectically**, and stressed that people should see the **reverse** as well as the obverse side of things. For example, when others said **firmness** was better than **softness**, he would **resort** that one's teeth were firm, but they would drop out before he died; while the tongue was soft, it would stick with him throughout his life. When others said **substantialness** was good, he would resort that only empty rooms could hold things, and one had to empty old thoughts out of one's mind before acquiring new knowledge. **Zhuang Zi**, another Taoist thinker, liked to illustrate truths through vivid **fables**, using humorous language. Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi both believed that it was the common law of the universe that kept nature and society **operating**. Therefore, spirit and material, and human and nature could not be separated. Chinese tea culture, integrated with tea's natural and material functions and human spirit, absorbed the Taoist spirit. Therefore, while tea ceremony is mainly applied in a Confucian spirit, the formation of tea culture, actually should mainly be attributed to the contribution made by the Taoist School.

The Combination of Human and Nature and the World

View of Tea Culture

According to the Taoist School, human and nature are unified. A person is a small world, and a cup of tea reflects the sea. Tea ceremony has assimilated this thought. Although tea is only a drink offered by nature, it contains natural law, and people should learn the law through drinking tea. Tea is the cream of nature, and people can learn about natural changes through the process of making, brewing and drinking tea as an art reflecting natural beauty. When the ancients brewed tea, they **ground** tea cakes, or the newly picked and baked tea first, then **sifted it through** a fire **sieve**, and put the most even and tender **powder** into a boiler. It would change wonderfully when the water boiled, and the water and tea blended with each other. People could appreciate natural beauty through observing the change. Lu Yu vividly described the tea dust which was just put into the boiler “as floating date flowers in an **annular** pond,” or “as the newly-grown green **duckweed** on a winding pond or **islet**.” Lu Yu also described the **foam**, the cream of tea, vividly: they were “as white as **snow cover**.” Tea connoisseurs regarded tea as the cleanest and most beautiful thing in nature, so people should **integrate themselves with** nature while drinking it. Lu Quan, a poet in the Tang Dynasty, known as the Tea **Submaster**, felt as if **misty** rain and cool breezes were spraying on him, and the whole world was incomparably bright and clear when he drank tea. When he drank seven cups of tea, he felt as graceful as a fairy. **Su Shi**, a great writer of the Song Dynasty, liked to row a small boat,

draw water from the river ,and brew tea in the rural outskirts of a town, or by the river bank. He believed that by doing so, he invited the bright moon and its silver flame into his jar. Chinese tea connoisseurs believed that people should not only demand from nature, they should also care for and understand it, and treat kindly so that they could live quietly and happily. There is much profound Taoist philosophy in a cup of tea.

Taoist Tea Connoisseurs Drank tea to Preserve Their Health

Taoists, who were called **immortals**, paid great attention to preserving their health. They believed that tea could ensure good health and a long life. The immortals **deified** the Taoist ideas, and called them Taoism. The mian precept was to **discard** all desires and worries from one's mind; the best method of preserving one's health was by keeping one's body and mind extremely peaceful. There were several ways to cultivate vital energy to reach the ideal state:

1. using the deep breath in the **pubic** region to regulate one's passages through which vital energy circulated;
2. **reposing** one's thoughts in nature or a part of the body;
3. imagining the **brilliance** of sunshine, rain and **dew**, and stars **sprinkling** one, washing one clean, and getting rid of diseases;

4. eating healthy food.

Because tea could help adjust one's mind, keep one's head, improve **digestion**, and **dredge** the channels, it became essential to Taoists. **Zhu Quan**, a famous expert of tea culture of the Ming Dynasty, often drink tea while eating fruits and **pine nuts** when he cultivated himself in the mountains. The taoist method was consistent with the science of channels and **collaterals** and the **pharmacodynamics** of traditional Chinese medicine. Taoists advocated adjusting one's mind and **physiological functions** through drinking tea, which was their special contribution to tea culture.

The Taoist Values and Characteristics of Tea Connoisseurs

Taoists had an active outlook on nature. They did not believe in God's will, and wanted to **coexist** with heaven and earth. They advocated natural Taoist rites, which meant **complying with** the law of nature and they also encouraged **retirement from the world**. The two concepts seem to **contradict** each other. However, the idea actually resisted the common views on wealth, women's looks, wine, undeserved reputation and benefits, and **intrigues**. Tea connoisseurs reflected Taoist thought in tea ceremony, and freed themselves from depression. Most of them disciplined themselves with aesthetic practices, so the teaset was also called *kujiejun* in the Yuan and Ming dynasties to express their lofty ideas. This tradition has been followed to modern times.

When China was **invaded** by foreign countries, many intellectuals would rather drink tea with steamed **maize** bread every day than become **lackeys**. It was precisely because of such lofty integrity that China was able to rise from sufferings times and again.

Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi , founders of the Taoist School, often spoke or acted contrary to common view **intentionally**. According to Lao Zi , people in the world could never find contentment in seeking pleasure ; only he was indifferent to pleasure, for he had realized the hidden danger behind high position and great wealth . Zhuang Zi expressed his views, which were also out of keeping with common ones, more vividly and clearly. According to him, wise men were admired because there were too many confused people in the world, if everyone became wise, there would be no wise man. Although the **rhinoceros** was a large animal, it could not catch a mouse. Chinese tea connoisseurs tried to learn the characters of Lao Zi and Zhuang Zi. For example, despite of the job's low social status, Lu Yu chose to become an actor; he refused to take a post in the court , and devoted himself to the study of tea culture. Zhu Quan, a famous tea connoisseurs of the Ming Dynasty, who was a member of the imperial house, built a tomb for himself in a remote mountain in South China when he was still young so that he could devoted himself to the study of the Taoist and Buddhist schools. It seemed to the tea connoisseurs that even beggars were better than corrupt officials, for beggars were pure in mind. Thus , Taoist tea culture was more suited to scholars and

common people than the literati and officialdom. The tea art and tea ceremony of the former were natural and **unrestrained**.

The Status of Buddhism in Tea Culture

When talking of Chinese tea culture, attention is often paid to its relationship with Buddhism. There is a saying both in China and Japan that “tea and *Chan* is an **integration**.” Although Chan is only a Buddhist **sect**, it has made a great contribution to the formation of the spirit of tea ceremony, and has played an important role in spreading tea culture throughout the East. The first disseminator of Japanese Buddhism was also the first tea master and the founder of the Japanese tea ceremony. The unique characteristics of Chinese Buddhist tea ceremony aroused great attention among Japanese monks.

Tea culture was closely related to earthly reality and society, while Buddhism stressed paradise. Chinese tea culture mainly stressed the love of life and optimism, while Buddhism emphasized bitterness and loneliness. The Chan sect solved the **contradiction**, and as a result, the two approaches were integrated.

China is a large smelting furnace, in which foreign thoughts have to be smelted before they take root in China. This is not because Chinese culture is “conservative” and “**exclusive**.” In fact, China was quite open and magnanimous towards foreign culture in the early and medium stages of feudal society, especially during the Tang Dynasty when tea culture was

created. Buddhism was spread from South Asia to China. At first, it was combined with the school of the emperor Huang and Lao Zi (a Taoist sect of the Warring States period and the early Han Dynasty. The emperor Huang and Lao Zi were honored as the founders of the Taoist School, hence the name). Taoists started to advocate tea drinking. However, it was during the Tang Dynasty that Buddhist thought and tea culture became fully integrated.

Most of the Buddhist sects that spread to China belonged to Great Vehicle, which developed from some Buddhist sects between the first and second century. Great Vehicle held that all living creatures could become Buddha, and equal stress should be laid on benefit to oneself and to others while practicing Buddhism. Buddhists regarded their doctrines as the best, hence the name "Great Vehicle,"; the sects advocating self-moksa (release from the cycle of rebirth) were deprecated as the "Little Vehicle".for example, the Sanlun, Sukhavati, Vinaya and Faxiang were all Great Vehicle sects which spread from India. However, these religious doctrines were not to the liking of the Chinese people. For example, according to the Sanlun sect, people should not be afraid of death, and should "cry for living." However, we Chinese people had such a deep love for life that we could not accept the idea that one could only become happy after one dies. According to the Sukhavati sect, the world was a dirty land, while we regarded land as our mother, on which there were beautiful grass and trees, and magnificent seas. How could we believe such beautiful land was dirty? Li Shimin, the first emperor of the

Tang Dynasty, claimed to be a descendant of Lao Zi-Li Er. The emperor flew into a **rage** when a monk told him that his family name had nothing to do with that of Lao Zi. the emperor said that since the monk had told him the knife of Buddha could hurt people, he would like to try it on him after he praying to Buddha for seven days. The monk had no choice but to say that the emperor was Buddha, and he prayed to him for seven days. Thus he escaped death. It was clear that during the Tang Dynasty Buddhist reform had to be carried out so the Buddhist theories could be integrated with Chinese culture. Thus **Tianatai**, **Huayan** and some other sects, which were similar to Chinese culture and **ideologies**, came into being. However, only the Chan sect really turned into a Chinese Buddhist sect. It advocated practising Buddhism by sitting in **meditation** in order to become peaceful in mind. It was similar to the Taoist practice of sitting in meditation and the Confucian views on one's inner accomplishment; it was beneficial to one's health, and enabled purification of one's mind to improve one's **realm** of spirit. *Hui Neng* (638-713), the sixth **patriarch** of the Chan sect in the **prosperous** period of the Tang Dynasty, advocated insight, expressed in the observation that "the butcher who lays down his knife at once becomes a Buddha." According to him, people could become Buddhists without becoming monks or nuns. Therefore, the court no longer needed to settle **disputes** over land between **monasteries**, and matters became convenient for the people.

With the appearance of the Chan sect, Buddhism started to have Chinese

characteristics, and became consistent with tea culture. The Chan sect made contributions to promoting tea culture in the following three aspects:

1. Popularizing the practice of drinking tea.

According to the Records of What Feng Saw and Heard written by Feng Yan in the Tang Dynasty, "Southerners liked drinking tea, while northerners did not often drink tea at first. In the middle years of the Kaiyuan Reign, the master of taming demons in the Diving Rock Temple on the Taishan Mountain developed the Chan sect energetically. The monks were neither allowed to sleep nor have supper while sitting in meditation at night, but they were allowed to drink tea. So each of them brewed tea and drank. People followed their example and tea-drinking thus became a custom...Many tea shops were opened in the city, from which everyone could buy tea. Tea produced on the mountain was great in variety and amount, and was transported by boat and carriages from the Yangze and Huai River valleys."

2. Developing tea plantation and planting tea on mountains.

It was expensive for monasteries to buy tea for monks, so the monks on some areas started to develop tea plantations or planted tea on mountains. Most of the monasteries were built in remote mountains, with excellent water and soil, and clean air, all of which were beneficial to tea plantation. *Ji Gong*, Lu Yu's master, planted tea by himself, and devoted himself to the study of tea. Many varieties of famous tea were produced by monasteries in the Tang Dynasty. The monks on Mount Putuo planted many tea trees, and "Putuo

Buddhist tea” became famous. The tradition of tea plantation was retained until the Ming Dynasty. According to *Li Rihua*, who lived in the Ming Dynasty, an old monk of Mount Putuo presented him a small bag of **White Crag** tea as a gift. Its fresh smell **gladdened** his heart and refreshed his mind. Many monasteries were built in *Jian'an* in the Southern Tang Dynasty, and most of them planted excellent tea because both monks and **pilgrims** drank tea and monasteries possessed land. In addition, the monks had enough time to study the skills of planting, making brewing and tasting tea. As a result, they promoted the development of tea culture, and Jian'an City became a famous tea production base during the Song Dynasty.

3. Treating tea art with **meditative** mind, and creating the Buddhist realm of tea ceremony.

According to its **philosophical** views, the Chan sect stressed the tempering and **remoulding** of one's **disposition** to find one's true self. When a person's spirit reached the cleanest and most healthy state, he would understand truths. Tea could help him keep calm and clear-minded while sitting in meditation. Therefore, tea's distinguishing features were similar to those of Buddhism. The monks of the Chan sect drank tea not only to refresh themselves; they also connected the realm of tea with that of the Chan sect, and appreciated that the true essence of the world was to seek peace of mind. Jiao Ran, a famous monk of the Tang Dynasty, was a tea connoisseur and poet. He was a friend of Lu Yu, and they often studied tea ceremony and Buddhist

doctrine, and wrote poems together. They also described their feelings about drinking tea, blending the fragrance of tea, natural and flowing verses, and **profound** Buddhist thoughts. According to Jian Ran , after drinking a cup of tea, one would no longer **feel in a daze**, but feel as frank and open as heaven and earth. After drinking another cup of tea, one would feel as if the spirit was cleaned by gentle rain. According to the Chan sect, one could only become a Buddha after getting rid of **infatuation**—the largest **obstacle**—and tea could help achieve the purposes. After drinking the third cup of tea, a person would understand the nature of things. According to the Chan sect, it was impossible for people to get rid of their worries intentionally. They had to **tranquelize** their hearts to grasp the spirit of tea ceremony, which was to study the relationship between tea and mountains and rivers, nature, heaven and earth, and man, and between the human and the material, and body and mind.

Other sects, as well as the Chan sect, had their own theories of tea ceremony.

For example, tea culture flourished in Tibet's monasteries. Tibetans regarded tea as the wonder of **enshrining** and **worshipping** Buddha. Monasteries granted tea to common people as the blessing of God and Buddha. Hundred-year-old brick tea has been kept in the **Jokhang Temple** in **Lhasa** till the present day. The Chinese people often said that "the older the wine, the better; while the newer the tea, the better." The 100-year-old tea is no longer useful as a drink, but the monks regarded it as the monastery's

protective **shield**. According to the description of a missionary of the Qing Dynasty, 4,000 lamas attended a large tea party held by the Karwenpalmo Lamasery, ordinary believers lay on the ground to worship Buddha, young monks held hot boiler and gave tea to the people, and people started to sing songs of praise. Because it was served as part of the Buddhist rites, tea became **imbued** with mystery. Buddha was to save all beings, so large boiler had to be used for such tea parties so that enough tea could be given to the people. The tea parties held by the Chan monasteries of **Central Plains accentuated** the **adjustment** of one's mind with tea to give full **scope** to one's ability to find one's true self, while the tea parties held by Tabetan monasteries regarded tea as a wonder of objective idealism, and entirely different from the spirit of the tea ceremony of the Chan sect.

We have approached the spirit of the Chinese tea ceremony from the angles of Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist schools. However they are not isolated, but integrated with , and **draw lessons from**, each other. They have won support among the people in daily life. People can grasp many profound truths without going through the complicated forms of tea art. In the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China (1912-1949) when China was in **turmoil**, and the people were **destitute**, scholars often put a brush pot, some books ,and a simple tea set on their tables to express their elegant ideals. The common people often placed a teaset on a square table in the central room of their house, and the whole family would drink tea together at night. After

thousands of years of **extraction** and **purification**, the spirit of the tea ceremony has **penetrated deeply into** the blood of th Chinese nation.