



RESEARCH PAPER

**Shared Culture and Heritage along the Belt and Road: A Study of Pakistani Tea**

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**ABSTRACT**

As one of the most popular beverages in the world, tea is popular in the countries of the Belt and Road Initiative. In ancient times, tea spread to most countries through the "Ancient Tea Horse route" and the Silk Road, which led to the exchange of economic trade and the spread of culture. The objective of this paper is to investigate tea culture in Pakistan, different types of tea and the economic constraints of this beverage on Pakistan's economy. It also highlights its role in Belt & Road initiative. After a long historical evolution, countries influenced by tea culture have also redefined the tea culture belonging to their society by combining the characteristics of their local culture. Especially in the Central Asian and South Asian countries in the Belt and Road Initiative region, this cultural continuity can be seen everywhere and has become a part of people's daily lives. Overall, tea has become a shared heritage of the Belt and Road. By combining the results of historical documents and anthropological fieldwork, this paper briefly describes the current plight of the domestic tea industry in Pakistan based on the research and import and export of tea and analyzes the possibility of the protection and trade of tea cultural heritage. The result shows due to import of tea Pakistan is facing problems as local tea production is less. It is recommended the more tea production and tea processing plants can save this intangible culture in Pakistan.

**KEYWORDS** Cultural Exchange, One Belt One Road, Tea, Trade

**Introduction**

The Belt and Road include two cross-regional cooperation economic belts and trade projects, or a combination of the two, namely the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. Nearly ten years have passed since implementing the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013, and the countries along the route have achieved impressive achievements. Although the construction of infrastructure has been developing steadily, the cultural exchanges between countries along the Belt and Road need to be further improved. Most of the countries along the route, such as China and Pakistan, have also established the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CEPC) project based on supporting the Belt and Road Initiative, but many scholars believe that this is based on geopolitical diplomatic activities. Strategically South Asia, together with Southeast Asia, is the most important expansion of the BRI. (Yaseen, et. al., 2017; Rahim, et. al., 2018; Muzaffar, & Khan, I. 2021). Official documents highlight the Silk Road Economic Belt's major goals, including transport connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and cultural, educational and touristic exchanges. Beyond its ancient origins, the idea has a long history in modern Chinese planning (ICG, 2017). For China, both regions are terrestrial gateways to the Indian Ocean. South Asia is also economically the world's fastest-growing region, growing at an average of 7% since 2014 (Ghiasi, 2021). To maintain the sustainable and stable development of the initiative projects, it is necessary to deepen cultural recognition, tolerance and understanding among countries.

Fortunately, among the countries along the Belt and Road Initiative, most countries, especially those in South Asia and Central Asia, have the custom of drinking tea. Pakistan is a jewel in the northwest of the South Asian subcontinent (Yaseen, et. al., 2023). As an important neighbor of northeastern Pakistan, China plays a pivotal role in its economy and strategy, not only because of its geographical location but also because of its material and spiritual support. Pakistan is a country where more than 95% of its citizens believe in Islam. Its food and beverages are mainly beef, mutton, chicken, pasta and dairy products. There are few vegetables and fruits. Strict religious regulations prohibit drinking alcohol, so they use tea instead of wine. Usually comes with tea. In their view, tea is an indispensable part of their daily life. Its unique tea-drinking culture is very different from Chinese tea culture and European tea culture. Taking tea as the breakthrough point of understanding local culture and social customs during the implementation of the Belt and Road project can realize the cooperation and exchange of tea trade between China and Pakistan, and it is also an effective way to deepen the cooperation of the Belt and Road Initiative. It has certain practical significance and application value in economic aspects such as import and export.

As we all know, Punjab has the largest concentration of plains in Pakistan and has one of the largest irrigation systems in the world that has continued since the British colonial period. Due to good natural conditions, many agricultural cooperation projects between China and Pakistan are concentrated in Punjab. The so-called "to win Punjab is to win Pakistan". The friendship between China and Pakistan is higher than mountains, deeper than seas, sweeter than honey, and harder than steel. With the proposal of the Belt and Road strategy and the continuous improvement of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, tea may also be able to embark on a new path. The Belt and Road Initiative should better play the role of tea as the main channel for tea to the world, play the role of "meeting friends with tea", promote the common development of people from all over the world, and explore new development areas and cooperation models of the Belt and Road Initiative.

## Literature Review

In the study of South Asian tea, some scholars pointed out that Kashmiris regard it as an indispensable drink (Charu,2008), with medicinal value (Ajaib,2012). In *The Darjeeling Distinction*, Sarah Besky (2019) affirms Markman Ellis's claim in *Empire of Tea: the Asian Leaf that Conquered the World* (2018), "Tea as 'exotic' to British society and British colonization Social influence." In China, starting from Ya'an in western Sichuan, passing through Kangding and Qamdo in Tibet, to Lhasa, and then to Nepal and Bhutan, this is a very strange and mysterious ancient business road, known as the Sichuan-Tibet the Ancient Tea — Horse route, it has existed for more than 1300 years since the Tang Dynasty(Wang,2016). Combined with the historical investigation of the Kashmir region of the South Asian subcontinent, it can be inferred that the route connected by the Ancient Tea — Horse route has affected the present-day Pakistan region. Tea carries the cultural significance of "luxury" and "commodity"(Shu,2017); some scholars start from different regions and different types of tea to clarify the important status of tea in society (Zhang,2013). Scholars from various countries have never stopped their research on tea, and they have also affirmed the important value of tea in promoting cultural exchanges and social and economic development.

At this stage of research on the history and culture of tea in Pakistan and South Asia, JürgenWasim Frembgen's book - *A Thousand Cups of Tea-Among Tea Lovers in Pakistan and Elsewhere in the Muslim World* is typical. The book features a large number of Muslim tea drinkers from around the world. His perspective is spread across Africa, Europe, and South Asia. The author discovers that tea trees were cultivated by the local population in Assam even before the arrival of the British colonizers. But it was not until the 19th century that tea in South Asia, like tea in other parts of the world, became part of the local culture in the form of tea drinking practices (Frembgen,2017,p.9). Through fieldwork and cross-cultural comparisons, the author presents a detailed account of the preparation of tea in Pakistan.

He synthesizes Islamic theological perspectives and folk medicine to elucidate the significance and applications of tea consumption in the Islamic world, emphasizing its purported benefits for physical strength, metabolic activity, and disease prevention (Frembgen, 2017, p.14). Furthermore, the author provides detailed descriptions of numerous extant teahouses, as well as those that have been rendered obsolete by the forces of modernization. These teahouses contributed to the vibrancy of Pakistani society by fostering multiculturalism. They served as hubs for the exchange of information, the dissemination of news, and the resolution of conflicts. The decorative murals, tea utensils, and poems created around tea in the teahouses reflect the rich heritage of Pakistani art and literature (Frembgen, 2017, pp.75-77). In essence, the author posits that tea is a cultural symbol, reflecting the homogeneity of Muslim tea-drinking practices in Pakistani society. The consumption of tea constitutes an integral aspect of the lifestyle of individuals in North Africa and South Asia, serving as a pivotal element in the formation of their cultural identity (Frembgen, 2017, p.94).

Jürgen Wasim Frembgen is arguably one of the more in-depth scholars of Pakistani tea culture and history in recent years. His perspective is unique in that he not only deals with Pakistan itself, but also compares it with other Muslim countries that have unique tea culture regions. In the introduction of Pakistani tea drinking customs, but also tea and literature, poetry, tea houses and Muslim medicine together. The study demonstrated the potential and possibilities of tea culture in Pakistan. However, the attributes of tea are diverse, and factors influencing the culture go beyond history, globalization, religion and language. Economics, social structure and technology also play a key role. As Pierre Bourdieu observed, culture is not merely a vehicle for expression and symbolism; it is also a locus of social power relations and individual practices. The production, circulation and consumption of cultural goods (for example, art, literature and science) are all subject to the influence of forces operating within a given field (Bourdieu, 1985). It can be argued that the production and consumption of tea in Pakistan, as well as the formation and change of tea culture, should be regarded as a dynamic process. This process is accompanied by social structural changes and alterations to human practices. In particular, it is necessary to concentrate on the advancement of tea in Pakistan in the present era and in the context of the contemporary period. It is essential to maintain a constant focus on the analysis of the relationship between Pakistanis and tea in this process, as well as in different contexts.

## **Material and Methods**

The critical analysis of the data of Pakistani libraries and centers through Qualitative research method and quantitative research method is used in taking the information of the types of tea in Pakistan.

The fieldwork method is a significant approach within the discipline of anthropology, particularly for the study of culture and qualitative research. Participant observation represents the most pivotal tool within this method. The fieldwork period for this project spanned from July 2021 to September 2022. Initially, I acquired knowledge of the names, preparation methods and drinking values associated with various tea-drinking practices through social interaction with the local population in Pakistan. Secondly, I elected to consume tea in the company of Pakistanis representing a range of age groups. This involved interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds, including university faculty members, younger Pakistani adults, tea merchants, and other individuals encountered in tea houses. The interviews were employed as the primary source of information for the analysis of Pakistani attitudes towards tea and their understanding of it. The process of participant observation is a time-consuming one, requiring a great deal of time and careful observation. This entailed observing the implements utilized for tea preparation, the specific tea varieties employed, tasting the flavors, noting the colors, documenting the verbal expressions, and other such activities. Thirdly, a visit was made to the National Tea & High-Value Crops Research Institute (NTHRI), situated in the vicinity of

Batdarian Village, Mansehra City, Khyber-Pashtun Province. I was afforded the opportunity to observe the work of the researchers at this institute. The researchers at the aforementioned institute were interviewed. A visit was made to the tea gardens of NTHRI, where an insight was gained into the institute's tea cultivation programme and production patterns.

Furthermore, the research methodology of this project encompasses data processing. The methodology does not entail the resolution of intricate mathematical problems; rather, it entails the procurement of data through the consultation of pertinent literature and web pages, followed by the formulation of intuitive judgments. The data set includes a number of variables, including the volume of tea imports and exports in Pakistan over recent years, the quantity of tea produced in Pakistan on an annual basis, the annual consumption of tea by the Pakistani population, and the area under tea cultivation in Pakistan.

## **Tea Culture in Pakistan and its Connotation**

### **Distinctive and Innovative**

The history of tea in Pakistan is inextricably linked to the broader history of tea in South Asia during the British colonial period. The British political and military expansionist movement resulted in the dissolution of the geographical boundaries between the two tea cultures. However, Pakistani tea culture is not a continuation or inheritance of a foreign culture. Pakistan has a wide variety of tea customs. In the preparation of tea, the Pakistani method is more likely to involve boiling the tea leaves than brewing them in boiling water. This method optimizes the flavor of the tea, which satisfies the Pakistani palate's desire for a robust tea aroma. Crops such as milk, sugar, cardamom and saffron are not only integral to Pakistani tea customs but are also dominant crops indigenous to Pakistan. In other words, a cup of Pakistani tea (whether it is Chai or Kahwa) represents the crystallization of the collective wisdom of the Pakistani people, reflecting the advantages of Pakistani natives and the distinctive flavor of Pakistan itself. Consequently, Pakistani tea culture is distinctive and innovative.

It can be seen that the tea culture in Pakistan has similarities with many countries in Central Asia, including Iran and Turkey. This is also in line with the eating habits of Muslims. Beef, chicken, and mutton are their favorites. Other dairy products such as cheese and yogurt can be found everywhere. Muslims in the South Asian subcontinent use their agricultural characteristics to present different types of tea. For example, Gilgit Baltistan is rich in walnuts, so there is a tea made from walnuts. Examples related to this are saffron, lemon, masala, etc. Therefore, it can be said that such a rich variety of tea is the inheritance of the tea culture by the Pakistanis combined with their cultural characteristics and advantages, thus redefining their tea culture.

### **Social**

In Pakistan, tea is regarded as an indispensable instrument for social interaction. Tea is a medium of communication in a variety of social contexts, including gatherings of friends and business negotiations. In Pakistani households, tea is a customary beverage used by hosts to entertain their guests. The consumption of tea serves to diminish the perceived distance between individuals, thereby facilitating the formation and strengthening of interpersonal relationships. Tea is a tangible manifestation of Pakistani hospitality.

### **Universal**

Does the concept of a "higher" or "lower" class of tea exist? Such a classification is not applicable in this context. Regardless of the country of origin or specific tea customs, all

tea is considered equal and there is no distinction between superior and inferior quality. This is also the case in Pakistan. I have had the opportunity to visit a number of Pakistani homes and partake in tea with the residents on a number of occasions. The participants included university professors, prominent members of the aristocracy, ordinary Pakistani students and young people, labourers residing in rural areas, and police officers responsible for maintaining security in their localities. In the homes of the aristocrats, I was presented with the most exquisite snacks and chai, served in expensive teapots. In the modest dormitories of Pakistani university students, young Pakistanis would often spend their own money on chai and biscuits, despite the fact that they were living on very limited resources. As we conversed over tea, they informed me that even in such a dormitory, it was their home. They explained that when guests came to their home, they were expected to be served tea. An Islamabad teahouse proprietor, who requested anonymity, informed me that if one were to visit a Pakistani restaurant or teahouse for a meal and the proprietor and waitstaff did not offer clean cups of tea and courteous service, one would not have traveled to Pakistan. The proprietor stated, "Regardless of race, as long as one drinks tea, one is our guest." In addition, I undertook a visit to the livestock market in Lahore. Despite the basic conditions and the presence of animal faces, tea stalls offering chai were present, and a cup of chai was observed to facilitate successful sales among those engaged in trading activities. At the summit of Patriata in Punjab, a young man who sells chai and kahwah serves tea to every tourist who climbs to the top, despite the basic conditions in which he operates. Tea is consumed in Pakistan regardless of the occasion or status of the individual. The pursuit of tea has remained consistent throughout history. Tea is a beverage that unites all Pakistani people.

### **Daily Life**

Tea is a part of the daily life of the Pakistani people. In Chinese mass society, there is a saying "firewood, rice, oil, salt, sauce, vinegar and tea". In other words, the Chinese use fire to cook, rice as the staple food, oil, salt, sauce and vinegar as the seasoning, and tea is ranked after the daily diet. But in Pakistan, tea is on the same level as diet. Chai is part of breakfast in the vast majority of areas.

During my travels to the rural regions of Punjab, I observed that the host families served chai, a tea-based beverage, at the table with all three meals. In the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region, Kahwah is consumed with the evening meal. Evening tea (shaam ki chai), a culinary tradition centered around tea, has also emerged. This practice bears resemblance to the British tradition of afternoon tea, in that it is not a formal meal, but rather a light repast. This occurs between the midday and evening meals, when families or friends gather to consume a variety of snacks and desserts while drinking milk tea. The selection of dishes is entirely at the discretion of the diner, akin to that of a buffet. For those who are particularly adept at creating a variety of dishes, the preparation of an evening tea platter represents a creative challenge and an opportunity for culinary experimentation. Evening tea has become an important social occasion for Pakistanis, providing an opportunity to socialize, gather with friends and family, and entertain guests. It also serves as a cultural indicator, reflecting the traditions and practices of Pakistani society.

### **Dependence**

Drinking tea is almost all over the streets of Pakistan, and there are even traders selling tea in the livestock market. Everyone drinks at least three cups of tea almost every day, and some people say, "If I don't drink tea every day, my life is incomplete". There is even a Punjabi proverb, "It is not blood that flows from the body of a Pakistani, but tea." This shows the importance of tea to Pakistanis. In a renowned teahouse, an advertising slogan is displayed above the entrance: Respect tea, tea is superior to all beverages. Tea is second thing which open your eyes after betrayal. Despite the Pakistani government's recommendation to reduce tea consumption as a means of alleviating the significant

economic burden associated with tea imports, tea remains a staple beverage for many Pakistanis. This dependence represents a significant challenge to the advancement of tea culture in the context of economic development. Some common types of Pakistani tea are summarized as follows:

### **Kahwah**

Kahwah is defined as pure tea, prepared without the addition of milk, and brewed or boiled directly in water. It is popular in places like Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Most Pakistanis consider Kahwah to be green tea, but Kahwah is also made from black tea in Kashmir, Rawalpindi, and Murree, etc. Many Kashmiris believe that the drink dates back to the Yarkand valley in Xinjiang during the Kushan empire in the first and second centuries AD. In the Kashmiri language, the word Kahwah means "sweetened tea"(Grierson,1932).

The term 'kahwah' is still used by some Kashmiris to refer to 'Mogul chai', a name that evokes the Mughal Empire, a Hindu-Muslim empire in South Asia that ruled from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. It seems plausible, therefore, to suggest that kahwah is a tea-drinking practice that developed during the Mughal Empire. At the present time, this tea is also consumed in numerous Central Asian countries, including Afghanistan and Iran.

Kahwah in Kashmir is prepared by boiling green tea, saffron, cinnamon, cardamom and Kashmiri roses (the addition of roses is referred to as Khameer, which is a type of Kahwah) as ingredients. A small quantity of cinnamon flakes and crushed cardamom is typically combined with water and brought to a boil in a pot. Subsequently, a modest amount of green tea is added and boiled at a low temperature for approximately ten minutes. Concurrently, a minimal quantity of saffron is dissolved in a small quantity of water. The tea broth should then be strained and the dissolved saffron added. According to individual taste, a suitable quantity of sugar or honey should be added, and the mixture should be stirred thoroughly. In the present era, for reasons of convenience, the typical preparation of kahwah is a simple brew of green tea, sugar, or honey. Once all the ingredients have been combined, the mixture should be boiled for approximately five minutes, after which it should be served.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kahwah is commonly referred to as Qehwa by the local population. This is consistent with the naming convention used in Afghanistan, where the two regions share a similar cultural and linguistic heritage. Consequently, the name of the tea has been influenced by the similarities between the two regions. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the residents of Peshawar tend to prefer Qehwa over Chai, which is consumed by the general public. Additionally, they often substitute jasmine tea for green tea on top of Qehwa. During the boiling process, ground cardamom powder is added, and sugar and lemon are incorporated upon the tea's emergence from the pot.

Kahwah has become an integral part of the daily diet of Kashmiris. It is a tradition that has been handed down from generation to generation and is one of the defining characteristics of the Kashmiri people. The preparation and consumption of kahwah, the use of a samovar, the serving of tchinpela (a bone china bowl used to serve kahwah) and the eating of Tchachvor (a traditional Kashmiri bread known as crumpet in English) are all regarded as sacred practices by the Kashmiri people.

The consumption of kahwah has been observed to have a refreshing and revitalizing effect on the mind, which results in the drinker experiencing feelings of refreshment and rejuvenation. Furthermore, the practice of Kahwah rituals is observed in certain rural regions of Kashmir. It is employed as a means of "expelling monsters" from children who are severely unwell and in a state of distress. Additionally, it is employed as a therapeutic agent to address epidemic illnesses such as whooping cough (pertussis). Some individuals

afflicted with migraine headaches have also been known to consume Kahwah infused with cardamom in order to achieve a state of relaxation and alleviate their symptoms.

### **Kashmir Pink Tea**

Kashmiri Pink Tea is a beverage that has been traditionally consumed in Kashmir and is considered a specialty of the region. The beverage is prepared by combining a unique assortment of green tea, milk, soda, and sugar. In Kashmiri, it is known as Noon chai, while in other contexts it is also referred to as Sheer chai, Gulabi Chai, Atkan chai, and Qaymak chai, depending on the specific preparation method.

It is beyond doubt that Kashmiri pink tea is immensely popular in the Himalayan region, extending well beyond the confines of Pakistani-controlled Kashmir to encompass regions such as Gilgit Baltistan. It is currently hypothesised that Kashmiri powdered tea originated in Yarkand, located in the Kashgar, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China. Formerly known as Turkestan, the region constituted a significant portion of the ancient Silk Road and served as a nexus for cultural diffusion. Given its status as a border region between China and Pakistan, Kashgar and Kashmir can be considered to have a close relationship. Throughout history and even to the present day, the people of the Kashgar region of China's Xinjiang province exhibit similarities with the Kashmiris with respect to their culinary traditions, tea consumption, and the household items they utilize. Regular trade occurred at the bazaars, which included tea. The Austrian botanist and explorer Charles von Hügel undertook a journey through the Indian subcontinent between the years 1831 and 1836. In his travelogue, the Austrian botanist and explorer Charles von Hügel noted the presence of a distinctive beverage in Kashmir, namely pink tea, which he had encountered during his visit to the region in 1835.

The preparation of Kashmiri pink tea is a more intricate process. The beverage is primarily composed of soda or water and baking soda, milk, salt, and gunpowder tea, which is essentially green tea. Furthermore, additional ingredients may be included, such as cardamom, cinnamon, star anise, pistachios or almonds, according to the individual's preference. The initial step is to combine water and baking soda or soda water (alkaline water) in a suitable container. Once the water has reached boiling point, the cardamom seeds, tea leaves, cinnamon and star anise should be added to the pot and mixed thoroughly. The pot should then be placed on a low heat and allowed to simmer for approximately half an hour to an hour, or until the majority of the water has evaporated. Once the majority of the water has evaporated, the addition of cold water is permissible. The mixture can then be reheated to boiling point. It is crucial to ensure that the tea exhibits a reddish hue throughout the boiling process, as this is a result of the chemical reaction between the alkaline water or baking soda and the chlorophyll present in the tea leaves. This red hue is referred to as "Tyoth." Following an extended boiling period, the tea leaves and spices are removed from the tea, which is then cooled. Subsequently, fresh whole milk is brought to a boil on a separate cooking apparatus and added to the cooled tea, preferably in a one-to-one ratio. Once the tea and milk have been thoroughly combined, the addition of salt and stirring are required. At this juncture, the hue undergoes a transformation, assuming a pinkish tone as a consequence of the interaction between the white of the milk and the red of the tea broth. Ultimately, the powdered tea should be poured into a teapot or teacup, and the beverage may be garnished with chopped pistachios or almonds.

The aforementioned method represents the more traditional approach to preparing Kashmiri pink tea. In the present era, sugar is employed in lieu of salt to satisfy the prevailing preference for a sweet tea. Sugar-sweetened Kashmiri pink tea is more prevalent in regions beyond Kashmir, particularly in Punjab and Sindh. Sweetened Kashmiri pink tea is known as Sheer Chai, largely due to the fact that when Kashmiri Muslims migrated to the Punjab in droves in the mid-18th century, they brought Kashmiri pink tea with them. Although the British tea-drinking culture had not yet become prevalent in the Indian subcontinent,

Kashmiris had already adopted the practice of drinking Kashmiri pink tea and had established it as a tradition.

Kashmiri pink tea is reputed to facilitate digestion and stimulate the nervous system. It is typically served with slivered almonds and crushed cardamom, accompanied by Pakistani specialty breads such as Kulcha and Taelwor, and Kashmiri bagels. Additionally, it is commonly served with Czochwor with Sot or Czot. This tea is regarded as a symbol of hospitality and luxury, and is often served on special occasions.

## **Chai**

The term "Chai" is used with a specific pronoun, and in general, it refers to regular milk tea, which is also known as "Doodh Pati Chai". Additionally, this milk tea is frequently served in the majority of Pakistani tea houses, restaurants, and other establishments. In certain contexts, the term "Chai" is also used to refer to all teas in Pakistan, in the broader sense of the word, including varieties such as kahwah, Kashmiri pink tea, and other types of tea. It should be noted that this broader term is more colloquial in nature and is typically employed in the following manner: "What would you like to drink?" "A cup of Chai will suffice." In this context, the beverage referred to as "Chai" by the host to the guest could be a milk tea or a local specialty, not necessarily a specific type of tea.

Chai is a beverage prepared from milk, sugar, and black tea (through the CTC process). It is the most prevalent tea in Pakistani society and is the generic term for all milk-based teas. In addition to Pakistan, this tea is also widely available in India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Nepal. In Pakistan, small roadside establishments, known as Dhabas, offer a variety of local snacks, refreshments, and milk tea, commonly referred to as chai. Those who are experts in the preparation of chai are referred to as Chaiwalas, which is a Urdu term meaning "tea vendor". In Urdu, the term "Wala" denotes an individual engaged in a specific activity. Consequently, the term "Chaiwala" is used to refer to street vendors of tea or those who prepare it.

The most common preparation of chai comprises tea leaves, water, milk and sugar. Initially, three cups of water should be poured into a pot and heated. Once the water has begun to bubble, one teaspoon of tea leaves (CTC black tea) should be added. Once the tea and water have been thoroughly combined in the pot and are boiling, one cup of whole milk should be added to the pot. Once the mixture has reached boiling point once more, reduce the heat to a low setting and add sugar to taste. Subsequently, the remaining solids should be removed from the tea using a strainer or filter, and the tea broth should be poured into a teapot or teacup. This process yields approximately two cups of Chai. For those seeking a more pure flavour profile, the initial step is optional; the milk may be heated as a "water" substitute and the tea leaves added directly. In some instances, additional ingredients may be incorporated according to individual preferences or contextual circumstances. These may include cardamom, ginger, black cardamom, cinnamon, black pepper, black cloves, fennel seeds, nutmeg, dried ginger powder, or saffron.

Chai is the most popular and preferred tea beverage in Pakistan. Tea is not only a beverage consumed by Pakistanis during leisure and recreation; it is also an integral part of the country's traditional three-meal-a-day diet. The majority of tea consumed in Pakistan is in the form of chai, a traditional beverage. In addition to its role in the daily diet, chai plays an important part in social interactions, including receiving guests, discussing business, and gathering with friends and family. In addition to the aforementioned consumption patterns, Pakistanis also prepare chai by boiling it. The vast majority of people consume at least three cups of chai per day, with the average daily consumption of CTC tea per person reaching one kilogram.



Additionally, chai serves as a stimulant. For those engaged in long-distance trucking, a particularly robust flavor is required. The result of combining regular chai with coffee is what is known as Truck Driver Wali Tea. A sufficient quantity of caffeine enables truck drivers to remain awake during the night without experiencing the effects of sleepiness. This type of tea is typically available at motorway rest areas and other driver's stations.

### **A Comparative analysis of Pakistani and Chinese tea**

In the way of making tea, Pakistan is very different from China. The Chinese will steep tea leaves in boiling water in a teapot or cup or use a teapot to boil the tea. Such tea leaves can be used repeatedly until the color gradually fades, and new tea leaves will be replaced. Most of Pakistan's Chai uses CTC process black tea, which is mixed with milk and boiled. After boiling, the tea leaves (granules) are filtered out. Even the Kashmiri pink tea is filtered, and the tea leaves do not end up in the cup and are not recycled repeatedly. This is one of the reasons why Pakistanis consume more tea.

In both China and Pakistan, tea is regarded as an everyday beverage, typically consumed through sipping. For reasons of convenience, the Chinese occasionally pour tea into a teacup that they carry with them. The beverage is consumed by simply adding hot water. In a restaurant setting, the waiter will typically offer tea, but it will be a plain tea, without any additional accompaniments. It is not feasible to consume tea in Pakistan without first boiling it. Nevertheless, prepared tea is available for purchase in street tea shops, restaurants, and even in offices.

In addition to their portability and rapid consumption, Chinese and Pakistani teas are also utilized in specific contexts within their respective countries. In Chinese culture, the preparation of tea is an integral part of social interaction, particularly during business negotiations or when entertaining guests. This is exemplified by the practice of "Kung Fu Tea," a style of brewing tea that involves a meticulous and time-consuming process. This is a sophisticated and challenging method that incorporates a great deal of Chinese culture and philosophy. Tea is also served in Pakistan as a beverage for entertaining guests and friends, albeit in a simplified form that retains its cultural connotations.

Additionally, there is a significant discrepancy between the two countries with regard to the nomenclature employed for tea products. In China, the nomenclature of tea products is based on the six principal tea types: green tea, black tea, yellow tea, white tea, oolong tea, and other tea types. In the context of ordering tea at a teahouse or purchasing tea, the initial step is to ascertain the tea's categorization within the six main categories. Subsequently, the consumer will determine the specifics of the tea's origin, production process, raw materials, and vintage. In Pakistan, the nomenclature of teas and tea customs is not structured around the six major tea categories. Instead, it is based on the addition of milk to the tea and the region in which the tea custom is a specialty. In some instances, the brand of the tea is explicitly indicated in the name, or the characteristics of color and function are emphasized. Even an adjective is employed in the designation of the tea. In addition to the aforementioned factors, the efficacy and flavor of the tea are also taken into consideration when ordering. A relatively small number of teahouses (or tea bars) will offer a classification system for their teas, with options such as "black tea" or "Oolong tea" presented to guests for selection.

### **The Economic Impacts of Tea Imports**

In the year 2022, Pakistan's imports of tea reached a value of US\$707 million, which represents the highest level of tea imports globally. Tea represents Pakistan's 21st largest import. Pakistan's principal sources of tea imports are Kenya (US\$ 534 million), Vietnam (US\$ 84.7 million), Rwanda (US\$ 31.4 million), Uganda (US\$ 27.9 million) and China (US\$ 9.42 million)

The huge tea import bill adds a huge economic burden on Pakistan and puts pressure on limited foreign exchange resources. Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have declined from about \$16 billion in February 2022 to less than \$10 billion in the first week of June 2022, barely enough to cover the cost of all its imports for two months. On this basis, Pakistan's Senior Minister Ahsan Iqbal has chosen what he considers to be "unnecessary imports" and is restricting their import. This was done as a measure to cut the high cost of imports and protect the economy. He appealed to the Pakistani public to "drink one to two cups of tea less per day to cut Pakistan's high import bill." (Sands,2022)

The incident attracted considerable attention from the Pakistani public almost immediately. The general public was skeptical about this proposed method of stimulating economic growth. The rationale is straightforward: tea is the "life" of the vast majority of Pakistanis. However, the economic burden represents a contradiction to the cultural tradition of tea consumption in Pakistan. It is imperative that policymakers identify alternative strategies to address this conflict.

## **Recommendations and Advantages**

### **Protection of Cultural Heritage**

As previously stated, Pakistani tea culture is characterized by a number of distinctive features. Tea is a fundamental component of Pakistani culture. The tea culture of Pakistan represents a significant cultural asset for the country. Those responsible for formulating policy are seeking to reduce the economic burden by reducing the consumption of tea by the population. However, given the extent to which tea culture is already embedded in the social fabric, it is unlikely that this will be achieved in the short term. Furthermore, tea culture represents a significant aspect of many Belt and Road co-construction countries. Such a culture facilitates the exchange and learning processes between the countries in question. It is therefore imperative that Pakistan's tea culture be regarded as a component of global tea culture and that this cultural heritage be safeguarded.

### **The Advancement of the Planting Potential**

The huge import quota of tea has brought a great financial burden to Pakistan. Increasing domestic tea planting and production in Pakistan is a way to reduce tea import quota, and also to meet the needs of domestic consumers for "self-produced and self-sold". This necessitates the undertaking of initiatives aimed at the development of regions deemed conducive to tea cultivation.

Pakistan has a huge potential for tea cultivation. It is suggested that the policy implementers may set up relevant tea departments to specialise in the development of tea cultivation in suitable areas where tea cultivation has not yet taken place. Tea gardens will be established one after another on land where tea can be grown.

The tea export market is dominated by five countries, Kenya, Sri Lanka, China, Indonesia and India, which export 80% of the world's total tea production (Khan & Hussain,2011). Thanks to the efforts of research institutions represented by NTHRI (the National Tea & High-Value Crops Research Institute), Pakistan's tea exports total led US\$15.2 million in 2020. Although this figure is far from its import quota, it also makes Pakistan the 38th largest tea export country in the world. It can be reasonably deduced that an increase in indigenous tea cultivation and production will have a positive impact on the country's economy and tea exports.

### **Encouraging Farmers to Participate in Tea Cultivation**

At present, the tea produced by most of the tea gardens in Pakistan has no losses but no major profits. Although tea is not profitable for farmers, can still engage in this technology, tea gardens are labor-intensive for only a few days of the year, and farmers can use the remaining time to engage in other income-generating activities; all tea farmers get Nursery subsidies, fertilizer subsidies and subsidies for the cost of picking fresh tea from tea gardens; tea farmers also receive interest-free loans for the first four years of planting their tea gardens; tea gardens are seen as a status symbol by most farmers in the target area (Latif et al., 2012).

In the interview, The administrator of NTHRI Dr. Abdul Waheed stated that tea cultivation is a challenging and lengthy process, but it has the potential to provide employment for three generations. Zeeshan Maqsood, who is involved in the tea trade at the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, asserts that growing tea necessitates a long-term vision. It is reasonable to posit that this will be the case until at least 2040, given that tea trees can take up to a decade to reach maturity. Should circumstances prove favorable, the country may be able to replace approximately 70% of its imports within a 20-year period (Ahmed, 2021).

Tea is one of the most important cash crops and plays a significant role in rural development, poverty reduction and food security in exporting and developing countries. It is a principal source of livelihood for millions of smallholder producers. There is evidence to suggest that tea production has the potential to generate income for farmers. It is recommended that policy makers establish relevant departments with the objective of sensitizing Pakistani farmers to the benefits of tea cultivation. It would be beneficial to conduct training on the subject of tea cultivation. Furthermore, it is imperative to safeguard the rights of tea farmers. It would be beneficial to extend invitations to private tea companies or private capitalists to consider investing in the Pakistani tea industry.

### **Taking Advantage of Belt and Road Connectivity**

Among the Belt and Road co-construction countries, China is not only the home of tea, but also a major tea producer. It is suggested that the co-operative relationship with China can be fully utilized by inviting relevant Chinese tea researchers for technical support and industrial guidance. Invite Chinese parties to participate in the construction of Pakistani tea joint ventures. Learn from China's tea business promotion model, as well as the experience of Chinese tea farmers in development and cultivation.

In order to enhance the collaboration and exchange within the tea industry with China, it would be advantageous to align the current Belt and Road initiative with the original route of the Ancient Tea-Horse route.

The Ancient Tea—Horse route refers to connecting traditional tea producing areas such as Yunnan and Sichuan, and further extends to Southeast Asian and South Asian countries and regions such as Myanmar, India, Laos, and Thailand (Ling et al., 2018). The land transportation route of Sichuan, Yunnan, Myanmar and India is a channel for China to strengthen friendly cooperation with Southeast Asian and South Asian countries and promote economic and cultural exchanges with each other (Chen, 1990). In the current research, it is not clear that the Ancient Tea-Horse route leads to Pakistan, but it is entirely possible to redefine a tea culture exchange and heritage preservation to Pakistan in the transportation road in the completed Belt and Road project at this stage.

Judging from the nature of the ancient Silk Road, the Silk Road has transformed into the Ancient Tea Horse Road since the Tang and Song Dynasties, and the Tea-Horse route in a broad sense should include the Silk Road since the Tang and Song Dynasties (Chen, 2011). The connotation of "the Ancient Tea-Horse route" has gone far beyond the scope of a "tea road" or "horse road", and has become an important economic

and cultural link between ancient, modern and even modern ethnic groups in southwestern China, and between China and South Asia, Southeast Asia and other countries. , religion and other aspects of communication(Wang & Wei,2020). Not only Pakistan, but many countries in South Asia are also countries along the Silk Road, and they are also Belt and Road co-construction countries.

The attention to the culture of South Asian tea, the extension of the Ancient Tea-Horse route, and the full play of tea's functions of "inclusiveness" and "benefiting the world" are the collision of cultures, societies and ideas of countries along the Silk Road, and it is also a reflection of This is consistent with the ultimate purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative.

## **Conclusion**

The tea drinking customs of Pakistan are characterized by a rich and colorful array of practices, which reflect the country's unique cultural heritage and traditions surrounding tea drinking and tea-making. The Pakistani people have integrated foreign elements with local advantages, tastes and cash crops to create their own distinctive tea drinking customs, which are an integral part of their daily lives and social activities. Pakistan's high tea consumption, which is a consequence of the country's dependence on tea, is among the highest in the world. However, this has also resulted in a significant increase in the country's tea imports, which has placed a considerable burden on the economy. At this juncture, the domestic economic situation in Pakistan and the country's national dependence on tea are in a state of contradiction. The current local tea-planting and production capacity is insufficient to meet the national demand for tea. It is not feasible to alter the established tea culture and national drinking habits. Instead, the focus should be on enhancing the efficiency of local tea production and encouraging farmers to participate in tea production, with the objective of reducing the reliance on tea imports. The potential for tea cultivation in Pakistan is boundless, and the country's tea culture represents a significant cultural asset among the Belt and Road cooperation countries. It would be beneficial to incorporate the exchange of tea culture into the Belt and Road project. It would be beneficial to enhance the country's collaboration with neighboring countries in the domains of tea trade, planting research, and other pertinent areas. The focus on Pakistan's tea culture and industry is not only an avenue for gaining insight into Pakistani society and culture; it is also a strategic decision that will contribute to the long-term and stable advancement of the Belt and Road initiative.

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