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Design for Tea

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Design for Tea

by

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Abstract
From a perspective of a young Chinese person, I noticed that lots of Chinese youth who like me neither drink tea daily nor understand the cultural meaning of tea. It is concerning that the lack of awareness of tea among Chinese youth might lead to the loss of Chinese tea culture. In this thesis project, I will introduce a system of portable teaware design focused on motivating users to enjoy the true beauty of tea, and so inspiring them to reassess their understanding of tea and themselves.

Key Words
Design, Culture, Tea
Introduction
Just as drinking coffee is prevalent in the Western society, tea plays a crucial role in its long history of the Eastern world. China is the world’s largest tea-producing country. In 2007, China produced over 30% of the world's tea, almost 1.2 million tons of tea out of 3.9 million tons produced worldwide (China, 2017). China is also a large tea consumption country, with tea drinkers equals about one-fourth of its population. The average annual tea consumption for each person in China is 3.7 pounds, but the majority of the drinkers are age 35 and above (年轻人不喝茶的问题究竟出在哪儿, 2016). In other words, Chinese adults age 18 to 35 are not the largest consumers of tea. Netease, one of the Chinese leading online news platforms reported that today’s Chinese youth consider traditional Chinese tea preparation a complicated and time-consuming process that stands on the opposite side of their fast-paced lives (年轻人不喜欢喝茶的几大理由 你中招了吗, 2016). Today’s Chinese youth live in a rapidly changed world, we are so getting used to being fast but have forgotten how to be slow, and so we have forgotten how to sit down and enjoy a cup of tea.

Project Rational & Positioning
The reason why modern China lacks the awareness of tea is complex. There are some obstacles that Chinese tea culture is encountering. Throughout history, the cultural diversity of tea in China has been significant, and tea drinking customs can vary greatly from place to place. Different regions developed their unique tea types, brewing techniques, drinking etiquette, and culture. These tea subcultures have lasted for thousands of years and are deeply rooted in people’s daily lives. However, within less than one hundred years, the invasion of the Western technology, the revolution of transportation and communication methods have changed everything. Tea is a great
example. By using new technology to communicate, people quickly got chance to see and experience different tea cultures from other regions of China. People started to realize that their local tea customs were different from those in other regions. Even today, understanding Chinese tea culture is an arduous task for Chinese youth because of its great range and depth. A tea leaf is weightless, but tradition bears the weight of thousands of years of history, and kids just get bored of understanding the tea history.

However, the influence of Western industrialized culture offers young China a poor solution to reinforce the value of tea – presenting it only as a fashionable drink. Nowadays, Bottled Tea market blooms in China. Hundreds of brands offer thousands of types of tea drinks, and they taste seductively good. Daxue is a China’s top strategic-driven research consulting firm reported in 2015 that in 2009, the consumption of tea beverages in China reached 9 million tons, representing 10% of the total beverage market. This market became the third largest beverage market in China after carbonated beverage and mineral water. Bottled Tea in China has become an oriental version of Coca-Cola, and it fits smoothly into modern China’s fast-paced lifestyle. It is common to see a young Chinese student waiting for a bus to school with a bottle of milk tea and an unfinished breakfast in his hands. A young white-collar worker is having his quick lunch with a bottle of iced red tea. Iced tea sells well in every hotpot restaurant since the sweet iced tea pairs well with spicy dishes. However, the tea is not tea anymore, it becomes a standardized, easily understood, mass-produced goods. By consuming these products, one could never grasp the true nature of the tea.

In this project, The very first critical question is to find out the true significance of Chinese tea. Despite all the differences between local tea cultures, there has to be something in common, something that all Chinese tea cultures share.
One possible answer is the idea of tea as a symbol of Chinese etiquette, a quiet reflection of how Chinese people treat others. The book, “the road of tea” (2014) stated that, in Chaoshan region, the east of Guangdong province, China has a custom of only using three teacups in a tea ceremony, regardless of the numbers of participants. Because there are limited numbers of teacups, there is a specific tea serving order; Guests are served first followed by elders then, youth, and others. Tea is also a philosophy and a subject that tied to religious belief and practice. Buddhism firmly believes that growing, making and drinking of tea as one of the approaches to Zen practice. Solala Towler (2010) stated that “In effect, the same harmony of mind, which could only be attained upon entering the gate of a Zen temple, could now be achieved in the serene atmosphere that pervades the tea room.” Chonglin Zhou, a Chinese writer, in his book, mentioned that China is a nation of ‘appreciating tea and discussing the way’ (pincha lundao 品茶论道). (Zhou and Tai 2012, p. 136) In my understanding, “The way” emphasized by Chonglin, is a creation of space that isolates one from the crowd, a mood for one to have an internal conversation with himself and a channel to elevate one’s understanding to a higher state. After all, drinking tea is an externalization of Chinese people’s way of life and one of many approaches to Chinese people’s spiritual practice.

In this thesis project, it is vital to solve the loss of tea’s long-lasting value in contemporary Chinese culture. I will design an object or a system of objects that deepen people’s understanding of tea and ultimately encourage users to embrace the profound truth of tea culture as an appreciation of Chinese etiquette, a way of spiritual practice, and facilitate a higher spiritual state of being.

**Design Research**
Understanding Chinese youth’s behaviors and psychological reactions to tea is the first essential step in developing any possible solutions. To do this, I initiated the research by conducting an online survey. The biggest advantage of the Internet-based survey is it gives quick access to the target population group (age between 18 to 30) which helps me to have a comprehensive understanding of users. In this survey, the expectation was to obtain people’s daily reactions to tea and what makes them like or dislike drinking tea. As charts shown on the next page, (213 interviewees, over 170 of them are in age between 18-30) very low percentage of people drink tea often.
Based on the given data, calculation shows only 20.55% of interviewees brew tea as a daily activity. Also, the majority of the population who like tea is because of the health benefits they receive from it. On the other hand, The complicated preparation process and the taste of tea suggested why people don’t like drinking tea. Evidently, the popularity of tea is quite low among the target population. More importantly, tea’s profound meaning as an appreciation of Chinese etiquette and a way of spiritual practice is absent from the results of the survey. It is crucial to find out what is preventing people from valuing tea’s true quality.

Arguably, one critical factor why Chinese youth dislike tea is the taste of tea. In the survey, over 33% of interviewees admitted they don’t like the bitter flavor of the tea. Undoubtedly, considering all teas have a bitter taste is stereotypical since different tea types have different flavors. The most widely consumed tea type in China is green tea, with a bitter taste. Here, people are likely to associate their experience with green tea and think of the general taste of tea are all similar. This misconception of tea’s flavor indicates youth’s general ignorance to tea knowledge. A young man, in the survey, mentioned that there is no reason to drink bitter tea if he could drink water. It is so true that water is more accessible and more easily understood than tea, and has no flavor. People don’t like the bitterness of tea, but what they ignored is a sweet aftertaste of tea. In the book, “The Classic of Tea,” written by Lu Yu in Tang dynasty argued that the true significance of tea is the sweet aftertaste (啜苦咽甘). A famous Taiwanese novelist, writer, Sanmao expressed the life as three cups of tea. The first cup is the bitter taste of life; The second is sweet of love, and the third is as free as a breeze. The transition of tea’s flavor from bitter to sweet is a process and experience; it needs people who have the life experience to participate and then to embrace the meaning of it. For youth, with less experience might not be able to sense the reserved, yet powerful energy of tea. As I’ve argued in the last section, young
people are more likely to get seduced by commercially prepared bottled tea, because they neither require people to respond back emotionally nor have the life experience to digest the meaning of tea. These bottled tea drinks are just made to satisfy consumers’ taste buds. As the chart demonstrates below, there is a hierarchy of tea, water, and bottled tea drinks in relation to youths’ physiological and psychological demands.

In this chart, tea sits at the bottom of the pyramid, on the lowest level of “taste” but requires the highest level of appreciation. On the contrary, bottled tea drinks are on the peak level of the taste but need no understanding. The real challenge for me, as a designer, is to push “tea” from the bottom of the chart to the top by design. The key to the success of this problem is how to inspire people who are still consuming tea drinks to appreciate natural, unadulterated tea. In the book, “The Road of Tea,” has mentioned that youth need a suitable channel that enables them to understand tea. But what is that channel? How to build that channel?
Shiah (2013), a psychologist, did an experiment. He divided participants into two groups. One group blindly received tea that had been intentionally treated by three Buddhist monks; the other group blindly received untreated tea from the same source. The result shows participants in his study who drink intentionally treated tea showed a greater increase in mood than those who drink untreated tea. Shiah’s study manifests the significant influence of how spiritually empowered objects can bring to people’s beliefs. Shiah’s finding inspired me to realize that it is more important to guide youth to experience, to believe the true benefit of tea rather than educating them to appreciate tea. Youth could only understand tea after they enjoy it. In my case, the design is the intentional treatment of users.

Leaf Tea bar is a tea house owned by Niraj Lama who is very knowledgeable in tea. Observation and analysis on how people behave in Niraj’s teahouse helped me to understand how a designated tea drinking environment influences people’s mood and their way of interacting with tea. The observed result shows in the chart on the left. On the right, is the diagram of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The comparison between these two charts is a discussion of how drinking tea in a tea house may affect people’s physical and psychological behaviors.
The cozy interior of the tea house facilitates people to relax (Level 1). In such a comfortable environment, people are more likely to communicate with the tea house owner and other people around (Level 2). There were great numbers of old customers in the tea house. The way a college professor enters the teahouse seems like he has been there many times by how it is similar to how he enters his home. Niraj knows and brews his old customer’s favorite tea without even asking. The relationship between Niraj and his customers are more like friends than business. More importantly; the teahouse successfully creates a mood, and environment to lead people into the world of tea (Level 3). There are many elements of the tea house help to build this engaging atmosphere. Delicate teaware displayed on a shelf, fragrant tea leaves contained in a thick, natural colored kraft paper, and Niraj’s skillful tea brewing technique contribute to the mood of the tearoom. Because of this, people’s behavior tends to reflect this beautiful set-up atmosphere and integrate themselves into their surroundings. For example, during my observations, two young customers found a way to adapt to the tearoom. They lowered their voice down to speak to each other. They carefully held up the teacups and took a tiny sip of tea in a very humble way. The harmonious interaction between tea and these two customers is almost spiritual, an unintentionally ceremonial practice. Is it only at that moment they could enjoy the true beauty of tea, and the whole atmosphere guides them on this path. Hence, the core of the thesis work is to design for user experience, and it is determined by how appropriate an atmosphere I could offer users. The stronger atmosphere created in the design, the easier people could step into it the tea world.

In conclusion, the design research proves the assertion that there are mass numbers of Chinese youth don’t appreciate the true quality of tea. To solve this issue is to build an environment that engages people in enjoying the tea rather than educating them to understand tea.
**Concept Development**

The initial objective of this design effort is to create a portable teaware system that encourages users to enjoy the true beauty of tea. Careful examination of the process of both Chinese and Japanese tea ceremonies helped me to understand how these two structured environments establish a powerful presence for participants to enjoy tea. This study allows me to extract elements of elegance and ritual from the ceremonies and apply them to my design. Again, the goal is to construct an engaging tea drinking atmosphere, and these elegant pieces from ceremonies are the building blocks. Some key features of the two are shown in the chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chinese Tea Ceremony</th>
<th>Japanese Tea Ceremony</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gestures</td>
<td>Gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smell fragrance of tea before drinking</td>
<td>Color change on tea whisk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>The sound of boiling water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm up teacups</td>
<td>The scratchy sound when stirring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order of serving tea</td>
<td>Tea color change while stirring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\</td>
<td>Turn tea bowl and face it in a guest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\</td>
<td>Sound of steam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that these key features from the ceremonies are fundamentally associated with the five senses (sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch) of a human being. For instance, in a Japanese tea ceremony, tea makers use strictly practiced tea making gestures as a strong stimulation on the visual sense of guests. In a Chinese tea ceremony, guests are encouraged to smell the fragrance of tea before drinking as a powerful way to activate people’s sense of smell. The TED talker, designer, Jinsop Lee in his speech “Design for All 5 Senses” argued that use people’s five senses...
as an effective method to evaluate the design’s impact on users. Krishna Aradhna, the professor of Marketing at the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, in her literature “Customer Sense: How the 5 Senses Influence Buying Behavior” introduced the five senses’ significant influence on buyers’ decisions on products. The theory of five senses perfectly explains why drinking in Niraj’s tea house is so good, which is because visitors’ five senses are fully engaged in that environment. To some extent, the core of the design is to raise the users’ five senses to a high level. However, there are also other factors that do not belong to five senses which are also important. For instance, the order of tea serving (elders first, youths second) in a Chinese tea ceremony is a crucial one. Technically, the tea serving order is visually driven since people visually observe how tea is distributed to them. However, the meaning of tea serving is far beyond visual reception; it is a practice of traditional Chinese etiquette. The etiquette of showing the most respect for one’s elders. In some ways, this essence of this has to be present in the design. The cultural implications are a critical factor in building the whole experience. The scale on the next page demonstrates how I determine a design concept based on the evaluation of five senses of users, Chinese etiquette, basic emotions of users (emotions will be discussed in User Testing section) and feasibility of a design concept.
This scale offers a rough guideline to judge the design concept in the early phase by filling elements into each category and rating their possible impact on users. For instance, In both Chinese and Japanese tea ceremonies utilize the sound of steam and the sound of water as a strong audial engagement to attract guests. I plot both “steam sound” and “water sound” into the scale and let it determine which one is more applicable to my teaware system.

By simply identifying the size of the triangles in charts, it shows both steam and water sounds are equally strong in triggering people’s positive emotions as well as the sense of hearing. However, creating the sound of water by pouring water hitting on an object is much more feasible than creating the sound of steam, which usually requires pouring water on an extremely hot surface. Therefore, “water sound” is evaluated as a better application to the design.

During the early concept development phase, it is also important to arrange design details logistically to benefit the design thinking process, and this involves both 2D and 3D approaches. A design analysis tree is an effective tool to allow me to cut the whole system into departments to solve issues individually while keeping the eyes on the big picture without losing the track.
As the analysis tree presented, the teaware system is modularized into five individual departments which are tea cups, water reservoir, teapot, storage and waste container. Notice the order of each department in the tree is matched up with their actual positions in the system which is shown on the right of the diagram. In this way, it’s easier for a designer to correlate the relationship between each department when adding or deleting design decisions. Also, details are marked in three colors (red = need to test, orange = decided, green = undecided / in progress) helps to individuate different developing phases of small tasks which offer a clear framework of the design process so that the designer can have the total control of the flow.

Beyond developing design analysis tree, writing notes on the 3D mockup is another valuable method for design thinking. One benefit of this approach is it combines the advantages of both
2D and 3D ideation. 2D ideation is often time efficient but lacks tangibility; designers can’t sense the actual quality of ideas by only seeing sketches on paper. On the contrary, a 3D mockup is tangible but relatively takes a longer time to make. This method works as a stepping stone between 2D and 3D by bridging these two together. It helps designers to transfer their 2D ideas into space more smoothly. Additionally, it enables one to foresee the design outcome by evaluating the 2D notes or sketches in space, and so one could make a quick design judgment without spending unnecessary time on making a complete model.

![Figure 1](image.jpg)

For example, figure 1 is an early 3D sketch made to discuss the relationship between each component and the design details within the system. Notes on the surface of this paper model offered a clear vision on how each section should attach with each other. At the bottom section of the model, I drew an ellipse to illustrate the initial texture layout. To come up with new ideas, I simply erased the older drawing and then sketched another one which is very time-efficient.

**User Testing**

User testing is extremely vital for this design since it gives valuable feedbacks on how concrete the user experience and tea drinking environment the teaware system established. There are two main parts are critical to test: sensory experience testing and emotional testing.
An important design decision is mounting a small object inside the teacups (Figure 2). This neat object plays a big role in boosting up users’ visual and hearing sense by allowing users to observe it’s interesting appearance and making a pleasing sound when the tea is pouring onto it. The theoretical result shows in the chart on the left, and the testing result is on the right.

(Figure 2)

Comparing to the theoretical result that “Sight” and “Hearing” sections are at high levels, practically, “Hearing” is relatively low but unexpected “Touch” sits at the peak. During the testing, many participants not only try to see and hear but also intend to have physical interactions with the object in the cup. People feel surprised as a result of the new design language (the tiny piece) that differs from their experience with a teacup. In a way; this unexpected outcome suggests that the design successfully raised users’ curiosity which is a beneficial factor to draw people’s attention to tea. However, the point is to somehow refine this
design language to trigger more positive emotions from users. After all, the tea experience has to be positive and enlightening. Also, notice the “Hearing” from testing result did not meet the theoretical expectation. Many people considered that the sound effect was too quiet to engage their interest even it’s great to look at it. This low sound volume (less than 30dB) is largely due to the nature of the tested material. The tested piece is a smooth stone with very evenly distributed grains. When the tea is dropping on the piece, water tends to flow down smoothly on the surface rather than making a splash sound. An ideal object would be a structural surface that could bounce the dropping water to create a louder sound. The last significant finding is the “Smell.” During the test, some people intended to smell tea without encouragement to do so. By nature, the scent of tea already is a powerful sensory engagement without any special treatment. However, users might be only willing to smell tea in a specially treated tea drinking environment. Again, as what I have mentioned in the Design Research section, user behavior is the physiological and psychological response to their surroundings. Thus, extra attention has to be paid on designing “Sight,” “Hearing” and “Touch” so that the tea’s natural quality “Smell” and “Taste” can be fully engaged.

Emotional testing is crucial since it gives the insight of how people feel they emotionally connected with the product. However, it is also tricky to test how people respond emotionally to a product since emotion is an abstract combination of physiological and phycological reactions. A testing approach is borrowed from a nicely developed emotional measurement tool called: PrEmo. PrEmo is a non-verbal self-report instrument that measures 14 emotions that are often elicited by product design (2005). The main reason why using PrEmo as a primary method for emotional testing is that 14 emotions are illustrated by cartoon animations (Figure x) which is reliably recognizable.
Ekman (1994) suggested that facial expressions can reliably deliver basic emotions and be recognized cross-culturally. Also, Bernson (1991) found that using animation can make the recognition of emotional expressions easier because the amount of irrelevant information is reduced. I also added a verbal instrument by asking people only using two words to express their emotions. The advantage of giving people the limitation of the verbal feedback is it pushes them to use the best-suited words to see how accurately people can pair their facial expressions with verbal feedback. The rating scale is shown on the next page.
Pick up to 3 faces to rate your feeling on this product. For each chosen face, rate it from scale 1 (weak) to 5 (strong).

Use two words to describe your feeling:

_______  _______

THANK YOU!
This method of emotional testing ensures user emotions won’t be affected prior to the survey because it allows users to interact with the product without providing instructing beforehand. After that, people were required to fill out the scale to rate their emotional response to the product. The chart above is the result. It is evident to see that people who chose “Neutral” to “Positive” dominated the “Negative” which indicate that the product successfully aroused people’s positive emotion. Notice the verbal feedbacks on the bottom portion of the chart such as “Natural,” “Calming,” “Satisfying” signaled that participants were in a very good mood to interact with the teaware.

(Participants started role-playing even without any instruction)
A significant finding of the test was people’s emotions are strongly connected to the usability of the design. Noticeably, people verbally described feelings such as “Complex” and “Lack of Instruction” often show negative emotions. During the test, these users were confused about some parts of the teaware’s function. Also, they are likely to forget how to reassemble each part after testing. This result suggested users’ failure on recognizing the components with a similar shape. Therefore, the construction of the product failed to communicate with these users effectively, and so made it difficult for them to connect with tea. Another interesting finding in this test was the shape, color, and material of the design potentially induced negative emotions. However, this finding was only observed from user behaviors and through conversations with users, but not from the rating scale. Results suggested that participants tend to be very explicit on a verbal description of positive emotions but lack efficiency on expressing negative emotions. People who revealed negative emotions were likely to have comments on the functional issues of the design. However, the internal triggers that induced negative emotions were absent from the verbal feedback. A possible reason for this lack of verbalization is due to participants not knowing how to express their negative emotions in words. Therefore, it is necessary to have a future study on decoding how the nature of a product (shape, color, material, etc.) affects user emotion and creating a new approach to help users to speak out their negative emotions effectively.

To refine the design from the testing feedback, I simplified the teaware system that originally consists of seven components down to six. Also, closer attention is paid to differentiating the silhouette of each component of the teaware so that users can easily recognize them. Additionally, a simple instructional illustration will be made to demonstrate how to use the product.
Discussion
The term “design” didn’t come to China until 1980th, a few years after China’s initiation of major development (Reform and Opening). From the early 1990th to the present, China is still in her early phase of its development of modern design. Unlike countries (Japan, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, etc.) that have already established their powerful design identities, China has a long way to go. Therefore, an impactful meaning of this thesis work is more than solving the cultural issues of tea in Chinese youth. Also, it is a discussion and an exploration of a possible way to modern Chinese design.

An insightful truth about this product is implementing traditional and cultural custom to the modern age platform. Traditionally, people often interact with tea in a fixed environment. For instance, a Chinese host welcome his/her guests with hot tea. Here, tea is an object of courtesy, and it might be considered little impolite if there is no tea offered in this situation. In a teahouse, tea changes its identity to a socialization medium or object of spiritual practice. People sit around, communicate with each other and taking a sip of tea to spend their quality time together.

In both scenarios, tea plays its different roles in a designated context. Traditionally speaking, it seems like the word “Tea” only has its profound connotation in a setup tea drinking background. On the other hand, in nowadays China, it’s often seeing a middle-aged businessman drink tea out of the insulated thermal bottle. Unlike the former examples, tea might offer him no more than what a cup of coffee does. Is there anything else tea left when taking the “Where” factor out? Does tea still have its meaning no matter where people drink it? In modern Chinese society, should a traditional way of tea adapt to this highly mobilized era? This design is a discussion of these questions.
This portable teaware design allows users to break through the spatial limitation. As the intent of the design, people are capable of practicing tea ceremony without environmental restriction. For instance, during the middle of a hard working day, ten minutes of tea break with colleagues serves people temporary mental isolation with the outside and benefits them back to work more effectively. A summer camping night might be even more beautiful with a tea ceremony near the shore of the lake.

This design changed the way people used to drink tea and perhaps created a new form of tradition, a mobilized tea ceremony. In contemporary China, the way that Chinese people interact with tea is still similar to our ancestors (except bottled tea drinks). We yet sit still and drink tea in a place where it offers tea. A photographer, Pierre Sernet, shot a photo series named “one.” In that project, he built a quick set-up tea house and selected random guests to enjoy a bowl of tea from a variety of cultural and geographical contexts. His idea is somewhat similar to mine, mobilizing the tea experience and achieving the harmony between a tea ceremony and surroundings may initially seem unrelated or incompatible. However, this mobilized tea house stays only at a beautiful yet experimental level but never put into practice.
It is debatable that to what extent people are willing to accept the new way of tea, the idea of the mobilized tea ceremony. At the end of Project Positioning & Rational section, I’ve discussed the core value of tea is just one of many approaches to facilitate people to understand and elevating themselves. A painter brings his toolbox in the field and paints the beauty of nature is a spiritual practice. A street dancer evokes all energy into dance is a form of spiritual practice. A person listens to music via his/her MP3 player can also be another way of spiritual practice. So, why can’t integrate tea and ourselves into different contexts (environmentally, culturally, etc.) be a
new way of spiritual practice? As a human being, the need to enjoy the beautiful things and understand ourselves is our innate quality. A mobilized tea ceremony could help us. However, modern Chinese are still blindly following the ancient tea drinking custom with limited development. We are still drinking tea conservatively in a confined environment as our ancestors were. The reason why Ancient Chinese don’t have a chance to make their tea ceremonies mobilized is that the limitation of the technology. There is neither a way to keep water hot for a long time nor to travel far with ease. It is nearly impossible for an ancient Chinese person to have a cup of hot tea while watching the breathtaking sunrise at the top of the Huangshan Mountain (one of the most well known natural heritage in China, but no major development until Ming Dynasty due to technology limitation). As for people living in the modern era, advanced thermal insulation technology, and transportation system could solve all issues that our forefathers have. Therefore, it is unnecessary to let the tradition restrain us. Instead, the impact of integrating the existing technology into the traditional way of tea can be more powerful than the custom.

**Conclusion**

Until 2018, the development of modern design in China is less than forty years which is just a beginning of a long journey. In the misty trail of design, young china is staggering forward, she stumbles and makes mistakes, but at the same time, there is always bright hope and opportunity. This thesis work is a discussion of how an ancient culture can better fit its self into the contemporary Chinese society, and an exploration of the possible way of modern Chinese design. What makes this project challenging is a designer is facing a remarkably abstract cultural issue, so it is almost impossible for a single design solution (a product) to solve the problem
perfectly. However, if there is one out of hundred percent of possibility that this teaware could arouse people’s attention to our culture and themselves; it is worth designing it.

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