

# Analyses on the External Communication Values and Publicity Approaches of Tibetan Tea Culture with Khampa Characteristics

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## ABSTRACT

Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristics is some "new variety tea" created by Khampa inhabitants, which is skillfully combined Ya'an black tea with the specialties of Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area. Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics is a unique tea culture formed in the course of Khampa's historical development and the communication and integration of various ethnic groups. For the sake of spreading excellent Chinese traditional culture overseas and increase the people's cultural confidence, the Tibetan tea types and drinking customs will be introduced at the first part of this paper, then the external communication values and the publicity approaches will be analyzed.

**Keywords:** *Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic, External communication values, Publicity approaches, Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tibetan tea has a long history. And Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic under the historical accumulation is an important part of Chinese traditional tea culture. Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area was once the only way which the Sichuan Tibet Tea Horse Ancient Road must pass through. Tea was sold to Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area by Tea Horse Trade, then it changed the beverage types there. For thousands of years, Tibetan tea has already become a necessity for people in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area. It has become a custom for local families to boil tea and drink tea every day. Mr. Ren Naiqiang, a Tibetan scholar, once said, "*Tibetan people like tea as much as their lives. People there love tea no matter they are from poverty, wealth, nobility, humble, and monks or secular people. Whenever they have food, they must boil tea, too.*" [1] There is also a Tibetan proverb that says, "*The Han people are satisfied with food, while the Tibetan people are satisfied with tea.*" "*People can drink tea three times a day and only eat one meal a day. They can suffer from hunger for three days, but they can not bear no tea*

*for one day.*" These expressions showed how much Tibetan compatriots love and rely on tea everyday.

## 2. OVERVIEWS OF TIBETAN TEA CULTURE WITH KHAMPA CHARACTERISTICS

### 2.1 *Types of Tibetan Tea with Khampa Characteristics*

Early Khampa Tibetan tea mainly includes Kangzhuan tea, Jinjian tea and Kangjian tea. **Kangzhuan tea** is round and rectangular in shape, smooth and compact in surface, with obvious surface and brown in color. The inner quality has pure aroma, the tea soup is red and brown, and the taste is pure and strong. **Jinjian tea** is round and rectangular in shape, slightly compact, without delamination, and brown in color. The endoplasmic aroma is pure, the tea soup color is yellow and red, and the taste is mellow. **Kangjian tea** is round and square in shape, smooth and compact in surface, brown in color, rich and pure in internal aroma. The tea soup color is red and transparent, the taste is mellow and sweet. With the change of market demand and the constant acceleration of new

product development, Kangzhuang tea and Jinjian tea have gradually withdrawn from the market and replaced by Jinzhu tea and Ganhong tea. In the past, due to the poor production of tea leaves and low living standards, Kangzhuang tea and Jinjian tea were picked with about 10 leaves, which are relatively coarse and old. The high fluorine content in the old leaves also made the tea of much lower quality, because high fluorine content is bad for people's health. The current **Jinzhu tea** and **Ganhong tea** only pick five tender leaves, which are more refined in material selection, higher in technology, more fragrant in taste and purer in flavor. Both of them are low fluoride tea, meeting the health standards of modern people. Tibetan tea originated from the Mengding Mountains in Ya'an and flourishes in the Tang Dynasty. Bai Juyi, a poet of the Tang Dynasty, wrote a poem about Mengding Mountain Tea: "*The most famous zither song called Lushui, and the best tea is from the Mengshan Mountain.*" (琴里知闻唯绿水, 茶中故旧是蒙山). The small leaf tea planted on the Mengding Mountain is mild in nature, which can clear heat, relieve detoxify, eliminate greasy food, and quench thirst. It has a fragrant and palatable taste, and a little sweet aftertaste. Tibetan tea is a kind of deeply fermented black tea, and its production process is quite complicated. The longer the storage time is, the mellower it is, and the higher its economic value is. The surface of standard Tibetan tea is flat and dense, with the characteristics of red, thick and mellow.

Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic has a unique Khampa Tibetan national style. Khampa inhabitants combined the local ingredients with the black tea to derive a variety of Tibetan characteristic tea, which have some special flavours. According to the tastes, Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic can be divided into sweet tea and salty tea. When making sweet tea, fresh milk (or milk powder) and sugar are added into the boiling tea juice. Salty tea gets its name by adding salt into the tea to make it salty. People add salt to tea, which can not only remove a little alkaline taste of tea, but also replenish the salt needed by the body. In addition, Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic are named butter tea, milk tea, flour tea, oil tea, bone oil tea, tsamba tea, etc., according to the ingredients. The famous **butter tea** is a kind of Tibetan characteristic tea that Tibetan compatriots drink everyday. The practice of butter tea adds

different local ingredients according to people's living habits, and the butter tea in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area has many flavors. When making home-made butter tea, most people add an appropriate amount of fresh milk or full fat milk powder, butter, tsamba, salt, crushed walnuts or peanut kernels or sesame to the tea after boiling and filtering the tea residue. Some people even add Chinese prickly ash or raw eggs, and then stir them in a special butter tea bucket or butter tea maker. **Milk tea** is made by adding sugar, yak milk or goat milk into the boiled tea juice. **Flour tea** is made by stir frying barley, wheat or highland barley flour with edible oil, and adding tea and salt to stir and boil after the flour is cooked. **Oil tea** is made by cutting an appropriate amount of yak suet, mutton oil or lard to refine the oil juice, adding tsamba or other fried flour, adding a certain amount of crushed tea leaves and salt, stirring and boiling them together. Some people also add crushed walnut kernels and raw eggs into it. This kind of tea is usually drunk after spring ploughing, autumn harvest or heavy physical work, which can help people eliminate fatigue and replenish energy. **Bone oil tea** is a nutritious bone oil soup made by breaking the stick bones in the yak legs and boiling them. After the soup is boiled white, the tea leaves are wrapped with gauze and put into the bone oil soup. When the tea leaves and the soup are mixed and boiled until the color, flavor and taste are appropriate, then the tea bag is taken out. Finally, an appropriate amount of salt is added to the bone oil tea. **Tsamba tea** is made by boiling the black tea, filtering out the tea residue, adding more tsamba and an appropriate amount of butter in the tea juice, and then boiling the mixture of the three into a thick juice. Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic is rich in variety, flavors and tastes, and its tea drinking custom is also very special.

## 2.2 The Custom of Drinking Tibetan Tea with Khampa Characteristics

According to the types of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristics, the drinking customs in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area are quite different from those of Han people. When Han compatriots drink tea, they mainly use boiled water to brew it, which is called "brewing tea". But in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area, people put tea leaves into water and boil them, which is called "boiling tea". Tea boiling way is very particular. "*Boiling tea*

*should pay much attention to the duration and degree of heating. When the tea juice with dark brown color, astringent but not bitter taste is the best.* [2]<sup>232</sup> In addition, except for sweet tea, other Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic will add a small amount of salt. A Tibetan proverb says, "Tea without salt drinks like plain water as a man without the sense of shame lives like a ghost." It highlights the important position of salt in Tibetan tea. The drinking time and habits of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic are also very different from those of public tea in other places. The drinking time and occasions of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic are unrestricted. "The Tibetans must use tea for weddings and funerals, and tea and wine are indispensable for entertaining guests. There is a Tibetan proverb says 'Tibetans fill their stomachs with tea and their brains with knowledge.'"<sup>[2]233</sup> Compatriots in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited areas, regardless of their families' wealth, must drink tea at three meals a day, drink tea when chanting sutras and chatting, and serve tea when greeting guests. Butter tea is an essential part of Tibetan compatriots' every breakfast. People drink butter tea even if they don't eat other food. Rich families will put enough butter tea into a teapot in the morning for a whole day drink, and simmer it near the fire for heat preservation. (Attention: Butter tea can only keep warm but can't be boiled again. Once it is boiled again, the tea will be separated from butter tea, the butter will shrink and bubble on the top, and the tea below will be in a state of clear water). People drink it before and after meals, drink it anytime as they like. In addition, Tibetan compatriots pay special attention to tea etiquette when drinking tea. When drinking tea in public places, they pay attention to the order of superiority and inferiority. When entertaining guests, they pay attention to the order of guests and hosts. When drinking tea at home, they pay attention to the order of senior and young.

### **3. THE EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION VALUES OF TIBETAN TEA CULTURE WITH KHAMPA CHARACTERISTICS**

#### **3.1 The Practical Value**

Tea was called "tea medicine" in the history of Tibetan-inhabited areas, indicating that it was

originally introduced into those places with its medicinal functions. In Fengyan (Tang Dynasty): There is a relevant written record in Volume II of *Feng Shi Jian Wen Record* that when the monks sat in meditation, "In order not to doze off, nor eat dinner, they can drink tea. People took tea leaves in their pockets and boiled it anywhere they want. From then on, people followed suit and became a custom". Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area is located in the hinterland of the Qinghai Tibet Plateau. Due to its high average altitude, barren land, thin air, cold climate and other ecological reasons, local Tibetan compatriots mainly eat beef and mutton, highland barley tsamba, or wheat flour food all year round. High calorie beef and mutton and dry tsamba are easy to cause hot and greasy intestines. People think that these bad symptoms will disappear after drinking tea, so the local people have these sayings: "Only tea can help to digest the fishy meat, and only tea can relieve the heat of highland barley" "One day without tea, Tibetan people may feel undigested. Three days without tea, they may get sick." Drinking Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic every day can not only provide the nutrition needed by people in high and cold plateau areas, effectively supplement heat, and resist cold and plateau reactions. It can also provide vitamins, amino acids and other important substances needed by the body, and help the stomach and intestines to digest. Therefore, Tibetan tea has always been called the livelihood tea for Tibetan compatriots. Tea is reputed as the "medicine for all kinds of diseases" by local people because of its multiple effects such as removing greasy, digesting, brightening, refreshing, lowering blood pressure, lowering blood lipid, and preventing obesity. Li Shizhen also recorded in the *Compendium of Materia Medica* that "Authentic tea is cold in nature, but only when it comes from Mengshan Mountain in Yazhou is warm, and it can cure diseases."

In addition, according to the modern research on the composition of tea, it is rich in 15%-30% protein, 4%-7% mineral salts (such as potassium salt, phosphate and a variety of trace elements), as well as tea polyphenols, amino acids, alkaloids and vitamins. The variety of crops in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area is extremely few. In particular, the intake of vegetables and fruits in people's daily life in pastoral areas is seriously insufficient. Their bodies will lack vitamins and other essential

nutrients. Drinking tea can adjust the local people's diet structure due to the lack of nutrients related to vegetables and fruits, and balance the dietary fiber needed by the body, which is very important for maintaining health.

### **3.2 The Cultural Heritage Value**

The English word tea comes from the Chinese character "tu"(茶), because the ancient Chinese called "cha" (茶) as "tu" (茶), and the British got tea from the homonym of Cantonese. Mr. Ren Naiqiang, also wrote in *The Collection of Ethnic Studies* that "Cha is called tea in English, and the interpreter had the transliteration of tu(茶)." [3] Chinese tea was introduced into Europe as early as the beginning of 17th century. Tea culture has a great impact on European society, and it still continues to affect the lives of people around the world. In Khampa Tibetan-inhabited areas, tea trees cannot be planted because of ecological environment problems, so tea leaves are bought from other places. The local people love tea as much as they love their lives, and in their long-term living, they have combined local specialties with tea to create characteristic Tibetan tea with rich cultural connotation. "Because of the vital role of tea in the life and social and economic activities of the Tibetan people, the tea culture of the Tibetan people is more colorful and distinctive than that of other ethnic groups in China, and has become a wonderful work in the original place of tea culture in China and even the world." [4] Tibetan compatriots used their wisdom in production and living to create the world famous butter tea and other kinds of characteristic tea, forming a special Tibetan tea culture in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area. For example, for the traditional butter tea in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area, the raw materials should be fully stirred with a special bucket to make it taste moist and more fragrant. Monks drink tea, herdsman drink tea... Ordinary people, men, women, old and young, sit around and drink tea. They are naturally relaxed when they drink tea, reflecting their inner peace and contentment no matter they are rich or not. At the same time, Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic also reflects the philosophical thoughts of the inclusiveness of various cultures, the unity of nature and man, and the cultural characteristics of harmonious coexistence between man and nature. The daily tea drinking customs focus on the order

of seniority, which reflects the noble social morality of Tibetan compatriots to respect the old and love the young. The characteristic Tibetan tea culture in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area can reveal the ingenious living wisdom and profound cultural characteristics of the Tibetan people from the aspects of tea making technology, tea making tools, tea making methods, tea drinking customs and tea drinking etiquette.

With the advance of globalization, resource sharing has become more convenient. And some local cultures have gradually disappeared in the long history of time. Some characteristic Tibetan tea cultures in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area have also disappeared with the improvement of people's living standards. In order to let people understand China's regional ethnic culture better, it is of great value to protect the excellent traditional minority culture and inherit the Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics. Inheriting Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic can promote the development of Tibetan tea making technology, enhance the inheritance value of national culture, and stimulate people's cultural confidence and national pride. In addition to Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic itself, the brewing way of Tibetan tea, drinking etiquette, tea sets, trade of Tibetan tea or "Ancient Tea Horse Road Culture" also have very high cultural heritage values.

### **3.3 The External Communication Value**

With the frequent academic exchanges at home and abroad, the translation and dissemination of the special Tibetan tea culture in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area will help to enhance the influence of Khampa Tibetan tea culture, encourage more experts and scholars in the academic community to pay attention to and join in the research on Khampa characteristic food and diet culture, so that the world can understand this mysterious and great nation better. According to the author's current investigation and understanding of the current situation of English translation of Tibetan Tea Culture with Khampa Characteristics, experts and scholars have little research on the external dissemination of it, so the outside world has little understanding of the extensive and profound it. For a long time, some western hostile forces have "demonized" China's image, fabricated rumors about China's "genocide", questioned China's

human rights issues, and led to a long-term misunderstanding of China's image in the international arena. To spread Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics to the outside world is to show the rich national culture of China to foreign people directly, and it is an invisible fact clarification, so that the rumors of "opponents" can be refuted. Therefore, it is conducive to eliminating ideological barriers, enhancing the influence of China's excellent culture, and establishing our status as a cultural power. On the one hand, it can achieve the effect of "subduing the enemies without fighting", and on the other hand, it can highlight the charm of China's excellent traditional culture.

At the same time, the external dissemination of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic can promote the economic exchanges between China and other countries, and promote the economic development of Khampa Tibetan-inhabited areas, too. With the rise of China's international status, Chinese culture has become more and more popular in other countries. It is reported that Chinese mahjong has become popular in the upper classes of some European and American countries because of its functions in preventing Alzheimer's disease and other diseases. Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic not only has nutritional and healthy drinking practical value, but also has special cultural value. Once it is spread, it will be very popular with the public. Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic is an important part of Khampa culture and also a part of Chinese tea culture. It has strong regional and ethnic characteristics and unique cultural transmission value. The spread of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic is to let our minority culture "goes out", uncover the mysterious veil of Chinese Tibetan culture, let more people understand the richness and inclusiveness of Chinese traditional culture, avoid national misunderstanding caused by different cultures, and promote cultural exchanges between different countries and ethnic groups.

#### **4. PUBLICITY APPROACHES OF TIBETAN TEA CULTURE WITH KHAMPA CHARACTERISTICS**

With the change of people's communication methods, ways of cultural publicity should also follow the pace of the time, and some approaches

that the public likes and accepts easily should be applied.

##### ***4.1 Making Feature Films***

As the new media has been popular with the public in recent years, the local Culture and Tourism Bureau should organize a team to shoot and produce Feature Films both in Chinese and English about "Tibetan Tea Culture with Khampa Characteristic" according to the needs of cultural publicity. The Feature Films can introduce the origin of the selection, picking and fermentation of Tibetan tea to making butter tea, milk tea, flour tea, oil tea, bone oil tea, tsamba tea, etc. of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic. Explain the characteristics and cooking process of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic in a popular way in detail, as well as why people here like to add salt to tea. Adding salt to tea was actually a tea drinking habit of the people in the Central Plains during the Tang and Song Dynasties, but this habit has been retained since the introduction of tea culture into Tibetan-inhabited areas. Khampa Tibetan culture is plentiful and colorful. The mountains, rivers, plants and trees here have been endowed with beautiful legends, so the landscape and plants here are full of spirit, which adds a bit of mystery to Khampa culture. The Feature Films can also talk about the story of tea and salt through the Tibetan tea culture — this story can be called the integration of the love story of "Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai" and "the Seventh Fairy and Dong Yong". It is said that a Tibetan boy and a Tibetan girl fell in love with each other quietly, but their fathers were chieftains (Tu Si) from two different districts with feuds, and they opposed the love and combination of the two young people. The girl's father sent someone to kill the boy secretly in order to prevent his daughter from associating with him. The girl was in agony after she heard the boy's death. When the boy's body was cremated, the girl jumped into the fire to die for love. Later, the two spirits turned into salt and tea trees. From then on, when people add salt to their tea, they help the two spirits meet again. To make this kind of story on New Media is to tell a good story about "Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic", which is also an interesting and effective way of culture publicity.

## **4.2 Online Celebrities' Publicity**

The rise of mass media has made some ordinary people become high traffic online celebrities. For example, Li Ziqi was very popular with netizens at home and abroad because of the videos she made in the past three years. Through the videos she made, we can learn about the production process of various Chinese food. Therefore, Li Ziqi was selected as the "Ambassador for the Promotion of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Chengdu" in 2019, and she also won the "Person of Cultural Communication of the Year Award" of China Newsweek. There are also some popular online celebrities in Khampa area, such as Liu Hong, the director of Garze Culture and Tourism Bureau. Ding Zhen, a famous online Tibetan celebrity in Litang county, attracting people by his amazing smile. And Zhuoma, a little Tibetan girl in Dege county, loved by people because of her typical Tibetan innocent and pure smile. All of the people have become popular in Khampa tourist attractions. They have accumulated a large number of fans and are highly concerned by the public. The local cultural publicity department can make full use of their "celebrity effects" to create the publicity of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic in a planned way. Let these online celebrities make videos from the source just like Li Ziqi made every special food, telling the whole process of a dish from planting and picking raw materials to making finished products. If you record the process of the butter tea, you can start from tea leaves picking, milking and other things. It is vivid, simple and grounded, perhaps better than advertising. These online celebrities bring their own traffic, and their videos attract the eyes of countless Chinese and foreign people. It may take a certain amount of time to make a video, but people can achieve very good publicity effects by understanding a particular culture through their behaviors.

## **4.3 Selling Finished and Semi-finished Products**

Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area is a must pass for China's most popular tourist route — "The most Attractive National Way in China--G318". In addition to the natural landscape of mountains and lakes, snow mountains and grasslands, there are also rich cultural tourism resources. It is a good choice to make use of the cultural tourism of

Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area to publicize the Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics. There are abundant characteristic food culture resources in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area, and the Khampa characteristics Tibetan tea is rich in connotation. Tourists coming here are bound to have food consumption. Many people have tasted tea and food in shopping malls that is for advertising. This kind of model is worth learning from the propaganda of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic. There are many tourist attractions in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area. A large number of tourists travel across mountains and rivers to visit Khampa Tibetan-inhabited area for vacation every year. They love the scenery and also have interest to try the local food and beverage. Therefore, Sales Booth can be set up at tourist reception, restaurants and hotels to sell some finished and semi-finished products of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic, and small paper cups of local tea for drinking can be provided for free. Relevant promotional text can be printed on the cup outside. When the tourists taste the characteristic Tibetan tea, they can read the text at the same time, so that they can understand different cultures while they experience special food and beverage. Tourists who like to drink Tibetan tea can buy another large cup according to their own preferences, travel on the low temperature plateau, and hold a cup of hot local characteristic tea, which is far more warmer than the "first milk tea in autumn". Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic is far more valuable and healthy than all kinds of "milk tea" sold on the street now. The milk tea sold in those stores, because of the high content of the flavor and sugar, is very harmful to our health, and is easy to cause various diseases, especially increases the risk of diabetes. Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic is rich in nutrition, has the functions of strengthening the body, resisting plateau reaction and cold, and is worth drinking. In addition, some customers will buy some semi-finished products to drink at home or take them as souvenirs to their relatives and friends in their hometown after tasting them, which not only sells Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic to all parts of the country, or even around the world, but also publicizes Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic to everywhere.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic is not only the livelihood tea for Khampa Tibetan compatriots, but also China's culture dissemination tea because of its rich nutritional value and profound cultural connotation. Explore the publicity research of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic deeply, which is conducive to promoting the continuous improvement of Tibetan tea with Khampa characteristic quality, and is more conducive to expanding the external influence of local characteristic food and beverage culture. In the cross-cultural communication and publicity, this paper analyzes the characteristic Tibetan tea culture in Khampa Tibetan-inhabited areas, so that readers can understand the essence of Khampa characteristic diet culture much better. Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics is a unique branch of Chinese tea culture and an inseparable part of Chinese excellent traditional culture. The spread of Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristics is of great value to the whole world. It is of great significance to enhance the cultural confidence of Chinese people and is the need for the development, protection and inheritance of national culture. The way and strength of publicity of Khampa Tibetan tea culture are directly related to the depth and breadth of "going out" of China's excellent traditional culture. There are still some limitations in the analyses of this paper. The author hopes that more experts and scholars will pay attention to Tibetan tea culture with Khampa characteristic, and actively participate in the research of Khampa characteristic food and beverage culture, and explore better ways of communication and publicity of Khampa culture.

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