



Università
Ca' Foscari
Venezia

Master's Degree in

Languages, Economics, and Institutions of Asia and North
Africa

Final Thesis

**The Current Trends of the Contemporary
Chinese Tea Industry and Their Development
Through Taiwanese Influence and Historical
Reforms**

Supervisor:

Ch. Prof. Livio Zanini

Assistant Supervisor:

Ch. Prof. Marco Ceresa

Graduand:

Taylor Catterina Bilardello

Matriculation number: 876839

Academic Year:

2019/2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	4
<i>ENGLISH.....</i>	4
<i>ITALIAN</i>	4
<i>MANDARIN.....</i>	5
INTRODUCTION	6
<i>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</i>	6
<i>Interest in Tea.....</i>	6
<i>Thanks.....</i>	7
<i>Method and Limitations.....</i>	7
<i>OVERVIEW OF CONTEXT</i>	7
CHAPTER 1: TAIWANESE TEA INDUSTRY OUTLINE	14
<i>SECTION 1:INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</i>	14
<i>SECTION 2: REFORMS AND MODERN-DAY TEA INDUSTRY</i>	17
CHAPTER 2: MAINLAND CHINESE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE DURING THE 20TH CENTURY	19
<i>SECTION 1: EFFECTS OF MAO’S RULE ON THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY: THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD</i>	20
<i>SECTION 2: EFFECTS OF MAO’S RULE ON CULTURE: THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION</i>	21
SECTION 3: AGRICULTURAL REFORMS.....	23
<i>Structural Change</i>	23
<i>Technological Improvement And Government Subsidies.....</i>	25
CHAPTER 3: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF CONTEMPORARY MAINLAND TEA TRENDS.....	28
<i>SECTION 1: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF TEA TRENDS AND PERCEPTIONS OF AUTHENTICITY</i>	31

<i>SECTION 2: TYING TOGETHER THE TWO: TAIWANESE AND POLITICAL- ECONOMIC INFLUENCE ON THE MAINLAND CHINESE TEA INDUSTRY</i>	39
<i>Case Study 1: Puer Tea</i>	41
<i>Case Study 2: Gongfu Tea Brewing Method And Tieguanyin</i>	46
<i>Case Study 3: Tools, Teahouses, And Tenfu Group</i>	51
<i>Tools</i>	52
<i>Teahouses</i>	56
<i>Tenfu Group</i>	60
CONCLUSION	63
BIBLIOGRAPHY	65
GLOSSARY OF CHINESE TERMS	72

ABSTRACT

ENGLISH

Over the course of recent history, tea, its processing methods, its brewing techniques, and its culture have ebbed and flowed between the nations of East Asia, weaving in and out of major historical events and leaving the world with a muddled picture of what authenticity means, what the art of tea truly is, and what tea culture's true origins are. This thesis attempts to attribute phenomena in the modern-day Mainland Chinese tea industry with different cultural influences and events that occurred in the past. The two biggest influences in the contemporary resurgence in Chinese tea culture are the following: 1) the Taiwanese economic reforms, their subsequent tea industry advancements, and their direct investment in Mainland China 2) and the history of the Maoist Era and the Reform and Opening Up that proceeded under Deng Xiaoping. Through these historical influences, the modern-day tea industry in Mainland China has been able to become a national industry, rather than remaining largely a regional one. Certain tea industry trends like the famous Puer tea, the elaborate Gongfu tea brewing method, tea education, and teahouses were able to develop and flourish all across Mainland China, changing and molding the tea industry in significant ways. This thesis explores these trends, tying each of them back to the historical influences mentioned above.

ITALIAN

Negli ultimi anni il tè, la sua lavorazione, le tecniche di infusione, e la sua cultura sono saliti e scesi fra le nazioni nell'Asia orientale, intrecciandosi con eventi storici importanti e generando numerosi interrogativi sul significato della parola autenticità, sull'arte del tè e sulle sue origini. L'obiettivo di questa tesi di laurea è quello di sottolineare l'influenza esercitata da fattori di carattere culturale e avvenimenti passati sull'attuale industria del tè cinese. Gli eventi che hanno determinato la rinascita contemporanea della cultura del tè cinese sono principalmente due: 1) Le riforme economiche taiwanesi, i successivi

avanzamenti nell'industria del tè e i loro investimenti diretti nella Repubblica Popolare Cinese 2) e la storia dell'era maoista e le politiche di riforma e di apertura inaugurate da Deng Xiaoping. Grazie alle influenze storiche appena menzionate, nella Cina contemporanea l'industria del tè si è diffusa a livello nazionale, non è più confinata a un carattere prettamente regionale. Si è assistito allo sviluppo di alcune tendenze legate all'industria del tè cinese come, ad esempio, il tè Puer, l'elaborato metodo di infusione Gongfu, l'educazione alla cultura del tè e le sale da tè, le quali hanno cambiato e forgiato l'industria del tè in maniera significativa. L'intento di questa tesi è quello di esplorare queste tendenze, ricollegandole alle influenze storiche sopracitate.

MANDARIN

在近代历史中，茶，它的加工方法，它的冲泡技巧，以及它的文化都已经在许多东亚国家中流传开来。茶与许多重要的历史事件萦绕在一起，为世界编织出一幅展示其真实性，其艺术的真正定义和其文化的真实来源的混沌画卷。这篇硕士论文旨在分析现今大陆的茶行业现象，以及不同的文化和历史事件对其影响。对于当代中国茶文化再兴，两个最大的影响分别为：1) 台湾的经济改革，其导致的茶产业的升级，以及台湾商人在大陆的直接投资；2) 毛泽东时代的历史事件和邓小平时期的改革开放。由于这些历史影响，当代中国大陆的茶产业已经变成一个国家产业，而不是保持在地方产业的位置。一些茶产业的趋势，比如说著名的普洱茶，精细的功夫茶冲泡技艺，茶文化教育和茶艺馆，在中国大陆的各个地方兴盛发展，并显著地改变和影响整个中国的茶产业。这篇论文将探索这些趋势，并找到这些趋势与上述历史影响之间的连接和关系。

INTRODUCTION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Interest in tea

My passion for Chinese tea started across the world in my first Chinese classroom in Rockford, Michigan in the United States of America. My teacher and one of my inspirations, Mr. Jeffery Hayes, imparted on us his love of Chinese tea by bringing us samples to drink while we memorized characters and read dialogues in Mandarin. He talked very fondly of tea culture in Taiwan and the numerous teahouses scattered throughout the country. When I finally ventured to Mainland China and Taiwan, it seemed as if opportunities to learn more about tea frequently fell into my lap. On a whim, I traveled to Wuyi Mountain in Fujian Province, and I met a couple from Wuyi who now live in Shanghai and own a teashop there. They invited me to lunch at a Daoist temple, and while we waited for the food to be prepared, we drank copious amounts of tea utilizing the Gongfu tea method of brewing. One of the primary teas we enjoyed was the famous “Big Red Robe” (大红袍 *Dahongpao*) from that very mountain area. On another of my trips, I visited my friend Julia and her family in Shantou in Guangdong Province. Her father happened to be a lover of tea, and he taught me more terminology with regard to the Gongfu tea method, and treated me to a variety of teas. He coached me in brewing tea and inspired me to buy my own Gongfu tea set, which I love to pull out when hosting guests at my house. Finally, on a visit to Taiwan, I visited a teashop in which I had my first encounter with the “smelling cup” (闻香杯 *wenxiangbei*). Each of these events was significant in strengthening my love for and my interest in Chinese tea. I was eager to learn more and dedicate time to studying the socio-economic and political factors that influenced this contemporary passion for tea that I saw across China during my time there. What I found was more multi-faceted than I originally imagined.

Thanks

I would not have been able to complete this thesis without the help and support of so many individuals across the world. I want to thank each of you who helped me during this long journey of writing my graduate thesis. Firstly, I'd like to thank Professor Livio Zanini, who shares my passion for tea, for helping give substance and direction to my myriad of interests regarding tea and also for being so understanding and helping me through the major setbacks I experienced in January. 我感谢蔡荣章教师让我采访您，给我很多有用的资讯。我也感谢 Judy 老师采访蔡荣章教师的时候帮我翻译。 A big thanks to Mr. Jeffery Hayes (or as I like to call you, 黑老师), my high school Chinese teacher, for helping me narrow down my topics in the early stages of my thesis and for imparting on me not only a love for tea, but also a love for the Chinese language. Thank you also to Dr. Gerald Emerick for sharing your insight into the thesis writing process and walking me through helpful organization. Thank you to Charlotte O'Keefe for doing me the hugest favor by borrowing that book from Michigan State University's library for me, and thank you to Angelo Amore for getting me access to Ebooks that I otherwise would not have been able to find. Y'all are the real MVPs. Grazie a Alessia Di Maio, Cristiano Dalla Valle, Claudia Baldan, Anna Serafini and Nicoletta Bonaventura, per avermi aiutato ad ogni passo di quest'esperienza a Ca' Foscari; per due anni (o magari dobbiamo dire tre anni a questo punto) mi avete incoraggiato tantissimo e non ho modo di ripagarvi per tutto quello che avete fatto per me. Grazie alla mia twin italiana, Martina Bellucci per aver corretto l'abstract scritto in Italiano e per aiutandomi in tutto. 谢谢 to 朱至宜 (aka ZZY) for correcting the Chinese abstract and for always giving me more and more reasons to love your country and culture. Thanks to Luke Jennings for cheering me on and giving me encouraging pep talks (or should we say TED talks?) and tips. Thank you to my love, TreVarree Wright, for believing in me, encouraging me to push myself...and fighting for me even when I wouldn't fight for myself. Thanks to my best friend, Holly Chapin, for letting me be a super lame roommate for a few months and for listening to me while I complained about not having motivation. Thank you to all of the countless individuals who prayed for me in all of my setbacks. And last but not least, the biggest thank you of all goes to my parents for housing me, feeding me, and putting up

with me unexpectedly for the bulk of this process. I am so grateful for each of you and know that I could not have gotten through this without all of y'all's help.

To all of you who will actually read this: thank you for taking the time! If you ever find yourself in my corner of the world, let me know, and we can enjoy some tea together.

Method and Limitations

This thesis is a review and synthesis of the existing literature about the contemporary Chinese tea industry, as well as an explanation of the factors that have contributed to the success of the Mainland Chinese tea industry. The majority of this thesis was written from the United States due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of this, I was hard-pressed to find access to certain academic books that have been published about the topic of tea. I utilized Ca' Foscari's search engine, Google Scholar, Perlego, Hoopla, materials that Professor Zanini could provide me, and reached out to a couple friends who attend universities in the U.S. that could provide me with the materials I lacked. Furthermore, many of the materials on China's largest academic search engine, CNKI, were inaccessible given the subscription from Ca' Foscari. It is within these limitations that I gathered sources for this thesis.

OVERVIEW OF CONTEXT

It is often said in spheres of international business and international relations that geopolitics does not exist in a vacuum. Everything that happens in one country somehow influences another. In other words, no acts can ever truly be neutral. The tea industries of Mainland China, Taiwan, and even Japan similarly do not exist in a vacuum. Over the course of recent history, tea, its processing methods, and its brewing techniques have ebbed and flowed between the nations of Southeast Asia, weaving in and out of major historical events and leaving the world with a muddled picture of what authenticity means, what the art of tea truly is, and what tea culture's true origins are. This thesis attempts to attribute phenomena in the modern-day Mainland Chinese tea industry with different cultural influences and events that occurred in the past. In Chapters 1 and 2, this

thesis introduces and details the nature of the biggest influences in the contemporary resurgence in Chinese tea culture: 1) the Taiwanese economic reforms and their tea industry advancements 2) and the history of the Maoist Era and the subsequent Reform and Opening Up that occurred under Deng Xiaoping in Mainland China. It of course must be stated that, although the *contemporary* Mainland Chinese tea industry has been widely impacted by the Taiwanese, the Taiwanese tea industry actually has its origins in Fujian Province (Driem 2019, 101-110). This is reiterated throughout the entirety of the thesis.

Chapter 1, Section 1 of this thesis briefly explains the history of the Taiwanese tea industry, beginning in 1697 and spanning all the way until the early 2000s. Section 2 of this chapter gives a brief overview of the modern-day tea industry in Taiwan by explaining the general reforms that took place in the agricultural industry in Taiwan and their direct and indirect results for the tea industry, such as technological improvements, academic expansion, cultural definitions, and economic development.

Chapter 2, Section 1 begins with background regarding the policies of the Maoist period, specifically the Great Leap Forward (大跃进 *Dayuejin*) (1958-1962), and the damages it caused in Mainland China in the agricultural industry as a whole. The Great Leap Forward caused the largest famine in world history, making essential grains hard to come by for the average Chinese citizen, let alone a superfluous commodity like tea.

Section 2 of this chapter explains the damages done to tea as a cultural mainstay through the policies and destruction of the Cultural Revolution (文化大革命 *Wenhua Dageming*) (1966-1976); Mao's Red Guards purged the country of cultural relics and made it a point to "Destroy the Four Olds" (破四旧 *posijiu*) which are "Old Ideas, Old Customs, Old Culture, and Old Habits" (Lewis and Liberthal, 2020). Enjoying culturally relevant activities and spending money on leisure was considered "negative capitalism" during this revolutionary period of time in Chinese history (Zhang 2014, 19). Despite the decades of cultural, societal, and political devastation that was brought about under Mao, the Maoist period prior to the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution actually

included an important tea-tree planting campaign. This campaign ultimately allowed the tea harvest to increase in the decades following Mao's control, as tea tree plantings take around seven years to produce tea that is able to be harvested (Etherington and Forster 1993, 37). In other words, the Maoist era both hindered the tea industry's growth in significant cultural ways, but it also helped put the tea industry in a favorable position during the Reform and Opening Up (改革开放 *gaige kaifang*) period.

After this historical background is explained and extrapolated upon, Section 3 of this chapter talks about the specific economic reforms that were implemented in Mainland China under Deng Xiaoping's rule, specifically referred to as the era of the Reform and Opening Up. At the beginning of the Reform Era, as was the case in Taiwan, the Chinese government focused their policies on the agricultural industry (Brandt and Rawski, eds. 2008, 8). This shift from a planned economy to a "Socialist Market Economy System" rapidly changed the structure of the Chinese agricultural industry, then the structure of all industry (besides those of importance to national security), and ultimately influenced and transformed the culture of the entire nation (Chen 2009, 121). The Household Responsibility System (HRS) (an important policy enacted in the agricultural industry during the reforms that transferred ownership from the collective to individual households (Brandt 2008, 485-486)), as well as industry-specific subsidies and tax cuts all helped bolster the tea industry in ways that were impossible under Mao's planned economy. These changes deeply impacted the tea industry on the mainland, allowing for much more productivity and efficiency than has been proven possible in a strict planned economy (a primary example of that claim being the detriment of The Great Leap Forward during the Maoist era). Equally as important to the transformation of the tea industry is the Opening Up portion of Deng Xiaoping's legacy: in 1978, the Chinese decided to open up to the rest of the world first through Special Economic Zones (SEZ). These SEZ were given the opportunity to receive foreign direct investment (FDI) from foreign businesspeople all around the world, most relevantly to the topic at hand being investment from the Taiwanese. The Taiwanese therefore were able to bring their technology and their advanced processing of tea into Mainland China, originally to help increase efficiency and to produce more tea for the growing market in Taiwan (Wang

2003, 124). Both the policies of the reforms and the policies of the opening up allowed the Chinese tea industry to grow and thrive. Starkly different from the political events that happened in the Mainland during the Maoist era, Taiwan did not experience the cultural purging that China did; rather the Taiwanese took it upon themselves to preserve and refine many aspects of Chinese culture¹. Understanding the Taiwanese tea industry is crucial to tracing the success of the Mainland Chinese tea industry. The Taiwanese had more than a decade-long head start to modern-day economic development, allowing their tea industry to thrive before the Mainland Chinese were able to enter into their era of reform.

Finally, in Chapter 3, the background of the Taiwanese tea industry and the historical events given in Chapters 1 and 2 are tied together and utilized to display the trends of the contemporary Mainland Chinese industry. In Section 1, certain anthropological and societal influences that can be seen across Mainland China and Taiwan are presented, helping to explain why there is such a deep affinity for tea in Chinese culture in the modern day. The contemporary definitions of authenticity and theories about their proliferation play a big role in understanding why these influences have had such a big impact on Chinese society at large. Furthermore, Section 1 of Chapter 3 presents the types of tea and different brewing methods, ultimately giving a birds-eye view of the Mainland Chinese tea industry at large. These definitions help set the stage for the relevant case studies in the following section. Each case study exhibits the effects of the Maoist period, the Reform-Era policies, and Taiwanese impact on the Mainland Chinese tea industry.

This final section of the final chapter, Section 2, explores tea types and trends in the form of case studies, starting with Puer tea as the first case study. Puer tea is a fermented tea from Yunnan Province in southwestern China. In the early 2000s, Puer tea experienced

¹ This act of preserving and refining Chinese culture is known as the “Cultural Renaissance” (中华文化复兴运动, *Zhonghua Wenhua Fuxing Yundong*) in Taiwan. (See Chapter 1, Section 1 and Chapter 3, Section 2, Case Study 3) (Tozer 1970).

an immense boom that sent the entire nation in a craze over this rich and unique specialty tea (Zhang 2014, 8). The key role that the Taiwanese played in the “renaissance” of the Puer tea industry is explained in this case study, as well as the direct and indirect impacts that the Maoist era and the Reform and Opening Up had on the industry.

Following the Puer tea case study, the Gongfu method of brewing tea and the “art of tea” (*chayi*) in a more general sense are discussed. The Gongfu tea brewing method was first recorded in Yuan Mei’s “The Way of Eating” (随园食单 *Suiyuan Shidan*), a book that was written about cooking and gastronomy during the Qing Dynasty of the 18th Century (Chen n.d., 10). From this record, it is deduced that this was a brewing method that was unique to Fujian and Guangdong Provinces; it was not a widespread phenomenon at that point in time. The Gongfu tea brewing method was only recently popularized throughout the rest of Mainland China as a legitimate representation of authentic Chinese culture (Zhang 2016, 61?). The Iron Goddess (铁观音 *Tieguanyin*)² Oolong tea is also discussed along with the Gongfu tea brewing method case study.

The third case study is split into three sub-sections, specifically focusing on 1) tools and technology that have been imported to better the tea industry, 2) teahouses and their cultural significance, and 3) industry-specific investments made by the Taiwanese through the famous teashop chain, Tenfu Group (天福茗茶 *Tianfu Mingcha*). The Taiwanese imported machines in order to streamline the tea production process, resulting in a more efficient industry in the Mainland. Much of the tea-making process in Mainland China has been mechanized through the contributions of the Taiwanese. Teahouses as cultural locales are also a “reimported” phenomenon that increasingly gained in popularity throughout Mainland China toward the turn of the 21st century³. Throughout the 1900s, teahouses from dynastic times saw a slow erasure, but in the Taiwanese

² For the remainder of this thesis, this tea will be referred to as “Tieguanyin Oolong tea”, rather than referring to it as the Iron Goddess.

³ This idea of “reimportation” is seen with all of the case studies presented in this thesis, including with Puer tea and the Gongfu tea brewing method.

attempt to preserve traditional Chinese culture, their existence became more and more prevalent in contemporary Taiwan, and finally in Mainland China. Not only did teahouses come onto the scene again in the modern-day, but also the idea of tea education has also become an important part of cultural education and has been a concept that has popped up in immense numbers in the latter half of the 20th century into the beginning of the 21st century. The popularity of teahouses and tea education is due in large part to Tenfu Group, a Taiwanese company that has established a major presence on the island of Taiwan and in nearly every major city across Mainland China. Each of these case studies exemplifies the importance of the Taiwanese tea industry to the Mainland Chinese tea industry, while also showing the primary ways that the major historical periods of the 20th century impacted said industry.

CHAPTER 1: TAIWANESE TEA INDUSTRY OUTLINE

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the Taiwanese tea industry dates back to the Qing dynasty in 1697, shortly after the island's name was changed from Portuguese-named Formosa to Chinese-named Taiwan. Prior to 1697, the island had passed between the hands of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Ming Chinese and the Manchus before it rested in the hands of the Qing Chinese. It is believed that their tea industry was born around that time (Driem 2019, 101-110). During the Qing rule, an influx of Chinese from Fujian Province immigrated across the Taiwan Strait and brought seeds and tea trees to cultivate the tea industry in the hilly, rural areas of Taiwan. In Fujian, the tea that has historically been primarily cultivated is Oolong (乌龙 *wulong*) tea, so naturally this was the tea that was brought to the Formosan island and planted in the largest quantities. Similar to the way the Taiwanese ultimately invested in and aided in the growth and expansion of the Mainland Chinese tea industry in the 1900s, the British, the Mainland Chinese, and the Japanese all three had a hand in improving the Taiwanese tea industry in the 1800s and 1900s.

The British had a high demand for tea, especially Oolong, and they sought to satisfy the demand via Taiwan in light of their tumultuous relationship with Beijing (Etherington and Forster 1992, 403). Specifically, one British merchant, John Dodd helped satisfy the British and even the American demand in the following significant ways:

John Dodd...imported plant cuttings from Fujian Province and distributed them to farmers in Tamsui District⁴. Dodd set up a tea factory to produce a more carefully processed finished product. The chosen type of tea was oolong. The tea was very well received and, in 1869, Dodd used the trade mark 'Formosa Tea' for the first

⁴ Tamsui District is a district located on the Taiwan Strait in Taipei, Taiwan.

direct shipment to New York. Exports of this tea increased rapidly both to the United States and Europe, where it had the reputation of being the ‘champagne’ among teas. Over the next three decades tea exports from Taiwan shared in the enormous expansion of the world tea trade, whereas mainland tea exports experienced a dramatic decline during the last two decades of the century (Etherington and Forster 1993, 30-31).

The Chinese, on the other hand, sent a viceroy who was a tea aficionado and aided in further developing the industry from a technological and organizational standpoint (Etherington and Forster 1992, 403). The next period of consequence for the Taiwanese tea industry occurred under Japanese occupation from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. During this time, production quality and efficiency improved due to new manufacturing technology and the implementation of quality control. The tea industry changed during this time based on international demand; it shifted from producing primarily Oolong teas to producing black teas. This was due in part to the Japanese production equipment being better suited for black tea production as opposed to oolong tea production (Etherington and Forster 1993, 32). In the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, the cultivation of tea was hardly significant, as wartime brought farmers to emphasize planting and harvesting staple crops. If there was leftover land, this was utilized for the planting of tea (Ukers: 1935, 328).

Official encouragement of the industry continued under the Japanese occupation (1895-1945). In 1898, planters, manufacturers, and dealers were required to form associations to prevent adulteration and to take responsibility for ‘sustaining the high character of Formosa [teas]’...In 1909, the Pingcheng Tea Experimental Station was established. A specialized extensions service was built up around the graduates of the Tea Technicians Training Institute. A tea inspection agency was established at the export ports in 1923. The development of new processing equipment enabled Taiwan to start producing black tea (Etherington and Forster 1993, 32).

Given the aforementioned history, tea had evidently been a staple in Taiwanese society for many centuries; however, it was not until the mid-to-late 1900s that Taiwanese tea culture as it is known today really started to blossom and flourish in many different ways. The Taiwanese tea industry had been propped up for years by multiple foreign influences, ultimately creating an export-centric industry. In the 1980s, the Taiwanese tea industry shifted from being primarily focused on exports to Japan, the United States, England, and especially Mainland China, to being focused on consuming copious amounts of tea themselves domestically (Etherington and Forster 1993, 33). In this same time period (directly following World War II (WWII)), the Taiwanese shifted yet again from primarily producing black teas to producing a great deal of green tea, which Etherington and Forster “speculate that this had much to do with the influx of mainlanders fleeing the new Communist regime, many of whom came from provinces where green tea was the preferred beverage” (Etherington and Forster 1992, 408).

In the 1950s and 1960s, Taiwan underwent a dramatic economic change that left them in a favorable position to consume more tea and invest in the tea industry not only on the island itself, but also in Mainland China. As is noted later in Chapter 3, Section 3 regarding the Mainland Chinese, with Taiwan’s economic improvement came an increase in quality of life and spending power. This spending power allowed for Taiwanese to engage in activities in which they otherwise would have not been able to participate, such as in tea education and enjoying the new teahouses that were popping up all throughout the country⁵. In addition to this newfound spending power, in the 1970s, the Taiwanese launched a campaign called the “Chinese Cultural Renaissance”. This “Cultural Renaissance” was in some ways a direct response to the Cultural Revolution that was occurring across the Taiwan Strait. Warren Tozer, in his article titled “Taiwan’s ‘Cultural Renaissance’: A Preliminary View”, claims, rather, that this campaign was more of a response to the modernization that was occurring in Taiwan with their immense and rapid economic improvement (Tozer 1970, 81). The United States played an influential role in

⁵ See the third case study in Chapter 3, Section 2 for more information on these teahouses in Taiwan and their outgrowth into Mainland China.

modernizing Taiwan through the “Sino-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (JCRR)” (Mao and Schive 1995, 31). Their aid, in conjunction with the reforms discussed in the following section, were the key factors that enabled Taiwan to rapidly modernize and experience economic improvement in the decades after the war. As is stated in a number of places throughout this thesis, modernization creates a type of nostalgia in the population of any given nation; this nostalgia brings people to want to experience activities and purchase commodities that are culturally authentic, giving them a sense of belonging and identity within their culture. With this foreign aid from the United States and the transformation that took place in Taiwanese society because of it as well as the reforms that were put in place by the Taiwanese government, modernization and westernization took place at breakneck speed, and the nostalgia for culturally authentic activities grew in the hearts of the Taiwanese. This is the environment in which the tea industry began to flourish on the island of Taiwan.

SECTION 2: REFORMS AND MODERN-DAY TEA INDUSTRY

Similar to the Mainland Chinese economic reforms that are outlined in Chapter 2, Section 4 titled “Agricultural Reforms”, the decades of economic expansion and marketization of Taiwan in the 1950s and 60s also had their genesis in the agricultural industry. In the Taiwanese case, the reforms began with a land reform program. There were three primary steps to the land reform program that the Taiwanese implemented during this period of history: 1) the “rent reduction program” which decreased rent from 50% of a farmer’s yield to 37.5%; 2) public land sales left over from Japanese occupation; 3) and the “land-to-tiller program” in which the government outlawed ownership of land over a certain size. The government required that any land owned by individuals or households that was over that threshold be sold to the government at a determined price. This land purchased by the government was then sold to individuals who had not previously owned land⁶, allowing it to be privatized (Cheng 1983, 72).

⁶ These individuals rented land prior to this program.

Each landlord was allowed to keep three chia (about 2.91 hectares) of medium-grade paddy field or six chia of dry land. Holdings in excess of these amounts were purchased by the government and resold to incumbent tenant farmers. Again, the price was set at 2.5 times the annual yield of the main crop. The landlord was paid 70 percent of the land price with land bonds and the rest with shares of government-owned industries (Mao and Schive n.d., 33).

The final result of the privatization of land was more accountability and therefore more productivity. From then on, the Taiwanese economy shifted from being largely labor-intensive to being technology-intensive. The tea industry, however, remained largely a labor-intensive industry⁷. Following the economic development period in Taiwan, land prices increased greatly, labor became scarce, prices for tea and other agricultural products increased continuously and, given the small area of the island of Taiwan, tea plantation area was also small. It was around this time that the Taiwanese started to look across the Strait to invest in the Mainland Chinese tea industry, because the popularity of tea and the concept of tea art continued to flourish in substantial ways in Taiwan (Sun et al, n.d. 38).

⁷ Harvesting and processing tealeaves is a rather manual process, even when considering the mechanization that has taken place in the industry in the modern day.

CHAPTER 2: MAINLAND CHINESE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE DURING THE 20TH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

The socio-economic and political events of the mid- to late-1900s were pivotal in setting the stage for the contemporary Chinese tea industry. This thesis will focus primarily on the Maoist period (1943-1976) and the Reform and Opening Up (1978-1989) that followed. The economic and political policies under both Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping impacted the state of the Chinese nation in groundbreaking ways. No industry or person was left unaffected by either of these decisive time periods. Both of these historical eras stifled and stimulated the Chinese tea industry, bringing about massive changes in the way tea was perceived and the role it played in society. This section explains the most significant policies that affected the tea industry at large, specifically elaborating on the changes that occurred in the agricultural industry. In order to better understand the transformation that took place during these two important periods of time in Chinese history and the ways they affected the tea industry of the modern day, the below background is provided.

Mao Zedong became the Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1943 and held the position until his death in 1976. During this period of time, Mao implemented Marxist-Stalinist reforms, including the two very significant movements of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution. Each of these movements left the country in a state of utter turmoil: the Great Leap Forward brought the greatest famine the earth has ever seen, while the Cultural Revolution destroyed many of the deep cultural relics and ties that China had previously held so dearly. First, a brief explanation will be given on CCP's second Five Year Plan in 1958 (aka the Great Leap Forward) and its effects on the nation's agriculture and the country as a whole. Secondly, the nature of the Cultural Revolution that took place during the decade of the third and fourth Five Year Plans will be outlined. Both the first and second sections will reveal the intense need for cross-

industry reforms, particularly in the agricultural industry. The third section will outline the quasi-accidental and then intentional reforms that took place in the agricultural industry under Deng Xiaoping. These reforms began in Anhui Province and spread like wildfire to other parts of the country (Lin 1988, S201). Hand in hand with the reforms is the “opening up”: the Chinese began allowing foreign investment in particular Special Economic Zones (SEZ), thereby initiating an influx of FDI and importation of relevant and helpful technology to Chinese agriculture and other industries (Wang 2003, 124). This opening up was particularly relevant in the tea industry, as the Taiwanese brought significant changes that will be mentioned briefly in the final section of this chapter (and explained further in Chapter 3 of this thesis), as well as other tea industry reforms.

SECTION 1: EFFECTS OF MAO’S RULE ON THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY: THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

Under Mao, a series of intense revolutionary policy changes took place in the newly founded People’s Republic of China. All the private property owned by individuals at the time was slowly expropriated by the government and subsequently used to establish large collective farms or communes (Brandt and Rawski, eds. 2008, 474-475). This collectivization took place during the execution of the Republic’s first Soviet-style Five-Year Plan. The plan for collectivization had three specific stages of implementation, with each stage essentially creating progressively larger cooperatives with progressively more shared assets. The first stage created “Mutual Aid Teams (MAT)” which were groups of families that made contractual agreements to share each other’s means of production while maintaining ownership. The second stage allowed for the creation of “Agricultural Producer’s Cooperatives (APC)” which were about fifty MAT that were banded together. At this stage in the process, land and labor were the two factors on which compensation was based, and each family took care of their own land. The final stage of the collectivization process combined five APC while simultaneously ending private ownership of property and resources; from this point forward, individual households were not to be compensated for their land contributions but only for their labor (Brown 2012, 29-30). This period of the first Five-Year Plan successfully set the stage for the second

Five-Year Plan, referred rather too optimistically as the Great Leap Forward. During the Great Leap Forward, more individual households were added to the cooperatives, creating significantly larger communes of around 5,500 households (Brown 2012: 31). In the early stages of the communes, workers were enthusiastic to produce and harvest to honor their leader, Chairman Mao. In addition to farming, the farmers began smelting steel. While this was happening, the local cadres began implementing certain quotas for farming. In order to reach these quotas, farmers committed farming faux-pas including “over seeding, deep plo[w]ing, and over fertilizing” (Brown 2012, 32). The consequences of these irresponsible farming tactics would be grave. Everyone was so set on pleasing Mao that the local cadres falsified the output rates of the farms, which turned out to be a fatal decision when grain taxes were increased and the communes had to surrender a majority of their grain to the government and were left with nearly nothing. The result was the largest and deadliest famine in human history.

While these policies evidently centered on essential grain production, it can be deduced that other non-essential crops were equally as affected. Due to the grain shortage, areas that were normally used for other crops were often repurposed to make room for essential grain planting and harvesting. In certain areas, tea trees were chopped down to utilize the arable land for grains (Zhang 2014, 126-127). This particular crisis in conjunction with the Cultural Revolution that took place in between the third and the fourth Five-Year Plans greatly impacted the tea industry. The next section outlines how Mao Zedong’s leadership and advocacy of the Cultural Revolution caused the popularity of tea and its cultural significance to decline.

SECTION 2: EFFECTS OF MAO’S RULE ON CULTURE: THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

Following the agricultural crisis, Mao dove China headfirst into what was formerly called the Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution (referred to as “the Cultural Revolution” for the remainder of this thesis). The Cultural Revolution was brought about broadly in order to work towards creating a communist utopia. To achieve those ends, Mao created the Red

Guard, which were young people who were commissioned to destroy the “Four Olds”: “Old Customs, Old Culture, Old Habits, and Old Ideas”. A great upheaval swept the nation, permanently obliterating cultural relics and historical sites that had existed for centuries, if not millennia (Gay 2012, 69). The primary focus of this campaign was to purge society of any Confucian influence and replace it with Mao’s communist agenda. Additionally, acts of leisure were frowned upon during the Cultural Revolution, causing what remained of the cultural enjoyment of tea as a pastime to be obliterated and thought of as “negative capitalism” (Zhang 2014, 19). This thesis puts the focus primarily on the way the Cultural Revolution sought to destroy the old customs and old culture, as this relates more specifically to the customs revolving around tea and tea culture.⁸ Jinghong Zhang describes the political nature of the Cultural Revolution with regard to the tea industry in the below paragraph:

Chinese symbolic identification with tea has not always naturally or steadily developed throughout history; rather, it has been uneven and shaped by political and economic pressures and social demands. Before and after the Reform era, the profile of tea in China was quite different. During the time of Mao (1949-1976), and especially during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), it was suppressed by the exclusive emphasis on political struggle. In this period, living standards were low...and consumption-based lifestyles were condemned as “negative capitalism” (*ziben zhuyi weiba*)[⁹]... The positive meanings of tea were buried, the number of public teahouses was

⁸ Because there is very little research regarding the cultural topic of tea during the Cultural Revolution specifically, it would be interesting to explore this gap in the literature and provide an analysis of the change that took place from the dynastic era, through the republican era, and into the Maoist era. Were tea and its cultural relics destroyed along with other ceramics, or did the Red Guard simply confiscate these relics, giving them to the elite to be enjoyed?

⁹ The literal definition of “negative capitalism” (资本主义尾巴 *ziben zhuyi weiba*) is “the tail of capitalism”

greatly reduced, and tea consumption was largely limited to the family and work unit (Zhang 2014, 19).

Even though this period of history was marked by widespread destruction, the tea industry also experienced some positive impact; interestingly enough, the planting of tea trees greatly increased during this era, as the Ministries of Agriculture and Foreign Trade under Mao Zedong implemented a major planting campaign in 1955 to stimulate tea fields that had since been abandoned (Etherington and Forster 1993, 37); when the market policies came into play under Deng Xiaoping, the trees were ripe for the picking (Forster 2012, pg). In fact, Etherington and Forster reject the studies that conclude that the Maoist period ultimately had a negative impact on the tea industry and that the Reform and Opening Up era with its Household Responsibility System ultimately had a positive impact; rather, their studies determine two things: 1) that the planting campaign in the Maoist era had a huge impact on the success and increase in output of the Reform and Opening Up 2) the Household Responsibility System “had a depressing effect on tea output” (Etherington and Forster 1993, 144). Even though there was a serious increase in plantings of tea trees during the Maoist era, much of this tea was lacking in the quality that was necessary for the famous tributary tea of dynastic times (Zhang, 2014: 126-127). Regardless of which scholars hold the accurate diagnosis of the situation, it can be said that the conjunction of all these aspects set the tea industry up for major growth and expansion in the years following the Maoist era. The following chapter details these years of growth and expansion during the period of the Reform and Opening Up.

SECTION 3: AGRICULTURAL REFORMS

STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Deng Xiaoping took power as Chairman of the Central Military Commission in 1978, shortly after the death of Chairman Mao Zedong. Early on in his reign, the CCP was able to drastically transform the state of the nation. The reforms that were implemented by the CCP under Deng Xiaoping in Mainland China in the decades following the Maoist era

were initiated in the agricultural sector, specifically in Anhui Province. Under Chairman Mao, as explained in the last chapter, the agricultural sector was highly collectivized. The “production team system” or the APCs mentioned above lacked in efficiency in the agricultural sector. This was due to the fact that the nature of the sector made it difficult to monitor production and the performance of each individual household (Lin 1988, S201-S202, S208). The collective structure lacked any serious accountability. Despite the immense shortcomings of collectivization, only on a few rare occasions did Mao employ the Household Responsibility System (HRS), which is a system that allowed for responsibility of land and its subsequent income rights to be transferred from the state and the collective to individual households (Brandt 2008, 485-486). Chairman Mao only utilized the HRS in order to “stimulate peasants’ enthusiasm to work diligently and efficiently and produce more” (Wang 2003, 114). Otherwise, he did not favor this system but rather preferred ownership to be collective.

The HRS had to jump through a number of hoops before it was actually adopted as official policy in Mainland China. In Anhui Province, a few farms illegally implemented the HRS and had great success as compared with other farms that maintained the collectivist policies. The successes spoke for themselves, and the once banned HRS became the mainstay of the Chinese agricultural economy (Lin 1988: S201). Once the agricultural sector began booming, the economic improvement occurred at such a rapid pace. In 1984, the report, “Submission on solving the current problems in the procurement and sale of tea” was presented by the Ministry of Commerce, essentially eradicating the monopoly that the government had on the tea industry (Shu 2010, 21). Around seven years after the HRS was first implemented in Anhui and two years after the abovementioned report was published, Document No. 1 was put into place, which allowed for the abolition of mandatory production planning and a shift towards guiding targets (Sicular 1988, 679). This did not mean that the government was completely allowing the agricultural market to function *laissez-faire*; rather, they would keep their influence in key industries that deeply affected the food security of the nation. Three main categories were utilized to determine the level of government involvement in planning and production. The first category was that of essential grains and edible oils

which were centrally planned and controlled by the central government. The second category included products under “designated procurement” such as tea, cattle and hogs, tobacco, medicinal herbs, etc. The third and final category was that of minor agro-products; these could be traded freely under the reforms (Sicular 1988, 684). This structural change of utilizing the HRS as opposed to Mao’s collectivist system allowed for the agricultural sector to grow more organically; ultimately, as the agricultural sector grew, other sectors were enabled for growth and expansion. The tea industry benefitted from the use of the “designated procurement” mentioned above, and it allowed for expansion that was not possible under the collectivist system during the Maoist period.

“...China’s reforms fall into two distinct stages: the incentive reforms that dominate the period from 1978 to 1984 and a period of gradual market liberalization that begins in 1985 and extends through the 1990s” (Brandt and Rawski, 2008, 497). The agricultural reforms were not the only changes that occurred under Deng Xiaoping that had an impact on the tea industry: the policies that called for the opening up of China to the outside world allowed for economic improvement on a broad scale and opened the door for important direct investment opportunities. The tea industry greatly benefitted from these policies as well, and the following sub-section explains how.

TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENT AND GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIES

One of the key improvements that the Reform and Opening Up policies allowed was the importation and utilization of new and improved technology within the tea industry. The tea industry was a major benefactor of the importation of technology from Taiwan and Japan; this technology helped create a more effective and efficient tea industry in the Mainland (Etherington and Forster 1989: 279).¹⁰ As was stated in the introduction, this

¹⁰ See Chapter 3, Section 3 for Case Study 3 titled “Tools, Teahouses, and Tenfu Group” which provides more information regarding the importation of processing technology from Taiwan.

investment was made possible at first through the creation of Special Economic Zones (SEZ). When they were first introduced, the SEZ policies included the following:

1) [F]oreign citizens, overseas Chinese, compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, and their companies [were] encouraged to invest and open wholly-owned enterprises or to set up joint-ventures with Chinese partners; their assets, profits and legal rights [being] protected by the Chinese law; 2) the power to approve foreign investment projects below 30 million US dollars; 3) the exemption of import duty on the imported equipment, spare parts, raw materials, vehicles and other capital goods that [were] needed for manufacturing in the SEZs; 4) the corporate income tax [was] 15 per cent, providing tax breaks as a further incentive to long-term investment or hi-tech projects; and 5) the exemption of income tax on the remittance of profits by foreign investors (Wang 2003, 124).

Government subsidies during the reform era did a great deal for improving the tea industry in the latter half of the 20th century. The central government allowed for each locality to claim their most essential industry and the government would thereby subsidize that particular industry. The localities that chose tea as their key industry were sent saplings and seeds to plant, along with funding for additional helpful resources (Tan and Ding 2010, 130).

The economic reforms and improvement they caused in Chinese society during this period naturally lifted many individuals and households out of poverty, giving them a more abundant standard of living. With this economic improvement, tea can once again be considered a key commodity among the general population:

The Reform era, which formally started in the early 1980s, saw a gradual elevation of living standards. Various forms of entertainment were encouraged, especially after the mid-1990s, when China began its economic surge. Entering the twenty-first century, the so-called “consumption revolution” has become more

intensely staged...Tea is once again stressed as an essential national representation (Zhang 2014, 20).

Both periods of history of the Maoist Era and the Reform and Opening Up prompted important structural changes in the tea industry, for better or for worse. It is essential to understand this background in order to comprehend the current state of the Mainland Chinese tea industry, as the factors directly and indirectly influenced tea planting, cultivation, production, and consumption. The final chapter of this thesis focuses specifically on the modern-day Chinese tea industry, giving an overview of the state of the industry and then diving specifically into the ways the Taiwanese and the historical changes of the 20th century have pushed the tea industry to become the cultural giant that it is today.

CHAPTER 3: CONTEMPORARY MAINLAND CHINESE TEA INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

Thanks to the factors that were explained in Chapters 1 and 2 including the drastic changes that took place in the Taiwanese tea industry, the planting campaign of Mao Zedong shortly after the Cultural Revolution, and the Reform and Opening-Up in the latter half of the 20th century, the Mainland Chinese tea industry was able to prosper and become such an important cultural aspect of Chinese society in the modern day. The final chapter of this thesis explains that, although tea has been a staple of Chinese life and culture for centuries, there is a contemporary phenomenon that is birthed from the influence of Taiwanese tea merchants and the after-effects of the immense economic reform that Mainland China underwent in the latter half of the 20th century. As the Mainland Chinese settled into their newfound national identity during and after the reform era, with it came the establishment of old regional tea customs as national relics to be prized and appreciated. This is in direct contrast to the national culture during the Maoist era that rejected anything that represented the old way of life prior to the Cultural Revolution. In addition to this new national identity, the Mainland Chinese also saw a major increase in their quality of life and their spending power with the economic improvement and the creation of the middle class. With this spending power, the Chinese have been able to consume superfluous items and explore their cultural heritage (Zhang 2018, 4-5). They are no longer bound by the poverty and food insecurity that ravished the nation during the years of the Great Leap Forward and the years of recovery that followed.

Section 1 of Chapter 3 outlines the contemporary Mainland Chinese tea industry by presenting the different categories of teas that are planted and consumed throughout the different provinces in China and the different ways of brewing and enjoying said types of teas. Furthermore, this section gives a brief introduction to the perceptions of authenticity in modern-day China and explains the reasons behind why the individual consumer in

today's Mainland China would seek out an authentic and culturally relevant way of living.

The second section of this chapter presents three main case studies as clear examples of the aforementioned influences on the Mainland Chinese tea industry. Ultimately, these case studies tie together both of the primary influences presented in Chapters 1 and 2. Case Study 1 elaborates on the abovementioned idea of authenticity by discussing the way Puer tea came onto the scene as a famous and wildly expensive commodity all throughout China. Puer tea is a fermented tea that makes up its own specific category of tea due to the way it is post-fermented. This tea is grown in the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture (西双版纳傣族自治州 *Xishuangbanna Daizu Zizhizhou*) of Yunnan Province in southwestern China (Yu 2016, 99). Puer tea had a unique ascension to fame in the early 2000s through the sojourn of a few Taiwanese businessmen. Their love for Puer tea and their desire to acquire more of it is what influenced the Puer tea industry to reignite the industry and rediscover its roots. Subsequently, Puer tea became immensely desirable throughout China, causing a frenzy for the most authentic Puer tea (even though the definition of authenticity differs depending on the individual)¹¹.

Along a similar vein, the second case study of this section presents the tradition of brewing tea in the Gongfu tea brewing method. Although this method was originally from Chaoshan in Fujian Province, this style of brewing has come to represent the “traditional Chinese tea ceremony” to many Chinese, Taiwanese and foreigners. This case study additionally explains the different influences that “reimported” the Gongfu brewing method back into Mainland China and how the confluence of all of these factors have established a modern day Gongfu tea culture throughout the country. Tieguanyin

¹¹ Eventually, the Puer tea bubble burst, as many counterfeit teas were found to have been sold at exuberant prices. This thesis does not discuss the bursting of this bubble, however for more information on this important part of Puer tea's history, Jinghong Zhang details the rise and fall of Puer tea in her book *Puer Tea: Ancient Caravans and Urban Chic*.

Oolong tea, one of the most famous Chinese Oolongs, is presented and discussed as part of this case study due to its proximity to the origins of the Gongfu tea brewing method and the fact that it is utilized to brew Tieguanyin Oolong tea.

Finally the third case study titled “Tools, Teahouses, and Tenfu Group” presents the general influence that the Taiwanese have had on the production process, tea culture, and the general marketing of tea in Mainland China. It uses the combination of the centuries’ long give and take between Mainland China and the island of Taiwan with regards to tea as its basis, and from there it expounds the ways in which the Taiwanese have saturated and developed the Chinese tea market. Because the Taiwanese did not experience the same sort of intense political upheaval that the Mainland Chinese did in the middle of the 20th century, they were able to reform and expand economically a few decades prior to the Reform and Opening Up in Deng Xiaoping’s China. With this economic expansion came the development of new technology in the tea industry, and also an increased middle class. The first part of this third case study discusses the technology or the “tools” that the Taiwanese imported into Mainland China in order to create efficiency in the production process. As is discussed in multiple places throughout this thesis, the Taiwanese would not have been able to bring this technology and make other industry investments in Mainland China had the Reform and Opening Up not taken place. The second part of this final case study discusses the contemporary teahouses that are seen on the streets of major cities across Taiwan and Mainland China. Although teahouses were celebrated locales in numerous cities throughout Mainland China even as late as the early 1900s, much of their relevance was erased during the early Republican period and the Maoist era. The Taiwanese have increasingly helped reintroduce the teahouse phenomenon to Mainland China. The most significant Taiwanese contributor to the Mainland Chinese tea industry is Tenfu Group, a tea company that has disseminated Chinese tea culture on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. This case study will discuss Tenfu Group’s rise and domination of the tea industry in Taiwan and then subsequently their investment and widespread impact in Mainland China. Before diving into the individual case studies that were outlined above, the following section explains the general state of the Mainland Chinese tea industry from a bird’s eye view; this gives adequate

background for the deeper explanation of the specific tea trends that are presented in the following section.

SECTION 1: GENERAL OVERVIEW OF TEA TRENDS AND PERCEPTIONS OF AUTHENTICITY

Tea has been grown all across the south of China for centuries. The plant species to which tea belongs is called *Camellia sinensis* and the two main varieties are *assamica* and *sinensis* (the former has bigger, rounder leaves, while the latter has smaller, more narrow leaves) (Etherington and Forster 1989, 303) (Yu 2016, 95). In a general sense, black tea and Puer tea are made from the *assamica* variety, while Oolong, green, and white teas are typically made from the *sinensis* variety (Etherington and Forster 1989, 303)¹². It is nearly impossible to talk about the origins of Chinese tea without mentioning the legend of the “Divine Farmer”, (神农 *Shennong*). The story of *Shennong*, is incredibly important to Chinese folklore. In essence, *Shennong* is famous for trying many different herbs and plants to test them for their medicinal value (Chen 1997, 81). One day around the year 2737 B.C., it is said that he consumed a poisonous plant; as he was suffering from the effects of said plant, a few leaves from a nearby tree flew into his boiling water (Ukers 1935, 2). He imbibed the beverage that was created, and it cured him of the illness the poisonous plant had brought on. William H. Ukers, a well-known tea scholar, in his book titled “All About Tea” discredits the legend that the earliest mention of tea was truly with *Shennong*, as the quotation that is credited for this first mention was not written into *Shennong*’s book until after 600 A.D. (2). This story, whether legend or factual in nature, illustrates the reasoning behind why tea is thought of to be a medicinal herb and is still widely used as such throughout China and the rest of the world (Zhang 2014, 10) (Sigley 2015, 324).

Jumping forward a number of centuries later from *Shennong*’s time to the Tang dynasty (618-907 A.D.), tea experienced its first cultural awakening throughout China. In the

¹² This is a generalization, not a rule.

book *Tea: The Drink That Changed the World*, Laura C. Martin explains the situation as follows:

As processing methods evolved from raw leaf to baked brick, the taste improved accordingly, and tea enjoyed a surge of popularity throughout China during the T'ang dynasty. Tea was served not only at the imperial court, but almost everywhere else as well. Drinking tea soon became an essential part of everyday life for many people, from emperors to peasants...Eventually social status became associated with the type of tea one drank (or could afford). Not only did the tea itself have to meet high standards, but everything associated with it—the utensils, bowls water, and tea caddy—all had to be of the finest quality. The T'ang dynasty, which proved to be one of the greatest in China history, valued quality and beauty. It was a time of great sophistication, characterized by a love of learning and the arts. Poetry, painting, calligraphy, music, and landscape gardening all enjoyed popularity during this time, and inevitably, this environment of refinement influenced the culture of tea. Naturally, people needed a place to get a bowl of tea, and teahouses and tea gardens soon sprang up in cities and towns across the empire. Many of these tea gardens became manifestations of the sophistication and refinement of the T'ang culture. Along with the search for the best teas came the development of the tea master, one who could find the highest-grade tea leaves from growers in the various regions, and who could prepare the most delicious teas. (Martin 2007, chap. 3).

Unfortunately, much of this development in tea culture that Martin describes in the excerpt above saw a major decline in the 20th century, as was outlined in the Chapter 2 regarding the destruction of the “Four Olds”. In contemporary China, however, the concept of tea culture has been revitalized and repurposed. Tea is thought of as much more than simply a medicinal herb or one of the seven essential food products or

household items of ancient China¹³; tea is experiencing its renaissance as a way of life and an art that has become a cultural custom, inseparable from the national Chinese identity.

Taking a look at the modern day map, there are four main tea-producing areas in China (excluding the tea-producing regions in Taiwan) (Li 2011). In these four areas, hundreds of different teas are grown¹⁴; however, there are only seven different main categories of tea: the non-fermented green and yellow teas, the partially fermented white and blue-green teas, and the fully fermented red, dark, and Puer teas. See Image 1 and Image 2 below for the chart provided by Jinghong Zhang in her book about Puer tea with regards to the categorization of teas (Zhang 2014, 13).

TABLE 1.1 Categories and pr

Fermentation Type	General Tea Category
Nonfermented	Green tea
	Yellow tea
Partially fermented	White tea
	Blue-green tea

Image 1

Fermentation Type	General Tea Category
Fully fermented	Red tea
	Dark tea
	Puer tea (fermented)

Image 2

Within these seven categories of tea, consumers throughout Asia and the rest of the world also enjoy scented teas, which are green or red teas combined with flowers such as

¹³ These essential food products and household items are “firewood, grain, oil, salt, soya sauce, vinegar, and tea” (Etherington and Forster 1989, 265-266).

¹⁴ In 1981, 650 tea types were reported to have existed (Etherington and Forster 1993, 4).

osmanthus, jasmine, or roses (Etherington and Forster 1993, 20). With these teas comes a variety of brewing methods, some being ceremonial while others are key parts of everyday life for the Chinese. Traditionally, the three primary brewing methods are the Gongfu tea brewing method, the *gaiwan* (盖碗) method¹⁵, and the glass tumbler brewed tea. Throughout Mainland China, these methods vary in popularity based on the region and the types of teas that are prevalent and celebrated in that particular region. The Gongfu method of tea brewing is practiced in Fujian Province, Guangdong Province, Taiwan, and Hong Kong most extensively, however this brewing style has been disseminated across the country and is seen as the “traditional Chinese tea ceremony” by many. Traditionally, the tools needed to perform the Gongfu brewing method were a small teapot and six small teacups, but in the contemporary practice, many different tools have been added to the brewing method that are discussed in further detail in the remainder of the thesis. Typically, Tieguanyin Oolong tea and other Oolong teas are brewed in this particular method. In Fujian Province’s Anxi County, the same Gongfu tea brewing method is used, however they use a *gaiwan* rather than the typical boccaro teapot to serve the tea into the individual teacups (Chen, n.d., 13).

This shift from the boccaro teapot to the *gaiwan* occurred because “after the liberation, when China’s Tea Purchasing Department was purchasing tea leaves, they needed to perform assessments of the tea’s quality, so when they examined the teas, they used a porcelain *gaiwan* cup to do so” (Chen, n.d., 13). Because of these mandated examinations, the tea farmers needed to take it upon themselves to monitor the quality of their own teas, so they began utilizing a *gaiwan* to mimic the process the Purchasing Department would use. The *gaiwan* tea method of brewing was popularized in the Yangzi River Basin in the north and is traditionally utilized for green and floral teas¹⁶. Finally, the glass tumbler

¹⁵ The term “*gaiwan*” does not have a direct translation in English. *Pleco Chinese Dictionary* translates it to “teacup with lid and saucer” or “lidded teacup” (*Pleco Chinese Dictionary*).

¹⁶ The *gaiwan* brewing method is not to be conflated with the usage of the *gaiwan* utensil when performing the Gongfu method in Anxi County (as was described above regarding

brewed tea is most popular in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces and is utilized to brew green teas, especially Dragon Well (龙井 *longjing*) and *Biluochun* (碧螺春) teas¹⁷. In these provinces of China, one can oft see individuals sipping from clear tumblers in order to admire the tealeaves opening and floating around the water. In all three of these brewing methods, the individual brews the same tealeaves with freshly boiled spring water multiple times over in order to squeeze all of the taste and fragrance out of the leaves (Chen n.d., 12-14).



Image 3: The *gaiwan* is pictured in red on the right side of the above photo (Red Blossom Tea Company, 2018)



Image 4: The Boccaro teapot is pictured above (Verdant Tea 2018)

This section gave a brief outline of what categorization of tea looks like in China, however there are many more ways in which tea can be categorized. Etherington and

the Gongfu method). The *gaiwan* method, rather, includes drinking tea straight from the *gaiwan*.

¹⁷ This tea does not have an English translation and is therefore referred to as *Biluochun*.

Forster describe the categorization of tea best in their book titled “Green Gold: The Political Economy of China’s Post-1949 Tea Industry”:

In China, tea is not only classified by the variety of bush, the shape of the leaf (round, long, or oval), its method of manufacture (roasted, steamed, scented, or compressed), and extent of fermentation, but also by the time of plucking (spring, summer, or autumn), the region of production, the scale of production (state farm, agricultural collective, or smallholder), final market (domestic or foreign, barter or cash) (16).

The case studies presented in Section 2 of this chapter are better understood with this bird’s-eye view of the tea industry and tea’s categorizations in mind. As this thesis continues to explore tea trends at a greater depth, it is important also to understand the background of the concept of authenticity and the perceptions that the Chinese have with regard to authentic tea and authentic tea culture.

EFFECTS OF MODERNIZATION ON TEA CULTURE AND PERCEPTIONS OF AUTHENTICITY

The economic prosperity and growth that Mainland China experienced as a result of the decades of Reform and Opening Up has drastically changed the Chinese psyche with regards to perceptions of authenticity in tea and this concept of “the art of tea” or “tea culture”. The art of tea is a relatively new phenomenon. The term itself for the art of tea in Mandarin, 茶艺 (*chayi*), is actually a neologism in the Chinese language; the terminology did not begin to pop up until the late 20th century (Chen n.d., 10). This new terminology and phenomenon represent the “revitalization” of the Mainland Chinese tea industry in a number of ways. Tea had been related with art in China’s past, but the new concept of the art of tea made the actual brewing of the tea into an art form to be celebrated. The revitalization of the tea industry can be seen in a number of phenomena across Mainland China, including the case studies that are discussed in the following section: the Puer tea industry, the Gongfu tea brewing method, the ever-increasing

quantity of teahouses within the nation, and tea education through the company Tenfu Group.

In China (and in many other countries across the world for that matter), modernization has occurred hand-in-hand with Westernization. After a few decades of Maoist policies including his campaign of the destruction of the “Four Olds” and then the rapid modernization immediately following the Maoist era during the Reform and Opening Up, the Chinese people have been hungry for cultural representations of Chinese culture. This can be seen in the way that Xi Jinping’s “Chinese Dream” (中国梦 *Zhongguo Meng*) and intense spouts of nationalism have ensued throughout the country. In her journal article “A Transnational Flow of the Art of Tea: The Paradox of Cultural Authenticity in Taiwan”, Jinghong Zhang explains this concept best when she writes about the effects that modernization and economic improvement have had on anthropological factors within tea culture and tea consumption. Zhang utilizes two main anthropological theories to support her analysis of the current situation. One comes from Charles Lindholm; his theory sustains that, as modernity and economic development increase in any given country, concerns about environmental issues and counterfeit simultaneously increase; therefore, people begin seeking out authenticity.¹⁸ Similarly, Bendix, another anthropologist, argues that many people experience a certain loss due to modernization and its outgrowths, and so these same people employ the fruits of modernity in order to “recover” those losses (Zhang 2018, 4-5). The outer workings of these two anthropological theories about authenticity can be seen first in Taiwan in the 1950s and 1960s, and then in Mainland China in the 1980s and 1990s. Zhang primarily utilizes these theories to support her diagnosis of the Puer tea industry and the Gongfu tea brewing method, however it is apparent that teahouses in Taiwan also took a similar trajectory, as they became oases to the hustle and bustle of the outside world that was industrializing and modernizing at rapid speed. Teahouses allowed for the Taiwanese and Mainland Chinese to enter into a calm, aesthetically pleasing and otherwise calming environment to

¹⁸ Zhang also talks about this at length with regard to Puer tea in her book, *Puer Tea: Ancient Caravans and Urban Chic*.

enjoy a culturally Chinese pastime and spend time with friends and family (Wicentowski 2000, 11). The elite (and even individuals who belong to the middle class) of contemporary China are able to use their disposable income to enjoy cultural habits that they otherwise would not have been able to enjoy in the absence of the economic improvement and modernization of Mainland China. They tend to seek after hobbies that are inherently Chinese, as modernization has happened in tandem with westernization and many western habits have increased in popularity and prevalence across the nation (Zheng n.d., 207). In the quote below, Jinghong Zhang beautifully sums up the consumer behavior with regard to tea for the Mainland Chinese in the modern-day. She is speaking specifically about Puer tea, however the same concepts can be translated to other high-end teas and aspects of tea culture:

[The Chinese] want to become wealthy to overcome the poverty of the past...and Puer tea, the ‘drinkable antique’ valued for its aged taste is a good candidate...[Additionally], consumers want to live healthy lives, to achieve physical balance for their bodies, which has been neglected during years of poverty. This...reflects distinctive Chinese beliefs that food is also medicine and that eating is essential to balance yin and yang, or cold and hot, in the body...Consumers [also] want to revive the past...to compensate for the suppression of interest in collecting antiques during the Maoist era. Spurred by economic growth, the expanding upper and middle classes have more income and leisure time to seek out and appreciate traditional Chinese aesthetic values...They also seek to balance the ongoing modernity and globalization that make many old things disappear...[Finally], consumers desire authenticity...[and] they wish to achieve distinct identification to balance the Maoist era’s emphasis on unification. In a sense this quest for authenticity reflects the trend for a new kind of individualism. It is also a response to the uncertainty brought about by modernity. Consumers believe that, in order to find authentic Puer tea, they must go to the rural tea mountains, which are unpolluted, quiet, and slow paced, in contrast to the polluted, noisy, and fast-paced urban life (Zhang 2014, 21-23).

Finally, Zhang presents Lindholm's idea of "the paradox of authenticity": "[O]nce something is declared authentic, it is at risk of losing its authentic status" (Zhang 2018, 5). This obviously makes for a complicated understanding of authenticity in the contemporary Chinese tea industry, as the idea of authenticity can shift as the commodity of tea or the customs surrounding it become part of mainstream society.

The above consumer behavior is an important background for understanding the case studies in the following section. The idea of seeking out culturally is discussed in more depth with regard to teahouses and other trends such as the Gongfu brewing method in the case studies provided in Section 2 of this chapter.

SECTION 2: TYING TOGETHER THE TWO: TAIWANESE AND POLITICAL-ECONOMIC INFLUENCE ON THE MAINLAND CHINESE TEA INDUSTRY

The Taiwanese tea industry was able to modernize a few decades before that of Mainland China thanks to the earlier industrialization in Taiwan as compared to Mainland China, the Taiwanese's innovative mindset that still deeply values classical Chinese culture, and the comparative political stability in Taiwan over that of Mainland China. In modern-day China, the Taiwanese have immensely influenced the tea industry through a number of significant channels. Not only that, but the Mainland Chinese government and its political and economic policy changes that were outlined in Chapter 2 have also given the tea industry a notable boost. The remainder of this thesis ties together the backgrounds of Chapters 1 and 2, drawing attention to the two primary influences (the Taiwanese and the political-economic policies in 20th-century Mainland China) that have similarly affected multiple tea regions and tea traditions across southern China and across the country as a whole. These tea regions and tea traditions are presented as case studies. The first of these case studies that are discussed in this chapter is Puer tea of Yunnan Province. The naturally fermented cakes of Puer tea used to be utilized as a tributary tea to the Chinese emperor, but in the China of the early 1900s, the formerly famous Puer tea of imperial times had nearly become obsolete (Yu 2016, 99). The revitalization and success of Puer tea in the modern era is due in large part to the pilgrimage of a few Taiwanese and Hong

Kong businessmen and tea connoisseurs that lit a spark and started a wildfire. This recent history of Puer tea is explained in the first case study of this chapter.

The second case study explains in detail the Gongfu tea brewing method of Chaoshan (but also of other parts of Fujian and Guangdong) that has been enriched as an important art form and cultural ceremony through the contributions of the Taiwanese. This method of brewing is presented alongside Anxi's Tieguanyin Oolong tea, as it is a tea that has historically been used when brewing tea in the Gongfu method and has its origins in the same part of the country. The Taiwanese had a huge impact on technological improvement in the Oolong tea industry, while the Mainland Chinese central and local governments both helped to prop up the tea industries (Tan and Ding 2010, 127).

The focus of the final case study is on the way the Taiwanese have influenced the Mainland Chinese tea industry on a broader scale through tools, teahouses, and Tenfu Group. The Taiwanese have exported their technology and refining techniques through widespread FDI throughout Mainland China. Thanks to this modern technology, more efficiencies have been achieved in the processing of Chinese tea. The Taiwanese did not stop at simply improving tea industry processes, but rather they have greatly influenced cultural cultivation of tea by reimporting teahouses back into Mainland China, creating spaces to experience traditional Chinese culture in a modern way. The biggest catalyst in the Mainland Chinese tea industry has been the company Tenfu Group, a Taiwanese company that has successfully disseminated and promoted tea education through a variety of channels, transforming tea to be seen as an art form and cultivating educational opportunities in which individuals can become masters of the art of tea, and much more. Their work in Taiwan and in the mainland has given rise to a robust contemporary tea industry on both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

As stated in the first chapter, the Taiwanese tea industry has its origins in Mainland China. What makes the topic of tea so interesting is the cultural exchange within the Chinese tea industry that flowed back and forth across the Taiwan Strait over the last few centuries. Neither Taiwan nor Mainland China could make the claim that their tea

industries would exist in their present state without the know-how from each side of the Taiwan Strait. The case studies of Puer tea, the Gongfu tea brewing method and Tieguanyin Oolong tea, and the general influence of the Taiwanese all seek to convey this reality. In dynastic China, certain teas ventured to Taiwan including fermented Puer tea and especially Oolong teas from Fujian Province. Along with the Oolong teas came the dissemination of the Gongfu brewing method, which ultimately became well established on the island of Taiwan. In contemporary times, the Taiwanese have managed to preserve and refine the Chinese tea industry, as has already been explained in other places throughout this thesis, and they have “re-imported” it back into Mainland China. The re-importation, re-invention, and revitalization of certain tea traditions are explained in the following case studies. In order to gain a better understanding of each of these individual case studies, I interviewed Professor Cai Rongzhang from Zhangzhou College of Science and Technology, formerly known as Tenfu Tea College. Professor Cai teaches Tea Philosophy (茶思想 *chasixiang*) and is very knowledgeable about Chinese and Taiwanese tea. Professor Cai’s colleague, a professor from the English department named Professor Judy Cai helped facilitate the interview by interpreting the conversation between me and Professor Cai. Recent information regarding Puer tea, the Gongfu tea brewing method, tools, teahouses, and Tenfu Group is provided from this interview.

CASE STUDY 1: PUER TEA

Puer tea has its roots in the province of Yunnan in southwestern China, specifically in Yiwu Township in the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. Yunnan’s indigenous populations have been planting Puer tea trees there for thousands of years (Zhen 2018, 317)¹⁹. Oftentimes in the West, tea is either bagged or stored as loose-leaf. Puer tea, rather, is compressed into a teacake or tea brick, from which the consumer of the tea will

¹⁹ The indigenous populations that are associated with cultivating Puer tea are the *Bulang* (布朗族), *De’ang* (德昂族), *Wa* (佤族), *Hani* (哈尼族), and *Jinuo* (基诺族). The Han Chinese were not associated with aiding cultivation and production of Puer tea until the 1300s (Zhang 2014, 10-11).

chip off pieces to then brew it. In the 17th and 18th centuries the Han people began migrating to the Southwest of China and helped bolster the existing tea industry in Yunnan, commercializing it and satisfying demand for the rich, fermented tea. Puer tea gained in popularity as a tributary tea to Beijing during the Qing dynasty, and, due to its ability to cut through fatty foods, it had additionally achieved fame in places like Tibet, Hong Kong, and other countries in Southeast Asia (Zhang 2014, 40, 93). Caravans would transport Puer tea over thousands of miles, allowing the tea to ferment naturally in the intense humidity throughout the voyage. In Hong Kong specifically, the tea was aged further and, like good wine, was a prized possession the longer it was fermented (Zhang 2014, 96). A few centuries later during the Maoist era in Mainland China, however, Puer tea saw a drastic decline in production. Although Puer tea continued to be produced and artificially fermented by the government during that period of time, the fine processing, natural fermentation, and teacakes that were Puer tea's claims to fame in the places listed above became rather obsolete (Yu 2016, 98). At this time in Taiwan, however, love for Puer tea had yet to take root in the general population, although a few tea connoisseurs did enjoy this tea. It was not until the turn of the century when the Hong Kong people anticipated instability as they shifted from being a colony of the British to being part of China again that Puer tea gained in popularity in Taiwan. In 1994, (a few years prior to the handover of Hong Kong in 1997) some Taiwanese tea connoisseurs and businessmen ventured to Xishuangbanna to explore the homeland of their beloved Puer tea, but were disappointed to find that the production of tea in the traditional way had essentially disappeared (Zhang 2014, 41). From there, the Taiwanese began putting the pieces back together with regards to producing the naturally fermented tea cakes and in a lot of ways were able to restore the traditional processing methods that gave Puer tea its fame in the first place. As the production was ramped up, a countrywide frenzy ensued, the Puer tea industry expanded extensively, and the fight for authentic Puer tea began. These Taiwanese businessmen also successfully promoted Puer tea in Taiwan; as is stated above, Puer tea was formerly only admired among a small group of connoisseurs. They "organiz[ed] tea events and publish[ed] journals and books that introduced Puer to the public, which successfully framed the tasting of aged Puer tea as part of Taiwan's refined tea tasting culture" (Yu n.d., 2).

Professor Cai shared two primary factors that allowed for Puer to gain fame in the early 2000s. In the late 1900s, Taiwanese government officials started the campaign “to recall ancient things and bring people nice memories...to revive Chinese culture”. He explained that an individual who was in charge of the National Museum in Taiwan got his hands on a teacake that was over 100 years old; this teacake astonished the general population and many began attaching more importance to ancient relics. The second factor was, as Zhang explained, catalyzed by the handover of Hong Kong from Great Britain to Mainland China. During this period of time, many foreign companies removed their companies from Hong Kong, leaving their buildings behind and up for auction. The Taiwanese who were involved in the auction of these buildings found that there was much Puer tea stocked in these buildings, tea that still had good quality and taste. The Taiwanese saw the value and from there, Mainland China began to see the value in Puer tea.

As was stated in Section 1 of this chapter, all tea comes from the plant *Camellia sinensis*; of the major classifications of teas, Puer tea fits into the *assamica* varietal rather than the *sinensis* varietal (Etherington and Forster 1989, 303). This means that the leaves are bigger than the tealeaves used to produce most Oolong and green teas. Even though Puer tea uses a different variety of tea than most other major teas, this only represents half of the reasoning why Puer tea is unique and stands out among all other teas. The other half of its unique nature comes from the way in which Puer tea is processed and fermented. Puer tea has two general stages of production with multiple steps in each stage. The first stage is rough processing and the second stage is fine processing.

Rough Processing and Fine Processing

Every one of the seven types of tea outlined in the introduction of this chapter (see page 32) starts their processing with withering, which entails leaving the tealeaves out in the sun in order to dry; this action does not halt the fermentation of the leaves, but rather causes any excess water from the fresh leaves to evaporate. In the case of Puer tea, the next step of production is frying or cooking the tealeaves, allowing for the natural

fermentation process to cease. From there, the tealeaves are rolled. Once the tealeaves are rolled, they proceed to the fine processing stage of their production. This stage consists of reintroducing moisture back into the teas, which stimulates the fermentation process yet again²⁰. The teas are subsequently packed into cakes or bricks and then dried, which finishes out the fermentation process (Zhang 2014, 56).

In the article titled “Sensorial Place-Making in Ethnic Minority Areas: The Consumption of Forest Puer Tea in Contemporary China”, Zhen Ma sustains that the acceptance of consumerism that came with the Reform and Opening Up as well as the growth of the middle class have both been crucial factors in the expansion of the Puer tea industry (322). The ability of the aforementioned Taiwanese businessmen to invest in the Puer tea industry in the significant ways that they did is another testament to the culmination of wide-reaching effects of the Reform and Opening Up policies that allowed for improvement and development in the Mainland Chinese tea industry. Modern day China is experiencing immense amounts of growth in their middle class, which is causing a shift in spending power, allowing Chinese citizens to participate in certain cultural activities and luxury hobbies that normally would not have been possible prior to the Reform and Opening Up, including the strong interest in tea and tea culture (Ma 2018, 322).

Due to the particularity of the Puer tea phenomenon in the early 2000s, many scholars have written on the topic of authenticity and its perceptions in the Puer tea industry. Some schools of thought regard authentic Puer tea to be based on the processing technique explained above. If tea is artificially fermented rather than naturally fermented, some individuals believe that that type of Puer tea is not the authentic kind. Additionally, whether the tea is from arbor trees or terrace trees is a major element that determines the authenticity of the tea (the majority claiming that arbor trees are the only bearers of

²⁰ Wetting the tea after cooking the tea is called post-fermentation, and it is unique to the processing of Puer tea. Most other teas are fermented prior to frying (see the way Oolong tea is processed in Case Study 3: Tools, Teahouses, and Tenfu).

authentic Puer tea)²¹. Finally, the particular location from which the tealeaves come is of utmost importance to the conversation regarding authentic Puer tea. It is easily agreed upon that authentic Puer tea comes from Yunnan Province; however, there are only certain mountains that achieve the status of authenticity by tea connoisseurs. Jinghong Zhang argues in her book *Puer Tea: Ancient Caravans and Urban Chic* that authenticity for Puer tea is complicated to determine, and the term authenticity itself is a major question. This question of authenticity is also being addressed in many regards in the tea industry at large, as was explained in Section 1 of this chapter.

The contemporary phenomenon of the Puer tea industry is a perfect case study to exhibit the confluence of Taiwanese influence and the consequences from former periods of history such as the Cultural Revolution and the Reform and Opening Up within the Mainland Chinese tea industry. Mao's policy decisions throughout the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution brought the once thriving traditional Puer tea industry to its knees, and without the occurrence of the Reform and Opening Up in the late 1900s, the Taiwanese would have never had the opportunity to invest in Yunnan's tea industry outright as they did. Furthermore, during the Republican and Maoist periods, tea in Yunnan was primarily mass-produced black tea, rather than the Puer tea of the past. The planned economy inhibited any natural market of investment of Puer tea; after the reforms, the Puer production was able to thrive (Yu n.d., 7). Jinghong Zhang explains the impacts of these historical periods as follows:

The Puer tea business in Yiwu was not always successful. It experienced several periods of decline, mainly due to political factors...A few years after the foundation of the People's Republic of China (1949), the purchasing and selling of foodstuffs, including tea, was monopolized by the state, and the operation of

²¹ Arbor trees are tea trees that grow in the wild and are thought to have more nutritional value than terrace trees. Terrace trees are tea trees that are intentionally planted and therefore have more uniform leaves and produce a more consistent product (Yu 2016, 100-101).

private family business was completely stopped. From the 1950s to the 1990s, Yiwu and the nearby tea mountains produced basic tea material primarily for state-owned tea factories. Though political struggle became the dominant theme in the Maoist era, from the 1950s to the late 1970s, and many activities were sacrificed in the name of class struggle, Yunnan's tea production did not stop. State-owned tea factories kept producing tea—to supply the needs of Tibet, on the one hand, and to supply Hong Kong, Macao, and other countries in Southeast Asia and Europe, on the other (Zhang 2014, 40-41).

The “re-importation” of this particular tea processing method is not the only representative of this confluence of factors. Additionally, the Gongfu tea brewing method and Tieguanyin Oolong tea are phenomena that experienced similar journeys across the strait to Taiwan and then ultimately made a return trip to Mainland China. These two phenomena are discussed in the second case study of this section.

CASE STUDY 2: GONGFU TEA BREWING METHOD AND TIEGUANYIN OOLONG TEA

The Gongfu tea brewing method is said to have originated in Chaoshan in Guangdong Province, but it also has deep ties to the neighboring Fujian Province. The first known record of the Gongfu tea brewing method is from the Qing Dynasty. As was explained in the introduction of this thesis, the Gongfu brewing method was first mentioned in the book “The Way of Eating” (随园食单 *Suiyan Shidian*), written by Yuan Mei. In his account of his time in southeastern China, Yuan Mei described a brewing method in which the tea drinkers in Guangdong Province and Fujian Province's Wuyi Mountain used small teacups and repeatedly brewed the same leaves multiple times. Many scholars claim that because of the nature in which Yuan Mei talked about this brewing custom, he must not have been familiar with it prior to this experience, showing that the Gongfu tea brewing method pertained only to these southeastern provinces of China rather than being a national custom that represents the entirety of China (how it is thought of today) (Zhang, 2016, 61). Until the turn of the 21st century, the Gongfu brewing method remained

popular primarily in Guangdong Province and Fujian Province, but it was subsequently disseminated to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Japan through the migration of Fujianese people over the last few centuries.

The most basic, bare-bones process of brewing in the Gongfu tea method that is seen throughout Guangdong Province, Fujian Province, Taiwan and Hong Kong has three key serving steps: “the phoenix nods three times” (凤凰三点头 *fenghuang sandiantou*)²², “Lord Guan makes his rounds of the city wall” (关公巡城 *Guangong xuncheng*), and “General Xin musters the troops” (韩信点兵 *Han Xin dianbing*)²³. These three steps are used to ensure that each guest gets an equal amount of brewed tea in his or her teacup, and that the boiled water opens the fragrance of each tealeaf (Chen n.d., 12)²⁴. In Japan and Taiwan, additional steps and tools have been added to the Gongfu tea brewing experience. This is where the water gets slightly muddled, and the origins of these traditions become unclear. Obviously, as stated above, the Gongfu tea brewing method originated in Mainland China, but the present state of this method is significantly different from the original tradition due to these outside influences. Lawrence Zhang says it best in his essay titled “A Foreign Infusion: The Forgotten Legacy of Japanese Chadō

²² <https://v.qq.com/x/page/j07375r4qq1.html>: Minute 1:20-1:45 of this video gives an example of the movement of “the phoenix nods three times”. This action ensures that the tealeaves all open up and release their flavor and their fragrance (“Chayi biaoyan zhi fenghuang san diantou de xuexi fangfa” 2018).

²³ <https://v.qq.com/x/page/e0529m16kmx.html>: Minute 1:13-1:28 of this video displays both the actions of “Lord Guan makes his rounds of the city wall” and “General Xin musters the troops”. Both of these actions help guarantee that each guest gets a fair amount of tea served to him or her (“Guangong xun cheng, Hanxin dian bing’ pao hu chaoshan gongfucha yuanlai you zheme duo jiangjiu” 2018).

²⁴ When I traveled in China, my friends in Shantou as well as the individuals I met in Wuyi Mountain all followed these three steps religiously without adding any additional fanfare or ceremonial actions. Both of these instances were rather informal settings for brewing and drinking tea.

on Modern Chinese Tea Arts” when describing the Gongfu tea culture: “...the tradition itself is at least partially invented, with a regional custom appropriated, foreign practices borrowed, and then, after mixing, inserted into a narrative of national tradition with deep historical roots” (61). The contemporary practice of brewing tea in the Gongfu tea brewing method has benefitted greatly from outside influences, most notably that of Taiwan. Due to Fujian and Guangdong’s proximity to the island of Taiwan and the influx of migrants from these two regions to Taiwan in the 1800s and then again in the 1940s, Taiwan has fully adopted the tea culture that comes with brewing in the Gongfu tea brewing method. The Japanese also imported this southeastern Chinese cultural custom and refined many aspects of it, creating an elaborate ceremonial ritual. From 1895-1945, the Japanese occupied Taiwan, so ultimately much of the refining that took place in Japan heavily influenced the already existing Taiwanese tea practices and customs.

The differences between the Taiwanese Gongfu tea ceremony and the Fujianese version are few, but they are significant. Taiwan adopted a few things from the elaborate Japanese Chadō, but they also invented certain elements, primarily adding new utensils to the process of brewing. These utensils include the smelling cup (闻香杯 *wenxiangbei*) and the caddy spoon (茶叶匙 *chayechi*). In Fujian, on the other hand, the fairness cup (公道杯 *gongdaobei*) was invented in order to assure that every guest gets an equal amount of tea in his or her cup. Pouring straight from the boccaro teapot or the *gaiwan* (depending on which is used) can oftentimes be misleading if too much water is used (Chen n.d., 14). The fairness cup is a cup that looks similar to a gravy boat that is utilized in the West, however not as shallow. The fairness cup does not have a lid like the *gaiwan* and the boccaro teapot do. For the Gongfu tea brewing method, the individual serving the tea pours the brewed tea from the boccaro teapot or *gaiwan* into the fairness cup first before distributing the tea into each of the small cups from which the guests will drink.

Professor Cai explained during the interview that the reason that the Gongfu tea brewing method has had steps added or removed from the original and authentic brewing method from Chaozhou was in order to keep up with current lifestyles. For example, the smelling cup, the Taiwanese invention, was added for hygiene reasons or for experiencing the

aromas and different scents of the brewed teas. On the other hand, the first brew of tea in the Gongfu tea method was traditionally used to clean the cups, as often different guests would use the same cup. The boiled tea liquid was used to sterilize the cups. It is now being advocated that this step be removed, because it wastes a valuable brew of high quality teas.

When I asked Professor Cai about more of the steps that have been added to the tea ceremony, he responded with a question, “When you are [watching] someone drawing [a] picture, you look at his movements when drawing or are you more focused on the final picture that comes out?” He made it clear that although the tea ceremony is beautiful and most people were very fascinated by the graceful gestures involved in the performance when tea culture was being introduced as a new phenomenon, that the most important part of the tea ceremony is the drinking of the tea. If the tea is not drunk, if the tea is not brewed well, then the ceremony and the graceful gestures really mean nothing in the end.

Given the fact that the origins of this brewing method were in places that are famous for their Oolong tea, it can be deduced that this method is utilized most frequently with Oolong.²⁵ Anxi’s Tieguanyin Oolong tea is a tea that has historically been used when brewing tea in the Gongfu method and has its origins in the same part of the country. This particular Oolong is presented next, as it also has elements of Taiwanese influence and stimulus from the historical period of the Reform and Opening Up.

²⁵ During my time in Shantou, my friends brewed Oolong tea and green tea using the Gongfu tea brewing method. For them, the most important factor was the quality and the strength of the tealeaves, as the method requires brewing the same tealeaves multiple times. The tea category of Puer tea that is discussed in the first case study has also more recently been brewed in this method.

TIEGUANYIN OOLONG TEA

A unique case study of interest took place in the city of Quanzhou in Anxi, Fujian Province regarding Oolong tea, specifically Tieguanyin Oolong tea (or in English, The Iron Goddess). Oolong tea in general was widely drunk for centuries throughout Fujian and Guangdong Provinces, as well as in Taiwan (as is stated in Chapter 1). When Mao Zedong came into power, however, Oolong tea did not rank high in classification, ultimately resulting in decreased production rates and low yields (Shu 2010, 4). During the Reform and Opening Up under Deng Xiaoping and in the years immediately following the reforms, the tea industry in Quanzhou thrived, grew and expanded. Tan Chee-Bing and Ding Yuling argue that governmental policies and Taiwanese influence are the major parties to thank for the immense growth that took place in Quanzhou. During the Reform era, the central government inquired of each local government to disclose what their key industry was, and from there the central government subsidized that particular industry. Quanzhou claimed tea as their primary industry, and the central government therefore “provided them with tea saplings free of charge” while also encouraging tea competitions between the farmers in the area (Tan and Ding 2010, 130). These competitions were highly publicized, giving the public more accessible knowledge about the tea being produced locally. Furthermore, after the Opening Up of China to the outside world, many Taiwanese were able to visit their ancestral villages. With them, they brought their Oolong teas that were not fermented nearly as intensely as the teas from Quanzhou (Tieguanyin Oolong tea in particular). The Quanzhou people began adopting some of these fermenting practices with their own teas, ultimately changing many notable characteristics of Oolong teas (Tan and Ding 2010, 132).

The Gongfu tea brewing method and Tieguanyin Oolong tea are two phenomena from Fujian and Guangdong Provinces that exhibit both the positive effects of Taiwanese influence while also showing how the policies of the Reform and Opening Up aided in reinforcing growth. The third and final case study of this section presents the three notable phenomena of: 1) technological improvement, 2) teahouses, and 3) Tenfu Group.

Each of these parts of the Mainland Chinese tea industry has received a great deal of assistance from the Taiwanese and the Reform and Opening Up policies.

CASE STUDY 3: TOOLS, TEAHOUSES, AND TENFU GROUP

It is clear that the Taiwanese played significant roles in certain individual areas in China, as was explained in the first two case studies of this chapter with regard to the Puer tea of Yunnan Province, the Gongfu tea brewing method of southeastern China, and the development of Oolong tea production in Fujian Province. In addition to these specific case studies, the Taiwanese have made other farther-reaching investments in the Mainland Chinese tea industry in the Post-Reform Era. These primary investments can be split into three main topics: 1) tools, including processing techniques and modern technology; 2) teahouses; and 3) Tenfu Group. Because of the delayed modernization of Mainland China as compared to Taiwan and other East Asian nations like Japan, the technological improvement of late 20th-century China lagged behind much of the rest of the world. New technology was not readily available for the Chinese to develop their own modernized processes for producing tea. It was not until the Taiwanese began investing in the Chinese tea industry, thanks to the policies of the Reform and Opening Up, that the Chinese were able to mechanize more of their tea production (Sun et al n.d., 39).

The Taiwanese did not stop at simply bettering the production processes of the Mainland Chinese tea industry; they sought also to influence tea culture in the Mainland through the broad dissemination of teahouses. Teahouses originated and have existed for centuries in Mainland China; however, much of the cultural significance of these locales was lost in the modern era due to constant political upheaval that started at the turn of the 20th century and continued until the end of the 1970s. The Taiwanese first reinvigorated the traditional Chinese teahouse and then successfully brought the culture back to its country of origin (Wicentowski 2000).

Finally, the Taiwanese saw the opportunity that a new economic system in Mainland China presented and seized the moment by marketing tea and promoting tea education in

significant ways through Tenfu Group. Tenfu Group is a Taiwanese tea company that is comprised of both Tenren's Tea and Lu Yu Tea Culture Institute. Through these two parts of their company, Tenfu Group has been able to market tea in a unique way and educate people on the art of tea, the health benefits of tea, the history of tea, and much more. Tenfu Group has revolutionized the way tea and tea culture are perceived in modern-day Mainland China. The three investments of tools, teahouses, and Tenfu Group are discussed in greater detail below.

TOOLS

In the 1970s, the Taiwanese economy became largely technology-intensive, which was a major shift from their labor-intensive economy of years prior. Despite these changes, the tea industry remained primarily labor-intensive, and it therefore experienced problems with rapid price increases as well as land becoming expensive and scarce and labor becoming equally as scarce. With these problems, the quality of tea began decreasing and there was not enough labor to satisfy the demand; all the while, tea culture was blossoming as a cultural phenomenon on the island. To satisfy the increasing demand for high quality teas, the Taiwanese began improving their tea-processing technology and simultaneously looked across the Taiwan Strait to Fujian Province to satisfy the need for more land and labor (Wu 2015, 871) (Sun et al n.d., 38). This was obviously beneficial to the Mainland Chinese tea industry too, as the new technology and processes that were subsequently imported from Taiwan helped their industry improve.

When Special Economic Zones (SEZ)²⁶ were established in Mainland China, the Taiwanese were quick to take advantage of the opportunity through FDI. The impact the Taiwanese made on the Mainland Chinese tea industry was primarily through the importation of mechanized processing machines and vacuum sealing machines (Tan and Ding 2010, 132). The focus of this case study is primarily on the headway that the Taiwanese made specifically in the Oolong tea industry in Fujian Province and other

²⁶ See Chapter 2, Section 4 for more information on the SEZ.

surrounding areas, however many of these tools are employed for production of other teas throughout the rest of the country. For green, black, and Puer tea, the processes include different steps than what are described in the following paragraphs, or simply the same steps in a different order²⁷.

The process of making Oolong tea in the modern day includes seven key steps: 1) withering; 2) bruising; 3) frying; 4) compressing; 5) wrapping; 6) scattering; 7) drying (Shu 2010, 97).

1. Withering: Tea is withered in the direct sunlight for 10-20 minutes, and someone will make sure the tea is moved around frequently, so as to evenly expose all of the leaves to the sunlight.
2. Bruising: The next step of the Oolong tea production process includes a helpful tool: the bruising machine. The Taiwanese introduced the Mainland Chinese to the bruising machine (see Image 5), which essentially crushes the leaves in such a way that the fragrance and the oils are released from the tealeaves (Red Blossom Tea Company 2017).



Image 5: Bruising Machine (Red Blossom Tea Company 2017)

²⁷ For more on the processing of Puer tea specifically, see the first case study of Chapter

Once the second step is complete, one could say there is a step in between bruising and frying: the tealeaves are left to ferment or oxidize for 18-24 hours (the timing varies based on the particular type of Oolong being produced).

3. Frying: From there, the tea is fried in order to put a final stop to the process of oxidation. The main tool that is used to fry the tea is called the roasting machine or a firing drum, which consists of a rotating cylinder that is heated to a high temperature (Shu 2010, 99).
4. Compressing: After frying, in order to compress the Oolong tea and to make it into the small round balls that are typically seen for Oolong (see Image 6), the hydraulic compactor machine, yet another Taiwanese invention, is utilized.



Image 6: Hydraulic Compactor Machine (Kincart, n.d.)

5. Wrapping: After the first stage of compressing the leaves, the secondary stage follows, which in essence involves wrapping the tea in cloth and making it into a tight ball. This ball is then rolled around the compressing machine.
6. Scattering: The cloth balls that are made in step 5 are then opened, moved apart, and then the process is repeated. The wrapping and scattering steps therefore go hand in hand.
7. Drying: Finally, the leaves are dried to annihilate the existence of any remaining moisture within the tealeaves (Shu 2010, 100).

Although it is not included in the seven main steps, another important part of the Oolong tea-making process is removing the stems from the tealeaves. In order to remove the stems, the stem removal machine, another Taiwanese invention and important contribution to the Mainland Chinese tea industry, is utilized. The stem removal machine separates the dried tealeaves from their stems and discards the stems (Kincart, n.d.) (See Image 7).



Image 7: Stem Removal Machine (Kincart, n.d.)

These processing machines mentioned above obviously allowed for more efficiencies in tea production. In addition to these processing machines, the Taiwanese also invented the vacuum-sealing machine to package the tea; this machine allowed for tea to be stored longer and to remain unaffected by the elements, greatly augmenting the shelf life of tea and maintaining its quality for longer periods of time (Tan and Ding 2010, 132). Prior to the Reform and Opening Up, processing of tea in the mainland was widely done by hand, although some machines did exist beforehand. Although some of the tea-production process remains manual, such as the actual harvesting and picking of tealeaves and moving the tea around during withering, the majority of the process has now been

mechanized, as is exhibited in this case study about the tools that the Taiwanese have imported into Mainland China.

TEAHOUSES

In addition to modernized technology, the Taiwanese also successfully revamped and “re-imported” the concept of teahouses. Teahouses originated as early as the Jin dynasty, however with the popularization of tea during the Tang dynasty, teahouses gained popularity in tandem. From the Tang dynasty up until the Republican Era, teahouses were frequented by people who wanted to engage in a variety of activities from talking business or politics, engaging in cultural activities such as plays and musical performances, and unwinding and relaxing. This was seen especially in the south of China in Sichuan Province. Unfortunately, there were major campaigns against teahouses during the early Republican Era; the government sought to frame teahouses and their related activities in a strictly pejorative light (Di 2008, 2-3). In other regions such as Yunnan Province, the Republican era had a thriving teahouse culture. Specifically describing the region’s largest city of Kunming, Jinghong Zhang writes of these Republican-era teahouses:

A social survey undertaken during the period of the Republic of China (1912-1949) recorded the presence of 350 teahouses in Kunming...Teahouses were categorized into four types at that time. ‘Teahouses for pure tea drinking’ ([清饮茶馆] *qing yin chaguan*), which served nothing but tea but sometimes allowed peddlers to sell snacks, made up 90 percent of the teahouses. ‘Broadcasting teahouses’ ([播音茶馆] *boyin chaguan*) provided music along with tea. ‘Pure singing teahouses’ ([清唱茶馆] *qing chang chaguan*) featured musical performances in addition to tea. And at ‘telling stories teahouses’ ([说书茶馆] *shuo shu chaguan*), tea drinking was subordinated to storytelling. This last type was the one that people in Kunming were now most interested in recalling, as it combined two forms of typical and traditional Chinese entertainment. All four

teahouse types functioned as places not only to quench thirst but also to socialize, or for individuals to enjoy a bit of ‘quiet’ time amid noisiness, perhaps all day (Zhang 2014, 192).

There was no respite for teahouses during the Maoist Era, however, as the destruction of the “Four Olds” came in full force and sent the prevalence of teahouses further on the decline. Paralleled with the above quotation, a drastic change took place in Kunming during this period of time:²⁸

During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), political struggle became the dominant political theme and anything related to consumption was condemned. Lao Li was born in 1955. He recalled accompanying his father to storytelling teahouses when he was less than ten years old. He clearly remembered that most teahouses like that were closed when the Cultural Revolution began and when ‘Destruction of the Four Olds’ (*po si jiu*)—meaning old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits—was advocated. Teahouses that featured storytelling, singing, or broadcasting were certainly considered old and undesirable, and Lao Li told us that drinking in teahouses at that time was despised as a luxury activity (Zhang 2014, 193).

By the time the Reform and Opening Up began in the late 1970s, teahouses had become an obsolete part of society (Zheng n.d., 199). Across the Taiwan Strait, however, teahouses played a different role in society than they did in Mainland China, and that allowed for an interesting transformation to take place, first in Taiwan, and then ultimately in the mainland.

Before the 1970s, teahouses in the modern-day sense were non-existent in Taiwan. The only teahouses that littered the streets of Taipei and other major cities of Taiwan fell into

²⁸ Lao Li, who is mentioned in this quote, is an individual from Kunming whom Jinghong Zhang interviewed for her book.

one of two categories: “old-man teahouses” or “tea rooms”. The “old-man teahouses” were really simply a means to an end and offered a place for that particular demographic to drink tea. The cultural dynamic that modern-day teahouses exude was absent from these teahouses. The “tea rooms”, on the other hand, were infamous across Taiwan for debauchery, given that “female company” was served along with the tea (Wicentowski 2000, 4). The modern-day teahouses of Taiwan and subsequently of Mainland China offer a diametrically different and more profound cultural experience; during the Taiwanese renaissance of traditional Chinese culture starting in 1966 (referred to from now on as the Chinese Cultural Renaissance), the Taiwanese government sought to combat the tide of modernization and to counteract the destruction of traditional Chinese culture that was occurring in Mainland China. The Taiwanese Ambassador to the United States stated the following in a speech regarding the Chinese Cultural Renaissance:

[T]he government in Taiwan today is searching for a more dynamic cultural program which will enable us to retain the fine features of our traditional culture and at the same time to achieve the necessary social and economic progress in order to set up an example for the Chinese on the mainland showing that it is possible to fuse tradition with progress (Tozer 1970, 95).

Within this movement, the Taiwanese revitalized the teahouse as a “house of tea art”, revamping much of the traditional cultural aspects of teahouses that were seen in Mainland China during the Tang Dynasty, as well as additional aspects (Zheng n.d., 201). Contemporary teahouses offer a tranquil environment in which to participate in the new cultural art of brewing and drinking tea. The walls are often decorated with Chinese art, while the furniture also exhibits traditionally Chinese characteristics. One of the most notable purposes for contemporary teahouses in Taiwan is the way they allow individuals to escape modernization and the rapid expansion that occurs around them daily and to be immersed in a form of “leisure activit[y] with Chineseness in some form” (Zheng n.d., 207). Mainland China also desires to escape the hustle and bustle of modernization and daily stresses of the modern world, and teahouses have been notably successful to achieve those goals (Wicentowski 2000, 11).

When the contemporary Taiwanese teahouse was reimported into Mainland China in the 1980s, at first the primary focus was tea education and the spreading of tea culture. Eventually these spaces were transformed organically into places where Mainland Chinese businessmen could meet up with their Taiwanese business partners. Around a decade later, a Taiwanese businessman opened a teahouse in Beijing, and a Beijing entrepreneur enjoyed the space, ultimately investing in new teahouses throughout the city for other entrepreneurs to meet. They were slow in becoming a trend, but finally they have become an essential part of modern-day Chinese society (Zheng n.d., 203).

Professor Cai claimed that a lot of the popularity of teahouses in the beginning of the 21st century was actually primarily due to the newness of the phenomenon. He described the increase in teahouses as more of a fad. Today in China²⁹, peoples' lifestyles have changed and are much more demanding than they were at the turn of the century, leaving little time for leisure. Professor Cai stated that the management of these teahouses needed to change due to the lifestyle changes of the average Chinese; in doing this, the teahouse did not become obsolete, rather the "tea" part of the teahouse became secondary. Now teahouses serve meals (breakfast, lunch, or dinner), and tea has become "an accessory", according to Professor Cai. The attraction that many had to the teahouse at the turn of the century because of its lure of traditional Chinese tea culture has waned, and the majority of people just attend teahouses to consume tea, do business, or enjoy a meal with high quality tea accompanying it. Professor Cai said that many of the books and journal articles outlined in this thesis were written with regard to the time of prosperity when the number of teahouses was increasing, but now it is evident that management of these teahouses needed to change with the times if they were still to remain in existence.

The "reimportation" of Taiwanese teahouses into Mainland China allowed tea culture and tea education to spread throughout the country while also providing a reprieve from the frenzy of modernization and cultivating an environment of tradition. Tenfu Group has

²⁹ Today refers to the year 2021.

taken marketing of tea multiple steps further beyond the teahouse and has meaningfully transformed the tea industry in Mainland China. The intricacies of Tenfu Group are discussed below.

TENFU GROUP

The most important influence that the Taiwanese have had on Mainland China's tea industry is undoubtedly in the expansion of the market, which in many ways encompasses the prior two influences of tools and teahouses. The Taiwanese have left no part of the tea industry untouched. They have expanded the tea market to incorporate all aspects of tea, including processing and consumption, education and the art of tea, and health and wellness. Because of Taiwan's rapid economic development in the 1950s and 1960s, people's quality of life was augmented, and the demand for high-quality tea increased in step with it. The Taiwanese put particular attention on the improvement of Oolong manufacturing, as Oolong teas are their primary teas. This improvement filtered over into Mainland China's Oolong tea industry as well (Sun et al n.d., 38). As we saw in the first few case studies of this section, their investment did not stop with Oolong tea, rather it was widespread in many particular areas throughout the country.

One of the largest (if not the largest) contributors to the Mainland Chinese tea industry is Tenfu Group. Tenfu Group is a company that was established by Taiwanese entrepreneur, Li Ruihe, in 1993 in Fujian Province. It found such success in Fujian Province and subsequently expanded rapidly in other cities and regions throughout the nation, ultimately transforming the modern-day tea industries in Taiwan and Mainland China (Shu 2010, 77). Tenfu Group is well known for its chain of stores that are widely spread throughout all major cities in Mainland China and Taiwan, however their approach to tea is holistic in nature. Tenfu Group cultivates tea and invests in every step of tea production from leaf to cup. The aspect that truly sets Tenfu Group apart from the rest, however, is the way they have established a market presence beyond simple production and consumption of tea. Over the last decade or so, Tenfu Group has promoted the cultural significance of tea through tea education institutions and through promoting tea education

at each of their store locations. This tea education includes instruction on different teas and their cultivation, brewing practices, tea culture as a whole, and health benefits of tea (Wu et al. 2010, 597). Additionally, Tenfu Group has emphasized the conceptualization of tea specialists and the cultivation of their education. An example of this would be the founding of the tea school in Zhangzhou College of Science and Technology and the Lu Yu Tea Institute (Pan 2009). Wu et al. explain that Tenfu Group is a comprehensive enterprise, consisting of planting and processing tealeaves, selling and marketing tealeaves, scientific research, cultural development, education, and travel. (596). It is evident that Tenfu Group has a far-reaching influence across all areas of the tea industry.

Professor Cai presented two reasons to explain the success and fast development of Tenfu Group in Mainland China: 1) world-class service and 2) the advanced ideology of tea. Tenfu Group's teahouses and teashops stood apart from all the others due to providing excellent service to the customer; at the time in China, service of this kind was a brand new phenomenon. Not only were the customers provided exquisite service, but they were also taught knowledge about tea, tea brewing, and tea culture. Professor Cai acknowledged that Mainlanders admire the Taiwanese ideology and knowledge about tea, because the Taiwanese have done much deeper research into tea culture as compared with Mainland China. The knowledge that one could attain by attending Tenfu Group's teahouses or teashops was a key factor in attracting the attention of the Mainland Chinese.

Aside from their service and their extensive tea ideology, Tenfu Group also has a unique operating model that consists of the following methods of research and development (R&D) and product diversification. In 1998, Tenfu Group first built tech labs, and shortly after in 2000 they began establishing tea institutes, tea gardens, and tea factories within the Mainland. The most recent addition to Tenfu Group's offerings is beauty and health offices: the health benefits of tea have been touted all throughout China's history, and Tenfu Group would be mistaken to ignore that aspect of the market. Product diversification research is central to Tenfu Group's mission, including extending research to develop natural tea health food products such as green tea probiotic pills, among other things. In addition to all these important improvements, Tenfu has also established its

own system of Geographical Indicators (GIs) to delineate growing regions and levels of quality throughout Mainland China and Taiwan, similar to what exists across the world for wine and other important foodstuffs (Pan 2009, 30).

It is obvious that Tenfu Group has left no aspect of the tea industry untouched and has also expanded the market to be more comprehensive in nature. Through Tenfu Group, the Taiwanese have exhibited their greatest influence over the Mainland Chinese tea industry.

CONCLUSION

As has become obvious throughout the course of this thesis, the modern-day Mainland Chinese tea industry is not only multi-faceted, but it also has had a number of influences that have significantly impacted its destiny in the modern world. The first stop on this journey was Chapter 1 regarding the Taiwanese tea industry. This chapter explored the historical roots of the Formosan island's tea industry from its nascence until the mid-1900s, while also discussing the economic reforms that occurred in the late-1900s and their modern-day relevance to the Taiwanese tea industry as well as their relevance to the Mainland Chinese tea industry. The Taiwanese tea industry developed with great help from outside influences including the Mainland Chinese (specifically from Fujian Province), the British, and the Japanese. All of these influences allowed for Taiwan's tea industry to flourish as they entered into major economic reform and improvement in mid-to latter-half of the 20th century. Not only that, but these influences set the Taiwanese up to be a significant influence on the contemporary Mainland Chinese tea industry in the modern day. From there, major historical events in Mainland China that have greatly shaped and molded the outcome of the contemporary Chinese tea industry were discussed in Chapter 2. Mainland China saw significant changes take place in the 1900s, and each of these changes in government and economic policy had deep impacts on the tea industry at large. Not a single aspect of China has gone untouched by the dramatic changes that took place under Deng Xiaoping and his predecessor, Chairman Mao Zedong. The Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and the Reform and Opening Up all had profound effects on the operations of the Mainland Chinese tea industry. These time periods were explored in this second chapter, explaining the ways in which the Great Leap Forward created immense agricultural issues, the ways in which the Cultural Revolution waged a war on superfluous consumption and destroyed many cultural relics, and finally, the ways in which the Reform and Opening Up allowed for improvement in the tea industry and the agricultural economy in general, as well as opening up the nation for FDI and the importation of important processing technology. The tea industry has used these changes to its advantage and has successfully catapulted itself to the forefront of Chinese culture, both as an art form and in society at large. The

final chapter of this thesis, Chapter 3, presented the state and the trends of the contemporary Mainland Chinese tea industry. The different types of tea and brewing methods were discussed in Section 1, setting the stage for the specific case studies that were displayed in Section 2 including those of Puer tea, the Gongfu tea brewing method, and finally technology, teahouses, and Tenfu Group. Taiwanese influence proved to be of the utmost importance in bolstering the industry through a variety of avenues. They achieved this influence through direct investment, the transfer of technology, and the development of tea education and teahouses. This thesis took a historical journey through the tea industries of Taiwan and Mainland China of the 1900s and early 2000s and tied the main historical events with direct or indirect realities of the tea industry today.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brandt, Loren and Thomas G. Rawski, eds. 2008. *China's Great Economic Transformation*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- Brown, Clayton D. 2012. "China's Great Leap Forward". *Education About Asia*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (Winter): 29-34. <http://www.asianstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/chinas-great-leap-forward.pdf>.
- "Chayi biao yan zhi fenghuang san diantou de xuexi fangfa 茶艺表演之凤凰三点头的学习方法 [The Phoenix Nods Three Times Method of the Tea Art Performance]," Tencent QQ video, 1:20-1:45 posted by "Yanjian weishi 眼见为食," July 28, 2018, <https://v.qq.com/x/page/j07375r4qq1.html>.
- Chen, Wenhua 陈文华, n.d. "Lun dangqian chayi biao yan zhong de yixie wenti 论当前茶艺表演中的一些问题 [On Some of the Problems in the Current Tea Art Performance]. *Jiangxisheng zhongguo chawenhua yanjiu zhongxin* 江西省中国茶文化研究中心. Cqvip.
- Chen, Wenhui 陳文懷, 1997. "Gangtai chashi 港台茶事 [Hong Kong and Taiwanese Tea]. *Zhejiang shying chubanshe* 浙江攝影出版社.
- Chen, Xiwen. 2009. "Review of China's agricultural and rural development: policy changes and current issues." *China Agricultural Economic Review* Vol. 1 No. 2: 121-135. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/17561370910927390/full/html>.
- Cheng, Chu-yuan. 1983. "Economic Development in Taiwan and Mainland China: A Comparison of Strategies and Performance." *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Vol 10, No. 1 (Spring): 60-86. <http://www.jstor.com/stable/30171949>.

d'Abbs, Peter (2019) Tea Art as Everyday Practice: *Gongfu* Tea in Chaoshan, Guangdong, Today, *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, 20:3, 213-231, DOI: 10.1080/14442213.2019.1611908.

Di, Wang. 2008. *The Teahouse: Small Business, Everyday Culture, and Public Politics in Chengdu*. Stanford University Press. Google Ebook.

Dittmer, Lowell. 2006. "Taiwan as a Factor in China's Quest for National Identity." *Journal of Contemporary China*, Vol. 15, No. 49: 671-686.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560600836721>.

Driem, George van. 2019. *The Tale of Tea : A Comprehensive History of Tea From Prehistoric Times to the Present Day*. Leiden: Brill. EBSCOhost.

Etherington, Dan M. and Keith Forster. 1993. *Green Gold: The Political Economy of China's Post-1949 Tea Industry*. Oxford University Press.

Etherington Dan M. and Keith Forster. 1989. "The Complex Case of the Chinese Tea Industry." *Food Research Institute Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3: 265-308.

Etherington, Dan M. and Keith Forster, 1989. "The Resurgence of the Tea Industry in China: 'Beware the Tail of the Sleeping Dragon'." *Outlook on Agriculture*, Vol. 18, No. 1. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003072708901800106>.

Etherington, Dan M. and Keith Forster. 1992. "The Structural Transformation of Taiwan's Tea Industry." *Word Development*, Vol. 20, No. 3, pp. 401-422.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(92\)90032-Q](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(92)90032-Q).

Forster, Keith. 2012. "The Strange Tale of China's Tea Industry during the Cultural Revolution". *China Heritage Quarterly*, No. 29 (March).
http://www.chinaheritagequarterly.org/features.php?searchterm=029_forster.inc&issue=029.

Gay, Kathlyn. 2012. *Mao Zedong's China*. Lerner Publishing Group. Hoopla.

"'Guanggong xun cheng, Hanxin dian bing' pao hu chaoshan gongfucha yuanlai you zheme duo jiangjiu '关公巡城、韩信点兵' 泡壶潮汕功夫茶原来有这么多讲究 ['Lord Guan Makes His Rounds of the City Wall, General Xin Musters the Troops' Brewing Chaoshan Gongfu Tea with So Much Careful Study]," Tencent QQ video, 1:13-1:28, posted by "Anbu shenghuo 庵埠生活", January 5, 2018,
<https://v.qq.com/x/page/e0529m16kmx.html>.

Kincart, Andy. n.d. "Modern Tea Processing Methods in Taiwan". Tony Gebely Tea Epicure. Accessed April 3, 2021. <https://teaepicure.com/tea-processing-taiwan/>.

Li, Wei. 1997. "The Impact of Economic Reform on the Performance of Chinese State Enterprises 1980-1989." *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 105, no. 5: 1080-1106. Duke University. <https://doi.org/10.1086/262106>.

Li, Xiao. 2011. "Tea-producing areas". Chinese Tea.
http://www.china.org.cn/learning_chinese/Chinese_tea/2011-08/02/content_23123028.htm#:~:text=In%20general%2C%20there%20are%20four%20tea%2Dproducing%20regions.&text=This%20refers%20to%20a%20large,and%20northern%20part%20of%20Jiangsu.

Lin, Justin Yifu. 1988. "The Household Responsibility System in China's Agricultural Reform: A Theoretical and Empirical Study." *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (Apr): S199-S224. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1566543>.

Lewis, John Wilson and Kenneth G. Liberthal. 2020. "China: The Cultural Revolution, 1966-76" *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Accessed January 10, 2021. <https://www.britannica.com/place/China/Attacks-on-party-members#ref590794>.

Ma, Zhen. 2018. "Sensorial Place-Making in Ethnic Minority Areas: The Consumption of Forest Puer Tea in Contemporary China." *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 19, No.4: 316-332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2018.1486453>.

Macfarquhar, Roderick and Michael Schoenhals. 2006. *Mao's Last Revolution*. Harvard University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvk12s4j>.

Mao, Yu-Kang and Chi Schive. 1995. "Agricultural and Industrial Development in Taiwan." In J.W. Mellor (ed.). *Agriculture on the Road to Industrialization: 23-66* Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/129337>.

Martin, Laura C. 2007. *Tea: The Drink That Changed the World*. Tuttle Publishing. Hoopla.

Pan, Xinmao 潘新茂. 2009. "Tai zi chaye qiye zai dalu yunying moshi de chuangxin—yi Fujian Tianfu jituan wei li 台资茶叶企业在大陆运营模式的创新—以福建天福集团为例 [On the Innovation of Operation Mode of Taiwan Tea Firms on the Mainland: A Case Study of Tenfu Group of Fujian]." *Journal of Jimei University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* Vol. 12, No. 4 (Oct): 29-33. CNKI.

Pleco Chinese Dictionary, s.v. "盖碗", accessed April 3, 2021.

- Red Blossom Tea Company. 2017. "The 6 Steps of Tea Processing".
<https://redblossomtea.com/blogs/red-blossom-blog/the-6-steps-of-tea-processing>.
- Red Blossom Tea Company. 2018. "5 Reasons to Brew Tea in a Gaiwan".
<https://redblossomtea.com/blogs/red-blossom-blog/5-reasons-to-brew-tea-in-a-gaiwan>.
- Shabad, Theodore. 1959. "China's 'Great Leap Forward'". *Far Eastern Survey* (July): 105-109. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3024027>.
- Sicular, Terry. 1988. "Agricultural Planning and Pricing in the Post-Mao Period." *The China Quarterly*, No. 116 (Dec): 671-705. Cambridge University Press on behalf of the School of Oriental and African Studies. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/654756>.
- Sigley, Gary. 2015. "Tea and China's rise: tea, nationalism, and culture in the 21st century." *Academy for International Communication of Chinese Culture and Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg*, Vol. 2, No. 3: 319-341. DOI 10.1007/s40636-015-0037-7.
- Sun, Weijiang 孙威江, Zhijin Zhan 詹梓金, and Zhixiong Chen 陈志雄, n.d. "Tai zi qiye zai Fujian kaifa chaye de xianzhuang yu tedian 台资企业在福建开发茶叶的现状与特点 [The Current Status and Feature of Taiwanese Enterprises in Developing Fujian Tea Production]." CNKI.
- Tan, Chee-Beng and Yuling Ding. 2010. "The Promotion of Tea in South China: Re-Inventing Tradition in an Old Industry." *Food and Foodways*, Vol.18, No. 3: 121-144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07409710.2010.504102>.
- Tozer, Warren, 1970. "Taiwan's 'Cultural Renaissance': A Preliminary View." *The China Quarterly* No. 43 (July-Sept): 81-99. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/652083>.
- Ukers, William H. 1935. *All About Tea, Vol. 1*. New York: The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal Company.

Verdant Tea. 2018. "Yixing Clay Tea Pots". Accessed April 3, 2021.
<https://verdanttea.com/yixing-clay-tea-pot-introduction>.

Wang, Yanlai. 2003. *China's Economic Development and Democratization*. Florence: Taylor & Francis Group. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Wicentowski, Joe. 2000. "Narrating the Native: Mapping the Tea Art Houses of Taipei." Paper presented at The Fifth Annual Conference on the History and Culture of Taiwan, University of California, Los Angeles.

Wu, Huizhen 吴慧珍, Jugen Zhou 周巨根, Xiaoyu Wu 吴小玉, Zhifu Chen 陈志福, Yishan Lin 林艺珊, Yiming Ruan 阮逸明, and Rongzhang Cai 蔡荣章. 2010. "Lun mintai cha chanye zhi hudong fazhan 论闽台茶产业之互动发展 [On the Interaction of the Development of Tea Industry between Fujian and Taiwan]", *Chaye kexue* 茶叶科学 vol. 30, No. 1 (2010): 593-598. <http://www.tea-science.com/EN/Y2010/V30/IS1/593>.

Yu, Shuenn-Der, n.d. "Taiwan and the Globalization of Puer Tea: The Role of the Taste of Aging". *Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica*.

Yu, Shuenn-Der, 2016. "The Authentic Taste of Puer Tea and Transnational Interests." *Taiwan Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 14, No. 1: 89-110.
<https://ianthro.ioe.sinica.edu.tw/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/TJA14-1-3-.pdf>.

Zhang, Jinghong. 2018. "A Transnational Flow of the Art of Tea: The Paradox of Cultural Authenticity in Taiwan." *The Asia Pacific Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 19, No. 1: 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14442213.2017.1400090>.

Zhang, Jinghong, 2014. *Puer Tea: Ancient Caravans and Urban Chic*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.

Zhang, Lawrence. 2016. "A Foreign Infusion: The Forgotten Legacy of Japanese Chadō on Modern Chinese Tea Arts." *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1: 53-62. <https://doi.org/10.1525/gfc.2016.16.1.53>.

Zheng, Jing. N.d. "The Re-importation of Cha Yi Guan Teahouses into Contemporary China from Taiwan: Cultural Flows and the Development of a Public Sphere". *Rogue Flows: Trans-Asian Cultural Traffic*. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1xwcv8.14>.

GLOSSARY OF CHINESE TERMS

Mandarin Characters	Pinyin	English Translation/Description	Page #
大红袍	Dàhóng páo	Literally translates to “big red robe”. A tea grown in Wuyi Mountain in Fujian Province.	6
闻香杯	wén xiāng bēi	Smelling cup: A Taiwanese invention that is used when brewing tea in the Gongfu tea brewing method; used to take in the scent of the tea prior to tasting the tea.	6 & 48
文化大革命	Wénhuà Dàgémìng	The Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution (1966-1976): Period under Mao Zedong that sought to enshrine communism and Maoism in Chinese society by purging the nation of Confucian and other Chinese traditions and capitalism.	9
破四旧	Pò sì jiù	Destruction of the Four Olds: Campaign during the Cultural Revolution to destroy “Old Ideas, Old Customs, Old Culture, Old Habits”.	9
改革开放	Gǎigé Kāifàng	The Reform and Opening Up (1978-1989)	10
随园食单	Suí Yuán Shí Dān	“The Way of Eating”: Book written by Yuan Mei in the 18 th century	12 & 46
铁观音	Tiě guānyīn	The Iron Goddess: A famous Oolong tea from Fujian Province.	12
天福茗茶	Tiānfú Míngchá	Tenfu Group	12

乌龙	wū lóng	Oolong tea	14
资本主义尾巴	zīběn zhǔyì wěibā	Literally “the tail of capitalism”: the term is used to express “negative capitalism”	22
西双版纳傣族自治州	Xīshuāngbǎnnà Dǎizú zìzhìzhōu	Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture. A prefecture in Yunnan Province in southwestern China that is most famous for growing and producing Puer tea	29
神农	Shénnóng	“The Divine Farmer”: the individual in Chinese folklore that is credited with discovering tea around 2737 B.C.	31
龙井	lóngjǐng	Dragon Well Tea: a famous green tea from Zhejiang Province	35
碧螺春	bìluóchūn	A famous green tea from Jiangsu Province	35
茶艺	cháyì	The art of tea. Another translation is “tea ceremony”. The neologism used to refer to tea as its own art form.	36
中国梦	Zhōngguó mèng	“The Chinese Dream”: terminology coined by Xi Jinping in 2012	37
茶思想	chá sīxiǎng	Tea philosophy	41
布朗族	Bùlǎng zú	Bulang ethnic group: one of the minority groups from Yunnan Province	41
德昂族	Dé’áng zú	De’ang ethnic group: one of the minority groups from Yunnan Province	41
佤族	Wǎzú	Wa ethnic group: one of the minority	41

		groups from Yunnan Province	
哈尼族	Hāní zú	Hani ethnic group: one of the minority groups from Yunnan Province	41
基诺族	Jīnuò zú	Jinuo ethnic group: one of the minority groups from Yunnan Province	41
凤凰三点头	Fènghuáng sān diǎntóu	“The phoenix nods three times”	47
关公巡城	Guāngōng xún chéng	“Lord Guan makes his rounds of the city wall”	47
韩信点兵	Hán Xìn diǎn bīng	“General Xin musters the troops”	47
茶叶匙	cháyè shi	Caddy spoon: a spoon used to measure out the correct amount of tea when brewing in the Gongfu tea method	48
公道杯	gōngdào bēi	“Fairness cup”: A cup in which tea brewed in a <i>gaiwan</i> or a <i>boccaro</i> teapot is poured. It has an open top and therefore allows a visual	48
清饮茶馆	qīng yǐn cháguǎn	“Teahouses for pure drinking”: One of the types of teahouses that existed in the Republican Era (1912-1949). Individuals attended these teahouses simply to drink tea, but some minor snacks were sold.	56
播音茶馆	bòyīn cháguǎn	“Broadcasting teahouses”: One of the types of teahouses that existed in the Republican Era (1912-1949). Music was played at these teahouses to	56

		accompany the tea being served.	
清唱茶馆	qīngchàng cháguǎn	“Pure singing teahouses”: One of the types of teahouses that existed in the Republican Era (1912-1949). Musical performances were given to entertain the tea-drinkers in these teahouses.	56
说书茶馆	shuōshū cháguǎn	“Telling stories teahouses”: One of the types of teahouses that existed in the Republican Era (1912-1949). Storytelling and tea drinking happened simultaneously in these teahouses.	56