



RESEARCH PAPER

Tea Culture in China: Tradition meets Modernity

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ABSTRACT

Tea can be so readily accepted by the world people simply because it is the only man-made beverage that is low in cost and conducive to health with the least adverse effect. Scientific analysis shows that tea contains a variety of substances that are effective in preventing cancer, reducing the level of cholesterol, disinfecting, helping digestion, refreshing the mind, postponing aging and beautifying human looks. In addition, tea contains some ingredients that have a unique power to resist oxidization. As a result, tea has great potential value in the local culture of every province of China. Scientific study of tea and the application of new technology will bring about a revolution in Chinese tea industries. Chinese tea culture covers almost all realms of life, both physical and spiritual. Tea culture is a branch of learning that takes as its subject of study the relationship between tea-marketing and tea-drinking on the one hand and the various aspects of political, economic and cultural life on the other as well as the influence they exert on each other. To study and systematize it carries a great and far-reaching significance. Primary and secondary data have been analysed through qualitative research which has resulted into the China big market of the tea, and it is becoming popular with the time.

KEYWORDS Shaoxing Rizhu, Wuyuan Zheyuan, Xinglong Shuangjing, Yangxian

Introduction

China is widely regarded as the birthplace of tea. It has the longest history of tea cultivation, production, and consumption in the world, and tea has been an integral part of Chinese society for thousands of years. Along the way, it has also played a significant role in the country's economy, art, and philosophy. According to legend, tea was first discovered in China over 5,000 years ago by the mythical emperor *Shennong*. He is said to have been sitting under a tea tree with a cup of hot water when a leaf from the tree fell into his cup. Finding the drink fragrant and delicious, he eagerly shared it with his subjects. Another legend posits that he was a keen herbalist and found tea leaves to be curative to some of the poisonous herbs and plants he consumed in search of new medicinal effects. As such, tea became an important component of traditional Chinese medicine and culture. Over the centuries, tea cultivation and production in China became increasingly sophisticated. Different regions developed their own unique varieties and styles of tea, leading to the six main categories of tea we know today: White tea, green tea, yellow tea, oolong tea, black tea, and *Puerh*/dark tea. Each tea category boasts its own typical set of aromas and flavours, and some may possess potential health benefits unique from other categories. (Kerin,2008)

Tea has also played a significant role in China's economy, particularly during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The demand for tea became so great that over many centuries it led to the development of what is now known as the ancient 'Tea Horse Road', a trade route which connected China to India and Tibet. Tea also gradually became an important commodity for export to Europe. The history of Chinese tea is a long and gradual story of refinement. Generations of growers and producers have perfected the Chinese way of manufacturing tea, and its many unique regional variations. The original idea is credited to the legendary Emperor *Shennong*, who is said to have lived 5 000 years ago. His far-sighted edicts required, among other things, that all drinking water be boiled as a hygienic precaution. A story goes that, one summer day, while visiting a distant part of his realm, he

and the court stopped to rest. In accordance with his ruling, the servants began to boil water for the court to drink. Dried leaves from a nearby bush fell into the boiling water, and a brown substance was infused into the water. As a scientist, the emperor was interested in the new liquid, drank some, and found it very refreshing. And so, according to legend, tea was created in 2737 BC. (Chinese's Tea, 2016)

Literature Review

Gao, Sally (2016). "A Cultural History Of Tea In China" examine the detailed cultural history of tea in China. *Liu, Tong (2012). Chinese Tea.* is a path breaking work about Chinese tea. *Weber, Irena (December 2018). "Tea for Tourists: Cultural, Representation, and Borrowing in the Tea Culture of The Mainland China and Taiwan"*. has compared the tea culture of two countries, its similarities and its differences. *Liu, Jerry C.Y. (2011). "Between Classical and Popular: The Book of Tea and the Popularization of Tea-Drinking Culture in the Tang China"* is the historical view of tea culture in China during Tang dynasty. *Mair, Victor H. The True History of Tea, (2012).*

Ceresa, Marco (2016). The History of Tea in China 2016 – Lu Yu and His Tea Classic – Associazione Italiana Cultura del Tè. *Gray, Arthur (1903). The Little Tea Book. The Baker & Taylor Company, New York.* is a tea book of Chinese tea which described the etiquettes and manners of the tea in China. *Benn, James A. Tea in China: A Religious and Cultural History,* define the cultural and religious history of Chinese tea.

Hinsch, Bret (2016). The Rise of TEA Culture in China: The Invention of the Individual. find out the reasons of rise of tea culture in China. *Houyuan Lu; et al. (7 January 2016). "Earliest tea as evidence for one branch of the Silk Road across the Tibetan Plateau"*. Lu has attached the cords of tea culture to the history of Silk Road and he also discussed its spread across the Tibet. *Mair, Victor H. The True History of Tea, (2012)* has given his own opinion about the true history of tea.

Jie, Li (2015). "Teahouses and the Tea Art: A Study on the Current Trend of Tea Culture in China and the Changes in Tea Drinking Tradition". In China tea houses are also transformed with the passage of time, this transformation is also part of Chinese tea culture. *Sigley, Gary (2015-12-01). "Tea and China's rise: tea, nationalism and culture in the 21st century"*. *International Communication of Chinese Culture.* Tea is a unifying force for Chinese people. Gary discussed the contribution of tea in the nationalism of China.

Material and Methods

The argument of this paper is that 'tea', although not listed as one of the 'four great inventions', is perhaps China's greatest contribution to humanity. Tea has literally changed the course of world history many times. Let's return to the example of the Industrial Revolution. The technological and manufacturing changes in Europe, and then North America, during the 19th Century laid the foundations for the development of the modern world. This process involved the large-scale migration of people from rural areas to the rapidly expanding cities (in many ways like the experience of contemporary China as it undergoes its own version of the 'Industrial Revolution'). The rapid population increases of cities such as London was accompanied by the spread of water borne diseases like cholera and dysentery. Large urban environments in the 19th Century Western world were not very pleasant or hygienic places for the teeming masses to live—they were crowded, polluted, smelly and diseased. However, coincidentally some might say, when tea became more readily accessible to most of the urban population—that is, when the price of tea began to drop so it became more affordable—the incidence of these diseases also began to decline rapidly. True, it is difficult to absolutely demonstrate a correlation between the spread of tea and the overall improvement in physical well-being, but it would be fair to say that the

act of boiling water for infusing tea—thereby killing waterborne pathogens—certainly was an element in improving the health of urban populations.

Tasting Tea: Tea is taken as a beverage to quench thirst. In China, regardless of the age, every citizen enjoys drinking tea. It is a common sight that people carry a tea flask wherever they go and they like to sip tea while working, studying and spending leisure time. In almost all Chinese restaurants, tea is served before meals and guests are warmly welcomed by a cup of tea in many households. The quality of the tea is judged by the color, fragrance and flavor of the tea, the water quality and even the tea set. When tasting tea, the taster should be able to savor the tea thoroughly.

Tea art: While drinking attention is paid to environment, atmosphere, music, infusing techniques and interpersonal relationships.

Tea-lore: Philosophy, ethics and morality are blended into tea activity. People cultivate their morality and mind, and Savor life through tasting tea, thereby attaining joy of spirit.

A representative part of Chinese tea culture is Tea Houses. In the history, teahouse has been called *Chaguan, Chasi, Chaliao, Chashi, Chafang, Chawu, Chatan* and so on. Different names represent different forms of teahouses. Some are big, some are small, but the functions are usually the same. Teahouse acts as an important intersection point of tea culture. The formation of a teahouse is closely associated with the development of drinking tea tradition. In the long history, a teahouse has always been the place where people from different classes get together to enjoy their social lives (Jie,2015).

It is not only a place of tea consumption, but also a platform for tea culture demonstration, communication and broadcasting. Today, in China, while teahouses remain popular as leisure places, the tradition of drinking tea is no longer the main service they offer. In modern China, especially the aged population or people who have retired from their occupations tends to spend their whole day in tea houses. From morning tea to the evening tea, Chinese people enjoy a variety of activities such as playing Chinese chess, cards and *mahjong majiang*, reading newspapers, chatting, recalling old memories, smoking, playing Chinese musical instruments etc. When the initial rise of tea culture started, it was mainly concentrated in the culture of the upper class among the literati, monks, the monarch and his official. In Jin dynasty, drinking tea instead of wine is a way for the people from the elite class to meet with guests and show their simplicity. With the popularity of drinking tea among the common people, teahouses have emerged rapidly. The citizens' tradition of drinking tea had become a new feature of tea culture.

The Traditional Chinese Tea Ceremony

Tea was cultivated in the beginning mainly as herbal medicine and mostly within temples. Monks began to use tea for its peace and calming effects and as a sign of humility and respect for nature. One of the first written accounts about the tea ceremonies dates as far back as 1200 years ago, during the Tang Dynasty. The serving of tea was also named "*chadao*" which meant "the way of tea". Attention to tea preparation and serving were the preoccupations of the Chinese tea connoisseurs which transformed the way tea was regarded by the Chinese. Chinese tea ceremony was born because of the respect for nature and the need for peace which the religious ceremonies involved. The philosophies of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism have blended giving birth to the magical Chinese tea ceremony. The traditional tea ceremonies were described as "*he*" which translates as "peace", "*jing*" which translates as "quiet", "*yi*" which means "enjoyment" and "*zhen*" meaning "truth". (Li,1993)

As the time passed, Chinese people started to appreciate the enjoyment of tea and its social value, besides its medicinal purposes. Tea ceremonies went from being only religious manifestations to becoming social, cultural and traditional events in different celebrations to honour the royal family or to mark different important events in people's lives. One of the famous Chinese tea ceremonies is the one named *Gongfu* tea ceremony, also known as Kungfu tea ceremony. It is known as the Chinese traditional tea ceremony. Oolong tea is traditionally served during this ceremony. *Gongfu* cha literally translates as "making tea with efforts" and it represents the ceremony of preparing and serving oolong tea as a sign of respect for the guests the tea is prepared for, and humility when it comes to nature.

The *Gongfu* tea ceremony isn't the only tea performing ritual in China, but it is the most popular one. There are other tea ceremonies in China with their own significance and practice, depending on the region of origin and history. Wu-Wo tea ceremony is a style of Chinese tea ceremony which encourages participants to forget who they are. The participants must forget about their knowledge, wealth, and appearance and establish a group equality without any prejudice. In Chinese Buddhist usage, *wu-wo* translates in Sanskrit as "*anatta*" meaning "no individual independent existence". Wu-Wo tea ceremony began in Taiwan and extended in all the Buddhist countries especially in China, being a highly spiritual type of ceremony. (Zhang &Yang ,2001)

Chinese Wedding Tea Ceremony

Tea ceremony is the most significant event in a modern Chinese wedding as the traditional three prayers ceremony is usually not practiced. The bride is formally introduced to the groom's family through the Chinese wedding tea ceremony. It will usually take place on the wedding day when most of the family members are present. Any sweet tea, symbolising sweetness in the new union, is good for the Chinese wedding tea ceremony. You can use sweetened red tea for simplicity's sake, but some traditional Chinese sweet teas are preferred for the good connotations in their names.

- Lotus seeds and red dates tea - Symbolising that the couple will bear children quickly and continuously.

- Longans and red dates tea - The longan represents a "dragon" and the wish for having male children (Yang, 2001).

Tea Ware

An inseparable element of tea Art is the vessels specially designed for brewing tea. You cannot prepare the perfect tea without the right tools. For the tea ceremony the perfect tea ware is needed to ensure the right brewing and the magical atmosphere of the entire ceremony. The items must be both practical and aesthetic, the perfect ying-yang combination. The mandatory tools are a Yixing teapot or a porcelain teapot, a tea pitcher or *chahai*, a brewing tray, a teaspoon, usually three small cups and a tea strainer.

The Chinese wedding tea set is a meaningful keepsake of the wedding. The bride's parents will pay for the tea set which is part of the dowry. The bride will use it again when her own daughter gets married in the future. There are both western and Chinese style tea sets. Tea sets with western style cups seemed to be the popular choice now. Popular designs include double joy, dragon and phoenix, peony or other flower motifs and gold trimmings. Tea sets designed specifically for Chinese wedding tea ceremony will not have containers for creamer or sugar. The tea pot come in various sizes and are either round or oval. Usually, four tea cups and a serving tray complete the set.

Tea originated in China and had a long history. Chinese tea technology also has a long history. Chinese tea technology development can be divided into four periods: the

origin of tea making; the transformation of tea making; the development of tea making; and the sprouting of tea making mechanization. At present, there are few research on the influence of Chinese tea technology on the world tea industry and how it affects the world tea industry. This article discusses the origin of tea, the historical evolution of Chinese tea technology, and the Chinese tea industry and the world tea industry, to explore the internal relationship between Chinese tea technology and the world tea industry and the impact of Chinese tea technology on the world tea industry.(Jolliffe ,2003)

China is the country of origin of tea trees and the first country to discover and use tea. The history of tea production in China has more than 4000 years. Legend has it that wild tea trees were found in China and detoxified with wild tea. At the time of King Zhou Wu's cutting, tea had become a tribute. During the Spring and Autumn Period, tea was used as a sacrifice and vegetable. During the Western Han Dynasty, tea has become a commodity. During the Western Jin Dynasty, tea trees cultivated in temples were also picked and made into tribute tea. During the Northern and Southern Dynasties, as Buddhism prevailed, many temples were built in the mountains. The southern temples basically planted tea trees. And many temples produced famous tea. From the analysis of the biological characteristics and historical use of the large tea tree, it is more accurate to say that the tea tree is native to the Dalou Mountains in the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau.

In the Tang Dynasty, tea drinking customs spread to all parts of the country, and the scope of tea production areas was further expanded. The ruling classes advocated tea drinking. At that time, there were more than 50 tribute tea categories, and an orderly tribute tea system was formed. In the Song Dynasty, tribute tea was further developed. At that time, tribute tea houses were also established in Fujian and other places to specifically manage the related matters of tribute tea production. And there were more and more tribute tea items. The tribute tea system in China continued to the Xianfeng period of the Qing Dynasty, and ended with the decline of the Qing Dynasty rule. At present, our country has many tributes tea to come down. After many years of evolution, they still retain the original name and traditional quality style, become historical tea (Jolliffe, 2007).

The History of Chinese Tea Technology

Over 6000 BC, there were tea trees in China. It was not until the *shennong* period, more than 2000 BC, that the Chinese labouring people discovered that the fresh leaves of wild tea trees could be detoxified. So, they began to plant them artificially. In the Eastern Jin Dynasty's "Wang Yang Guo Zhi Ba Zhi", written by Qu Chang, it was recorded that when King Wu of Zhou allied with the local minorities in *Ba shu* to fight against Shang Zhou, tea trees had been planted in the gardens of the people of *Ba shu* and had been as tribute. Tea needs to be processed as a tribute, and the process is like sunbathing, Due to the role of light and heat, the quality has changed a lot. And it has a special flavour like the present white tea. China has a history of tea making for at least three thousand years.

The Origin Period of Tea Making

From more than 2000 BC to the end of the tang dynasty in 96 AD, Chinese tea making technology developed from the fresh leaves of wild tea trees to the steamed green tea balls of the tang dynasty. From the discovery of wild tea plants to the tang dynasty as a popular beverage, tea technology in China underwent complex changes. At the beginning, the tea was raw boiled, and then dried collection, until the Wei dynasty the tea cakes was made and dried. When drinking, grind and brew. From the making process of cake tea, people found that grass smell of cake tea is very strong; so people began to explore how to remove the green cake tea. Later, people invented the steamed green method. That is, fresh leaves steamed, mashing cake perforation, through the drying. Since then, the quality of tea has improved considerably. In the process of making cake tea, people found that the tea juice has a bitter taste. After that, it was found that a way can reduce the bitter taste of the tea.

That is, fresh leaves were first washed and then steamed, then pressed to remove the leaf juice, and finally made into cakes. India now making green tea by squeezing out part of the leaf juice, is to learn our method of tang dynasty.

The working people of China made the superior tea, which was approved by the feudal emperor at that time. So they asked people to make the superior tea in large quantities to pay tribute to the royal family. Although the tribute tea system was a very cruel system of exploitation by the feudal class, it greatly promoted the technological reform of tea production. The production of tribute tea includes steaming tea, pressing tea, grinding tea, making tea, over-yellow, drying tea and other processes. *Gongcha* is delicately made. After tea buds are picked, they are first soaked in water and then steamed. After steaming, they are rinsed with cold water to quickly cool the tea leaves, in order to keep them green. After the cold with a small press to water, and then with a large press to the juice, the number of times is variable according to the actual situation. After the juice is removed, put it into a pot and mix with water to grind it. The cakes are dried. The drying times depend on the thickness of the tea cakes, which usually range from 10 - 15 times. These technical measures are good or bad. On the plus side, rinsing with cold water quickly and keeping it green is the method currently used to make steamed green tea; cold water is changed to air blowing, which is an improvement on this basis. On the negative side, squeezing water and juice reduces the original taste of the tea and reduces the quality of the tea, so the steamed green tea process is therefore eliminated.(Yang, 2001)

A Time of Revolution in Tea Making

From 961 to 1368, Chinese tea-making technology evolved from steamed green tea to stir-fried green tea. This period lasted from the song dynasty to the Yuan dynasty for more than three hundred years. It was changed from steamed green tea to steamed green tea, and then changed from steamed green tea to fried green tea. In the process of making steamed green tea, the bitter taste of tea cannot be completely removed, and the aroma of tea is not right. The tea retains the original flavour, because the manufacturing process changed from steaming green tea group to steaming green loose tea. The modern Japanese manufacturing process of milled tea is based on the practice of steamed green tea in China at that time. Unlike Japan's milled tea, when drinking, our country does not grind it into shreds but brews it with whole leaves. At that time, the famous steamed green tea varieties in China were *Gusong Purple Bamboo Shoots*, *Piling Yangxian*, *Shaoxing Rizhu*, *Wuyuan Zheyuan*, *Xinglong Shuangjing*, etc. Drinking tea is quite common, and related appreciation methods have been developed to distinguish the quality of tea. After countless practical explorations of reciprocating cycles, by the end of the 12th century, China's tea-making technology was improved from steamed green tea to fried green tea. This can make full use of dry heat, give full play to the excellent aroma of tea, and solve the shortcomings of steamed green aroma and low flavor, which is a change in Chinese tea-making technology. (Standage,2005)

The Development Period of Tea Making

From AD 1368 to 1700, although it was also more than 300 years, China's tea technology developed rapidly during this period. From stir-fried green tea to the development of a variety of tea, the color is rich. In the process of making roasted green tea, people found that the aroma of drying is not as good as frying. By stir-frying, people invented the method of stir-frying green tea. Through continuous attempts, people gradually changed the tea making technology, and the invention of new tea making technology also appeared. More and more tea colors were produced, such as pine, pearl tea, dragon well, melon slices, mao feng and other famous teas appeared one after another. Although they all belong to baked green and fried green tea, each has its own characteristics, rich and colorful. On this basis, people have invented five major teas: yellow, black, white, green and red.

Tea Mechanization in the Bud

In our country, the use of water wheel power grinding to make tea has appeared in the tang and song dynasties. In modern times, the technology of making tea using machinery was started in the early 20th century in foreign countries. China started it after the founding of New China. After China invented the method of tea making, the countries that had the conditions to develop tea production came to China to learn the technical knowledge of tea production and vigorously develop their tea production. Based on natural adaptation, Japan was the first country to develop green tea production, followed by India (including now Pakistan and Bangladesh), Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. Tea production in India was owned by British capitalists, so tea technology improved quickly. In the early 20th century, India first adopted machines to produce graded black tea. Subsequently, Japan used machinery to produce steamed green tea. At that time, the Chinese tea production technology is backward. And the modes of production are small-scale manual operations. After the founding of new China, China vigorously developed tea production and implemented many technological innovations. At the beginning, China set up large-scale red and green tea processing plants in tea districts all over the country, and the production of red and green tea was fully mechanized. Various tea-making machines have appeared one after another and have been gradually promoted to the countryside. Recently, China has advanced to electrification, continuity, serialization and automation (Pomerantz & Topik, 1999).

The Present Situation of Tea Making Technology in Modern China

The development of Chinese tea is also closely related to the support of the world, especially China's science and technology. Taking the development of tea production technology as the main line, China's modern tea technology is mainly focused on the focus of tea garden construction and transformation. The selection, breeding and approval of many new tea trees and the improvement of old tea gardens and the construction of new tea gardens have greatly increased the area of tea planting in China. In 1978, the area of tea planting increased by 5.2 times compared with 1950.

The second stage is the stage of vigorously promoting the production technology of tea name optimization, whose technical development route is embodied in the production of green food in China proposed by the ministry of agriculture of China in 1987. In 1990, the first organic tea product was produced in China, and then the processing of famous green tea went into mechanized production. In 1999, the ministry of agriculture proposed pollution-free tea production, and China's tea processing technology changed from green to organic. After entering into the high-quality organic tea, the emphasis on pollution-free tea production has gradually realized the optimization of the name of tea and the safe production, effectively ensuring the people's basic needs for tea quality and safety. In 2000, the output of famous and excellent tea in China reached 135,000 tons (27,000 tons in 1990), and the proportion of the output of famous and excellent tea in the total tea output increased from 5% in 1990 to 19.8% in 2000, an increase of nearly four times. In 2000, the first tea tree gene (polyphenol oxidase) was cloned. In 2002, China introduced clean production of tea. In 2003, there were many developments in tea deep processing in China. In 2005, theanine was successfully synthesized from microorganisms.

After the expansion of tea garden area in the first stage and the optimization of tea production name in the second stage, the main tea technology in the third stage focuses more on the intensive and modernized construction of tea garden. It combines the technological achievements of the first two stages and carries out tea technology research and development based on the needs of consumers and tea deep processing, such as the combination of improved tea planting and industrialization, the clean and standardized production of tea plantations, which make full use of and promoting the advantages of China's tea resource endowment. The development of tea garden construction has laid a foundation for the further development of tea technology in China. The standardized tea

garden and mechanized operation can not only greatly improve the output and production efficiency, but also ensure the output level of Chinese tea. In 2007, the ministry of agriculture put forward the tea development policy of “stabilizing the area, improving yield per unit area, improving quality and improving efficiency”. In 2009, the ministry of agriculture proposed standard tea construction (lilywhite, 2008).

Conclusion & Recommendations

China tea has a long history. With the rapid development of tea technology and agricultural technology at that time, the Chinese tea industry prospered and developed, and the tea spread to Japan, North Korea, India, and the world thus giving birth to the world tea industry and continuously influencing the development of the world tea industry. The world's tea industry continues to develop and innovate based on China's tea technology, making tea spread throughout the world and developing into a beverage that people all over the world like. Therefore, China's tea technology gave birth to the world's tea industry and promoted the continuous development of the world's tea industry. The world tea industry continues to develop based on China's tea technology innovation, forming different tea consumption habits and tea consumption markets in different countries. Therefore, China should continue to strengthen the knowledge innovation in Chinese tea industry and improve the basic research and technical research of tea. In addition, we also should vigorously train senior talents in tea technology innovation, strengthen international tea technology exchanges, constantly improve Chinese tea technology level, and promote the high-quality development of Chinese tea industry. At the same time, we should also take the world tea industry market as the orientation and construct the tea technology innovation management mode guided by the “target-demand-system” three-dimensional integration. So that China tea can not only meet the domestic consumption demand, but also meet the world tea consumption demand.

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