

Current Situation and Countermeasure on the Development of Taoism Health Preserving Culture Undertaking

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Abstract

This paper starts from current situation of Taoism health preserving culture and explores it based on the topic of *development of Taoism health preserving culture*. Besides, the paper differentiates cultural undertakings and industries which are confused often, determines its concept and characteristics and puts forward feasible implementation steps, specific guideline and mode adapted to modern society.

Key word: Taoism health preserving culture; Cultural undertaking; Culture industry

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INTRODUCTION

Taoism thinks that Tao generated everything, including mankind, they all embody law of the Tao. Hence, nature and man in one are the highest principle of preserving one's health, which means letting people's living activities conform to the laws of nature. The health maintenance modern people calling mostly refer to physical health while mental health has been relatively neglected. Taoism regards people as a unity of "form, qi, soul" and "sex and life", these kinds of theories separate people from other non-life body, plants and animals. Therefore, Taoism culture advocates accomplishment of "form, qi, soul"

as well as "sex and life" at the same time, in context of modern society, it means to keep physical and mental healthy simultaneously. Due to that Taoist practice takes living a long life with good eyes and ears as the top goal, they pay much attention to maintenance and extension of life as much as possible. Under background of this practicing culture, Taoism has accumulated valuable experience and formed a complete theory and method for preserving one's health. It's the most prominent, obvious and representative also one of the symbols to make it different from other religious cultures, till now it has important influence and meaning.

Take off its religious coat, Taoism's research, extension and promotion on health preserving culture no doubt has scientific theoretical basis and great practical value to modern society people's physical and mental health, meanwhile, it may realize good foreshadowing, propaganda, and leading role for its development. This paper discusses current development and countermeasure about Taoism health preserving undertakings from its concept and difference between health preserving cultural undertakings and industry.

1. CONCEPT OF TAOISM HEALTH PRESERVING CULTURE UNDERTAKING

1.1 Concept of Culture Undertaking

Hu (2010) holds the opinion that cultural undertaking means people take up some regular activities with certain targets, scale and important influence on social development in culture and art, press and publication, radio, film and television. Specifically, it includes subjective content such as thoughts and theories, value criterion, spirit form as well as objective elements including content carrier, transmission mode, cultural facilities and cultural organization and management system. Generalized cultural undertakings including

both culture industry and those non-profit cultural undertakings didn't make industrial operation. Narrow cultural undertaking mainly refers to non-profit cultural undertakings. It has the characteristics such as publicity, commonweal, diversity, equality and advancement.

According to Li (2012), cultural undertaking must be a kind of public welfare undertakings and never for the purpose of profit. Taking up culture construction, promoting the political, spiritual, material and ecological civilization construction, meeting people's growing demand for culture should be undertaken by some specific departments and units, it's a kind of industries belonging to national economy. Li Zhengyuan gives his definition as following: Cultural undertakings refer to those public welfare industries engaged in the cultural construction and providing public service, they realize administrative management and directly controlled by the administrative department through administrative means.

To sum up, cultural undertakings is public utilities which are non-profit and pursuing for commonweal and social benefit maximization, it is based on education and service, serves for social public life also has certain forward-looking in guiding ideology.

1.2 Difference Between Cultural Undertaking and Culture Industry

The concepts of cultural undertaking and cultural industry are easily confused, in view of this, it's necessary to distinguish them from definition, purpose, principle and operation modes.

Hu (2010) considers that culture industry refers to those activities providing cultural and entertainment products and services to public as well as activities collection related. From production purpose, cultural undertakings generate public cultural products serving for country needs while culture industries generate for-profit commodity and serve for market needs; from source of capital, capital of cultural undertakings is from national finance and social support while capital of cultural industry is from enterprise; cultural undertakings seek highest social benefits as operating principle while cultural industries take highest economic benefit as top principle; from the regulation way, cultural undertakings accept direct control from national administrative commands while cultural industries accept indirect control such as national laws and regulations, tax policy and price leverage.

According to Li (2012), the differences lie in that whether it operates through the market mechanism or industrial mode, whether it's for-profit or not. Cultural institutions won't reject profit-making, they also need to implement cost accounting and do operation management. Therefore, it's better to use "non-public welfare" to define "culture industry" rather than "profit-making". To sum up, culture industry should have following definition: Culture industry is a kind of "non-public welfare" industries

which offering cultural products production and cultural consumption and implementing enterprise management, it accepts indirect control intervention from administrative department through law, taxation and price lever.

Above all, in author's opinion, cultural industry is kind of industry for-profit and non-public welfare operations pursuing for maximizing economic efficiency and based on production and consumption. The key differences lie at characteristics of "for-profit" and "non-public welfare", "operational" didn't include them.

1.3 The Difference Between Health Cultural Undertaking of Taoism and Health Cultural Industry of Taoism

According to the principle how to define the cultural undertaking and the cultural industry above, the healthy cultural undertaking of Taoism and the healthy cultural industry also should be defined and distinguished. The health cultural undertaking is a kind of public undertakings which is non-for-profit, public welfare and pursuing the maximum social benefit, supported by academic research and education promotion, it shows the unique health culture of Taoism so that it serves the public health life in practice by the method and technology of keeping in good health, it also theoretically leads the trend and direction of modern health care through the health theory of Taoism.

The health cultural industry of Taoism, namely profitability cultural industry, is based on social benefit oriented; it pursues the maximum economic benefit. It belongs to the scope of industrialization not public welfare, and mostly it is operated through company, studio and institution. The Taoism does not participate in the operation directly, and offer technical advice and support at best.

The characteristic of operation isn't the key factor to differentiate them because both of them are operational, and the key factor to differentiate the two is for-profit and non-public welfare.

2. THE VALUE OF DEVELOPMENT OF TAOISM HEALTH CULTURAL UNDERTAKING

2.1 Be Beneficial to Promote Public Physical and Psychological Health

People who live in the rich material environment meanwhile are confronted with great physical and mental pressure, besides different kinds of modern and civil diseases all affect the human's healthy life. The study of the theory of health preserving of Taoism is the very thought foundation to solve the problem. The promotion of the theory is just the effective way to recuperate the body and mind. Excavating and popularizing the health culture of Taoism is an effective way to make the Taoism

adapt to the development of modern society and give back to society, and also it has considerable practical rationality.

2.2 Be Beneficial to the Adaptation of Taoism Into the Development of Modern Society

The development of Taoism is facing difficulty in modern society. Compared with other religions, it has no advantages in the ideological system. In addition that some foreign customs have been brought in, the belief systems of traditional religions are also facing great challenge. Thus, developing the health cultural undertaking of Taoism is just an effective and important way for the Taoism to adapt to modern society because it not only has scientific value to meet the real demand of people who want to keep good health, but also it has culture value. Based on the health cultural resource of Taoism, it can be built with characteristic as well as widespread mass base, both of which can provide huge space and motivation for the development of Taoism belief. The health culture of Taoism is the most prominent, obvious and representative, and one of the symbols which distinguish Taoism culture from other religious cultures. Thereafter, the health culture has important and realistic meaning for the development of Taoism. With the help of the health culture of Taoism, it shall make tremendous and special contributions to the health undertakings in modern society, also greatly promote the integration of Taoism with modern society, thus it will find a new breakthrough point and new level for development of Taoism undertakings.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT CONTENT OF THE PRESENT HEALTH CULTURAL UNDERTAKING OF TAOISM

Actually, the content of the health cultural undertaking is rich and colorful, covering academic education, cultural transmission, diet, medicine, direct massage, worship, and inner alchemy and etc. Now the most popular content of health culture of Taoism mainly lies at three items as Tai Chi, Taoism medicine and Taoism diet.

3.1 Health Keeping of Tai Chi

Even though Tai Chi was not referred in the old health keeping books of Taoism, it was created on the basis of health keeping theory of Taoism. The basic core of Tai Chi is based on Taoism thought, conforming to the theory of “living is weak and its death is firm, all living nature also is weak and its death is withered, so the firm also means the death and the weak also means living” in Tao Teh King. Reflecting the understanding of the Taoism to the “Life”, and being based on avoiding “firm” which is the characteristic of “death”, it has much stronger function of health keeping and health care.

Guo (2004) considers that during Qing emperor Kangxi years that Chen Wangting created Tai Chi, and at

that time Tai Chi was great art for attack and defense, so the health keeping wasn't the major function. Different from Guo Zhiyu, Zhang Zhiyong thinks that the so called “Chen Wangting created the Tai Chi” is subjective and unilateral, because the technical development of Tai Chi extend from Changquan to Paochui, then Tai Chi evolved from Paochui on the name and technical characteristics, in late Qing it began to be mature and in the Republican period was in full flourish period. During the Daoguang reign, it was innovated by several founders of martial arts such as Yang Luchan in order to comply with the public demand of health care and recuperation, gradually it prevailed in folks and transferred into a kind of health keeping exercises.

Li (2007) compares Tai Chi with Yoga from the point of body building, movement principle, culture background and the concept of health, he considers that at present Tai Chi doesn't form a scientific system of health care like Yoga integrating the “movement, diet, conditioning, living”, in addition that the outdated promotion idea and method, resulting in its difficulty in promotion and acceptability among young people like Yoga. The author advocates simplifying the skills of Tai Chi, absorbing concept of “briefness and efficiency” of Yoga and weakening the culture color of ‘Wushu’ of Tai Chi on the basis of showing respect for tradition.

Even though Tai Chi health keeping has certain mass basis and development history, its operation process is complicated, the promotion way is old, and also the concept of health is not systematic. During the promotion process of Tai Chi, easy to operate and characteristic of health keeping should be focused, and health care system must be formed to comprehensively guide how to live healthily, at the same time strengthen the contact and communication with the public. At present, Tai Chi is mainly promoted by social sports team, they're focusing on the teaching method but lacking of theory study. The Taoism organization has comprehensive advantage in the technique and theory of Tai Chi, however, due to the scope of Taoism, it mainly exists in the form of small scale performance and exhibition, lacking of extensive contact approach with people.

3.2 Health Keeping of Taoism

Taoism doctor not only uses medicine, but also combines the spiritual method in the process of diagnosis and treatment such as the psychological hint and psychological comfort and etc, it is different from traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine. The biggest characteristic of Taoism doctor is the combination between religion and medical science. Mysterious heart treatment method becomes the mental pillar of the patient and the dependence in psychological. This medical procedure with strong religious color can also preach religion and its doctrine in the process of patient treatment. The medical philosophy giving both consideration to the physical

therapy and psychotherapy just accords with the health culture concepts of Taoism “cultivation of body life and inner nature together” and “body and spirit should cultivate together”, and meanwhile it provides multiple reference to modern mainstream medicine concept.

Cheng (2013) points out that the traditional treatment of Taoism medicine can be divided into three levels: medicine and acupuncture as the core, Qigong and guidance as auxiliary, and the prophecy in magic arts book and witched treatment as the periphery. Cheng Han finds that in addition to three traditional levels, Wudang Taoism medicine also has some other methods such as psychotherapy, technology therapy and breathairian, and the four treatments to treat difficult miscellaneous diseases, all these to open a broad prospect. It needs to be attention that the Wudang Taoism doctors actively take the mode to cooperate with the social institution, for example, based on Wudang mountain hospital, fully exert the advantage of the Taoism doctor treating incurable diseases, choose to cure stroke, diabetes and rheumatism and etc, and take the road of specialization. In addition, the medicine recipe of Wudang Taoism doctor and health keeping method appeals much to the foreign medicine researcher. The successful experience of Wudang Taoism doctor provides a practical road for the modern development of Taoism medicine.

Facing the rest of time, the traditional Taoism medicine is trying to find an innovative road to adapt to the modern social development. Besides its own excellent medicine tradition, it can cooperate with the local medical and health organization, combine with local characteristics to contact the folks in depth, and expand influence through academic communication and theoretical research.

3.3 Dietetic Life-Nourishing

Dietetic life-nourishing of Taoism pays attention on letting nature take its course, the nature here means their actual situation such as gender, age, physical condition. Meanwhile, seasonal factors and geographical reason should be taken into consideration to build up one’s health.

Huang (2010) explains Taoism diet concept in “suit measures to different conditions”. The principle goes as following: “Suit measures to different time, people and local conditions”, it means diet should in accordance with seasonal climate change, different geographic area also different characteristics such as age, gender, physical fitness in order to realize longevity and healthy live. Cai (2009) also discusses this point of view from concordance, self-control and duty three aspects. Ren (2010) introduces dietary culture of Daoist from Lao mountain such as vegetarian diet, less food, drinking and tea culture, they are part of Lao mountain Taoism culture.

There’re rich materials in modern society, people have various dietary choice, however they often get disease due to unscientific diet concept and habit. The idea of “suit

measures to different conditions” has positive guiding significance for today’s people. As lacking of positive promotion consciousness and way, current Taoism health food business is now limited to Daoist temples. People cannot contact systematic thought of Taoism health food at ordinary times, so they cannot integrate this idea into daily care.

4. ITS CURRENT PROBLEMS AND COUNTERMEASURES

4.1 Existing Problems

To sum up, Taoism health maintenance cultural undertaking has following problems: from the academic theory point of view, the rich Taoist cultural resources didn’t form full and reliable theory; from the perspective of government management, it lacks of related management organization and policy support; from the perspective of education popularization, it lacks special internal cultural talent training as well as public welfare propaganda and service consciousness; from macro perspective of development, it lacks unified business plan and specification. From perspective of business main body, it lacks enough autonomy while social organization isn’t normative and scientific.

4.2 Possible Countermeasures

4.2.1 Form Complementary Development Mode Between Taoist Organization and Social Organization

Since it’s going to develop Taoism health preserving culture undertaking, we must take social benefit as the highest principle, and we cannot just focus on small scale development within the organization or development of social organizations which lacks of normalization. Therefore, we should not only have independently leading mode by Taoist organizations and social organizations but also jointly dominated mode integrated government, Taoist organizations and social organizations, both independent model and joint model should complement each other and make common development. During specific operation, it should give priority to government investment in community public welfare projects such as public education, public fitness and construction of public facilities and realize service-oriented development model. Meanwhile, market factors shall be taken into consideration properly and do the complementary job.

For those Taoism regimen cultural projects which have big demand and high popularity such as Tai Chi, it should give priority to joint investment by social sports organizations and Taoist organizations and realize combination mode of theoretical knowledge learning and practical experience, besides, coupled with Taoism regimen knowledge introduction about dietary daily life to build up comprehensive service system to make up inadequacy of the government’s leading business mode.

4.2.2 Build Talent Cultivation System of Taoism Health Preserving Culture Undertaking

In addition to various development models, it also needs to establish a comprehensive system of talent training. No matter the interior of Taoist organizations, social organizations or government departments, they all lack of professional talents and consciousness of talent cultivation and need to establish a comprehensive talent cultivation system. Now the promotion personnel are mainly Taoist, religious believers, Taoism regimen enthusiasts and academic researchers, in addition of a few academic researchers who master further understanding, most of them don't equip relevant basic knowledge system but a few methods and skills, hence they cannot meet different needs of people who have different backgrounds on the theory exploration and practice of preserve one's health. Therefore, religious management department of government, education department should launch related personnel training projects, Taoist school at all levels should open related majors to make scientific and systematic teaching to religious and social practitioners, thus to improve their professional quality.

4.2.3 Strengthen Theory Research and Communication

Taoism regimen thought has a complete theoretical system, current health preserving culture undertakings lack of theoretical study but stress on the spread of skills and methods while the spread is loose. The theory research and communication have positive guiding influence on correct using skills and methods as well as systematic spread, meanwhile, it will improve development quality of Taoism health preserving culture undertaking.

4.2.4 Refer to Successful Cases From Other Religious Culture Undertakings

Successful cases from other religious cultural undertakings could provide some inspirations on its development. Shi (2012) puts forward the strategic thinking that "on the basis of the Buddhist doctrine, take traditional culture as link, serving the society as purpose" to make related service and culture into society and bring cultural service projects into the temple. About specific measures, the author puts forward that it should cultivate Buddhist talents who adapt to the social spiritual civilization, promote temple Buddhist culture combined with the popular activities, issue temple journals and production of spiritual and cultural products, organize Buddhist cultural activities together with social groups, promote all kinds of

stationery products, talent introduction and management innovation.

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, academic fields pay lots of attention on development of religious culture, Taoism culture development and health preserving culture, but few of them carry out its development problems. Some studies found the relationship between Taoism health preserving culture and modern social healthy life, but they only focused on its link itself or its positive influence. This paper starts with the current situation of health preserving culture undertaking and explores the topic of development of Taoism health preserving culture undertaking, then it makes distinguish about cultural undertakings and industries, determines its concept and characteristics, puts forward some feasible implementation procedures, specific guidance ideas and modes, above all, it's a kind of initial exploration.

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