



PUERH CHANGES LIVES

BY MIKE BAAS

How can it be that pouring hot water on a pile of leaves has the ability to make an instant connection to the Present occur within us? You don't even have to drink it for the depth to start having an effect. When you do finally drink it, you cannot predict the results.

I am partial to Puerh. Perhaps that means I'm partial to "deep Qi". The substance of Puerh seems to affect all people. Tonight, for instance, I drank tea formally for the first time with my mother. After the second cup, she declared that she was done. The same declaration was made after the fifth cup. Even on the eighth cup, she was still declaring herself "completely finished". A few cups later and my father arrived to gladly take her place, drinking cup after cup for the first time. The cups started tasting less and less of tea but by that point, everyone was beyond tea, speaking joyfully and with truth, about everything!

My small children, three and one and a half years of age, are very much drawn to the "tea party" and enjoy a watered down cup of lukewarm tea as much as any adult enjoys their piping hot cup. The next-door neighbors have become tea party regulars, putting down their cell phones and turning off their TVs to enjoy cup after cup with us late into the night while the kids run hog-wild around the house.

Puerh tea creates a calm synchronous connectedness. It immediately gives you a PhD in Taoist philosophy, yet in a common language you can share with unlearned friends. It invokes "Asian culture" in its body. It makes me feel like travelling to distant lands or ancient times is superfluous. The information it holds is consistently satisfying, in-and-of-itself. Doing nothing is never easier than with Puerh.

Sometimes Puerh decides it is time for an inward journey. I recall closing my eyes to iridescent desert palm trees swaying in the wind of my mind's eye, repeating a siren song of unrepeatable Truth over and over again hypnotically. I intently studied this image as it appeared throughout the hour of my meditation and I never quite reached the bottom. I cannot now express to you what significance was uttered but I do know that I would have liked nothing more than to continuously reflect upon those glowing trees. Like everything in Tea, it too shall pass and I ended the meditation grateful that such insight was possible and even accessible to me. And perhaps most amazingly, even in this psychedelic story, Puerh tea is so sober!

There is no moral quandary with Tea. Tea stands up again and again as something truly reputable. I can

understand why Tea passed Herself down through dynasty after dynasty, and why it demanded tribute.

The world needs Puerh tea. Mankind needs to get deeper. We're killing ourselves with our lack of attention to the simple passing of time. This age old problem is showing more muscle now. Everything is accessible yet the quality isn't really there because "we" aren't there. We have lost "being there", if we ever had it at all. I am not well schooled in today's culture, but I don't much like what I see. I feel like an old, retired man in my Tea-detachment. I understand why people retire to sit on their porches for the remaining decades.

From my porch, I'd like to invite young people to this retirement culture of Tea. I want to create a society of Tea achievers, content on sharing tea with one and with all, which means sharing authentically with one and with all. (There's barely even a sense of "other" in Tea.) Tea wants only the bare minimum in all regards. Yet Tea is so productive! It accomplishes so much at every step on the Path. I want to live in a Tea world. And I think we are beginning to see it, though it may take lifetimes to accomplish. But Tea has all the time in the world...

Mike Baas is a newer member of Global Tea Hut from Southern California. He attended one of Wu De's workshops and was inspired to begin a tea practice—one that is spreading, as you can see.

One of our favorites: 2001 8582 Sheng Puerh ▶



Inner trademark ticket (nei fei) ▶

