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# The Consumer Behavior behind the most consumed beverage in the world, *Camellia sinensis*.

Case Study on French consumers

BACHELOR'S THESIS | ABSTRACT

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THE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR BEHIND THE MOST CONSUMED BEVERAGE IN THE WORLD,  
CAMELLIA SINENSIS.

To business students and professionals alike, consumer behavior is an essential part of business, and more so for those who specialize in marketing. Knowing how to make sure your product stays in the mind of the customer is not an easy challenge. It becomes even more difficult when you are told to use anthropology together with it. We are left with something known as business anthropology.

Camelia sinensis, known to most simply as tea, has been a product that has been around for millennia. Known for its many virtues and qualities, its market keeps flourishing to this day.

Most of us however do not stop and think about this plant nor about its linkage with many different cultures. Together with consumer behavior and business anthropology, we can strive to understand the importance a product has within a certain culture. In this case study, the study subject will be the consumption of tea in France and more particularly, about French consumers.

This thesis has for goal to find a link between consumer behavior and anthropology in a business sense and use those newly found skills to analyze this cultural behavior towards a product, namely here, tea.

KEYWORDS:

Consumer behavior, Tea, Business Anthropology, France, Tea House

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# 1. Introduction

This thesis explores the French consumer behavior consumption of tea using anthropological aspects related to business. The aim of this thesis is to use business anthropology to understand the choices of French tea consumers today. Considering that tea is, after water, the most consumed beverage worldwide (Dattner, 2008), it would be careless to claim that the market for tea does not exist. It is a far quieter world than coffee, which has remained long in the shadows, and most of the time when tea is discussed, it is about the unfair and unethical wages of the tea pickers.

## 1.1 Motivation

Tea has been a dear product to me since a very early age. The earliest time I can remember having an interest in tea, was when, as a child, I had gone out to a Parisian tea salon called *Angelina* with my paternal grandmother. I had always disliked the basic Earl Grey teas, which I found tasteless and far too strong for my young tastes. Then, I asked if I could have some of my grandmother's tea. I was extremely surprised to learn that this lovely bergamot essence was Earl Grey tea as well, but of a much higher quality to that sold in normal grocery stores. My interest arose as to this tea, and I set out to find out from where it came. I found out that it originated from a store called *Mariage Frères*, (one of the three tea houses discussed in chapter 2) and took it upon myself to visit said store. It became a revelation and I discovered a hidden passion for tea.

Once this interest became evident I found it difficult to expand my knowledge, as material was scarce. Living in another country, I needed to wait for every summer, as it was then that I could get more things related to tea, such as teas themselves and books. The lessons offered now by *Mariage Frères* did not exist, nor did a trip alone to Asia offered by *Palais des Thés/ Ecole du Thé*, seem like an option. Nowadays, there are quite a lot of options, as several major tea houses offer lessons in the tasting and learning of tea. Their online shops offer teas, and all kinds of accessories one could think of, marketing their brands to the fullest potential. Cups, teas, spoons, tea infusers, filters, tea pots and even different trips are sometimes organized, like the trip to Darjeeling in April 2015 through *L'Ecole du Thé*.

My studies as an international business student as well as my love for the lovely *Camellia sinensis*, tea, have lead me to write my thesis on a subject that I feel personally connected to and that therefore an offer personal insight and different viewpoints from subjective observations. By combining the prior knowledge I possess, the one retrieved during the research of this study about tea, along with my education as an IB student, I wish through this thesis to open up the world of tea by sharing this enthusiasm. I have personally no training rather than self-acquired knowledge on the matter, and my wish to learn more also is a reason for the writing of such a work.

The market of tea is immense. This thesis will speak about the consumption of tea in France using consumer behavior. The consumption of tea demands a constant reinventing of itself to attract more consumers. There are still today tea drinkers and amateurs who tend to prefer an older fashioned kind of tea appreciation, a crucial element to French Tea. The art of appreciation, has been essential to the understanding of tea. It cannot be argued that one can with more ease

market a product if one grasps, and therefore appreciates, its value as an artifact. (Okakura, 1906)

To understand a culture, anthropology is needed, and shall be discussed further in chapter 2.

The topic has been chosen in an attempt to allow deeper analysis strategies in consumer behavior using culture as a way and business anthropology as a method. As the reader may have limited background information some terms will be explained to justify their presence in this work. The following paragraphs give a simple image of a classic tea consumer in France.

An amateur is generally considered a person fond of a particular interest, study, or science in a non-professional. Amateurs often have little or no formal training in their recreations, and many are autodidacts. (Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition, 2010) A person who is interested in tea, a tea amateur/consumer, is an immense potential consumer, as not only for the main product, the tea itself, but also all things related to its market such as lessons, degustation, books, instruments of many kinds, trips and voyages, of which none are cheap. The price for tea can range from a few euros to thousands for a 100g or less. (Gautier, 2005)

There are various kinds of training methods for tea amateurs, which have been marketed very well. Special schools who specialize in the learning of this art are spread out all around the world, usually in places where tea is cultural. In Paris, there is *L'Ecole du Thé* (The Tea School), who present themselves as such *"Created in 1999 to share knowledge harvested in the François-Xavier Delmas trips, founder of the Palace of Teas, The Tea School offers mainly oriented training and tasting tea and for individuals and professionals"*<sup>1</sup>

One can also go to Japan, and have the patience to learn Japanese to become a **Nihoncha Instructor** (**Japanese Tea Instructor**) *"This program is rather standardized teaching the most popular Japanese*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.ecoleduthe.com/fr/>

*green tea. Sencha is most commonly studied and many of the regional differences are standardized to teach one basic method. It is a good starting point for instructors to begin their career as tea professionals, and also getting general public more deeply interested in Japanese green tea so that they start to explore different types and regions.”*<sup>2</sup>

These different kinds of trainings offer a variety for the tea amateur. To the French consumer learning about tea carries the same characteristics as the learning about wine, another longtime partner in French culture. (Gautier, 2005)

## 1.2 The objective of the thesis and research questions

The objective of this thesis is to answer “*How did Tea become the world’s most consumed beverage*”, by using literature and by analyzing tea consumers currently in France. Understanding the consumption tendencies can allow more growth and opportunity, especially for a product that is starting to be well-appreciated overseas. To give a brief example, French tea is known and appreciated by the Japanese, who have more than three *Mariage Frères* tea salons all over Japan. The value of this thesis will be the combined consumer behavior and anthropological views used to explain the consumption of tea in France and the attitude of the French consumers. The target group consists of tea amateurs or those who have a small interest about tea and who wish to learn more.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://maunakeatea.com/nihoncha-japanese-tea-instructor.html>



The thesis is designed to answer the following sub-questions:

- How did Tea become the world's most consumed beverage?
- What kind of a market does tea represent?
- How does culture play an important role in the answering of the two previous questions?
- How important is the appreciation of tea on a cultural level?

### 1.3 The structure of the thesis

I will specify that since this topic is not a common one, repetition within the text is to be found in order for the reader to understand without a doubt what this thesis is about and what it is aiming to answer. It is imperative for the reader to well understand each chapter and it's topic before going further within the study.

The following chapter describes consumer behavior and anthropology along with their relationship of the case study. Separately defined at first, they are then merged. The case study comes after in the same chapter. The research methodology is the third chapter and will in detail discuss what method was used and in what purpose.

The methodology chapter also introduces how the research was implemented by focusing on the research techniques, the target group and the questions asked from the respondents. The fourth chapter is concentrated on the actual research and its analysis. In addition, the results of the questionnaires in Appendix 1 will be criticized and analyzed in the same chapter. The conclusion will deliver the research findings and shall have suggestions for future researches.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 The Hofstede and Trompenaars Models

Culture is a mix and collection of elements and practices which provide a medium for perception, judgment, calculation, correspondence, and action amongst those who share a historical period, a language, and a geographic location. (Zulfiqar)

In relation to international marketing, culture can be defined as “the sum total of learned beliefs, values and customs that serve to direct consumer behavior in particular country market” (Bernier, 2012) Culture is made up of three essential components: Beliefs, customs and values.

Each of these three factors affects and influences consumption behaviors and therefore the pattern of purchase of a certain individual. Beliefs, values and customs send direct and indirect messages to consumers regarding the selection of goods and services; it is the cultural. The culture a customer live determines and affects its decision process. (International Marketing and Culture)

Culture can be described like an iceberg. The part of the iceberg that you see above the water is only a small fraction of what is there. What you cannot see are the values and assumptions that can sink your ship if you mistakenly run into them. (Bernier, 2012) Daily behavior is influenced by values and social morals which work closer to the surface than the basic cultural assumptions. The iceberg model of culture suggests that the visible parts of culture are invisible parts for those not familiar with said culture. (Matsushashi) It also highlights the difficulty of understanding people from different cultural backgrounds because although we may see the visible parts or their *iceberg*

we cannot immediately realize what the foundations are, creating sometimes problems and tensions between companies and consumers.

### **Individualism-collectivism**

This cultural dimension developed by Hofstede expounds that the kind of relationship an individual has with him or herself and with others in every culture. In societies where idea of individualism is of paramount importance, most of the individuals are expected to take attention and upkeep of themselves and their immediate family. (Hofstede, 2011) In this kind of culture the consumer behaviour is self-dependent, which implies that societal values are of less significance for their consuming habits. Moreover, the organizational styles are deep rooted into efficiency, but they also take into consideration the cultural values. In these cultures, individuals are merely regarded as the members of groups who are expected to look after them in give-and-take for allegiance to organisation. (Bernier, 2012)

### **Uncertainty Avoidance**

(Hofstede, 2011), This element deals with the necessity to create rules and regulation for prescribed and proscribed behaviour of people against their sense of uncertainty. Hofstede observes that countries marked with political stability and strong sense of cultural identity score low on this dimension as they feel usually secure. However, countries like those of Latin America score high on this dimension because people feel insecure about political climate which adversely affect their collective psyche. In these states, organisations usually rely on ad hoc practices as they could change or wind up their business owing to uncertain prevailing conditions. Consumers in

these states are quite inactive as they do not indulge into buying spree out of trust problems. (Zulfiqar)

### **Power Distance**

This dimension unravels the costs of discrimination found in the authority and power relations within a specific society. It adversely affects the hierarchy and reliance relationships in the outline of family and organisations. For example in patriarchal societies, power within a family rests on the male. His decisions will be regarded as the most influential with regard to what is to be bought. Applying similar analogy at organisational level, in such societies the organisational structure is predicated on gender relations which value more to male workers. (Hofstede, 2011)

### **Masculinity-Femininity**

Through this dimension points the in masculine cultures the dominant values are success and achievement. The implication of this dimension at organisational level incorporates that in masculine societies organisations prefer to focus on success and achievement and its structural style is male-dominated which propels the values of competition, progress and organisational efficiency. (Bernier, 2012) (Hofstede, 2011)

The feminine cultures put a great of emphasis on the concern for others. In this situation, organisation mainly focuses on social responsibility which forms the part and parcel of their organisational ethos. At consumer level, it would certainly imply that countries which have concerns for other will pay less heed to consumer values; whereas culture which puts lot of

significance to success and achievements in terms of their financial strength and professional success, these states (or cultures) will put more emphasis on consumption values. (Zulfiqar)

### **Long-Term Orientation**

This dimension in Hofstede Model envisages the bringing forth attributes which are oriented towards futuristic prospects by long term awards. Hofstede in his later studies proposed that long-term versus short term dichotomy is more useful for his theoretical construct. The societies having long-term collective vision usually rely on deferred gratification patterns. (Zulfiqar) (Bernier, 2012)

The main dimensions of culture framework defined by Trompenaars are predicated on four cultural typologies which are as follow:

### **The Incubator Culture**

It implies that prevalence of informal relations and low level of centralisation at organisational level. In this culture, the role and responsibilities are not well defined and there can be serious infringes on the overall organisation's motivations. (Zulfiqar)

### **The Guided Missile Culture**

This cultural typology is mainly task oriented with high level of centralisation and low level of authority. 'Getting the job done' with 'the right man in the right place' are favourite expressions. Organisational relationships are very results oriented.' It shows that Guided Missile cultures have strict sense of responsibility. In these cultures, the managerial style is based on problem solving

solutions and managers are in full charge of authority. In these types of organisational culture, the level of adaptability is very high, therefore these organisations are best suited to work in multi-cultural framework.

### **Family Culture**

Family culture is an inverse form of the Guided Missile culture. The employees of organisations marked with such kind of cultural ethos revolve around the core of authority. But like family, there are little rules and therefore there is less room for bureaucratic style. All which matters most is the will of the authority, which is a rule unto itself. In these organisations, managers have little or no say. They remain at the mercy of top slots. There remains a permanent contest amongst organisation's members to remain as close to authority as possible. (Zulfiqar)

### **The Eiffel Tower Culture**

The Eiffel Tower Culture is marked with strict centralisation and high level of formalisation. This culture is highly oriented towards role fulfilment which makes employees of an organisation largely adhere to the organisation's main motives and business slogans. The whole organisation and its energies are directed towards pre-defined sets of goals and ambitions. (Zulfiqar)

There are three different ways to approach consumer decision making process. The consumer typology approach categorises customers according to the retail investment and the types of consumers which usually get into particular type of consumption pattern. The consumer psychographic approach hinges upon the overall lifestyle of the consumer. For example, a

consumer with middle class lifestyle will tend to emulate the life style of the elite within his or her specific income. In the same vein consumer characteristic approach depends on the detailed study of different traits and characteristics of consumers, which involves the study what consumer is looking after.

The main weaknesses of the Hofstede study seems to be outdated and therefore obsolete, he doesn't take into consideration different cultural groups in a same country (example: in Spain there are Catalans, Basques and Castilians). (Bernier, 2012) The definition of the dimensions may be different from culture to culture. For instance, Japanese collectivism is organization based but Chinese collectivism is family based.

Marketing management efforts, particularly with respect to promotion, should be focused on and should communicate to the core cultural values that each target country possesses, whether it is individualism, masculinity, power distance, long-term orientation, or some combination of these cultural dimensions. By focusing on these core values, marketing efforts can be leveraged to achieve more rapid consumer adoption of the newly introduced product. (Zulfiqar)

Each population of each country is characterized by Hofstede's four plus one cultural dimensions. The study of these cultural dimensions can give very important information to marketers for the standardization or the adaptation of the marketing mix. (Bernier, 2012)

Collectivism influences innovativeness, service performance and advertising appeals. Uncertainty avoidance impacts information exchange behavior, innovativeness and advertising appeals. Power distance affects advertising appeals, information exchange behavior, innovativeness and service performance. Masculinity impacts sex role portrays, innovation and service performance.

Finally, long-term orientation influences innovativeness. (Bernier, 2012) (Zulfiqar)

## 2.2 Hall's high/low context approach

Edward T.Hall (1960) introduced the concept of high and low contexts as the way of understanding different cultural orientation between societies. Low-context cultures rely on spoken and written language for meaning. Senders of messages encode their messages, expecting that the receivers will accurately decode the words used to gain a good understanding of the intended message. High-context cultures use and interpret more of the elements surrounding the message to develop their understanding of the message. In high-context cultures, the social importance and knowledge of the person and social setting add extra information, and will be perceived by the message-receiver. (Bernier, 2012)

Aesthetics relate to the senses, and the appreciation of the artistic nature of something, including its smell, taste or ambience. (International Marketing and Culture) It for this reason that proper branding, advertising, coloring etc. are crucial elements, as if some product is not aesthetically pleasing, consumers do not give it a second thought.

Culture has deep effects on the consumer behaviour as well as organisations' structure which, in turns, affect organisations' efficiency. The prevalent mode of cultural values best describes what kind of consumer behaviour and what kind of organisational goals have been embedded into them. Moreover, the study further suggests that an organisation with flexible rules with an adaptive style of operations is best suited in today's world of multi-cultural workplace when the role of employees especially managers is also becoming complex in the face of global assignments. (Zulfiqar)



To recapitulate briefly, the primary purpose of this thesis is to try and understand how tea became the most consumed beverage in the world and how has it been able to remain at this primary spot for consumers. I shall also explore the issue of tea in the luxury market, as by comparing and speaking about French tea consumption, which is as the subtitle of this thesis, the case study will be contrasting different French tea houses and thus allow for a broader understanding of French tea consumers and thus of their consumption.

I will also be using anthropological points of view in discussing the consumption of tea. This research method option idea came to me close to the end of my research. I understood that through anthropology, we can understand the consumer and therefore understand tea through them in their culture. By understanding this, the method of for example marketing tea, can be immense.

Tea has formed deep roots in cultures that are several millennia old, to give one example from an old chine legend, tea was used in China as a medicinal drink since approximately 2000 before our time. (Dattner, 2008)

Since drinks in general, in comparison to tea, can be spoken of only as new products, this study does not speak of/or analyze the consumption of other drinks than tea. Being the second most consumed drink on the globe after water, it is needless to say that the market for tea is skyscraping.

Based on a research by Munmun Ghosh and Arindam Ghosh (Ghosh, June 2013) (Consumer buying behavior in relation to the consumption to Tea, A study of Pune City), regardless of tea's wide consummation, consumer behavioral pattern changes from time to time and this behavior change

is influenced by many factors such as the loyalty to a brand, price, aroma, color, etc. More factors will be discussed later in this chapter.

The study of consumer behavior is based on their conduct, where the consumer has three roles as the user, the payer, and the buyer.

After some consideration, I noticed whilst doing my research that an approach to anthropology and marketing, through the understanding of consumers, therefore the very department of consumer behavior, was possible and indeed beginning to be greatly practiced. It is for this specific reason that consumer behavior as well as anthropological aspects are used to give answers to the questions posed the introduction, as well as provide as a basis for future usage of anthropological research in the business department of consumer behavior. This paper shall discuss consumer behavior and its connection to different anthropological approaches, now used more in the business world.

According to classical kind of anthropological theory, culture is an essential part of all societies. All human behavior, including market behavior, takes place within a cultural context (Moran, 1987)

Considering therefore how important anthropology can be to understand consumer behavior at deeper level, understanding tea and its place culturally therefore also affects its marketing and consumption greatly.

The primary technique anthropologists use to study culture is participant-observation, which involves living among a group of people, observing and recording their behavior, and participating in their daily lives as much as possible. (Anthropological Approach to Consumer Science: A Practical

Teaching Case Study, 2001) As I will demonstrate later in this thesis whilst speaking of the French consumers I will give an example that supports this phrase.

To put into simpler terms what I am trying in my study to transmit to the reader, is that the anthropological approach is effective in the study of consumer behaviors because anthropologists and anthropological methods offer a unique perspective. Using advertising as an example, while focus groups might be used to look at the demographics of a region to best select a specific advertising campaign, an anthropologist would study how people react to the ad.

An anthropologist might notice sometimes people go to the bathroom or kitchens during commercials while others mute them altogether. Because people may be performing multiple tasks, the only way to know what they are doing is through observation. Not being an anthropologist myself but a business student, I have still found while conducting my study that observation is indeed key. However, if one does not understand what one sees, there is no analysis being made. This is in reference to the example found later in this chapter.

## 2.3 Tea Consumption in France

The French keep consuming more and more tea. (Dattner, 2008) The market continues its growth, new counters open every so often in French cities, and tea salons have always been fashionable. Tea counters are the equivalent of tea stores or shops with the difference of selling only tea and its related items. (Books, utensils etc.) The consumption of tea, the second most popular beverage in the world after water (according to the Tea Association of the USA. Inc), has almost doubled in France in the last fifteen years. On average, one in four French starts their day with a bowl of Darjeeling or Earl Grey, whereas there were only one in seven in 1988. (Gautier, 2005)

The French consume fifteen times less than their British neighbors. 57% of women and 35% of men in France consume tea, which is now highly renowned for its thousand identified virtues. "For three or four years, the consumption of tea, especially green tea, increases by 6 to 10% per year, provides Olivier Scala, President of the French Committee of Tea.

"People travel and realize that there is something other than coffee. And then tea carries with itself a very natural image. The health argument has contributed much to its success. Rare or valuable teas seduce an increasingly demanding public, as evidenced by the growing number of tea drinkers clubs or flowering of specialty shops, and especially the exponential size of teas shelves in supermarkets. The winner of this enthusiasm remains unquestionably iced tea, which the French have gulped 156 million liters last year." (Deguen, 26th of October. 2001) Since the apparition of this article, the consumption of tea has kept on increasing. With 275 grams used per French per year, we are far from the two kilograms used by the British. The apparition of green tea, aromatized or flavor has immensely aided in the sales. Green tea, at its just title, has proven itself a winner with its healthy reputation. (Gautier, 2005)

In France, the consumption of tea can be divided as pictured in Fig 1. (Dattner, 2008)

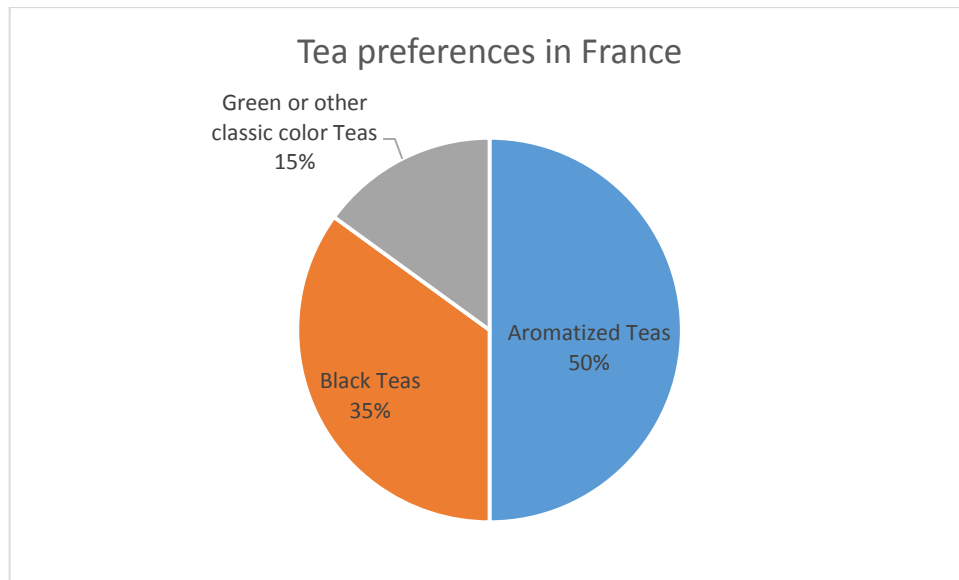


Fig 1 (Thé, rituels et bienfaits, Christine Dattner, ed. Flammarion, 2008, page 124)

Since the 1970's, several establishments have opened in France in full dedication to tea, and everything surrounding it. With the creation of aromatized tea, the clientele has significantly rejuvenated. Going from cozy English style environments or to the relaxed design, there are no longer strict. The tea service will however always be served either in porcelain or in earthenware. (Dattner, 2008) In higher-end locations, the tea will most likely be served in Japanese cast iron pots, which in turn are greatly appreciated by the French public. Research demonstrated that the French love collecting teapots of all materials and kinds, some reaching incredibly astronomical prices and due to this, the market for tea accessories is extremely favorable.

Being so, and the author having visited more than five Parisian shops dedicated to only tea, I can confirm much is done to make the customer feel unique and also have a unique experience. The atmosphere itself is created on from that very purpose. Moreover, the accessories available in the

shop can furthermore be sampled in the adjoining tea salons of several shops, such as *Mariage Freres*. Other companies, such as *Palais des Thés*, prime themselves on their knowledge sharing by offering all kind of study levels for consumers who wish to learn more on the actual product itself. It is in this sense of mind that consumers therefore consume, wanting to remember that moment at the tea salon, be it alone at home, or at a social gathering with friends. This is done by purchasing accessories and the tea itself.

The following images give a clear view on the price ranges so that the reader of this research can put into context what is being explained and told.



Fig 2.1



Fig 2.2

*Hanoi* from **Dammann Freres** at 53 euros    *Happy Aladdin* from **Mariage Frères** at 260 euros

! Note that these are quality certified products from the respective Houses.

The French appreciate diverse products related to tea, making it an interesting market allowing for a lot of variety. Like with wines, having special glasses for each sort, teas have similar unwritten rules. In France today, the most preferred teas are as follows:

- Darjeeling served in porcelain cups and teapots.
- Lapsang Souchong served in earthen pots.

- Earl Grey served in a glass teapot (similar to fig 2.1 and fig 2.2 above)
- Green tea, served in Japanese cast iron pots.

Tea has been growing in consumption in France. This can be linked to culture as well as to the history. In France, where the gastronomy is almost a venerated art, tea has built itself a place in the hearts of starred chefs that try to incorporate teas into their recipes. As a still “new” ingredient in France, compared with other countries that have been using it in their cuisine for centuries, tea in the French cuisine is slowly but surely becoming adopted, even if hospitality schools yet have not included it into their programs. (*Documentary: Tea, a revolution brewing by BBC, 2014*)

Master Tseng, a Tea Master of Chinese origin is said to be the global reference in the matter and is consulted by great chefs from around the world in order to be asked her opinion on everything regarding tea and how it would marry into a recipe. (Jary, 2014) In the documentary *Tea, a revolution brewing* by BBC, 2014, Master Tseng affirms the growing interest of the French when it comes to the consumption of tea. According to her, people are getting more interested in quality over price, not minding the fact that a few grams can climb high into elevated prices. She confirms the growing awareness of tea in France, and the culture it brings.

For the average French consumer, the growth of the tea business can be linked to another product that holds a high position in French cuisine and admiration. It is not coffee, often thought of when one thinks of tea, like one would think of salt and pepper. Here, we are speaking about wine. (Gautier, 2005)

These two drinks have a lot in common. In competition since the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Europe, both were first consumed due to their virtues. Their production is tied to their terroir, their consumption is

extremely social and the indicators in their tasting are identical. Like many alimentary products, these two were initially appreciated for their medicinal virtues. Wine and tea have evolved in their rituals of consumption, and both products were in the beginning in France, victims of additives. Wine, water, and tea were never drunk in their pure forms, things such as spices always needed to be added, mainly due to hygienic reasons, to *clean* the product. It is far later that tea and wine reversed to their clean forms, and consumed as it was meant to. (Le thé, aromes et saveurs du monde, Lydia Gautier, Aubanel, 2005, page 164)

Compared to Japan and China, where the consumption of tea, and its cultural importance and veneration are held in high esteem with such practices as tea ceremonies, (Cha no yu for Japan and Gong fu Cha for China), French tea customs seem by far primitive. With people initiating themselves to tea, people and masters, such as Master Tseng, can offer professional insight, and can allow the consumer for yet another aspect of the product. According to Okakura Kakuzō, the art of appreciation is about simplicity. Kakuzō argues that this tea-induced simplicity affected art and architecture, and he was a long-time student of the visual arts. He also states in *The Book of Tea* (1906) how the art of appreciation taught the Japanese simplicity.

To return to wine, which is an essential of piece of French history and culture, understanding that tea holds the same alliance types as wines to for meals, its tastings have slowly been offered in all major tea houses in France. Certain schools have even opened (*Palais des Thés*), where people can taste, analyze, and understand tea. “When people today have health issues, and can no longer have any wine, and yet wish to have an accompaniment with their meals, I believe tea can really substitute the wine, if a search for harmony is effected in the same considerations that if it were



wine ” Anne-Marie Rosenberg, wine store owner. While tea is in France still preferred to be had during midday and not with meals, it is still considered a wine substitute.

Cultural-wise, and as mentioned previously, wine has been an essential part of French history. Tea has slowly caught up, and a lot of skepticism still prevails as many look from high up tea and its world, not seeing wine as an equal product.

CEO and founder of *Palais des Thés*, François-Xavier Delmas, in the documentary *Les Maitres du Thé, France 5*, discussed why he had decided to found this company. *Palais des Thés* is more of a teaching school for tea than an actual shop, or tea house/salon, even if all of the above are possible things to be done in this house. Delmas stated that the reason for founding the company was that the market of tea in France was limited to only a few exclusive houses that were also price-wise quite costly. He is also the genius behind one of France’s first tea house schools, a school where one will learn about tea, about its history, and all else linked to gastronomy and tastings. Courses go from affordable to nearly luxurious, an entire weekend going up to over 400 euros. (L'école du Thé, 2015)

Created in 1999 to share knowledge generated during the trips of François-Xavier Delmas, The Tea School offers mainly oriented training and tea tasting for individuals and professionals. In one place, The Tea School invites you to discover tea, through tastings, introductory courses, thematic conferences and much more. During the documentary, makers followed him during his trip to Darjeeling, on his yearly voyage to buy tea from that region. An interesting method was used by the seller in order to persuade François-Xavier Delmas in purchasing that year’s harvest, which by his (François-Xavier Delmas’s) standards was exceptionally good. The seller mentioned that a group of Japanese buyers were also interested in the product. Later, François-Xavier Delmas

explained to the camera/crew, that had the seller said that a group of English had been interested, he would have called his bluff. He further explains that the French and Japanese share the same tastes in many things, and in this case teas. “The French”, he says “like the Japanese, prefer lighter teas than our British neighbors.” This can be as a culturally motivated tactic, as Japanese’s culture and French culture share similar aspects in tastes and flavors. The way teas were tasted and analyzed, as well as judged in the documentary, greatly resembled the way the same thing is done with wines. This confirms yet again, how using something as cultural as wine for the French as well as its tastings can be transferred and applied to the field of tea. (Delmas, 2013)

For several years now, another important French tea house has begun to offer courses on tea tastings, even if they do not reference themselves as a school. The origin of *Mariage Frères* has a key role in colonial tea and spice trade in France. Around 1600 the company was founded, responsible for teas, and spices. A few generations later, two brothers joined from their fathers side of the family and in 1854 created the solely tea company. As the oldest French importer of tea, *Mariage Frères* supplied the most exclusive retailers, delicatessens, tea rooms and hotels. (Frères, 2014)

The excellence of its products and its great respect for the French art of tea have always been recognized and appreciated. After 130 years of existence, *Mariage Frères* decided to enter the retail business, selling more than 500 high quality teas over the counter and by mail-order. The company is still located in the historic Marais district of Paris, and the building has remained intact. According to *Mariage Frères*, French connoisseurship is the art of perfect elegance. (Gautier, 2005)

The fundamental concepts of the French school are perfect elegance and taste, as refined during several centuries of traditions. The French drink the widest variety of teas in the world, ranging from 50 of the most reputable Darjeeling estates to mild Gyokuro tea, not forgetting Malawi teas and the rarest blends. French tea connoisseurs are highly aware of the subtle differences between teas, whether ordinary, rare, or fancy, choosing the most appropriate in the morning, at meal time, etc. Just like French wine, combining tea with various dishes is a high art. Serving it in refined tea sets is also part of the festive occasion. Tea has become part of the French gastronomy. (The French Art of Tea, Mariage Frères, Mars 2014)

It does seem strange to hear of such a phrase as the French art of tea, however, cross the eastern lands all the way to Japan, this art I put to the same rank as French gastronomy and wines. *Mariage Frères* holds the title for the French art of tea. When speaking of tea in France, *Mariage Frères* is a house that simply cannot be ignored. When *Mariage Frères* launched their tea parlor in 1854, their target group of clientele was that of the luxury of royal European courts and of Parisian salons. Bought back in 1984 by a Thai entrepreneur named Kitti Cha Sangmanee, the label then starts selling to the detail, to individuals. The Japanese tourists become thus enamored with *Mariage Frères* products. (Deguen, 26th of October. 2001)

The label has the immense advantage to attract the targeted and hip clientele. "We are very appreciated by the world of fashion and creative. In Milan, for example, we have partnered with Vogue magazine. In Kuwait, we organized a tea tasting with gold leaf in partnership with Louis Vuitton, "explained Franck Desains, one five associate directors of *Mariage Frères*, head of business development.

The Mariage Freres boxes have come to be known even in London's fashion shows, contemporary art galleries in New York. "Bulgari said to have served our selection of teas to create its line of perfumes," says Franck Desains.

The success of *Mariage Frères* has led to a lot of competition. Franck Desains monitors in one eye a group of Chinese businessmen photographing teapots and cups *Mariage Frères*. "Our" business model "is interesting and many are looking to copy," he says. (Sultan-R'bibo, 2010) The high-end tea market has long been the almost exclusive hunting ground of the French brand *Mariage Frères*. But in recent years, some competitors, such as Kusmi Tea, do not hesitate to address the historical leader.



Fig.3 represents a large part of the *Kusmi* tea collection in its famous multicolored hip caddies.



Fig.4 represents a part of the *Mariage Frères* tea collection in its famous black and chic caddies.

The average French consumer consumes 275 grams of tea per year (Gautier, 2005) and tea is sold in either 50g or 100g bags, (in reference to a *Mariage Frères tea salon store clerk* ) making it rather impossible to own more without it going bad, unless properly equipped with good tea caddies. (Jary, 2014)

In understanding this information, the reader is now capable of understanding the position tea has in French culture and therefore its importance in it. Due to this the reader will also understand French tea consumers in their choices and in future know how to better create questionnaires for further study, be it in this domain or another. The reader can also assess the need for anthropological aspects in business and its impact on the market and on the consumer analysis.

### 3. Research Methodology

This thesis focused on the research method by which to answer primarily “*How did Tea become the world’s most consumed beverage*”, as well as the three remaining questions presented in the introduction and repeated at the end of this chapter. The additional added value to this research was the attention brought on consumer behavior, and the path of research one might employ to find something that is deeply rooted in culture. The consumption of tea has become part of the French gastronomy (Gautier, 2005), and yet a way of measurement or of understanding why certain teas are preferred above others, or why it is consumed in a specific manner in France, still bears its background from historical facts. By understanding the *why*, the *how* of the main question may be answered, and thus there was a need for this kind of research, which in the future might provide insight to others should they decide to experiment on it.

The method used to conduct this study was originally intended to be purely qualitative. Authentic answers from respondents were crucial. The second research question might have been better analyzed through a quantitative approach, but since this research was not about numbers, qualitative inquiry was almost only exclusively used. Quantitative answers were obtained when the participants were asked questions related to their age and their gender. Qualitative answers permit a detailed information into the participant’s mindset, including their opinions and their views. In the parts of the two questionnaires, namely a survey and a quiz, the participants were to answer multiple questions (the second questionnaire was to help the respondent with a specific question in the main questionnaire), but largely had an opportunity to write and explain their answers, allowing a true view into their mind-set.

The research was conducted using two online questionnaires (see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2), which were sent to the participants through personal emails and private Facebook messages. The questions in the main survey were to provide proper answers by which to analyze and later answer, the four questions of this research. An early idea was to interview two or three individuals that worked for different French tea houses and through their experienced answers have qualitative data, which could be described as beyond reproach. Unfortunately after only a single house agreed to have an interview, I was resorted to abandon the idea, as I preferred to not risk having a biased opinion, especially since all of the previously mentioned tea houses are rivals. The first questionnaire was anonymous, and in the second participants could include their names if they wished, as the second questionnaire (quiz) was mainly to see how much the participant already knew. Participants were encouraged to do the second questionnaire first. By having them relaxed, I believe the first questionnaire was answered more truthfully and in a relaxed manner, providing more reliable data. While the second questionnaire took only a few minutes to answer, the first one was longer, demanding an easy 20-30 minutes.

As stated, this research was constructed to answer the following questions,

- How did Tea become the world's most consumed beverage?
- What kind of a market does tea represent?
- How does culture play an important role in the answering of the two previous questions?
- How important is the appreciation of tea on a cultural level?

*Anthropology is becoming an increasingly popular source from which to borrow tools to investigate marketing and consumer behavior. Not only do many anthropologists themselves conduct some marketing and consumer research, but more and more marketers are developing anthropological methods in their marketing practice and research. The anthropological approach focuses on the influences of culture and society on the individual consumer's behavior; it emphasizes participant observation and academic analysis of consumer behavior through both management and consumer perspectives. It is argued that the anthropological approach to the study of consumer behavior could be very effective in helping students understand the principals of consumer behavior. (Anthropological Approach to Consumer Science: A Practical Teaching Case Study, 2001)*

Many companies have started to hire anthropologists for their marketing research. Saveri indicates that traditional market research tools are limited by their question-and-answer format, "In the case of surveys, you're telling the respondent how to answer and you're not giving them any room for anything else." She sees ethnography as an incredibly precise and powerful tool when used properly. (Anthropological Approach to Consumer Science: A Practical Teaching Case Study, 2001) My own research lead to similar conclusions, especially when conducting my interviews, which appear later in this chapter section of the thesis. No survey can tell engineers what women really want in a razor, so marketing consultant Hauser Design sends anthropologists into bathrooms to watch them shave their legs (Seattle Times , 1999)

For the purpose of this research, I will compare the three main tea houses in France and through this method I allowed myself to compare the three types of consumers that compose the group of the French consumers. This information I gathered was firsthand. The objective of this



comparison is to give the reader a simple view of different consumers going to different houses, as they seek different kinds of experiences.

The example I spoke of earlier is the following: I was in a covered marketplace in Paris with my grandmother, aged 70. For this study I will also give my own age to make the generation gap clearer. I am 22 years old, and like my grandmother, I am French and a tea consumer. I myself therefore fit the study group shall I say, which will be discussed later in the research methodology and research analysis.

In this marketplace, we came across the three distinctive tea houses: *Kusmi*, *Mariage Frères* and *Palais des Thés*. The interesting fact is how they each represented and marketed themselves. *Kusmi* identified itself with a young clientele and bright colored boxes as seen in Fig.3, in comparison to the black and timeless classic *Mariage Freres* caddies seen in Fig.4.

The reaction of my grandmother as we approached was the following “All these bright colors, I do not like it at all.” Through this declaration I noticed how the clientele indeed was so different from *Mariage Frères*, located not even 10 meters away from the *Kusmi* stand. *Mariage Frères* identifies itself with its never aging black boxes with its company logo. Interestingly enough and to confirm what was said earlier about the Japanese adoring the French art of tea, *Mariage Frères* was filled with customers from China and Japan. I asked a young girl my age from where she was and why she had come to *Mariage Frères* when there were other tea houses right nearby. She smiled and answered in a nice English that “*Mariage Frères* teas are the best French teas.” She had spoken as a matter a fact. Walking further down the market, we found the *Palais des Thés* stand. Its simplicity was the message I had hoped to see and I that is what I witnessed. Where *Kusmi* attracts with its multi-colorful-ness and *Mariage Frères* with its ancient black caddies, *Palais des*

*Thés* offered a selection of colored boxes and they were also the only ones not to have actual tea house representatives. **Simplicity** is their keyword. *Mariage Frères* has the key word of **authenticity** while *Kusmi* has for keyword **new**.

Thanks to this example and experience, I saw what was to me, and therefore for this study, a revelation in understanding the different French consumer groups of tea in France. This analyzing is also in thanks to anthropological ways of how I saw things. A questionnaire for tea marketers here could not have been very helpful here, especially if they are not aware of such difference in priorities for the different consumers.

Another example that can be given is the message each house sends to its customers. *Mariage Freres* sells authenticity, and appreciates an older public in general, and also demands to have a certain budget. *Palais des Thés* is more of a school, while *Kusmi* is financially and with their style, more open to youngsters and domestic public. *Kusmi* has as their number one product the Detox Tea. In today's society, where being healthy and trying products that enhance this is well seen, this product has become the number one in sales in the *Kusmi* industry. This is yet another example of how *Kusmi* uses today's fashions to its advantage, while houses like *Mariage Frères* use their house name and fame to be number one in this market. And their quality has yet to be questioned either.

While all these are based on personal experience, the business student in me can analyze them from a different point of view, under a commercial spectrum. I understand the difference and therefore see how importantly they play here. Teas newfound rise today in France can also be brought back to what was said earlier about its health benefits and how attractive this appears to consumers of any of the houses.

### 3.1 Sampling

The targeted audience included; students, working age, and retired age. This market sector represents a certain price tag, and cannot be entertained if one has no revenue. The emails and invitations were sent to 45 people, as diversity was also key in answering the first and main question of this thesis.

In a final count, the invitations had been sent using email, to forty-five different email addresses I possessed and therefore created the sampling group. Out of the send emails, twenty-six gave response to the questionnaire. Since the questionnaires were simple to answer, and that this was mentioned in the emails, a notice was sent again once after its initial release on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2015.

The active response rate was measured using the following relationship below.

$$\text{Response Rate} = \frac{\text{Completes}}{\left( \text{Completes} \right) + \left( \frac{\text{Completes}}{\text{Completes} + \text{Not Qualified}} \times \left( \text{Not Contacted} + \text{Refused} \right) \right)}$$

Fig. 5

(<http://www.answersresearch.com/response.php>)

So by calculating we thus obtain: Total number of responses, 26 divided by the total number of the original sample, which is 45. The answer is thus 57.77% of an answer rate. This high answer rate can be attributed to a rising interest in tea, as more than 26.88% in the second questionnaire answered favorably to learning more about the topic after doing the survey. All who answered the first survey took time to answer the quiz and the question about the quiz.

One error could be named, namely the one done in the contacting of the tea houses for interviews. Time was not well managed and if I had better persisted, I believe I could have obtained the interviews that would have further legitimized this research study.

### 3.2 Reliability, validity and generalization

For this study to be reliable, the asked questions allowed the participant to think about their answers in an objective manner. The difficulty in the collected answers was that many knew hardly anything on the topic and seemed reluctant to give full answers, even if they did write a few words. As mentioned previously, to increase the validity of this study, the questions asked in the questionnaire were specifically designed to allow proper answers for the research questions. Useful information was needed, and asking useless questions would have been futile, misleading and a waste of time for both the participant and the researcher. In the elaboration of the interview questions, which were unfortunately not used, a professional journalist was of help, and was willing to advice on the necessary and relevant questions to ask. The questionnaire inquiries were entirely done by myself. (See questions of the interview in Appendix 3.)

The participants represented different groups in age, generation, financial background, interests etc. The sent emails and social media invitations were however targeted to all those reaching between the ages of 15 and 80. Considering the focus of the study was on the consumer behavior of tea in France, the nationality of the respondents was French as well as foreigners having lived their entire lives in France. Since I myself am French, but have lived my whole life abroad, I could analyze under a certain eye and consider myself an outsider to the study even if my personal experiences can confirm certain things. As an anthropologist would, I analyzed the received

answers without bias and put everything under a heavy light, thus minimizing the risk of being bias and using these answers to answer the questions of this study. My own experiences are used as examples and to confirm theory. However, in the answering of the main questions, only the literature in its pure form as well as the questionnaire replies are used to make a conclusion.

#### 4. Research analysis

The actual sample of the research were, as previously mentioned in the active response rate, defined in the sampling paragraph, the 45 French tea consumers of whom 26 answered. It is important to note here than while 34 percent of the respondents were male, the remaining 66 percent were female. From earlier on in the research, one can clearly affirm that the industry of tea is fitting to all, and therefore age does not limit the possibility of tea consumption. It does however make a difference in general knowledge of tea, the importance of quality and other financial aspects. The variety between the people who responded was between the ages of 15 to 80.

35 percent of the respondents were retired, while the majority of the respondents (42 percent) were students. The remaining percentages were of the working class. These three groups of respondents varied greatly in their answers since the financial situation is the most different. Based on the answers of the respondents, while someone in their retirement can spend 40 euros on a certain tea, students who are unemployed cannot afford to do the same. The following sections discuss the research findings.

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex and holistic picture, analyses words, reports, detailed view of informants and conducts the study in a natural setting. (Axman)

This research has tried to include all of the above in an effort to answer the four questions posed in the introduction.

These questions are:

- How did Tea become the world's most consumed beverage?
- What kind of a market does tea represent?
- How does culture play an important role in the answering of the two previous questions?
- How important is the appreciation of tea on a cultural level?

More than half of the respondents (67 percent) had never thought about their interest in tea. The questions asked in the survey allowed them to look at this product through another light. When asked about the importance of tea in French culture, the respondents all gave different answers. To quote one, "When I think of tea, especially in Europe, I think about the united Kingdom, not France, I do not think the French greatly pay attention to tea or believe it has a great importance in the French culture" 19 year old female. Another respondent stated that he did not think wine and tea were comparable to one another since one has always been in French culture and gastronomy (wine) and that tea was only a much newer ingredient, at least when it came to French gastronomy.

All of the respondents are tea drinkers. Some stated preferring coffee over tea, but still replied to the questions in the survey. Even if not something practiced in their youth, 78 percent of the retired group confirmed that they spent between 127 and 341 euros on a yearly budget, for tea and its accessories. In comparison with this, the students spend roughly between 20 and 50 euros in the same time span. Since teas (except Pu-Erh teas) can be kept no more than two years, ( (Jary, 2014) it seemed unlikely that the respondents had more than 5 types of teas in their possession. The reasons for such answers, which could seem like anything but optimistic for this study, instead proved how a benign product that is used every day, could indeed have a deeper significance that those who utilize it see. Anthropology here is useful to a high level, as by asking specific questions in the questionnaire, I as the researcher managed to make the respondents think about their answers, and later analyzed them as an outsider. The question regarding health benefits was one where the answers were the most similar. 92 percent of all respondents replied in a positive manner towards the known health benefits of tea. They also agreed on tea's importance to a healthy diet. According to the medical journal Doctissimo, (Doctissimo is a French website dedicated to the health and well-being founded in 2000) tea is good for the heart, brain, and even claimed to be an anti-cancer weapon. The participants of the survey all shared the same positive views on green tea. To specify green tea is important since black tea is known for not being as soothing and calming as green tea, according to the respondents

Earlier, the financial situation or background was said to be reason for the different kinds of spending when it came to tea. Lack of choice was a reason none of the respondents mentioned. When answering questions related to spending and importance in the tea quality, again, responses

varied. Only 12 percent of students found it more important to spend more for a better quality tea than to buy more for a lesser price and quality. "Tea is tea" was a phrase seen thrice within the responses.

The lack of interviews with the three tea houses allowed for very little numbers to be available. Most of the numbers were obtained from books found in the bibliography list, but they are more concerned with consumer trends in France, than dealing with actual statistics.

#### 4.1 How did Tea become the world's most consumed beverage?

Throughout the literature review and introduction there are several references made of educating yourself more about tea as one would with wine, or simply for the pleasure of doing so. Apart from the Japanese tea instructor position, and the profound respect and fame of Master Tseng, tea today offers very little career opportunities. And yet, for a product that is the most consumed beverage after water, surely trade in tea must be flourishing and so must its sales. The French are neither the first producers nor consumers of tea and yet the fame for French Tea is known beyond the continents.

4 percent of the respondents, which amounts to only one person, in the retirement group, knew of this term and mentioned it while answering question 17 of Appendix 1. *Do you believe tea is an important part of the French culture? Why?* Tea and its importance for French consumers is on the rise. (Deguen, 26th of October. 2001) Having the same attributes as wine, tea has won over many French hearts. The ability to find a connection between the two products allowed for a faster rapprochement.



How did Tea become the world's most consumed beverage? Tea always *was* the world's most consumed beverage. There are traces of tea used as medicine in China that date back five millennia (Dattner, 2008). The theory allowed myself to further analyze the question and try to see also *why* tea had remained at the top. Culture was the answer. By becoming part of sacred rituals in, for example China and Japan, tea was able to retain a high position then and into today. The health benefits tea has have allowed it to be a new and long lasting trend in France within youngsters. (Deguen, 26th of October. 2001) The answers from the respondents in regards to this question, were similar. A few of them, 11 percent to be exact, knew that tea had a very important cultural place in the countries mentioned above.

#### 4.2 What kind of a market does tea represent?

As the answers came out of the survey, it was clear that tea represents a growing market in France. The respondents varied again here with their answers. In 12 years the French tea consumers has risen 25 percent since 2006. The French market of tea has known an increase between 195 and 2006 to attain the 340 million euros. The percentage growth is up to 10 percent in the luxury tea sector. (Benoit, 2007-2008)

Although the theory from chapter 2 might not simply answer this particular question, using theoretical methods from the anthropology section of the chapter, it was clear by examining the replies that the tea market in France is growing at a high rate. The retired age group validated this by affirming the rise of interest in tea. The director and founder of *Palais des Thés*, François-Xavier Delmas confirmed this in the documentary *Les Maitres du Thé, France 5*, and gave this as one of the reasons to having created this tea house, so that the French public could have something else

for option than just *Mariage Frères* products. As mentioned in the introduction, *Palais des Thés*, also known as *L'École du Thé*, was one of the first to propose another experience to tea, which was later on imitated by *Mariage Frères* (Deguen, 26th of October. 2001).

#### 4.3 How does culture play an important role in the answering of the two previous questions?

The research was done from the angle of analyzing the question itself as well as the received answers using an anthropological view, allowing it to be unbiased. Culture plays an immense role in understanding how people, in this case the respondents, answer the questions given to them in Appendix 1. Asking those specific questions allowed them to freely give their views and opinions on the matter. Qualitative research is very descriptive (in reference to Professor Linnea Axman), and along with the theory from the literature review, comes together to form a conclusion, which can be read in the final chapter.

#### 4.4 How important is the appreciation of tea on a cultural level?

*Questions 6. How much time do you take to drink tea? In other words, how much importance do you give to taking the time to drink tea? Question 23. What do you look for in a cup of tea, and Question 24. Which feelings do you get when you drink tea? Name at least 3,* were taken from Appendix 1 and were used to analyze the answer “How important is the appreciation of tea on a cultural level.

Taking the time to drink your cup of tea will depend on the importance you give to it. 24 percent of the respondents said that they took the necessary time they wanted to contemplate their cup

of tea. The more tea is appreciated, on a cultural level, the more likely it will be to be passed down. "The French are always interested in the origins of what they eat and drink, and in the cultures that produced it," says Francois-Xavier Delmas "We see it exactly like wine. We can explore the tastes of tea exactly like we explore the tastes of wine. We can produce different colors, vintages, new growth, single garden, fermented teas, exactly like with wine.

*"Today we even advise Michelin-starred restaurants on how to serve tea instead of wine. It goes excellently with some types of cheese. And these days many business-people don't want to drink alcohol at lunch, so a vintage tea is the perfect alternative.*

*"The joy is that it is all for the French a re-discovery. For centuries we have had no real contact with tea. So unlike the British, we formed no habits. This means we can learn about tea as a pure, new product."* (Schofield, 2014) From my own experience, it is my grandmother who initiated me to another kind of tea drinking, and appreciation. It is part of my culture, and part of anyone's culture when they are willing to try and see its importance.

#### 4.5 Suggestions for improvement

This kind of research could always benefit from further qualitative research and neutral outsider views and opinions. A better planning for the interviews, jointly used with perhaps more sophisticated statistical tools, might contribute in enhancing the perception of the consumer behavior, and therefore forecast at some extend market trends in the future. That said, a bit of quantitative analysis could be introduced.

## 5. CONCLUSION

### 5. 1 Research findings

The objective of this thesis was to compare between themselves the three French Tea Houses as well as answer the four questions found in the introduction and research analysis using questionnaires and consumer behavior as well as business anthropological skills and methods to make findings and make suggestions for improvements.

The first research question was to find out how had a certain product, in this case tea, had managed to become the worlds most consumed beverage. By discovering the deep cultural roots to which tea was tied, it soon became clear that tea had indeed always been important at one point or another at a certain given time. Also, given how the case study was directed to the consumption of tea in France, there was a need to see if tea was also the most consumed beverage there and how did it culturally affect its consumers.

The second question measured the size of the market of tea. Since qualitative research was used, descriptive insight and analytical methods were more important than mere numbers, mostly acquired in quantitative researches. According to the responses, several respondents did not see a problem in spending a fortune in tea and its accessories. As for the interest for tea courses and especially due to its newfound health benefits, this allowed for a greater market for tea to open up.

Finally, the other two research questions were to measure the cultural aspects of tea in the French culture. Based on the responses many of the replies showed that the respondents had never even considered the place of tea in their everyday lives, while other merely thought of it as a hobby and nothing more. As research shows in the articles, the interest for tea is at a steady growth. .

As mentioned in the literature review, the usage of business anthropology in such works is only the beginning. Finding similar works was a challenge, as mostly they were in reference to the consumer behavior patterns of either China or India. Taking these into consideration as well as the anthropological methods spoken of in the theory, I was able to come to a just middle and use both to figure out how important tea was in the French culture and to the French consumer.

## 5.2 Suggestions for further research

Due to the limitations of bachelor's thesis' length, this research provides quite a narrow view into the topic. Therefore there are various subjects for further research.

One of the suggestion for improvement of this research would be to conduct more studies on business anthropology and consumer behavior. As mentioned in the literature review, consumer behavior may be young in the business world, but business anthropology is much younger. Another suggestion for the improvement of such a research would be more work in studying the analysis methods in order to prevent false conclusions and biases opinions.

It is important to mention at the end of this research, that the questionnaire from Appendix 1 was created in the effort to help validate the theory and analysis chapters rather than answer the thesis primary questions. This was done with the idea to allow the thesis to be conducted using business anthropology and to try and allow for future similar kinds of works to be created and bettered over time.

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## Appendix 1: Survey

1. Male or female?
2. To which age group do you belong to?
  - i. 15-20
  - ii. 21-30
  - iii. 31- 40
  - iv. 41- 50
  - v. 51 - 60
  - vi. 61 - 70
  - vii. 71-80
3. Situation
  - i. working age
  - ii. retirement
  - iii. student
4. How much knowledge do you have about tea? *Find below link to aid in answering the question.*  
<http://www.quizyourfriends.com/end-quiz.php?id=1505250631503203>
5. Did you enjoy the quiz and did you learn something?
6. How much time do you take to drink tea? In other words, how much importance do you give to taking the time to drink tea?
7. Would it surprise you to learn that tea is the world's most consumed beverage? If yes or no, why?

8. What got you interested in tea?
9. As a French, how important do you think tea is in your culture?
10. How often, many cups do you drink (give options per day, week)?
11. How much do you spend when buying tea?
12. Do you buy tea?
13. How often do you buy tea?
14. How many teas do you have?
15. When did you start drinking tea?
16. Do you prefer coffee to tea?
17. Do you believe tea is an important part of the French culture? why
18. Do you think is an important drink? Why?
19. Do you believe drinking tea has health benefits?
20. Do you have accessories associated to tea?
21. Do you consider tea at the same level with gastronomy?
22. Would you pay for a tea tasting, if no, why?
23. What do you look for in a cup of tea?
24. Which feelings do you get when you drink tea? Name at least 3.

Offering the liberty in answering the questions is more of an anthropological approach than a business one, however, by combining the two, answers can be drawn to support the literature and the conclusion.

## Appendix 2: Quiz

In relation to question 4.

<http://www.quizyourfriends.com/take-quiz.php?id=1505250631503203&lnk&>

- |                                                                 |                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. To which botanical family does tea belong to?                | RA <i>Camelias</i>      |
| 2. Japan is renowned for it's which colored teas?               | RA Green                |
| 3. Which temperature is best for the infusion of Japanese teas? | RA 50-70°C              |
| 4. What does "Wu Long" stand for in Chinese?                    | RA Black Dragon         |
| 5. What is the advised time of infusion for Wu Long tea?        | RA 5-7 minutes          |
| 6. For which ceremony is Gunpowder tea used?                    | RA Moroccan Hospitality |
| 7. Does green tea have less caffeine than black tea?            | RA No                   |
| 8. Is the Indian tea culture as ancient as that of China?       | RA No                   |
| 9. Tea, hot or cold, is refreshing.                             | RA True                 |
| 10. What is the name of the Japanese Tea Ceremony?              | RA Cha No Yu            |

RA= Right answer

The purpose of the small quiz was to give the responder an idea of their knowledge level and to aid in answering question number 4. The results therefore are for the benefit of the respondent and hold no importance to the actual study of this research. Each answer had three or two choices in which the respondent could test their knowledge.

### Appendix 3: Interview for a Tea House *(not used)*

Hello Madam,

I am a student doing a Bachelor of Business Administration at Turku University of Applied Sciences in Turku, Finland and I am currently preparing my thesis end of studies on tea consumption in France. I would be grateful if you help me with the following questions as your support will be invaluable to me.

1. Could you tell me what are the flavors of tea which the French look for, and appreciate the most?
2. Why do you think the French prefer this kind of tea?
3. Are there any resemblance to the style of French and Japanese tastes?
4. Have you done market researches to reach this conclusion, or is this conclusion based on what you sell the most?
5. Have you noticed / seen a rise in the interest of tea in France? If yes since when?
6. How has the market changed in the last 5 years?



7. Do you think tea interest is a fashion, a trend?

8. Do you believe that people are interested in tea, its history and its origin more than before?

9. What is the average age of your customers and will they search the same flavors regardless of age?

10. Does the choice depend on the prior knowledge of the product?

11. What can you tell me more about the habits of tea consumers in France?

12. Could you give me some statistics on the market in France?