

CHANOYU Quarterly
TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

No. 46



The embossing on the cover is adapted from a gold embroidered fabric called *Houn kinran*, favored by Sen Soshitsu XV, fifteenth generation grand master of the Urasenke School of Chanoyu. The motif is composed of a phoenix (*ho*) amid clouds (*un*) and is the graphic representation of his Buddhist name, Hounsai.

FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT Sen Soshitsu XV,
Urasenke Grand Tea Master

ADVISORS Inoue Yasushi, Matsushita Konosuke,
Naya Yoshiharu, Perry T. Rathbone, and John
Young

SENIOR EDITOR Usui Shiro

EDITORIAL ADVISORS Mori Akiko and
Tsutsui Hiroichi

CHANOYU Quarterly

TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

EDITOR Gretchen Mittwer

ASSOCIATE EDITORS Peter Duppenhaler,
Keith Snyder, and Betty Winchester

CONSULTING EDITORS Dennis Hirota and
Tanihata Akio

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS Kogushi Fumiko
and Sasaki Hirokuni

Chanoyu Quarterly is published quarterly by the Urasenke Foundation, Kyoto, and the Urasenke Chanoyu Center, New York. Subscriptions: Japan, four issues ¥4,400; elsewhere, US\$20.00 (air postage US\$14.00 extra). Single copies: Japan, ¥1,100 (¥900 at selected bookshops); elsewhere, US\$5.50 (air postage US\$3.50 extra). Prices subject to change. Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery on all orders. Back issue list sent free upon request. U.S.A. residents write: *Chanoyu Quarterly*, Urasenke Chanoyu Center, 153 East 69th Street, New York, New York 10021. All others write: *Chanoyu Quarterly*, Urasenke Foundation, Ogawa Teranouchi agaru, Kamikyo-ku, Kyoto, Japan 602.

NUMBER 46

<i>Sen Soshitsu XV</i>	<i>Ma</i> : A “Usefully Useless” Thing	5
<i>Tsutsui Hiroichi</i>	Sen Sotan	7
<i>Richard B. Pilgrim</i>	<i>Ma</i> : A Cultural Paradigm	32
	<i>Temae</i> —Tea Procedure: <i>Ryurei Gozumi</i>	54
	Book Reviews	70
	Glossary	78
	Chronology	80

The names of Japanese persons are written surname first in accordance with the Japanese practice. Kanji for names, titles of works, and italicized terms, where appropriate, are given in the Glossary.

ISSN 0009-1537 COPYRIGHT © 1986 by Chanoyu Quarterly. All rights reserved. Printed in Japan.

CONTRIBUTORS

Sen Soshitsu XV Fifteenth generation Urasenke Grand Tea Master; President and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Urasenke Foundation; Abbot, Kyoshin'an temple; Professor, Department of History, University of Hawaii. Books by Dr. Sen available in English are: *Tea Life, Tea Mind* (Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1979) and *Chado: The Japanese Way of Tea* (Tokyo and Kyoto: Weatherhill/Tankosha, 1979).

Tsutsui Hiroichi Director, Urasenke Konnichian Library; Assistant Professor of Japanese Culture, Kyoto Junior College of Culture. Author of *Gbasbo no Keifu* (Geneology of Tea Documents. Tokyo: Bun'ichi Sogo Shuppan, 1978); *Chanoyu Meigen Shu* (Collection of the Famous Words of Tea Masters. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1980); *Meiki ga Tadotta Rekishi* (The Histories Behind Famous Tea Utensils. Tokyo: Shufunotomo, 1984); and *Chajin no Itsuwa* (Anectodes About Teamen. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1984).

Richard B. Pilgrim Associate Professor of Religion, Syracuse University, New York. Author of *Buddhism and the Arts of Japan* (Pennsylvania: Anima Publications, 1981), and co-author (with Robert Ellwood) of *Japanese Religion: A Cultural Perspective* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Publications, 1985).

Chanoyu is a synthesis of arts that gives expression to many aspects of Japanese culture. From its beginnings in the fifteenth century down to the present, it has been both catalyst and medium in the development of distinctive art forms. Under the guidance of Grand Master Sen Soshitsu XV, the Urasenke Foundation seeks to encourage the further development of these arts and to promote a worldwide understanding of the spirit of chanoyu.

Ma: A “Usefully Useless” Thing

Sen Soshitsu XV

In Japan, most people are keenly aware of the change of seasons; when winter ends, the first signs of spring are accompanied by the sprouting of buds and shoots, which before long are followed by the blossoming of flowers. Then the fresh young leaflets on the trees develop into full green leaves, and summer is here. However, when winter becomes too cold, many people start thinking about how nice it would be to just skip ahead to summer; or when the gloomy, overcast skies of the rainy season which precedes summer appear, as they always must, many wish the weather would clear up quickly. These feelings are probably due to the melancholy felt in our own minds and bodies because of the weather. However, the fact is that without the rainy season, the preparation—the regulation and adjustment which all things must make in the progression to summer—could not take place. It is precisely because there is a rainy season that the new rice seedlings can be planted. And in the same way, it is because of the existence of this transitional season—a kind of *ma* or interval which comes between spring and summer—that our own human enrichment can occur.

Ma, in the sense of an interval in time, is a very important thing for us. Though we might paradoxically call it a “usefully useless” thing, when we think of it as the gray space between seasons, it becomes very significant in that, like the rain, it allows a smooth seasonal transition in our lives.

Thinking of the importance of *ma*, another thing that comes to mind is the concept of room space. In chanoyu, the tearoom is a completely empty space, void of any ornamentation. Sen Rikyu established this as one of the characteristics of a tearoom. Using the analogy of the virgin white canvas open to the imagination of the artist, the host is free to decorate the interior of the tearoom according to the occasion and to his own state of mind, revealing in his choices the degree of his training and the depth of his wisdom and sensibility. So it is this empty space of the tearoom, this virgin canvas, which in turn teaches us many things about the use of space, and about life itself. I believe this is a remarkable approach to the concept of room design, an approach which requires tea people to constantly exercise creativity and educated sense as interior designers.

In tearooms as well as traditional Japanese dwellings, there is a special *ma*—the tokonoma—built into one of the walls of the room. This is the focal point of the room, the place of honor, where a scroll is hung or flowers are arranged, and through these the room becomes enriched. There is a tendency these days to think of this *ma* as wasted space, and so one often sees modern Japanese houses in which there is no tokonoma. However, inasmuch as this *ma* of the tokonoma is rich with meaning and potential, we should consider it a truly useful thing.

The ordered sequence of the procedures in chanoyu attaches great importance to the *ma* which is the unconcerned moment of movement from one step to the next. Through this continual transition from move to move, not only does the tea gathering proceed smoothly, but host and guests are led to interact harmoniously with each other and to handle all utensils with equally great care, without thinking of their relative values.

When asked about what constitutes the most useful part of a door, most people give answers related to its various structural parts; few remember that all of these would be useless if it were not for the space—the *ma*—which allows us to pass through the door.

In Zen training, the moment of enlightenment is accompanied by a profound discontinuance or gap—the *ma*—from which then flows the richness of life lived from a different center.

The above are just a few examples of the usefully useless *ma* in our lives. Yet, unfortunately, most people in the modern world are both unaware of and uninterested in its importance. Social pressure encourages keeping busy with all sorts of useful, practical tasks which allow little time for reflection and awareness of the *ma* within and without. The result is widespread restlessness which threatens world peace and, ultimately, even the existence of life on this planet. In its own quiet way, the practice of chanoyu, by making us aware of the importance of the usefully useless, can make a great contribution to world peace. 

Sen Sotan

Tsutsui Hiroichi

Sen Sotan, the grandson of Sen Rikyu (1522-1591), founder of the Sen family tradition of chanoyu, was thirteen years old at the time of his grandfather's death, and was to live through one of the most turbulent periods in the history of the Sen family. Born in 1578, it was formerly believed that his father was Rikyu's eldest son, Doan (1546-1607). Relatively recent findings indicate, however, that his father was actually Shoan (1546-1614), a son of Rikyu's second wife, So'on (d. 1600), by a previous marriage. This Shoan, who was the same age as Doan, was taken into the family and married Rikyu's daughter, Okame.¹

Rikyu, who was raising his family in his hometown of Sakai, in present-day Osaka prefecture, had naturally started Doan out earlier than Shoan in the activities of a *chajin* (man of Tea), and it seems that Doan exhibited remarkable talent. Once Shoan was accepted into the family, however, friction developed between the two step-brothers, which was greatly augmented by Shoan's marriage to Okame and the birth of the couple's first son, Sotan; for Doan had not yet taken a wife, and was without an heir to carry on the family name. Rikyu must have realized that it would be difficult for Doan and Shoan to continue residing in Sakai together, and therefore made plans to move Shoan to Kyoto.

By 1581, Rikyu had placed Shoan [and family] in Kyoto, providing an estate for him near the gate of Daitokuji temple. Later the same year, Rikyu also arranged for a tearoom to be built on the grounds of the estate, carving a name plaque reading "Fushin'an" ("Hut of Uncertainty") for the room. This event is considered to mark the establishment of the Kyoto branch of the Sen family.

Rikyu frequently visited Kyoto and stayed at Shoan's home, and so was able to observe Sotan's early development. When Sotan was about eleven years old, Rikyu suggested that he begin Zen training at Daitokuji. So the young boy began his religious training under the 111th abbot of that temple, Shun'oku Soen (1529-1611), expecting one day to become a Zen priest. Shun'oku was the spiritual guide of many famous chanoyu masters, including Rikyu, and also of many military leaders, and may be said to have ushered in the golden age of Daitokuji. As verified in Shun'oku's analects, the *Ichimokuko* (One

1. Though the dates of these events are uncertain, Shoan would have become an official heir to the Sen family name when he married Okame (posthumous name, Sokei), and it may be presumed that this did not occur until after 1577, the year of the death of Rikyu's first wife, when both Shoan and Doan would already have been thirty-one years old. Readers should note that there are varying theories and stories regarding a great many of the details of the Sen family history.

Translated and adapted from "Sotan no Shogai" in Chiga Shiro, ed., *Chado Shukin* vol. 4 (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1983), by permission of the author.



"Layman" Sotan. Portrait by Shokado Shoji (1584-1639). Inscription by Suigan Somin (1608-1664) [for translation and interpretation, *see* p. 24]. Ink on paper. Central area: length, 57.5 cm.; width, 24.7 cm. Photo courtesy of the Chado Research Center, Kyoto.

Silent Scroll), this spiritual and cultural leader took a liking to the youth, Sotan, who from early on showed a certain flair for poetry, and eagerly observed his progress.

Destined though Sotan may have been for the priesthood, only two years after beginning his religious training at Daitokuji, an event occurred which concerned the welfare of the entire Sen family, and which was to throw him deeply into the world of chanoyu. Rikyu, who had been a substantial patron of Daitokuji, and who was currently serving as Toyotomi Hideyoshi's (1546-1598) chanoyu advisor and confidant, had been honored by having a wooden statue of himself placed in the upper story of the temple's main gate. Suddenly, he received orders from Hideyoshi to return to Sakai and confine himself to his house. On the twenty-first day of the first month, 1591, Rikyu, startled by Hideyoshi's vehement action, rushed to Daitokuji to take counsel with the priest Kokei Sochin (1532-1597) on how to deal with the situation. In the stories recounted by Sotan to his disciple Fujimura Yoken (1613-1699), published as the *Chawa Shigetsu Shu* (The "Pointing to the Moon" Collection of Tea Stories) in 1683, we read that when the agitated Rikyu was just entering the temple grounds in a palanquin, he noticed Sotan about to start off for the city and hailed him. Sotan, at this time, did not realize that anything was amiss; however, it was the last time that he was to see his grandfather. Only about a month after this, Rikyu was ordered by Hideyoshi to commit ritual suicide. Probably it was this experience, together with subsequent events, that influenced Sotan in later years to live frugally and never to be a servant of authority—a way of life which earned him the nickname "Beggar Sotan."

Rikyu probably realized, when he was ordered into confinement in Sakai, what the final outcome would be, so he sent for his son Doan, wrote out a will, and thereby authorized the distribution of his estate. It was decided that the family property in Sakai would be divided among Doan, Rikyu's daughters [he had at least five daughters], and their husbands. Not a word is mentioned in the will concerning his property in Kyoto, allegedly because he had received warning that it would be confiscated. However, from the sentence in the will which states, "The entire property is accounted for in this writing and nothing is outstanding," we may conclude that this measure was taken to forestall interference by Doan in the Sen family property in Kyoto occupied by Shoan.

Following Rikyu's suicide, the surviving family members anxiously awaited Hideyoshi's next command. Even Sotan had no guarantee of safety, though he was in training at Daitokuji. The *Chado Shiso Densho* (Transmissions of the Four Founders of the Way of Tea)² states:

-
2. Also known as the *Matsuya Nikki*, this work is based upon the tea diaries (*kaiki*) of several generations of the Matsuya family of Nara, as edited and supplemented by Matsuya Hisashige (1566-1652). This is one of the major sources documenting the chanoyu of this era. The "Four Founders" are: Sen Rikyu, Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshu, and Hosokawa Sansai—considered the greatest chanoyu masters of the late sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries.

Shoan also expected to be punished. His wife, Sotan's mother, had separated from Shoan and left the house prior to these events. Although she [thus] would not have been punished, she returned quickly when this affair broke out. She despised Shoan, but was willing to die alongside her son Sotan if necessary, and to this end she remained secluded in the house. As it happened, Shoan was not punished, but word spread in admiration of his wife's unprecedented and courageous action.

With the exception of Rikyu, all the members of the Sen family survived Hideyoshi's wrath. Nevertheless, the Kyoto property was confiscated, and Shoan sought protection under Gamo Ujisato (1556-1595), a warrior living in Aizu Wakamatsu (present-day Fukushima prefecture). Doan, too, is said to have sought the protection of a daimyo family, but evidence of this is difficult to obtain.

The Sen family was pardoned after a few years, though the exact year is still uncertain. Again, information about the Sakai branch of the family is scarce;³ but one valuable source of information regarding the restoration of the Kyoto branch is a letter called the "*Shoan Meshidashijo*" (Letter Summoning Shoan), signed by Tokugawa Ieyasu and Gamo Ujisato, which reads in part, "Hideyoshi wants you summoned. . . . Hurry and come up [to the capital]." Unfortunately, the date of this letter is given only as the thirteenth day of the eleventh month, with no year indicated. But as Sugimoto Hayao points out in his *Sen Rikyu to Sono Shuben* (Sen Rikyu and His Surroundings. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1970), various factors strongly suggest that the earliest possible year was 1594.

One piece of evidence which supports the 1594 date is to be found in Shun'oku Soen's previously-mentioned *Ichimokuko*, in the chapter "Concerning the Death and Funeral of Man'i Tanko Chikkei Soan (Mozuya Soan)." This Mozuya Soan is recorded as having died in 1594, and apparently, Sotan was still undergoing Zen religious training at Daitokuji at this time, and had achieved the rank of *zosu* (keeper of the sutras). On the other hand, however, it is generally believed that Sotan's second son, Soshu, was born in 1593.⁴ If we accept this date as fact, it means that Sotan would have fathered Soshu be-

3. According to Murai Yasuhiko in *Chado no Genryu* vol. 1 (Kyoto: Tankosha, 1983), pp. 37-39, when the family was pardoned, both Shoan and Doan returned to the capital and Doan was (re)engaged as Hideyoshi's personal chanoyu advisor. It had been expected, even by Shoan, that Doan would succeed Rikyu as the head of the Sen family tradition. This explains why Sotan was sent to Daitokuji to carve out a life for himself as a Zen priest. However, with Hideyoshi's sudden death in 1598, Doan, left without a patron, returned to the family home in Sakai, where he died nine years later, bringing the Sakai branch of the family to an end.

4. The placement of Soshu's birth in 1593 is based upon his death poem, composed at "age eighty-three" (eighty-two by our modern-day method of counting age) and dated the fifteenth day of the second month, Empo 3 (1675).

fore his return to lay life [which coincided with the restoration of the family], and the birth of his first son, Sogetsu (?-1652), would have occurred even before this. Sotan had been practicing Zen with great singleness of purpose, and had even risen to the rank of zosu. The implication is that in spite of this, he had sneaked out of the temple, consorted with a woman, and begotten two children.

With regard to these points, the chanoyu historian Murai Yasuhiko states in the January 1980 issue of the *Chado Zasshi* magazine (Kyoto: Kawara Shoten), "We probably have no choice other than to accept all these facts as they are: Sotan lived in Daitokuji for a while after Rikyu's death, and during that period, rose from the rank of *kasshiki* (lay servant) to that of zosu. On the other hand, he had his secret times spent outside the temple as a worldly man. In all probability, the person who persuaded him to contract this irregular marriage was none other than his own mother, Okame."

If Sotan, in weighing the relative importance of the Sen family succession against the strength of his own personal determination to proceed in the Buddhist Way, held the family to be more important, he might well have made an effort to get away from the temple in order to produce an heir. But we must remember that he had experienced the tragedy of Rikyu's death, which occurred because of Rikyu's proximity to power, and for that reason Sotan refused to serve under anyone's authority all his life. How could he have concerned himself with family affairs so deeply as to compromise his ideals in this way?

It is still a matter of some question, thus, as to when Hideyoshi finally pardoned the family. Nonetheless, with the event, Sotan's life took an unexpected turn. During Rikyu's lifetime, Hideyoshi had observed the young Sotan while the latter served at Daitokuji. When he decided to arrange for the restoration of the Kyoto branch of the Sen family, he conferred with Shoan, and it was decided that Sotan should be made the acting head of the family, despite his youth. The *Chawa Shigetsu Shu* tells us that "he commanded that Rikyu's confiscated treasures be given to Sotan." And at the same time, Hideyoshi arranged for Sotan to resume lay status. The theory that Shoan retired early and moved to a small cottage called Shonantei at Saihoji temple (commonly known as Kokedera, the "Moss Temple") in Kyoto is strongly supported by this.

Unfortunately, almost nothing is known about Sotan's life during the following twenty years or so, but we do know that in 1599, at the age of twenty-one, he received the Buddhist name Gempaku from Shun'oku. In an entry in the *Ichimokuko* dated the third day of "early spring," Keicho 4 (1599), there is a verse preceded by an introduction, entitled "The Name Gempaku," relating this event as follows:

The old priest searched high and low for a good name for Sotan. The name he chose was Gempaku. A short verse commemorates the event:

The dark, dark regions of Zen practice—
Words will not avail to reach them.
Gazing fixedly upwards,
Pouring out the heart before the Buddha.

Shibayama Zenkei, in the section “*Ichimokuko ni Miru Sotan-kan*” (The View of Sotan Seen Through the *Ichimokuko*) of *Sotan to Sono Jidai* (Sotan and His Times. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1957), tells us that the first two lines of the verse are in reference to the first part of the name, “Gen(m) 元,” meaning “source” or “beginning,” and the last two lines to the second part, “haku (pa-ku) 伯,” meaning “chief” or “noble.”

It is probable that Sotan, by the time he received this name from Shun'oku, was already considered the head of the Kyoto branch of the Sen family. However, with the death of Hideyoshi in 1598 and that of Sotan's grandmother, So'on, in 1600, the young Sotan became the focal point of the Sen family tradition of chanoyu, and in 1601, again requested Shun'oku to grant him a Buddhist name. This time the name chosen was Genshuku (元叔; literally, “source [of] youth”). This marks the beginning of Sotan's activities as the bearer of the Sen family tradition of chanoyu.

A Life Dedicated to Reviving the Sen Family Tradition of Chanoyu

The mid-1620s to mid-1640s, when Sotan was in his prime, corresponds to the Kan'ei era in Japanese history, when Kobori Enshu (1579-1647) succeeded Furuta Oribe (1543-1615) as the dominant figure in the world of chanoyu, and the major practitioners of chanoyu were the *daimyo* feudal lords. In these circumstances, Sotan believed that the best way for the *wabi-cha* (chanoyu stripped of frivolity and pretense) tradition of his family to survive was to explore more deeply the idea of *cha Zen ichimi*, the idea that tea and Zen are identical in spirit—a concept fostered earlier by Rikyu and described in the record of Rikyu's teachings, the *Nampo Roku* (Southern Records)⁵ as follows: “The essence of wabi is the pure, undefiled realm of Buddha.” It is evident that Sotan considered himself designated by fate to pass on to future generations this Way of Tea which had been established by his grandfather.

The *Zencha Roku* (Account of Zen and Tea), a well-known work which expounds the idea of *cha Zen ichimi*, was published in 1828, but is believed to have been transcribed in 1715. The probable original text of this work, the *Cha Zen Do-ichimi* (On the Identity of Tea and Zen), has traditionally been attributed to Sotan. Five of the ten chapters of the *Zencha Roku* are virtually the same in content as the *Cha Zen Do-ichimi*: “Tea (*chaji*) Takes Zen as its Spiritual Basis,” “The Practice of Tea,” “The Spirit of Tea,” “Tea Utensils and Zen Utensils,” and “The Garden Path (*roji*).” It is perhaps not too far-fetched to conclude that Sotan, having undergone Zen training at Daitokuji

5. Also written in characters pronounced *Nambo Roku*, deriving from the name of the man who supposedly wrote the work, Nambo Sokei (dates unknown).

under Shun'oku, indeed composed a work such as the *Cha Zen Do-ichimi*.⁶ The following passage from the first chapter, "Tea Takes Zen," clearly expresses the fundamental principle of wabi-cha as Sotan probably conceived of it:

It has been rightly said that chanoyu and Zen are the same in spirit. To dote on unusual things and rare treasures, to select only the best in food and wine, to build a tea house and make playthings of the plants and stones of the garden, transforming [the place] into a pleasure ground—these things are far removed from the true spirit of the Way of Tea. On the other hand, the very practice of Zen-style chanoyu is the embodiment of aspiration toward the Way of Enlightenment. Making tea entirely according to Zen teachings is a means to understanding the nature of the Self.

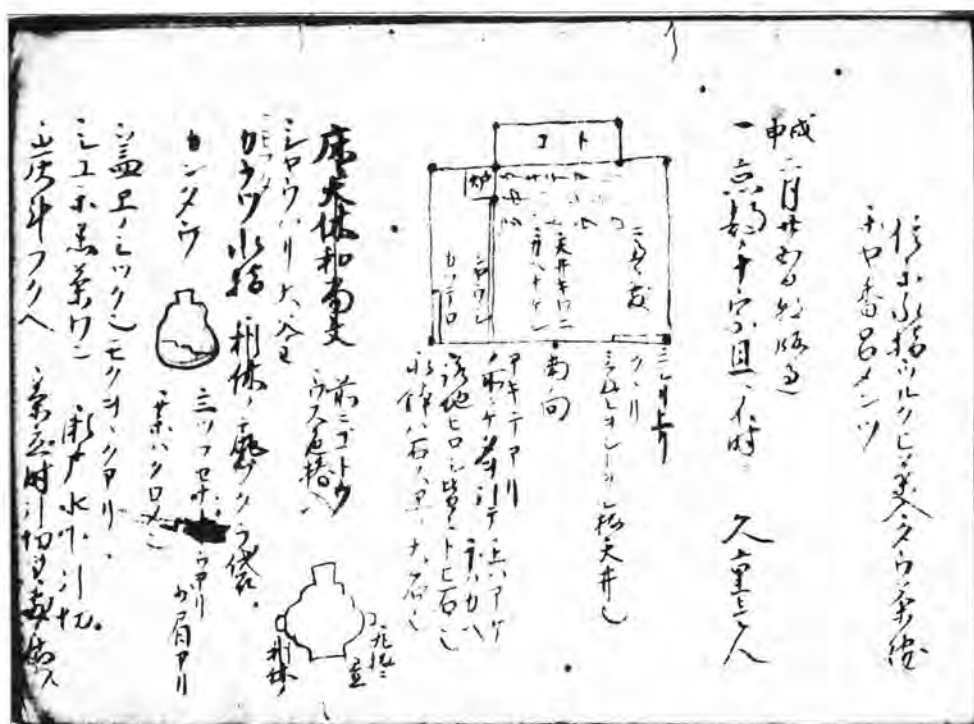
The wabi of which [Rikyū and] Sotan spoke may indeed be equated with the spare, lean beauty predominant in Zen thought, and if Sotan did write the *Cha Zen Do-ichimi*, it represents the basic thrust of his effort to mold his grandfather Rikyū's chanoyu into a kind of spiritual exercise. In fact, Sotan's firm implantation of the Zen spirit into this tradition not only served to rejuvenate wabi-cha during this era when *daimyo-cha* (chanoyu designed specifically for the feudal lords) was predominant, it also laid the foundation for the future course of the development of the Way of Tea.

We can envision the atmosphere of Sotan's chanoyu through an account recorded in the *Matsuya Kaiki*.⁷ According to this, on the twenty-fifth day of the second month, 1608, Sotan invited Matsuya Hisashige as sole guest to a mid-morning tea gathering. The tearoom was three tatami mats in floorspace, two of these being for the use of the guest, and the remaining one for the host to prepare the tea on. A central pillar and wall with a small arched door (*kato-guchi*) divided the guest's space from the host's, and the design of the room was such that upon entering from the tiny "crawl-in" portal (*nijiriguchi*) in the south wall, the guest would notice that the tokonoma, slightly off-center and of the size known as *daim*e (three-quarters of a normal tatami mat), appeared quite large.

It is thought that Sotan built this tearoom according to his own taste quite soon after the restoration of the family and his father's retirement, when Sotan was in the process of developing his own chanoyu style. In form, the tearooms that he built during this period, known as *Sotei-gakoi* or *Doan-*

6. See Shibayama Zenkei in "Zencha Roku Kaidai" (Notes on the Zencha Roku), *Chado Koten Zenshu* vol. 10 (Kyoto: Tankosha, 1956), for an argument disputing Sotan's authorship of the *Cha Zen Do-ichimi*.

7. The *Matsuya Kaiki* (Matsuya [Family's] Tea Diary) consists of the records kept by three generations of the Matsuya family of Nara, including Hisashige, editor of the *Chado Shiso Densho* (see note 2). Altogether, the *Matsuya Kaiki* covers the years 1534-1650. This is another of the major sources of documentation regarding the chanoyu of this era.



The Matsuya Kaiki entry for the twenty-fifth day of the second month, 1608. Includes a sketch and description of Sotan's three-mat tearoom. Photo courtesy of the Chado Research Center, Kyoto.

gakoi, were arranged so that the main guest, when seated in his appointed place, could see into the hearth through the gap formed by the tokonoma pillar and the central pillar, and the host could enter and take his seat hidden from view.

On the day of the gathering mentioned above, the tokonoma was decorated with a calligraphic scroll, with a light-colored camellia in a bronze vase placed before it. This placing of both scroll and flowers together in the tokonoma was due to the gathering being held in mid-morning, an irregular time. A kettle which had belonged to Rikyu was placed on the hearth, and alongside it was a Karatsu-ware cold-water container with matching lid. The container for the powdered tea was a Chinese piece, also from Rikyu's collection, and a black Raku-ware teabowl and Seto-ware waste-water receptacle completed the selection of utensils. In short, except for the use of the Chinese tea container, all the utensils were of wabi taste. Following the tea in this room, the guest, Hisashige, was conducted to a large *shoin* style room (a formal study). Evidently, this is the very room presently known as the Zangetsutei (Room of the Waning Moon) within the precincts of the Omotesenke school of chanoyu. It should be noted that the two characteristic aspects of Sotan's chanoyu style, which I will describe in more detail later, are represented in this day's events: he first served tea to his guest in a quiet little three-mat room, and followed this with a light meal served in a large *shoin* style room.



Teabowl handmade by Sotan. Believed to be the only extant teabowl made by Sotan himself. Height, 10.0 cm.; diameter at mouth, approximately 10.5 cm.; diameter at bottom, 11.0 cm.; diameter of foot, 4.5 cm. Property of Urasenke Konnichian. *Above:* On the front of the teabowl is etched the character "koto-buki," meaning "felicitations." *Below:* the bottom of the teabowl, with etched writing which says, "Age sixty. Totsutotsusai," and Sotan's cipher. Totsutotsusai was one of the names which Sotan went by. Photos courtesy of Mekata Soin.



During the era directly after the recovery of the Sen family, Sotan found himself unavoidably short of available funds. Offers of employment at times came to him from daimyo families who continued to revere Rikyu, and we know that his sons repeatedly urged him to accept such offers in the belief that doing so would greatly improve the fortunes of the family. But, not desiring to make what he felt to be the same mistake as his grandfather, Sotan gracefully declined such offers. This is not to say that he never considered giving in to these entreaties. In the *Hon'ami Gyojo Ki*, a record of the activities of the artist-chajin Hon'ami Koetsu (1558-1637), a close friend of Sotan's,⁸ appears the following undated entry:

In a certain year Sotan set off in the direction of Edo (present-day Tokyo) in response to an invitation to serve [as chanoyu advisor to] a daimyo. He had gone as far as Otsu (a small city neighboring Kyoto on the east) when he was suddenly taken ill and decided not to continue on the journey. Actually it turned out that he was pretending. Word has it that Sotan could not agree with the idea of binding himself in service to the daimyo. Although we are intimate friends, there are times when Sotan's strong will impresses me and makes me ashamed of myself.

Sotan, although steadfast in his determination not to accept employment for himself under the various daimyo who entreated him for his services, was not averse to exploiting the opportunities on his sons' behalves, and on several occasions he called upon the help of his influential acquaintances to seek their support for his sons.

His efforts eventually bore fruit. In the second month of 1633, on the recommendation of the priest Gyokushitsu Sohaku (1572-1641) of Daitokuji, who was Shun'oku's Dharma heir, Sotan's third son, Sosa (1613-1672), succeeded in acquiring a position as chanoyu advisor under the lord of Karatsu Castle in the province of Hizen (present-day Nagasaki prefecture). A few years later, Sosa went on to become chanoyu advisor under the Kii (present-day Wakayama prefecture) branch of the Tokugawa clan. With Sosa successfully employed, it must have seemed to Sotan as if spring had come once more to his family. It is known that about this time he parted with a valuable hanging scroll in order to build a one-and-a-half-mat tea hut at the family property in front of Hompoji temple, naming the hut Fushin'an after the tearoom which Rikyu had had built on the grounds of the family's original estate near Daitokuji. A letter from Sotan to Sosa dated the twenty-eighth day of the seventh month, Kan'ei 10 (1633), says that the tiny hut, begun on the twenty-third of that month, had had its roof completed, and that at this rate the *kuchikiri*

8. Sotan's close association with Koetsu is verified by a writing dated the twenty-fifth day of the tenth month, Keian 4 (1651), which shows that when Sotan was planning to sell his estate, Koetsu acted as one of his agents in the transaction.



Pair of teascoops named *Ninin-Shizuka* (also pronounced *Futari-Shizuka*), "Two [Lady] Shizukas," and case. Made by Sotan. Bamboo. Teascoop on the left: length, 17.9 cm. Teascoop on the right: length, 17.8 cm. Property of the Tokugawa Reimeikai Foundation, Tokyo.

chakai (gathering at which the leaf-tea jar is opened for the first time) would be possible around the seventh day of the ninth month in the new hut. Sotan later wrote that this structure had turned out remarkably well for having been built almost entirely of secondhand materials. In building this new tea hut, perhaps he was expressing his joy at the improvement in his family's circumstances.

For a few years after 1634, Sotan resided in Edo. The reason for his move is not at all clear; perhaps he went because he wanted to see Sosa, who was stationed in Edo about this time, or more likely, perhaps he wanted to gauge the job opportunities for his eldest son, Sosetsu. His second son, Soshu, was no longer a worry in this regard, as he had been adopted into the Yoshioka family of lacquer masters. But Sosetsu, although he was already past forty, seems to have been leading an aimless life.⁹

Whatever Sotan's reasons for going to Edo, he returned to Kyoto in the fall of 1639 and began to search there for suitable employment for Sosetsu, asking various people to help him. In an emotional letter to Sosa dated the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of Kan'ei 17 (1640) he says that he told Sosetsu to request the aid of the famous priest Takuan Soho (1573-1645), and that, though Takuan presented Sosetsu with a horse, "not even a thank-you visit from Sosetsu!"

Among the most notable practitioners of daimyo-cha, Sotan was particularly friendly with Oda Uraku (1547-1621) and Katagiri Sekishu (1605-1673), while with regard to Kobori Enshu, the fact that Sotan received a silver ladle from him shows that there was some contact between the two. Also, Enshu's son, Masayuki, seems to have had a hand in procuring employment for Sotan's fourth son, Senso (1622-1697), with the Maeda family of Kaga (present-day Ishikawa prefecture). Sotan was also friendly with many of the daimyo and men of refinement in Enshu's circle, one of whom was the renowned swordsman Yagyū Munenori (1571-1646). Thus it seems that though Sotan was at odds with many of the tenets of daimyo-cha, he recognized that it was a legitimate way of chanoyu.

There was one particular daimyo, Nagai Shinsai (also called Naomasa; 1587-1668), lord of Yodo Castle at Kuze in Yamashiro province (present-day Kyoto prefecture), who strongly admired Sotan's wabi-cha. This influential daimyo had been a retainer of the second Tokugawa shogun, Hidetada (1579-1632), and in 1633, was given control over the Kyoto area, becoming the superior of Kobori Enshu, who was governor of Fushimi (a present-day ward of Kyoto city). Shinsai had even had occasion to offer tea to Hidetada's successor, Tokugawa Iemitsu, and by such activities, had made a name for himself among the tea-loving feudal lords. The only record that remains of Shinsai holding a chanoyu gathering in Yodo Castle is the entry for the twenty-first day of the second month, Kan'ei 11 (1634), in the *Matsuya Kaiki*. Details of

9. Sosetsu and Soshu were Sotan's children by his first wife, while Sosa, a daughter named Kure, and Senso were children of Sotan and his second wife, Soken.

the entry would seem to support the assumption that Shinsai was, at that time, a follower of Enshu's style of chanoyu, which was dominating the chanoyu world at the time, especially as he was personally acquainted with Enshu. Although it is uncertain exactly when he began to aspire to learn Sotan's way of chanoyu, we may assume that his interest coincided with the general recognition of Sotan's chanoyu toward the end of the Kan'ei era.

There is an interesting anecdote about these two, Shinsai and Sotan. On one occasion, Shinsai held a chanoyu gathering at his villa, to which he invited Sotan. Shinsai had been deeply impressed by the frugal *kaiseki* (meal served during a chanoyu gathering) he had been served as Sotan's guest on a previous occasion, and also believed that an air of genteel poverty was most suitable for chanoyu. Accordingly, he entertained Sotan during this gathering with an extremely frugal *kaiseki* of one soup and three side dishes (*ichiju sansai*). Sotan ate the *kaiseki* with relish and took his leave. Later, he told Shinsai that though the *kaiseki* which had been served that day was probably intended to be true to the wabi ideal, it was not appropriate for Shinsai, a high-ranking lord. He explained that it was natural for unremarkable men like himself, in keeping with their station in life, to serve frugal meals, but that the *kaiseki* served by a lord such as Shinsai should be appropriately lavish. Sotan further suggested that, since the carp of the Yodo River nearby were famous, it would be good for Shinsai to serve Yodo carp. After a few days, another invitation arrived from Shinsai. This time Sotan took along his protegee, a plasterer named Dosai. Shinsai entertained Sotan with a nobleman's feast, serving Yodo carp as he had been advised; but, the story goes, Sotan did not eat it. Instead, he passed it to Dosai, who was waiting in the adjoining room, with the words, "You probably have never eaten this dish known as Yodo carp. Why don't you try some?"

The fundamental aim of chanoyu is the exchange of true feelings between host and guest. In wabi-cha, the host's choice of simple utensils and cuisine serves as one way to symbolize his humanity, and the guest's response serves as an expression of his humanity. In choosing the utensils and food to be served, however, it is important that they be in keeping with the host's rank in life. Sotan, in his criticism of the frugal "one soup three side dishes" *kaiseki* first served by Shinsai, was saying that true chanoyu is that which is appropriate to the practitioner's lifestyle, and in which there is no air of pretense.

In addition to Shinsai and other such daimyo acquaintances, the people whom Sotan approached of his own accord and regarded with friendliness were mainly members of the Kyoto nobility. He was particularly welcome in the household of Empress Tofukumon'in Kazuko (1607-1678), the official consort of the Retired Emperor Gomizuno'o (1596-1680) and daughter of Shogun Tokugawa Hidetada. Sotan instructed the Empress in chanoyu, and the depth of their relationship may be inferred from the fact that his second wife, Soken, had been a lady-in-waiting in the Empress's service, and also, that a number of chanoyu utensils and other items passed between the Empress and him. It is said that several chanoyu utensils in Sotan's taste, including a



Dark green lacquer *tsumagure* (red-trimmed) *daisu* utensil stand. Sotan is said to have dedicated a utensil stand of this type to Empress Tofukumon'in. Upper shelf: length, 71.5 cm.; width, 37.0 cm. Lower shelf: length, 73.0 cm.; width, 39.0 cm. Height, 56.0 cm. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.



Ikkanbari type container for powdered tea. At one time owned by Sotan. *Ikkanbari* refers to a particular type of papier-mache or papier-mache finish made from Japanese paper and lacquer, and named after the Chinese immigrant lacquer artisan known by the Japanese name Hiki Ikkan (1578-1657). This artisan's works caught Sotan's fancy, and ever since, Ikkan and his heirs have served as masters of this technique for the Sen family. On the inside of the lid of this black tea container is Sotan's cipher, in vermillion lacquer. Height, 7.5 cm.; diameter, 5.3 cm. Property of the Fujita Art Museum, Osaka.



large utensil stand (*daisu*) finished in dark green lacquer with bright red trimming [photo on p. 20], were dedicated by Sotan to Empress Tofukumon'in.

It is believed that the men who created the opportunity for Sotan to come into such close contact with Empress Tofukumon'in were Konoe Nobuhiro (1599-1649) and Miyake Boyo (1580-1649). Nobuhiro was the fourth son of Emperor Goyozei, and the Retired Emperor Gomizuno'o was his nearest elder brother. In 1623, Nobuhiro became Chief Advisor (*kampaku*) to his own father, Emperor Goyozei, and in 1645, took the tonsure and assumed the name Ozan. Sotan often called at his residence and in turn invited him to chanoyu gatherings at Fushin'an. Sotan was also a frequent guest at chanoyu gatherings held by Ozan's son, Hisatsugu (1622-1653). Hisatsugu notes in his diary that from the time he was about twenty, he invited Sotan to chanoyu gatherings so that he could demonstrate to Sotan his aesthetic refinement. At the time of this diary entry, Sotan was over sixty years old. As time passed, their relationship apparently deepened, for about ten years later, on the twelfth day of the fifth month, 1651, records show that Hisatsugu hosted Sotan and Sotan's son, Sosa, at a chanoyu gathering in which all the utensils which he used were items which had at one time belonged to Rikyu.

A letter from Karasumaru Mitsuhiro (1579-1638) indicates that Sotan was also a friend of this influential nobleman. The letter, dated the fifth day of the fifth month, year unspecified but presumed by some historians to be 1636, was to thank Sotan for the latter's earlier communication, which had been accompanied by a verse praising Mitsuhiro's efforts at the opening ceremonies of Toshogu shrine in Nikko, and celebrating the latter's safe return to Kyoto.¹⁰

Over and beyond the dignitaries whom I have mentioned, the one person who exerted a great influence both upon Sotan's chanoyu and upon the pattern of his life itself—perhaps to the same degree as did his early spiritual guide, Shun'oku, and his childhood training in the Zen environment of Daitokuji—was Horin Shosho (1592-1668), the priest of Rokuonji temple (popularly known as Kinkakuji, the Temple of the Golden Pavilion). Horin enjoyed the favor of the Retired Emperor Gomizuno'o and frequented Gomizuno'o's salon.¹¹ In the *Kakumei Ki* (Records of Passing Through the World), Horin's diary, it is recorded that he was an intimate not only of noble families, but also, in addition to Sotan who practiced wabi-cha, was on good terms with such masters of daimyo-cha as Kobori Enshu and Katagiri Sekishu, and with Kanamori Sowa (1584-1656), master in the tradition of chanoyu for the nobility (*koshitsu no chanoyu*).

10. The Toshogu was completed in the fourth month of 1636, under the direction of Tokugawa Iemitsu, to commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of Tokugawa Ieyasu's death. At the opening ceremonies, the sacred Shinto sword and mirror were offered by three men from Kyoto, one of whom was this Karasumaru Mitsuhiro.

11. For information regarding the Retired Emperor Gomizuno'o's salon, see Kumakura Isao, "Kan'ei Culture," in *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 42 (Summer 1985).



A note from Sotan to Donyu, asking him to make a teabowl. Year unknown. Mounted as a hanging scroll. Central area: height, 15.0 cm.; width, 41.2 cm. Property of the Raku Museum, Kyoto.

There is a red Raku teabowl still in existence, made by Donyu (also known as Nonko; 1599-1656), the third generation Raku master, and named *Horin*. It was created upon Sotan's request to Donyu, for whom Sotan had a great affection. No doubt Sotan presented this teabowl to the priest Horin at some time, conferring the priest's name on it when he did so. When Sotan invited Horin to chanoyu gatherings, he unfailingly chose to have him come for between-meal chanoyu gatherings (*kashi no cha*). At such gatherings, no one would expect any particular delicacies. And indeed, Sotan's table was lacking in extravagant cuisine. We can say that he invited the priest to enjoy not fine cuisine but human companionship. Horin could always enjoy delicacies when he went out visiting elsewhere; it was for that very reason that he looked forward to Sotan's style of chanoyu.

Sotan is known to have attended a number of chanoyu gatherings hosted by Horin, in the company of one of his own most important friends and disciples in the wabi-cha tradition, Yamada Sohen (1627-1708). This Sohen was later to become one of the representative chajin of the mid-Edo period.

Another of Sotan's closest companions was Miyake Boyo, whose name was mentioned earlier with regard to his part in introducing Sotan to the court. Boyo was most famous as a Confucian scholar who gave lectures at the palace and before the nobility on the philosopher and his works. His debut as a chanoyu master, to judge from a number of sources, took place in about 1632. Boyo had studied Confucianism under the tutelage of the aristocratic poet-scholar Fujiwara Seika (1561-1628), and maintained contact with the nobility. It is said that he received a large tract of land in Takagamine, near Hon'ami

Koetsu's artists' village, from Emperor Goyozei. It may be imagined that Boyo shared his knowledge of Confucianism with Sotan, and in turn, learned chanoyu from him.

Though no sources record any relationship with the cultural luminary of the age, Shokado Shojo (1584-1639), we find secondary evidence of some contact from the fact that a portrait scroll of Sotan was painted by him [photo on p. 8]. In this work, Sotan appears to be no more than fifty years old, and is depicted as a slightly plump and friendly looking man. The portrait was made to resemble Bodhidharma, whom Shokado often liked to paint. The inscription on the portrait is by Suigan Somin (1608-1664), the 195th abbot of Daitokuji, and is dated the twenty-sixth day, ninth month, autumn of Jo'o 1 (1652). We must conclude that Sotan requested the inscription some decades after the portrait was painted. The inscription may be translated:

The old man Pang is the unassailable fortress of the Buddha
Law.

With a limited means, he keeps a frugal household.

The riches of the host [of a tea gathering]: he should despise them.

Once he makes tea and lays a fire in the brazier, the guests
are never-ending.

Suigan is here referring to Sotan as the "old man Pang (Jap., Ho)" of Japan. Pang was a famous Chinese layman who experienced enlightenment under the guidance of the great Zen master known in Japan as Baso Doitsu (709-788), and who was hailed as the Chinese reincarnation of the Indian sage Vimalakirti (Jap., Yuima), also a layman. Suigan likens Sotan to "the unassailable fortress of the Buddhist Law," saying that he despises wealth and honor, that his household is always modest, and that his heart is quiet and composed. Every time he burns charcoal and makes tea, guests come continuously to enjoy his hospitality. From what we know, this verse aptly describes the circumstances of Sotan's life in his old age.

One chanoyu master whom Sotan did not regard with favor was Kanamori Sowa, for he regarded Sowa's style of chanoyu as something that he could never reconcile with the wabi-cha tradition. We can hazard that Sotan felt what might be termed rivalry with Sowa, who was known in court circles as "Elegant Sowa," as opposed to Sotan's own reputation as "Beggar Sotan." The straightforward Sotan was an open critic of Sowa's chanoyu, referring to it as "Kanamori's lying chanoyu."

It is known from the *Kaoku Yuzurijo* (Records of House Inheritance) now in the possession of the Omotesenke school of chanoyu, that in 1646, the sixty-eight-year-old Sotan willed the tea house and residence of Fushin'an to his third son, Sosa. [This property and the lineage extending from Sosa eventually came to be known as the Omotesenke.] He himself, accompanied by his fourth son, Senso, moved into quarters behind this as a temporary domicile

while he began work on his official retirement quarters. [These quarters and the lineage extending from Senso eventually came to be known as the Urasen-ke.] A letter to Sosa dated the eighteenth day of the fifth month reveals that within these new quarters, he intended to construct two tearooms—one, four-and-a-half tatami mats in floorspace, and the other, one-and-a-half mats—using the sizeable capital presented to him by the goldsmith Goto Shosai of Edo. Sotan seems to have changed his plans, however, and eventually built a one-and-three-quarter-mat room, which later came to be named Konnichian (the Today Hut), and a larger room for entertaining the nobility, which was named Kan'untei (Cold Cloud Arbor). In the *Kakumei Ki*, we see that he invited Horin Shojo of Kinkakuji to the opening ceremony on the twenty-eighth day of the fifth month, 1648, and the *Matsuya Kaiki* reveals that he later received Matsuya Hisashige as a guest there on the fifth day of the fourth month, 1649. Probably some of Sotan's other close associates were also invited to partake of tea in the small room, Konnichian, and a kaiseki meal in the Kan'untei. After discharging his responsibilities by finding employment for his sons and disciples, Sotan wanted to lead a life far removed from the ordinary world; a life steeped in wabi. Yet he found himself unable to make exclusive use of the extremely wabi style one-and-three-quarter-mat room, obliged as he was on occasion to entertain such people as Empress Tofukumon'in and Konoe Nobuhiro Ozan. Thus he decided to maintain the Kan'untei for the evocation of the mood of *kirei-sabi* (antiquated elegance) as practiced in the Enshu style of chanoyu.

Many other details of Sotan's chanoyu reflect the dual influences of wabi and kirei-sabi in his life. For example, although most of his preferred chanoyu utensils have a strong Zen flavor, even more so than those of Rikyu, a few relatively ornate objects are included. Conversely, even the large eight-mat Kan'untei, with its shoin elements and transom said to have been designed after a comb which Empress Tofukumon'in once gave to Sotan, has a ceiling skillfully constructed with *shin* (formal), *gyo* (semi-formal), and *so* (informal) panels in the usual wabi style, and the room can be used with an arrangement of utensils suitable for a small wabi-style room. The unusual design of the fusuma placed where a wall would ordinarily be, which gives the possibility of replacing the fusuma with reed blinds in summer, is also a unique feature of this room. The fusuma of Kan'untei, depicting the "Eight Sages Drinking *Sake*," were painted by one of the greatest artists of the day, Kano Tan'yu (1602-1674), who admired Sotan's style of chanoyu and probably often visited him when he was in Kyoto.

On the other hand, the Konnichian tearoom, with its extremely limited space, exudes a distinct Zen flavor as the physical boundaries of the room are transcended and another, wider cosmos is experienced. It is said that the name Konnichian came from an exchange of notes between the priest Seigan Soi (1588-1661), 170th abbot of Daitokuji, and Sotan. Seigan left a note at Sotan's tearoom saying, "I am a lazy one, but without saying 'tomorrow,'

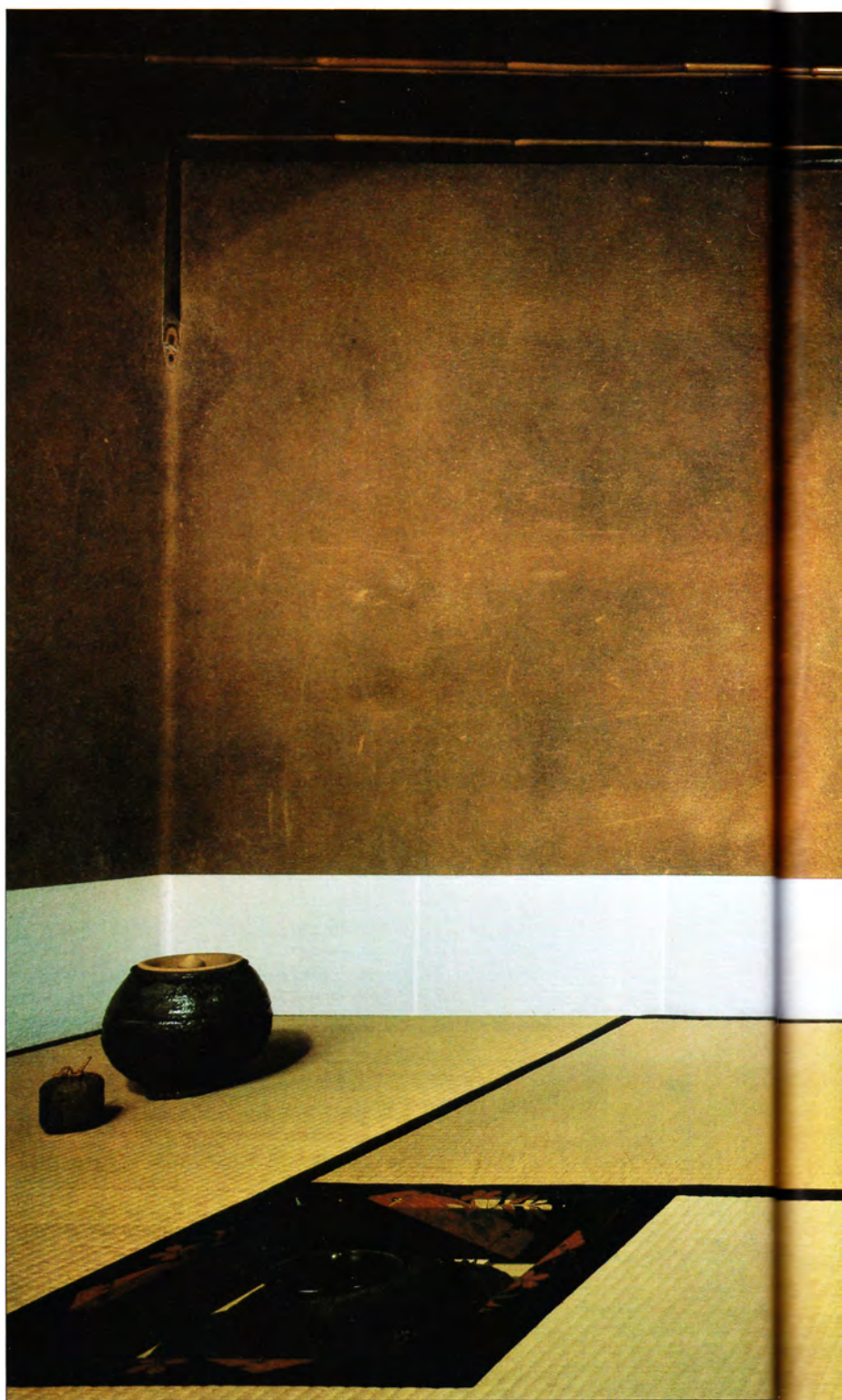


Interior view of the tearoom Konnichian, the "Today Hut." Built by Sotan in 1646, this tiny, extremely wabi style room, only a little over six feet square in floorspace, is a symbol of Urasenke. Seen here is the north wall, as viewed from the area just inside the *nijiriguchi* "crawl-in" portal from which the guest would enter. This wall serves as a *kabedoko* "wall alcove." To the side of the *kabedoko* is the *sadoguchi*, the host's doorway. The scroll features a rendition, by the tenth-generation Urasenke grand tea master, Nintokusai (1770-1826), of the priest Seigan Soi's note which is said to have inspired the name of the tearoom. The writing may be translated, "A lazy priest knows not about the morrow." This tearoom is designated an Important Cultural Property. Photo courtesy of the Chado Research Center, Kyoto.



Interior view of the tearoom Kan'untei, the "Cold Cloud Arbor." Built by Sotan in 1646. To the upper right can be seen the transom said to have been designed after a comb given to Sotan by Empress Tofukumon'in. The fusuma have a painting of "Eight Sages Drinking Sake," by Kano Tan'yu. Though this room has the mood of "antiquated elegance" (*kirei-sabi*), it also features many wabi elements. Designated an Important Cultural Property. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.

Pp. 28-29: Interior view of the tearoom Yuin, "Further Retreat." Believed to have been built by Sotan in 1653, this room is said to be modeled after Sen Rikyu's 'ideal' four-and-a-half-mat tearoom. Designated an Important Cultural Property. In the tokonoma is displayed a scroll with poem and abstract painting of Daruma (Bodhidharma) by Sotan, and a white camellia in a single-tiered bamboo vase named *Daisbi* (Great Teacher), made by Sotan. The container for powdered tea, in front of the fresh-water jar on the host's mat at the left, bears Sen Rikyu's cipher. All the other items seen here are utensils known to have been favored by Sotan. Photo courtesy of Shogakukan Inc.





came today to see you. It was regrettable [that I couldn't see you]." To this Sotan replied, "Since you came, I wish that rather than tomorrow, I could have met you today." The name of the present Urasenke family residence, Konnichian, derives from this tearoom. It is indeed a place which expresses the chanoyu spirit of that free and untrammelled human being, Sotan.

Sotan next built the Yuin (Further Retreat) tearoom, modeled after Rikyu's four-and-a-half-mat tearoom, and gave Konnichian to his son Senso. Sotan died on the nineteenth day of the twelfth month, 1658, at the age of eighty, leaving behind this farewell verse:

Born out of thin air,
Void as thin air,
It comes.
Void again, void as it goes,
The sound of the bell.

In the *Sotan Denju* (Sotan's Initiation to the Mysteries [of Chanoyu]), Sotan wrote about his chanoyu as follows:

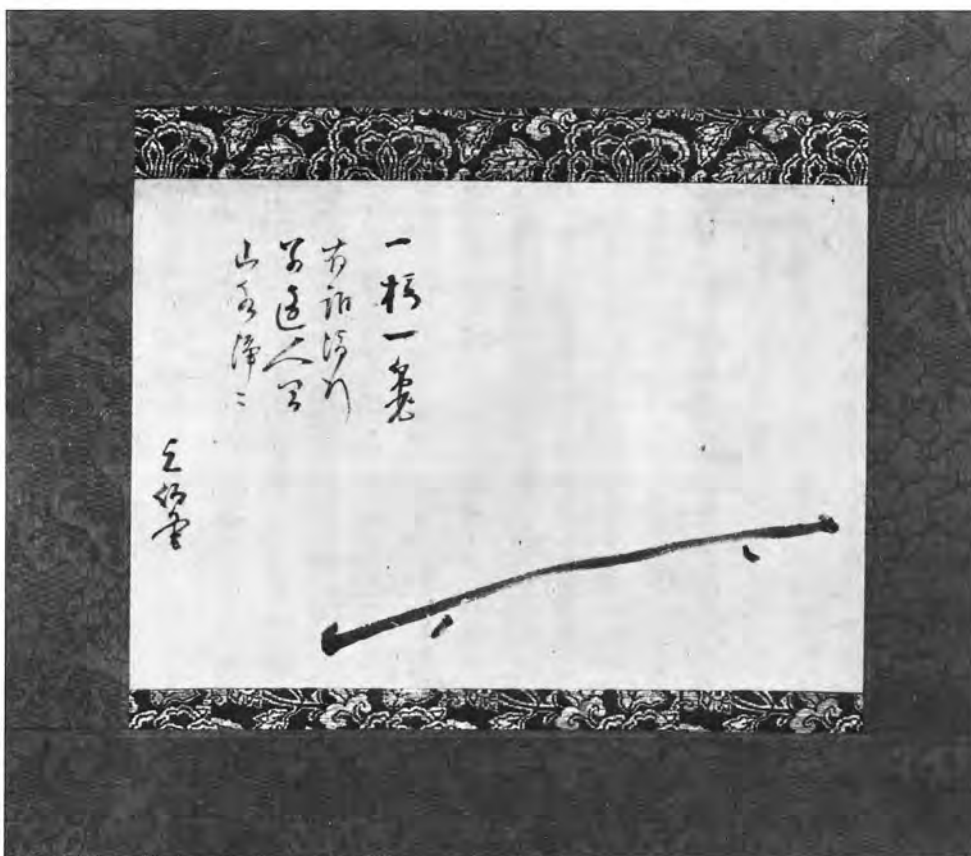
To me the real meaning of chanoyu is to know the fundamental principle of oneself and to practice in a manner proper to one's means. While it is good to have all the necessary utensils, it is essential to take care that you do not exceed that which is suitable for a particular occasion. You should avoid overdecoration.

It was with this spirit that he practiced his wabi style of chanoyu, and as Rikyu's successor in this tradition, continued to refine it. In short, the soul of Sotan's chanoyu was to discern "what is enough," and not to exceed one's own means and capacity.

A passage in the *Chawa Shigetsu Shu* seems to summarize most aptly his personal lifestyle which itself expressed the spirit of wabi:

... the only one close is Rikyu's grandson Gempaku Sotan, who has never in his whole life chased after fame and fortune, but for seventy-odd years now has always hung a bamboo blind in his window to lend a note of purity. On snowy mornings or moonlit nights, whenever it pleases him he invites his tea friends; when he makes it his own pleasure, he sits alone. And if by chance someone should happen by to inquire about the Way, he answers that since chanoyu originally derived from Zen, why point anyone toward any other Way?

Among the picture scrolls which Sotan painted, there is a small work entitled *Hashi* (The Bridge). The upper left-hand corner bears the epigraph,



Hasbi, "The Bridge." Poem and painting by Sotan. Ink on paper. Central area: length, 24.4 cm.; width, 34.6 cm. Photo courtesy of the Chado Research Center, Kyoto.

One bridge, one brushstroke—
 Who can be found to cross it?
 People are always parting from each other,
 But the mountains and rivers are always pure and
 unchanging.

The bridge, drawn with a single stroke, is more than just an inked line of freshness and power. It is rather an unconstrained stroke, firmly placed down in a single breath from its beginning to its well-defined ending. When I look at this picture, I sense Sotan's recognition of the evanescence of things. ㇿ

Translated by Rebecca Otowa

Ma: A Cultural Paradigm

Richard B. Pilgrim

Ma (lit., “interval,” “between”), together with the various meanings that it carries, points to a central value system—even a cultural paradigm as a fundamental way of “seeing” things—within the culture of Japan. This central value system is found expressed most consistently and explicitly in the traditional arts of Japan—performing, visual, or literary arts—and in that context, is simultaneously both deeply religious and deeply aesthetic. While this particular paradigm and its artistic expression can be found in other cultures (notably, traditional China), it so permeates Japanese culture that it could be argued that it is one significant element within a generalized Japanese cultural identity.

What is *Ma*?

The elusive character of *ma* is precisely one of its central features. The term refers, at least within the context of the arts, to a certain poetic sense of reality, a certain poetic “world.” This is perhaps best elucidated by the original Chinese character for *ma*, 間: a combination of the character for gate or doorway, 門, and that for moon, 月. It is as though the very word itself invites one to experience the moonlight as it filters through the gate. (Later, in both China and Japan, the moon component was replaced by sun, 日.)

Speaking about the meaning of the word *ma*, the contemporary *noh* actor, Komparu Kunio, says:

This word [*ma*] can be translated into English as space, spacing, interval, gap, blank, room, pause, rest, time, timing, or opening. . . . Of course both understandings of *ma*, as time and as space, are correct. The concept apparently first came from China . . . and was used in reference only to space, but as it evolved in Japanese it came to signify time as well. . . . Because it includes three meanings, time, space, and space-time, the word *ma* at first seems vague, but it is the multiplicity of meanings and at the same time the consciousness of the single word that makes *ma* a unique conceptual term, one without parallel in other languages.¹

In general usage, however, the word *ma* means “interval”; the space or time between things or events. Thus it is used in compounds to suggest mea-

1. Kunio Komparu, *The Noh Theatre: Principles and Perspectives* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill/Tankosha, 1983), pp. 70f.

In the interest of consistency, the editor has taken the liberty of spelling the word *noh* as such, and the word *ma* in lower case, throughout the article.



The gate in the *roji* garden at Urasenke. The very word *ma* "invites one to experience the moonlight as it filters through the gate." In chanoyu, passing through this gate along the "dewy path," one enters a world apart from the common and the mundane. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.

surement; by itself it can refer to a room as the space between the walls, or to a rest in music as the pause between the notes or sounds. By the same token it can also mean timing, as in the comic recitation art called *rakugo*, where *ma* is quite explicitly a part of the craft and skill.

By extension *ma* also means “among.” For example in the compound word for human being, *ningen*, 人間, *ma* (pronounced *gen* here) implies that persons (*nin*) become human when they stand among or in relationship to others. As such, the word *ma* takes on a dynamic meaning having much to do with the relativity of things or events. With this it also carries an experiential connotation; for persons to stand in relationship to other persons is for them to experience each other. In the phrase *ma ga warui* (“the *ma* is bad”), for example, there resides the notion of being embarrassed.

The word therefore carries both objective and subjective meaning; that is, it can be discovered in the objective, descriptive world and can also refer to particular modes of human experience. The latter element is the point at which *ma* becomes a religio-aesthetic paradigm and brings about a collapse of distinctive, objective worlds, and even of space and time themselves. To quote the contemporary architect, Isozaki Arata:

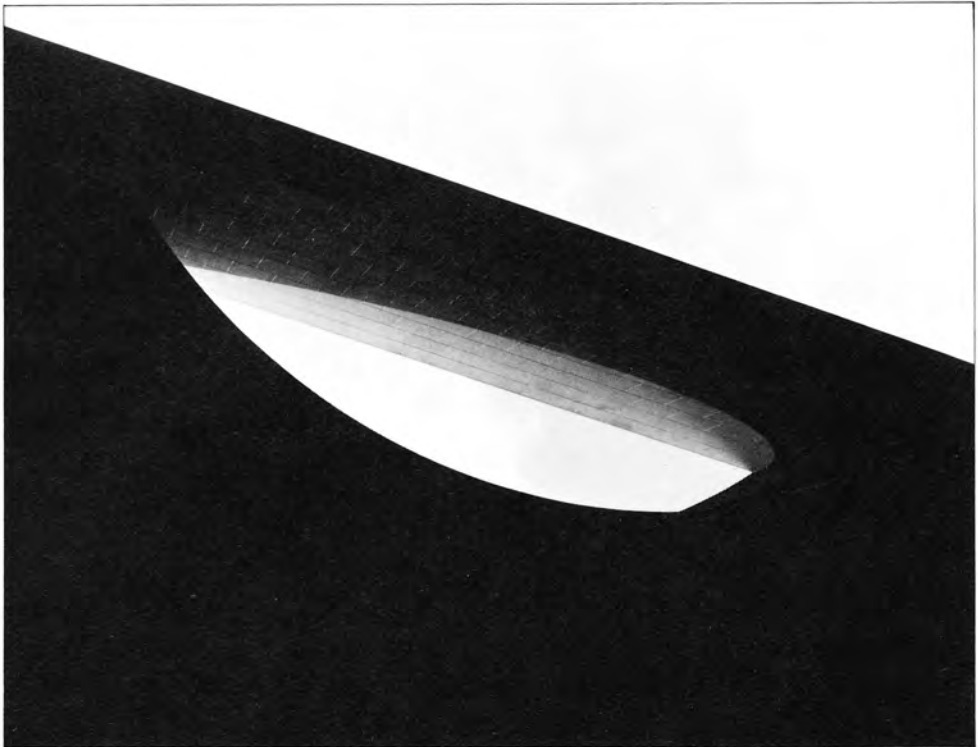
While in the West the space-time concept gave rise to absolute fixed images of a homogenous and infinite continuum, as presented in Descartes, in Japan space and time were never fully separated but were conceived as correlative and omnipresent. . . . Space could not be perceived independently of the element of time [and] time was not abstracted as a regulated, homogenous flow, but rather was believed to exist only in relation to movements or space. . . . Thus, space was perceived as identical with the events or phenomena occurring in it; that is, space was recognized only in its relation to time-flow.²

The collapse of space and time as two distinct and abstract “objects” can only take place in a particular mode of experience which “empties” both the objective and the subjective worlds; only in an aesthetic, immediate, relational experience can space be “perceived as identical with the events or phenomena occurring in it.” Therefore, although *ma* may be objectively located as intervals in space and time, its meaning ultimately presses beyond that to a deeper, poetic level.

The Arts of *Ma*

One *locus classicus* for *ma* in the traditional arts of Japan is the *noh* drama. It is specifically referred to by the founder and theoretician of *noh*, Zeami

2. Arata Isozaki, *et. al.*, *MA: Space-Time in Japan* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, n.d.), p. 13.



Aperture in the eave of the main office of the Fukuoka Bank, Fukuoka City. Architectural design by KISHO KUROKAWA architect & associates, 1975. "Although *ma* may be objectively located as intervals in space and time, its meaning ultimately presses beyond that to a deeper, poetic level." Photograph by Ogawa Yasuhiro.

Motokiyo (1364?-1443), who says the following in his writing called *Kakyo* (The Mirror of the Flower):

Sometimes spectators of the noh say, "the moments of 'no-action' are the most enjoyable." This is an art which the actor keeps secret. Dancing and singing, movements, and the different types of miming are all acts performed by the body. Moments of "no-action" occur in between (*hima*). When we examine why such moments without action are enjoyable, we find that it is due to the underlying spiritual strength of the actor which unremittingly holds the attention. He does not relax the tension when the dancing or singing come to an end or at intervals between the dialogue and different types of miming. [Not abandoning this mind/heart in the various intervals] he maintains an unwavering inner strength. This feeling of inner strength will faintly reveal itself and bring enjoyment. However, it is undesirable for the actor to permit this inner strength to become obvious to the audience. If it is obvious, it becomes an act and is no longer "no-action." The actions before and after an interval (*hima*) of "no-action" must be linked by entering the state of mindlessness in which one conceals even from oneself one's intent.³

Concerning this teaching by Zeami, Komparu says that "Zeami is suggesting implicitly the existence of *ma*. He is saying that noh acting is a matter of doing just enough to create the *ma* that is a blank space-time where nothing is done, and that *ma* is the core of the expression, where the true interest lies."⁴

This "no-action" or "moment between"—this empty *ma* in space-time—is therefore a still or empty center out of which the deepest meaning, enjoyment, and interest arises. This "negative space," as Komparu calls it,⁵ has aesthetic power for it "unremittingly holds the attention" of the audience and yet presents no specific, descriptive content. It is a gap in time which is neither a contrived and self-conscious "act" of no-action nor a meaningless pause in the otherwise eventful sounds and sights on the stage. Rather, it is made significant and powerful, both religiously and aesthetically, by revealing the actor's "inner strength"—an inner strength which, in turn, is grounded in the Buddhist concept of "no-mind," the ultimate basis of artistic creativity. The *ma*, or

3. Nose Asaji, ed., *Zeami Jurokubu Shu Hyoshaku*, Vol. I (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1949), pp. 375f. As translated in W.T. DeBary, ed., *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, Vol. I (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 285. Words in parentheses and brackets added by author from original text. The word *hima* is an alternate word for *ma* here.

4. Komparu, p. 73.

5. Ibid., pp. xx-xxi.



Scene from the noh play *Teika*. In noh, the *ma* or moment of "no-action" is "a still or empty center out of which the deepest meaning, enjoyment, and interest arises." Photograph by Konma Kiyonori.

empty moments between the actions, are thus gates out of which the "light" of this art shines. They are pregnant moments of religio-aesthetic power.

These intervals of no-action do not, of course, happen in a vacuum. They are created, in part, by the forms of action which come before and after them—actions which themselves are based in no-mind, and which thereby are "linked by entering the state of mindlessness [no-mind]." The pregnant interval thus works in concert with the figures and forms of the art both to link those forms and to break through their sequencing and beauty of appearance into a deeper level beyond appearances.

It is precisely in this latter context that Zeami, in his *Shikado Shō* (Book on Attaining the Way of the Flower), makes an important distinction between the essence and the performance of noh:

We must distinguish in the art of the noh between essence and performance. If the essence is the flower, the performance is its fragrance. Or they may be compared to the moon and the light which it sheds. When the essence has been thoroughly understood, the performance develops of itself. Among those who witness noh plays, the connoisseurs see with their minds, while the untutored see with their eyes. What the mind sees is the essence; what the eyes see is the performance.⁶

The true power of noh is a spiritual power which lies beyond superficial appearances. The audience is being asked to see with their own spirit that which lies beyond the visual aspects of the performance, however beautiful and interesting those aspects may be. The intervals of no-action therefore link the appearances while also helping one to "see" at a different level or in a different way.

All of this is, of course, primarily based upon particular modes of experience. *Ma* does not exist, or at least does not function, without a certain kind of experiential sensitivity—one which is both religious and aesthetic. The essence of noh, as of many other traditional art forms in Japan, is enlightenment, or the Buddhist experience of no-mind. The externals of the performance, in the case of noh, are the appearances of things as they arise from that experience. Thus we have both the forms and non-forms (*ma*) of the art "faintly revealing" the depths.

While noh provides one *locus classicus* for the expression of *ma*, there is evidence of the existence of *ma* in painting, chanoyu, and calligraphy. This *ma* has been described as "imaginary space" filled more by one's own mind than by an objective content.⁷ Komparu, in fact, relates *ma* to the stylistic

6. Nose, p. 461; DeBary, p. 296. Nose makes it clear, here, that words such as mind and essence must be understood Buddhistically and spiritually.

7. See especially Itoh Teiji, *Nihon Design Ron* (Tokyo: Kashima Kenkyu Shuppan Kai, 1974), pp. 112-119; and Yoshimura Teiji, *Nihonbi no Tokushitsu* (Tokyo: Kashima Kenkyu Shuppan Kai, 1980), pp. 178-199.

distinction (which originated in calligraphy, but is not limited thereto) between the *shin* ("correct" or formal), *gyo* ("going" or semi-formal), and *so* ("grass" or informal) styles. In each of these artistic styles the intervals or gaps serve as an empty space within which the forms of the art function. Although present in the *shin* and *gyo* styles, one best sees this function of *ma* in the *so* style, in which the visual forms of the art tend to be least descriptive.⁸ This style leaves more space for the imagination to enter and for the viewer to be taken beyond appearances. Such an art is less symbolic of some specific content or meaning than it is a sign of an immediate experience or atmosphere.

Another traditional art form in which the idea of *ma* plays an important part is poetry. Much of Japanese poetry has avoided a "filled-up," narrative, descriptive style. Rather, to crystalize a specific experiential moment—one with clear overtones of an imaginative, unarticulated reality—the poetic forms have often manifested gaps in the flow of words and images. A classic example can be found in Matsuo Basho's (1644-1694) well-known haiku:

<i>furuike ya</i>	Old pond!
<i>kawazu tobikomu</i>	Frog jumps in;
<i>mizu no oto</i>	Sound of water.

While the images cohere around a particular situation, the phrases are terse and grammatically unjoined, creating gaps. If sensitively read, however, the poem pulls one into the rich, imaginative spaces in between and not merely into a narrated event.

In light of this, it is interesting to note that the poet Fujiwara Teika (1162-1241) once said, "Excellent poetry is not to be found among 'related verses'. . . . It is precisely because these verses are all too predictable, each phrase taking up so surely after the previous one. . . . In 'unrelated verses,' however, each phrase stands apart from the next, the better for the unexpected to come about."⁹ The scholars of Japanese poetry, Robert Brower and Earl Miner, point out the effect of Teika's use of the uncommon or unrelated images when they say: "His unexpected rearrangement of nouns and verbs works with the allusions [to more ancient literature] to create a world of imaginative, mysterious beauty out of the natural order of time and place."¹⁰

Such a poetic process dislocates a descriptive or "natural" order of things; it breaks, cracks, and otherwise creates holes in the mundane flow of time and space. As the architect Kurokawa Kisho says of such non-linked poetic images: "The space between the images gives the impression of non-sensual ambiguity and multiple images. . . . The gap left unfilled and undone becomes a transitional, complex, silent, multivalent space."¹¹

8. Komparu, pp. 71f. (Cf. Itoh, *Nihon* . . . , pp. 120-134).

9. As quoted in Kurokawa Kisho, "Rikyu Gray: An Open-ended Aesthetic," *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 36 (1983), pp. 42-43.

10. Robert Brower and Earl Miner, *Japanese Court Poetry* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), p. 277.

11. Kurokawa, "Rikyu Gray: An Open-ended Aesthetic," pp. 43-44.



“Patchwork” poetry cards (*tsugi-shikishi*). Calligraphy, in the *so* or “grass” style, attributed to Ono no Michikaze (also known as Ono no Tofu; 894-966). Mid-Heian period. Ink on paper. The *so* style “leaves . . . space for the imagination to enter. . . .” Designated an Important Cultural Property. Height, 13.4 cm; width, 26.5 cm. Property of The Goto Museum, Tokyo.

Another poetic example of this affirmation of spaces can be found in *renga* (linked verse). Writing of the Buddhist influence on this type of poetry, Gary Ebersole says that the "Buddhist essence of *renga* . . . is not to be located in the [literary] universes or scenes . . . created by the semantic relations posited between two links by the poets and the listener/reader, but in the space between the linked poems—that is, in the dissolution of the literary universe."¹² The same could be said for *noh* drama: in both, narrative story and action give way to a deeper message which shines through the cracks and gaps in those forms.

It is important to emphasize the Buddhist grounding for much of this affirmation of spaces in between. The "Buddhist essence" in this case is the direct realization of the impermanence of things. Just as the descriptive, literal world is in constant flux, and the experiential awakening to that fact "empties" one into another perspective, so also the poetry is "linked" precisely through unlinking so that no thing and no narrative sequence abides. In Buddhism the realization of impermanence is synonymous with emptiness experience. Emptiness experience, in turn, is "middle-way" or "between-ness" experience which abides nowhere and constantly both deconstructs and reconstructs the world. The *renga* poet Shinkei (1406-1475) said: "The mind of the true poet is not caught upon existence or nothingness . . . but is like the mind-field of the Buddha."¹³

The theme of impermanence and non-abiding, with the resultant poetry of dislocation, finds expression in the poetic lifestyle as well as in poetry itself. Basho, like many before him, saw the poetic life as one of wandering dislocation without a fixed abode, quite literally casting himself to the wind to let it blow him where it would. In fact Basho referred to himself as a "wind-blown hermit," and his life exemplified the detached awareness of the immediately passing, impermanent world grounded in *mu* ("no-thingness") or *ku* ("emptiness"). In the same way, the poetic art arising on this ground is dislocated; that is, it cannot be located in a literal, descriptive, narrative world, or the "literary universes" referred to above. Poetry breaks, cracks, and opens that world to another perspective—a perspective of direct, non-dual experience.

*shizukasa ya
iwa ni shimiuru
semi no koe*

Quiet!
Into rock absorbing
Cicada sounds.¹⁴

A very different place in which we can find a rather explicit affirmation of *ma* is in the film art of Ozu Yasujiro (d. 1963). Ozu is said to have funda-

12. Gary Ebersole, "The Buddhist Ritual Use of Linked Poetry in Medieval Japan," *Eastern Buddhist* XVI 12 (Autumn 1983), p. 55.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 65f.

14. From Matsuo Basho's *Oku no Hosonagabito* as translated by Cid Corman and Kamaike Susumu, *Back Roads to Far Towns* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1968), p. 99.

mentally directed “silences and voids,” empty shots or codas which contribute nothing to the narrative line or character development.¹⁵

Ozu's films diverge from the Hollywood paradigm in that they generate spatial structures which are not motivated by the cause/effect chain of the narrative. . . . The motivation [for their use] is purely 'artistic.' Space, constructed alongside and sometimes against the cause/effect sequence, becomes 'foregrounded' to a degree that renders it at times the primary structural level of the film. . . . At times spaces with only the most tenuous narrative associations [and no place in the cause/effect chain] are dominant; narrative elements may enter these spaces as overtones.¹⁶

At least one commentator on Ozu's work directly links this to *ma*,¹⁷ and the similarity to what has already been discussed above is obvious. Particularly suggestive, however, is the relationship to the *shin, gyo, so* structure; it is precisely an art in the *so* style that “foregrounds” the empty space-time and uses the narrative forms of the art as “overtones.” The light that thus shines through is the meaning and power of such “negative spaces” that dissolve the narrative, cause-and-effect world being presented.

The realization that Ozu's gravestone carries the single word *mu*, “nothing,” on it adds an exclamation point to the connections of much of his art to what has been discussed here regarding *noh* and poetry. The film critic Paul Schrader, in fact, cites Ozu's work as a clear example of Zen art in which the empty shots cut away from the action to moments of unrelated, non-active, and usually natural scenes in order to invoke *mu* more explicitly (just as in Zeami's moments of no-action). Schrader calls Ozu's films “rituals which create the eternal present, give weight to the emptiness, and make it possible to evoke the *furyu* (artistic/aesthetic effect).”¹⁸

This is not to say that the action, themes, and narrative of the films are unimportant. However, the empty shots function to dislocate that world of meaning and action, emptying yet opening it to another level of experience and reality.

Schrader goes on to say that while the empty shots express *mu*, Ozu's “films are structured (finally) between action and emptiness, between indoors and outdoors, between scene and coda.”¹⁹ I would emphasize the word “between” in this comment. The *ma* of an art is not merely found in the intervals

15. Kathy Geist, “West Looks East: The Influence of Yasujiro Ozu on Wim Wenders and Peter Handke,” *Art Journal* (Fall 1983), p. 234.

16. Kristin Thompson and Bardwell Smith, “Space and Narrative in the Films of Ozu,” *Screen* 17/2 (1976), p. 45. Parenthetical comments added by Pilgrim.

17. Geist, pp. 234f. (Cf. Ochiai Kiyohiko, “Eizo Geijutsu no Ma” in Minami Hiroshi, ed., *Ma no Kenkyu: Nihonjin no Biteki Hyogen* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1983), pp. 226f.

18. Paul Schrader, *The Transcendental Style in Film* (Berkeley: University of California, 1972), pp. 33f.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 29.



Scene from *Banshun*, "Late Spring." 1949 Shochiku film by Ozu Yasujiro. The characteristic silences and voids in Ozu's films "function to dislocate that world of meaning and action, emptying yet opening it to another level of experience and reality."

of space or time, although those are important. *Ma* resides in that between-ness which is continually breaking open the literal, descriptive world and inviting direct experience of the inarticulate, deconstructed, "empty" reality of immediate (non-dual) experience—something I believe F.S.C. Northrop meant by the "immediately experienced, undifferentiated, aesthetic continuum."²⁰ As such, *ma* also functions to bridge the forms of an art; to stand between and thus not opt for either form or non-form.

To shift to yet another art form, we are now in a position to better understand what certain contemporary architects mean by *ma*—especially architects such as Isozaki Arata. Generally speaking, *ma* is understood by these people to affect architectural design in a number of ways: the importance of open, bridging spaces; form defining space rather than space serving form; simplicity, asymmetry, flowing, changing forms, etc. All such characteristics are, Isozaki says, true of all the "arts of *ma*."

A particularly interesting and useful discussion of *ma* in the context of architecture and city planning can be found in an article by Gunter Nitschke which is, in turn, based in large part on the work of Isozaki and others. Nitschke describes the various meanings of *ma* as: 1) having objectively to do with the four dimensions of length, length/width, area/volume, and time; and 2) having subjectively to do with human experience. This latter element, in particular, brings us face to face with *ma* as a particular way of seeing, experiencing, or being aware of the world. Nitschke suggests that this aspect of *ma* has to do with the "quality of an event . . . as perceived by an individual."²¹

In fact for Nitschke *ma* is ultimately "place" or "place-making," in that it includes not only form and non-form, but also those things as imaginatively created or perceived in immediate experience. Such place-making is not merely the apprehending subject's awareness of an objective, three-dimensional space continuum comprised of an arrangement of things; rather, it is "the simultaneous awareness of the intellectual concepts of *form + non-form*, *object + space*, coupled with subjective experience . . . it is the thing that takes place in the imagination of the human who experiences these elements. Therefore one could define *ma* as 'experiential' place, being nearer to *mysterious atmosphere* caused by the external distribution of symbols."²²

Such experiential places are, by their very nature, characterized by a dynamic, changing, directly experienced immediacy; it is a sense of reality or a paradigm better characterized as poetic immediacy than as being objective or subjective. It is in keeping with what Joseph Kitagawa has described as a "unitary meaning structure" in Japan characterized by "poetic, immediate, and simultaneous awareness" within which past and future, time and space, are collapsed into the present, and "time [is] not perceived as an independent

20. F.S.C. Northrop, *The Meeting of East and West* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1946) chpt. IX.

21. Gunter Nitschke, "'Ma': The Japanese Sense of 'Place' in Old and New Architecture and Planning," *Architectural Design* 36/3 (March 1966), p. 152.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

reality from nature [or space]."²³ It is an opening of oneself to the immediacy of the ever-changing moment beyond distinctions and beyond the "this and that" world. It is a world between subject and object, subjectivism and objectivism. It is, as Isozaki put it, a place in which space is "perceived as identical with the events or phenomena occurring in it; that is, space [as] recognized only in its relation to time flow."

Another contemporary architect interested in *ma* is Kurokawa Kisho. Emphasizing a "world between," he discusses the veranda of a typical Japanese home as exemplifying the between-ness where outside and inside, nature and man, are merged; boundaries, distinctions, and oppositions blurred. Generalizing upon this example and idea, he talks about Japanese culture as a "culture of grays" or a culture of "Rikyu gray." Furthermore, regarding architectural design (*ma-dori* [lit., "to grasp the *ma*"]), he says: "In design, *ke* [also pronounced *ki*; "experiential immediacy"] represents the intermediary spaces; the sense of suspension between interpenetrating spaces is the feeling described by *ke*. In design, then, *ke* is the 'gray zone' of sensation."²⁴

This comment stresses the unfixed, dislocated sense of space or place, as well as the importance of experiential immediacy. As Kurokawa elsewhere suggests, this grayness arises out of an "open-ended aesthetic" which refuses clear boundaries and fixed viewpoints but rather affirms the fluid, moving "viewpoint" of direct experience—one which allows infinite variation, interchangeability, and the blurring of separate things. He relates this to both *ma* and *ku* as the affirmation of a process of emptying while yet existing within the world of forms and objects: "If the concept of *sunyata* (*ku*) had a color, it would surely have to be Rikyu gray. . . . *Sunyata* is not the opposite of matter or being; rather, it is a non-discriminative and non-perceptual concept of existence that signifies neither being nor nothingness. Hence, it is possible to say that it suggests the spatial dimension of the twilight color of Rikyu gray."²⁵

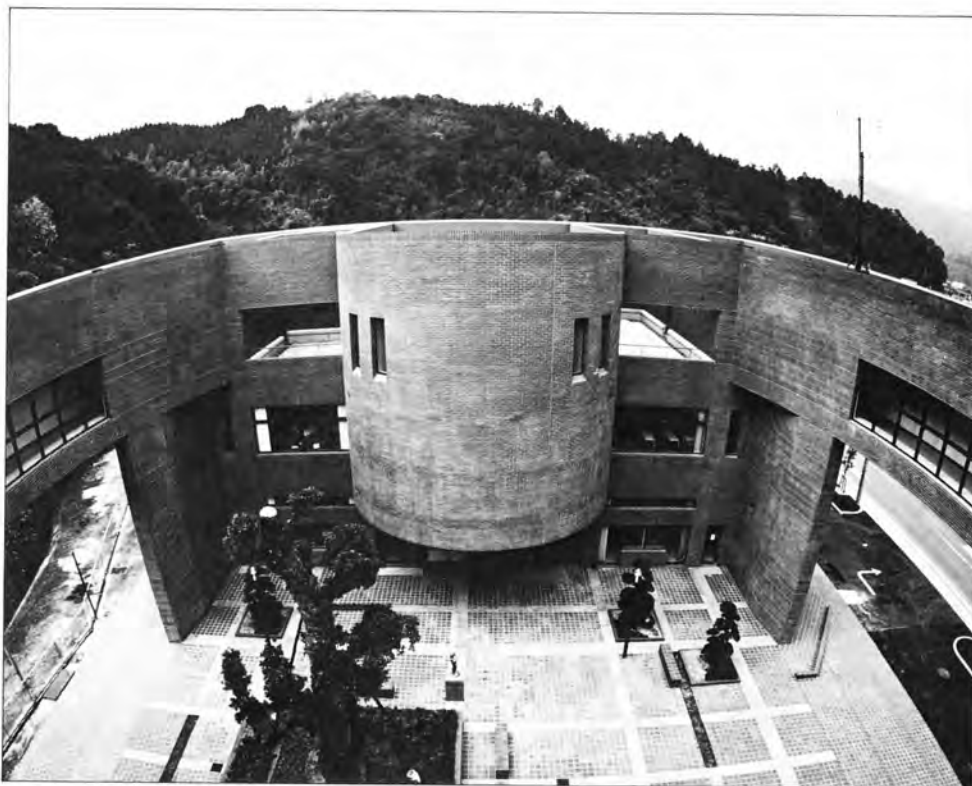
This is the same as to say that it is a "between-ness experience" or a "middle-way experience" between the this-and-that world of descriptive, "discriminated" reality. Architecturally speaking, it expresses itself in shifting planes, open but pregnant spaces, blurred boundaries, and ambiguity. The *ma* of architecture provides a shifting, transient experience of living spaces and forms. It leads to asymmetry and non-fixed centers where "place-making" takes place.

One specific architectural form seems important in this regard, and that is the *kekkaï*, or boundary marker; for example, movable partitions, fences, ropes, and such. The architectural historian Itoh Teiji suggests that these kek-

23. Joseph Kitagawa, "A Past of Things Present: Notes on Major Motifs in Early Japanese Religions," *History of Religion* 10/1-2 (Aug.-Nov. 1980), p. 40.

24. Kisho Kurokawa, "A Culture of Grays" in Tsune Sesoka, ed., *The I-Ro-Ha of Japan* (Tokyo: Cosmo Public Relations Corp., 1979), pp. 9, 17. (Cf. his "Rikyu Gray and the Art of Ambiguity" in *Japan Architect* no. 266 [June, 1979], pp. 26-56; and Itoh, pp. 32-51. See also "Rikyu Gray: An Open-ended Aesthetic.")

25. Kurokawa, "Rikyu Gray and . . .," pp. 40, 43.



Waki City Hall plaza, Yamaguchi Prefecture. Designed by KISHO KUROKAWA architect & associates, 1975. In architecture, *ma* "expresses itself in shifting planes, open but pregnant spaces, blurred boundaries, and ambiguity." Photograph by Ohashi Tomio.

kai are an important key to understanding and expressing a Japanese aesthetic of transient, changing, unfixed spacing and spaces. Tying this particularly to ancient Buddhist architecture but implying Shinto architecture as well, Itoh says that the fragile, movable partition—now suggesting one boundary and now another, but all in a rather subtle and veiled way—links things and spaces in their very flexibility. “In *kekkaï* one finds a fluid concept of space that goes beyond fixed boundaries, and it is a concept of space that ultimately reflects the impermanence not only of space, but of all that is within it.”²⁶

The Buddhist influence is here again invoked by the sense of impermanence which breaks down the static, objective, three-dimensional, descriptive world into an immediately experienced, dynamic process of form and emptiness. As we have seen above, this is central to a *ma* aesthetic or *ma* paradigm that simultaneously locates and dislocates the world of form and order, and creates a ritual, actional, experiential, in-between, wandering aesthetic and paradigm punctuated by pregnant gaps and veiled, changing forms—a “gray” art which is the “color of emptiness.”

In addition to such Buddhist influences on the meaning and function of *ma*, there are also potential connections between Shinto and *ma* as a religious-aesthetic value. These lie in three interrelated areas: shrines and their nature, the nature of *kami* (gods), and the nature of Shinto ritual. The connection to shrines lies in the idea that shrines were originally little more than rather temporary, open, stone-covered sacred places marked off by sacred ropes and containing a simple pillar, rock, or temporary abode for the god.²⁷ The key ideas here are both the open, cleaned out spaces as sacred *ma* and the notion of a temporary, rather fragile shrine form.

Closely related is the idea of *kami* as formless spiritual energies which can only be temporarily and vaguely experienced as they come into the sacred presence of the shrine and leave again. Matsuoka Seigow, in writing about Shinto and *ma*, stresses this factor as the spiritual atmosphere (*kebai*) of *kami* as it comes into the empty (open) spaces of the shrine and is vaguely experienced by the worshipper. He thus says:

Kami does not abide: its nature is to arrive and then depart. The Japanese word *otozureru*, meaning to visit, is a compound of *oto* (sound) and *tsure* (bring). The ancient Japanese may truly have perceived the sound of *yugen*, utmost mystery and elegance, accompanying the visitations of *kami*. No doubt this was what is today perceived as *ch'i* by those involved in martial arts and meditation. This “*kebai* of *kami*” has set the basic tone of Japanese culture.

26. Itoh Teiji, “*Kekkai*: The Aesthetic of Partitions,” *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 32 (1982), p. 57.

27. Itoh, in “*Kekkai* . . .” p. 47, suggests that the origin of *kekkaï* may go back to the idea of the sacred rope, *shimenawa*, as a sacred, movable boundary marker.



Iwasaka sacred plot of ground with stone monument, in the compound of the Naiku (inner shrine) of Ise Shrine, Mie Prefecture. "Shrines were originally little more than rather temporary, open, stone-covered sacred places marked off by sacred ropes. . . ." Photograph by Watanabe Yoshio.

The *kebai* of *kami*'s coming and going was to pervade the structure of homes, the structure of tea houses, literature, arts, and entertainment, and it has developed into the characteristic Japanese "aesthetic of stillness and motion." This is what we call *ma*: the magnetic field from which the *ch'i* of *kami* subtly emanates. . . . Space, or *ma*, is the very foundation of Japanese aesthetics. Minute particles of *kami*, as it were, fill that *ma*.²⁸

Matsuoka claims that this leads to an aesthetic and art built on a "morphology of clouds"²⁹—an impermanent, fluid, veiled, and ambiguous aesthetic or art in which a spiritual atmosphere (*kebai*, *ki*) is as important as the forms depicted, and the negative, imaginative, open moments of space-time are as important as what is objectively there.

A third and related idea has to do with the process of Shinto ritual as primarily a stance of waiting in expectant openness and stillness. As private interviews with Shinto priests have suggested,³⁰ Shinto worship is precisely a matter of waiting for, receiving, and attending to the presence of *kami* rather than

28. Seigow Matsuoka, "Aspects of *Kami*," in Isozaki, *MA* . . . , pp. 47, 56.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 56.

30. Particularly, interviews with Okamoto Kenji, Assistant Chief Priest at Atsuta Shrine in Nagoya (Fall, 1983).

an active seeking or petitioning of that presence and its benefits. Others have emphasized this same kind of experience through the metaphor of a host awaiting and attending to a guest, but all of it suggests a mode of sensitivity which opens the self to the depth of the moment through a discipline of open receptivity and sensual sensitivity.

Such experience tends to emphasize the fullness of the present moment in its intuitive, aesthetic immediacy as the locus of living reality. As we have already noted from Kitagawa, the ancient Japanese emphasized the immediate, poetic awareness of space-time collapsed into the present moment. In Isozaki we have noted that space and time are experienced as simultaneous, and space is a function of time-events which fill it. On a similar theme, Gary Ebersole has said that some classical Japanese poetry reflects a non-linear sense of time in which the past is brought into the present and time is experienced as an "eternal now."³¹ Jean Herbert seems to be indicating the same thing when he reports that "Shinto insistently claims to be a religion of the 'middle-now,' the 'eternal present'. . . [and reflects an interest in] the domain of immediate experience."³²

Such forms and modes of experience seem very parallel to what I have already described as the *ma* aesthetic. They affirm not only the idea of pregnant intervals in space and time, but also a quality of awareness which seeks to penetrate into the depths of a sacred reality and experience its immediate presentness within or in between the flow or process of space-time.

Conclusion

It would seem that the *ma* of art begins in the affirmation of pregnant holes or gaps in the sequence of images or events, intervals which function in part to deconstruct that flow of sequential appearances. Hence the moments of no-action in *noh*, the gaps in poetry, the empty shots in Ozu's films, or the empty spaces of architecture are all centers around and through which interest is aroused, an inarticulated reality is faintly revealed, and the very forms and sequences of images standing on either side are linked.

The net result is an aesthetic and art which somehow stands between the artistic form and the pregnant gaps, opting for neither one nor the other but admitting both—in dynamic togetherness—as signs of the immediately experienced religio-aesthetic of both self-awareness and the conjunction of time and space. Reality or "place" is a continuum emptied of self and other, time and space, this and that, inside and outside, etc. The descriptive, 'real' world described by these distinctions is collapsed, allowing another kind of light to

31. Gary Ebersole, "The Religio-Aesthetic Complex in Manyōshū Poetry With Special Reference to Hitomaro's *Akino No* Sequence," *History of Religions* 23/1 (1983), pp. 34f.

32. Jean Herbert, *Shinto: At the Fountain-Head of Japan* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1967), pp. 32f.

shine through. In such immediate experience the boundaried, descriptive, objective world begins to blur, fold together, and wander, creating a poetic art of profound ambiguity but spiritual depth.

Most important is the point that *ma* is a mode of awareness or experience—a perspective—not merely an objective criterion of the art forms themselves. *Ma* is grounded in a particular kind of awareness and sensitivity in which the self is emptied into the immediacy of each passing moment, a moment including both the passing forms of things and the inarticulate depth perceived in, through, and in between them. The self thus rediscovers itself in direct relationship with the other, and not as set off against it; space and time are not distinct things either from each other or from the human participant, but are closely related to the events and experiences taking place in them. The philosopher Nishida Kitaro, in fact, closely associates the idea of place with both self-awareness and the conjunction of time. Place is a space-time continuum as immediately experienced.³³

It is interesting to note that William LaFleur, in discussing the ethics of Watsuji Tetsuro, not only emphasizes the importance of the fact that the Japanese word for human being carries with it the notion that to be human is to be in relationship, or in between, but argues that behind this notion, at least in Watsuji, is the idea of "emptiness." Watsuji, he says, "uses *ku* as a basic term in his system. That is, the very reason why man is both individual and social is because, according to Watsuji, the individual dimension of existence 'empties' the social dimension and, conversely, the social dimension 'empties' the individual one. . . . (Existence) is a finely balanced mutuality of dependence."³⁴

Watsuji's aesthetics, says LaFleur, are based on the same idea. For Watsuji, he says, each of the arts (under Zen Buddhist influence) has "a common point that the moment of negation lies at its core. . . . This moment of negation is not merely a nothing, but the notion of emptiness as co-dependent origination."³⁵ In painting, for example, "there is a relationship between the void on the canvas where nothing is painted—a wide and deep space—and the dark silhouette of the sparrow."³⁶

This mode of experience deconstructs any outer world set over against the inner world of the subjective self. It creates a kind of fluid, two-dimensional, flowing world which is transparent—like the gate of *ma*—to another kind of depth, a depth which is neither beyond this world nor deep in the self-soul of the human as psychological agent. At this depth lies a sacred, invisible center where the gods dwell; a place unfolding to nothing, but a place of rich being; a

33. Nishida Kitaro, *Nishida Kitaro Zenshu* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1978-1979); Vol. XII, p. 66; XIV, p. 353.

34. William LaFleur, "Buddhist Emptiness in the Ethics and Aesthetics of Watsuji Tetsuro," *Religious Studies* (14, June 1978), p. 244.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 246.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 247.



The rock garden at Ryoanji Temple, Kyoto. Form is emptiness, emptiness is form; the "middle way."



Shrike on a Withered Branch. Painting by Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645). Edo period. Ink on paper. "... there is a relationship between the void . . . where nothing is painted—a wide and deep space—and the dark silhouette. . . ." Designated an Important Cultural Property. Central area: height, 125.5 cm.; width, 54.3 cm. Property of the Kuboso Memorial Museum of Arts, Izumi City, Osaka.

place of "the still heart where nothing happens."³⁷ This depth dismisses, as Roland Barthes has pointed out, the hidden inwardness of soul animating the inanimate, of hidden meaning expressed in symbolic gesture. Rather, it reveals an "empire of signs" in which the signs are empty and rituals have no gods, and "there is nothing to grasp."³⁸ It is, we might say, a depth of the surface.

Such a religio-aesthetic mode of awareness expresses itself not only in the arts but in the culture of Japan generally. The arts, however, are its clearest expression and they reveal a remarkable similarity across genre lines as they do so. In fact, to the degree that the Japanese arts have reflected *ma*, they have reflected a cultural paradigm and helped establish a cultural identity in Japan. Insofar as *ma*, or *ma*-like elements, are paradigmatic for Japanese culture, they all reveal the shady gray moonlight shining through the cracks and gaps in the gate. 

37. Peter Popham, "God is in the Gaps: Tradition and the Architecture of Arata Isozaki and Fumihiko Maki," *Japan Society Newsletter* (April 1985), p. 9. Cf. Fumihiko Maki, "Japanese City Spaces and the Concept of Oku," *Japan Architect* no. 263 (March 1979), pp. 51-62; and Maki (*et. al.*), *Miegakure suru Toshi* (Tokyo: Kashima Shuppan Kai, 1983), pp. 167-223.

38. Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), pp. 108f and *passim*.



Temae – Tea Procedure: Ryurei Gozumi

Gozumi (lit., “latter charcoal”) refers to the procedure for replenishing the charcoal fire in the *furo* (portable brazier) or *ro* (sunken hearth). In the sequence of a *chaji* (full-course tea gathering), this follows the *koicha* (thick tea) *temae*, which is the first part of the *goza* (“latter sitting”), the second half of the *chaji*. When using the conventional *ryurei* tables designed by the eleventh-generation Urasenke grand tea master, Gengensai, a *furo* is used year-round; thus there are no major seasonal variations in the *temae*. Fundamentally, it is the same as when using *nagaita so-kazari* (long, black-lacquered board with full display of utensils) with a *furo*. In the standard situation as presented here (*hongatte*, wherein the guests are seated to the host’s right), the board—or *tenchaban* (host’s main table) in this case—would have the following “full display” on it before the guests enter: the *furo* and *kama* (kettle) on the left-hand side; a *mizusashi* (cold-water jar) on the right-hand side; between these, a *shakutate* (ladle stand) holding a *bishaku* (ladle) and a pair of *hibashi* (metal “fire” chopsticks); and in front of the *shakutate*, a *kensui* (waste-water receptacle) with *futaoki* (lid rest) in it. An interesting addition to the preparations, entailed by using the table, is the placing of the *sumitori* (charcoal container) on the bottom shelf of the *tenchaban* (see step 1, p. 56). This allows the host to circumvent the necessity of returning to the *mizuya* (preparation room), to fetch the *sumitori*, after making his initial bow within the tearoom. Unlike *chanoyu* conducted on *tatami*, wherein the host sits and bows at the *sadoguchi* (host’s doorway) before entering the tearoom, and can momentarily put the *sumitori* to the side when doing so, in the case of *ryurei*, which itself means “standing bow,” he makes a standing bow within the tearoom, and this cannot be done while he is carrying utensils in his hands. Within the flow of a *chaji*, then, the important thing to remember in preparing for the *ryurei gozumi* procedure is

that the placement of the prepared sumitori on the shelf of the *tenchaban* is part of the host's preparations of the tearoom during the guests' *nakadachi* (intermission between the *shoza* "first sitting" and *goza*, when the guests go back out to the *koshikake machiai* [waiting arbor] in the garden).

The sumitori for *ryurei gozumi* is prepared as in the standard *gozumi* procedure, except that the *hibashi* are in the *shakutate* on top of the *tenchaban*. First the *sumi* is arranged in the sumitori as shown in the following photographs.



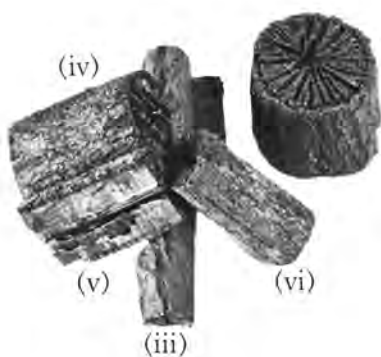
(i)



(ii)

(i) *makura-zumi*

(ii) *kodai*



(iv)

(v)

(iii)

(vi)

(iii) *warikuda*, split side down

(iv) *gitcho*

(v) *warigitcho*, split side away from *gitcho*

(vi) *ten-zumi*



(vii)

(vii) *wado*

After this, three *eda-zumi*, branch ends down, are placed in the front right part of the sumitori. The *kogo* (incense container) is placed on the *kodai*. The *kan* (lifting rings) for the *kama*, open ends matched and to the bottom, are set in the front space and leaned against the *wado*. The *kumi kamashiki* (woven kettle rest) is set on edge so that it leans against the left-hand side of the *wado*. The *haboki* (feather duster) is laid across the left-hand portion of the sumitori.

It is a convention to use a *kirikake* type *furo* with the Gengensai ryurei table; that is, one which allows for the *kama* to fit exactly on the *furo* rim, thus supporting the *kama* over the fire. With a *kirikake*, there is no need for a *baiki* (shallow bowl for ash) or *baisaji* (ash spoon).

Finally, a *mizutsugi* (water pitcher) filled with fresh, cold water, and with a *chakin* (linen wiping cloth)—rinsed but not rung, and folded in the standard manner—placed on its lid, is needed to replenish the *kama*. As featured in the photographs presented here, a *yakan* (metal *mizutsugi* having the handle across the top) such as a *koshiguro*—as opposed to a *katakuchi* (bentwood, lacquer, or ceramic *mizutsugi* having the handle attached to the side opposite the spout)—is used, and a bamboo *futaoki* is hung on its spout.



(1)

The sumitori is in place on the bottom shelf of the tenchaban before the guests enter the room (1).



(2)

The host steps into the tearoom and the guests rise. The host bows (2), and at the same time, all the guests rise and bow in return.



(3)

The host approaches the tenchaban from the guests' side and seats himself on the stool. He takes the sumitori from its place on the shelf below the tenchaban and places it in front of the mizusashi (3).



(4)

The host stands, steps behind the stool, and moves the stool to the left so that it is directly in front of the furo (4). Then he again takes his seat.



(5)

If kan are attached to the furo, they are now lowered, beginning with the one on the guests' side (5).



(6)

The host takes the haboki with his right hand (R), and places it slightly to the right in front of the sumitori, so that the handle is pointing diagonally toward himself (6).



(7)

R takes the kogo from the sumitori, and rests it briefly on the palm of the left hand (L) (7).



(8)

R firmly regrasps the kogo and places it to the left of the furo (8).



(9)

If the host is a woman, and/or the knob of the kettle lid is made of iron, silver, or gold, the fukusa is taken from the belt and folded as it would be to wipe a chashaku. R closes the lid of the kettle with the fukusa (9). Then the fukusa is returned to the belt. In all other cases, the host uses his bare fingers to close the kettle lid.



(10)

R takes the kan from the sumitori, and L takes one of them. The kan are simultaneously slipped through the lugs of the kettle and leaned against the upper part of the kettle (10).



(11)

R takes the kumi-kamashiki from the sumi-tori (11).



(12)

R passes the kumi-kamashiki to L (12), turning it over right over left.



(13)

L places the kumi-kamashiki to the left, diagonal to the furo (13).



(14)

R and L take hold of the kan of the kettle, lift the kettle off of the furo, and set it down diagonally on the kumi-kamashiki (14).



(15)

R and L slide the kettle and kumi-kamashiki together slightly away from the guests, and then remove the kan simultaneously (15).



(16)

R and L match the kan together so that the open ends are even. R holds them while L grasps them top and bottom. L places them to the left of the kettle (16), so that the open ends are toward the host.



(17)

R picks up the haboki and brushes off the furo (17) as shown in Diagram A. Then the haboki is returned to its place in front of the sumitori.

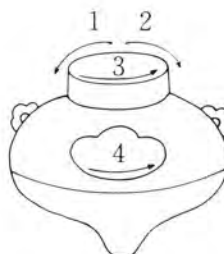


Diagram A: Shobaki (first brushing)



(18)

R draws the hibashi from the shakutate (18).



(19)

L assists R in regripping the hibashi (19).



(20)

With the hibashi, the host gathers the fire remaining from shozumi into the center of the furo (20).



(21)

The sumi is placed in the furo, beginning with the wado. L assists for the wado only (21). After the wado, the order is: maru-gitcho, warigitcho, warikuda and eda-zumi together, and finally, ten-zumi.



(22)

The hibashi are held parallel to the host while L momentarily holds them, allowing R to slip around the ends of the handles and regrasp them from above. R places the hibashi in the sumitori, then picks up the haboki and brushes off the furo (22) as shown in Diagram B.

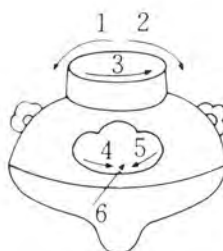


Diagram B: Gobaki (last brushing)



(23)

R returns the haboki to its original place on the sumitori (23).



(24)

R picks up the kogo, places it on L palm, then removes the lid of the kogo and places it in front of the host on the tenchaban (24).



(25)

R takes the hibashi from the sumitori and with the assistance of the fingertips of the left hand, reholds the hibashi for use (25).



(26)

Using the hibashi, the host places incense in the furo (26). The hibashi are reheld and returned to the sumitori.



(27)

R replaces the lid of the kogo and puts the kogo back in the sumitori (27).



(28)

R takes the hibashi from the sumitori and transfers them to L. Then R takes the haboki and, as L holds the hibashi over the sumitori, brushes off the tips of the hibashi in two strokes (28).



(29)

L rotates the hibashi so that the undersides are to the top, and R brushes this side of the tips in one stroke (29).



(30)

R puts the haboki back on the sumitori. L transfers the hibashi to R and the hibashi are returned to the shakutate (30).



(31)

L grasps both kan for the kettle from the sides, R takes one of them, they are simultaneously slipped through the kettle lugs, and then momentarily leaned against the upper part of the kettle (31).



(32)

The host firmly grasps the kan and slides the kettle and kumi-kamashiki slightly toward the furo (32).



(33)

As in step 16, the kan are removed and placed to the left of the kettle (33).



(34)

When the kan have been set down, the *sho-kyaku* (first guest) asks to see the furo and the newly-laid charcoal. The host bows in acknowledgement of this request (34), and then retires to the mizuya.



View of the sumi in the furo at this point in the temae.

After all the guests have inspected the fire, the host returns to the tearoom carrying the mizutsugi—spout to the left—with R, L supporting it at the bottom, beneath the spout. The mizutsugi is placed in the center of the tencha-ban, then R takes the chakin from the lid and places it on the kettle lid. R takes the futaoki from the spout, sets it momentarily on L palm, then places it in front of the kettle. R, using the chakin, places the kettle lid on the futaoki. L takes the chakin and uses the top edge of it to flip open the hinged lid of the spout of the mizutsugi (koshiguro).



(35)

R picks up the mizutsugi, L supports it under the spout with the chakin, and water is poured into the kettle (35).

The mizutsugi is returned to its place on the tenchaban. L wipes the underside of the lip of the spout with the chakin, then flips the lid of the spout closed with the top edge of the chakin. The chakin is transferred back to R, and R uses it to replace the kettle lid on the kettle. The chakin is placed on the kettle lid, and the futaoki is put back on the mizutsugi's spout. R takes the chakin, and as L holds the knob of the kettle lid, wipes the lid. L returns to the host's lap while R continues wiping the body of the kettle. (See Diagram C for the strokes for wiping the kettle lid and body.) Then R places the chakin on the lid of the mizutsugi.

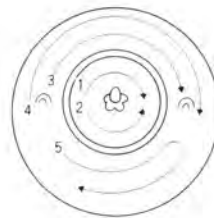


Diagram C: Wiping the kettle



(36)

After carrying the mizutsugi back to the mizuya, the host returns to his seat and puts both of the kan on the kettle (36).



(37)

The kettle is set on the furo (37).



(38)

L picks up the kumi-kamashiki from the left side and, turning it over toward the sumitori, transfers it to R, which places it in the sumitori (38).



(39)

The host removes the kan from the lugs of the kettle (39).



(40)

R and L match the kan together. R grasps them at the section where the ends are open (40).



(41)

R places the kan in the front space of the sumitori, leaning them against the inner front wall (41).



(42)

If kan are attached to the furo, they are now raised, beginning with the one on the guests' side (42).



(43)

R sets the lid ajar on the kettle (43). (*See* step 9 for the use of the fukusa.)



(44)

The host stands and returns the stool to its original position in front of the tenchaban (44).



(45)

The host sits down again and picks up the sumitori (45).



(46)

The host stands, turns toward the guests, and returns to the mizuya with the sumitori (46).



(47)

The host steps back into the tearoom, all the guests rise, the host bows (47), and the guests bow in return.



Book Reviews

A History of Japanese Literature. Volume One: The Archaic and Ancient Ages. By Jin'ichi Konishi. Translated by Aileen Gatten and Nicholas Teele. Edited by Earl Miner. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984. xx + 475 pp., with chronological table, bibliography, finding list for Japanese poems, and index. Hardcover, US\$57.50; paperback, US\$22.50.

We have been blessed in the past few years with the publication of volumes of promised complete histories of Japanese literature written by three men of deep and broad scholarship and elegant expression: Donald Keene's *World Within Walls* and the two-volume *Dawn to the West* survey the major writers, schools, and trends of the Tokugawa and modern centuries; Shuichi Kato's three-volume *A History of Japanese Literature* treats the landmarks of Japanese literature in their political, philosophical, and social settings; and now we have the first volume of a projected series of five by Jin'ichi Konishi, whose "independence of mind," praised by Earl Miner in his foreword, makes this yet another addition to the required reading list of anyone interested in Japanese or comparative literature.

No one with an interest in Japanese literature could be unfamiliar with the name of Jin'ichi Konishi. Possessor of a restless and curious mind, he has written widely and provocatively on premodern literature and aesthetics, and we are all the beneficiaries of his research and theorizing. This first volume of Konishi's history is so rich in fact, example, theory, and speculation that it is difficult to discuss adequately in a few paragraphs. Readers will find themselves mulling over it for years to come and returning again and again for bits of information.

Konishi has used chronological and typological frameworks incorporating comparison of the development of the forms and modes of Japanese literature to the Ainu, Ryukyuan, Korean, and Chinese literary traditions. He also deals peripherally with the literature of the peoples who are believed to have settled the Japanese islands prehistorically: both those from the South Pacific and those from northern Asia. Konishi treats compositions by Japanese in Japanese and Chinese equally, rather than giving them a totally separate treatment as others have done. This approach is especially fruitful in the discussion of the development of *waka* (Japanese poetry), since so much of the rhetorical technique and tone of *waka*, as well as the early Japanese attitude toward poetry, was based upon the Japanese understanding of Six Dynasties poetry and the practice of composing poetry in Chinese in the Six Dynasties style.

I will leave it to anthropologists to judge the validity of Konishi's assumptions about the characteristics of the Japanese from the second to the seventh centuries, which he bases on observations of primitive peoples today. But it seems obvious that observing primitive peoples today is one of the few

means we have for speculating on what the early Japanese might have been like and what their attitudes might have been. The discussion of poetic forms and oral narrative and their uses among primitive peoples, as well as the speculation about the effect of the introduction of literacy on an oral tradition, is fascinating and thought-provoking.

The willingness to speculate that makes this study stimulating also leaves it occasionally open to attack. Although Konishi is generally careful to mark speculative statements with a "perhaps," there are instances when the distinction between theory and fact is not made absolutely clear. Konishi has attempted an entirely new periodization of Japanese literature, based not upon political or social developments, but upon literary ones. In this volume he treats the Archaic and Ancient ages, the former of which he argues is typified by a lack of distinction between literature, religion, and history, and by the flourishing of the *kotodama* (translated in the index as "word spirit"); during the latter he asserts that the "kotodama became attenuated" and the Japanese awoke to the ideal of *ga*, or literary precedent. He also sees a transition from Archaic song to Ancient waka, from Archaic verse-prose narrative to Ancient prose narrative.

The weakest part of this theory is the emphasis on the concept of *kotodama*. Miner, in his foreword, suggests a comparison of *kotodama* to "what Western anthropologists term the 'mana' of words." I wish that the word *kotodama* had been translated in the main body of the book using this term. As it is, the translators and editor did Konishi a disservice by not translating the word, and also by failing to provide some gloss on the historical use of the word, especially since it is basic to Konishi's argument in reperiodizing early Japanese literature. The term *kotodama*, as Konishi points out, does not appear before the late seventh or early eighth century, and other scholars argue that the concept originated in those centuries. It is Konishi who reads this concept back into the Archaic Age despite the lack of linguistic evidence. His argument: it was "so universal a concept in that early age that it need not have been singled out for special mention."

The one serious flaw in the theory is Konishi's emphasis on the notion of the uniqueness of *kotodama* to the Japanese language. He states, for example, that "the *kotodama* was characteristic of the Yamato language alone, and did not exist in foreign tongues," and that it is "the distinguishing feature of Yamato literature." Yet surely most peoples of any stage of development have a sense of the power of words, of the magic of words, of the vitality that lies in verbal expression and gives it the ability to affect human beings and the realm of the spirits as well; and in fact, Konishi himself suggests a comparable Maori belief. The not very convincing theory of the unique quality called *kotodama* needs to feel the heat of Konishi's otherwise impartial and clear-sighted judgement. It leads to obfuscation rather than enlightenment.

Konishi's insistence on the quality of *kotodama* as a distinguishing characteristic of the Archaic Period leads him to posit different functions for rhe-

torically identical devices in different periods. He has created the term “guide phrases” to identify the *makura-kotoba* (“pillow word”) and *jo-kotoba* (“prefacing word”) in the Archaic Period, when, he argues, they were seen as verbal charms. His distinction of guide phrases from *makura-kotoba* and *jo-kotoba* leads him to a rather tangled suggestion that five-syllable guide phrases were meaningful while *makura-kotoba* are not necessarily so, and that longer guide phrases were **not** meaningful while *jo-kotoba* were. He also argues that it is *kotodama*, rather than rhetorical effect, which imbues the guide phrase with power. The word *kotodama* and the assertions of the uniqueness of Japanese in possessing *kotodama* run through the book as a refrain, much more frequently even than is suggested by the index, where the entry “*kotodama*” lists only a sampling of the references in this volume.

I have two minor criticisms. First, should *monogatari* (tale) be considered distinguishable from *nikki* (diary) because, as the translators assert, they are written in the past tense while *nikki* are in the present tense? I think not. Second, Konishi writes that a major distinction between song and *waka* is that *waka* can be composed by solitary poets, who thus form their own audience, while “in song there is no such thing as a performer who, with no audience before him, takes upon himself the additional role of recipient” (p. 243). This seems untenable. Don’t children make up songs and sing them to themselves? Don’t workers sing about their work when alone? Don’t some of us sing original compositions in the shower?

The translation on the whole is excellent. It reads smoothly as scholarly English prose. Only rarely did I wish to consult the original to see if I could make sense of a sentence or two. However, there were a few instances where an unusual choice of English locution left me mystified. Some of these questions were answered by the editor (i.e. p. 235, where the note speaks of “varieties” of pillow words and the editor’s note explains that “‘varieties’ imply reasonably distinct versions, ruling out such things as slightly different phrasing or usage”). In other instances, English words chosen for the translation are left without clarification. The Introduction and Chapter 10 treat something called “implicit tone” without definition or description. Probably what is meant is that the author’s emotions are subsumed in and expressed through natural imagery; but there is no explanation.

Typographical errors are few. There is a misplaced note number on p. 5; it should be several sentences farther down in the text. Page 28 has *Impunmon’in* no Taifu, while in the index, it is *Impu Mon’in*. Page 161 has *Heida* for *Hieda*; on p. 279, a slash (/) is needed in front of the word *Nestled*; p. 336 has *seventeenth* for *seventh*. On p. 404 there is a word omitted in the phrase “the atmosphere [?] hovering over,” and “involving by” should be “involving.” The page numbers listed for Yatsuka Mitsuomitsuno no Mikoto in the index should be 253 and 367-68.

This book can be appreciated both by the serious student of Japanese literature and by the uninitiated. There are few instances where knowledge is

assumed. The author, translators, and editor have accomplished their monumental task with grace and verve. Anyone who reads this book will await the succeeding volumes with impatience and with gratitude to all the people involved in the project.

Laurel Rasplia Rodd
Associate Professor of Japanese
Arizona State University

Lost Innocence: Folk Craft Potters of Onta, Japan. By Brian Moeran. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984. xv + 252 pp. US\$30.00.

The potting community at Onta (Onda) was an interesting and obvious choice for a study such as this one, surviving as it had, almost untouched, into the mid-twentieth century, and then suddenly finding itself the object of much attention from the leaders of the emergent Folk Craft movement. For them it represented an "ideal," happily combining the production of functional pots with conservative methods of production (symbolized by the splendid wooden clay-crushers, the very sound of which set fire to imaginations), the extensive use of "natural" materials (including a life itself bound up with "nature" in the remote valley setting), and the anonymity of the craftsmen themselves. The sincere if rather muddled observations that make up Yanagi Soetsu's book, *The Unknown Craftsman* (Kodansha, 1972), were engendered in this kind of place, and were responsible, together with the ideas of now well-known figures of the *mingei* (folk craft) scene such as Hamada Shoji and Bernard Leach, for calling attention to the beauty of folk crafts, and in particular, folk pottery.

It is rather ironic and sad that this very attention paid to the Onta community by the very people who wished to nurture and protect it gave rise to forces, traced very clearly in this book, which have thoroughly upset the social structure of the community, and perhaps irreversibly altered the nature and quality of the pottery itself. Moeran shows how the sudden rise in demand for the "folk craft" pottery of Onta caused people who had once worked very closely together, dividing their year between communal farming and potting activities, to split. Now there are families which devote themselves full-time to making pottery, and those engaged in other occupations. This development has led to changes in social relations and assorted economic disparities within the village.

At the same time, the new pressures altered the whole pottery-making cycle, especially firing patterns, causing the once-central communal kiln to be by-passed by some of the more prolific potting families which had built their own kilns. Pressures from dealers and the insatiable public they represented caused a sudden demand which could only be met by several technological innovations, though these were small in comparison with the modern techno-

logy incorporated by some other famous Japanese "folk kilns," such as Mashiko or Koishiwara (Koishibara). Though the swift alteration (many would say "decline") in the quality of the work from those kilns was not matched at Onta, there are critics who claim there is an obvious difference between the old Onta products and those made for the current, still-continuing "folk craft" pottery boom. These differences include ones of function—huge storage jars being replaced, for example, by umbrella stands—and of glaze and shape. These changes were sufficient to disturb the Folk Craft Museum people in Tokyo and, as Moeran tells us, in 1962 a "Miss Y" was dispatched to Onta with a set of photographs and comments on the shapes and glaze colors of the old Onta pots that had made the village's pottery noticed in the first place. This information was distributed among the Onta potters so that they might be able to keep their "tradition," though the result has been somewhat debatable.

Theoreticians of folk craft movements, like Ruskin and Morris in England earlier, and Yanagi and his followers in Japan in the 1950s and 60s, have never really been able to fully explain the emergence, at various periods of man's history, of pots of undisputed aesthetic quality combined with suitability to function. Perhaps no one can. The rather naive ideas of "closeness to nature" and "lack of individuality or concern with profit" are probably involved, but Moeran points out, quite rightly, that awareness of these ideal periods only seems to come once industrialization has taken place and people find themselves surrounded by artifacts of a different kind. To attempt to preserve any social period or social group is to try to stem the tide, and in that sense, perhaps, the Folk Craft movement was building on sand at Onta. Because of the direction Japan had chosen to take since the Meiji period, changes were inevitable, though they took a relatively long time to reach such an out-of-the-way village.

In modern Japan, "functional" pottery has come to include coffee sets, decorative wares, and gifts for tourists. Moeran mentions the dilemma facing the Onta potters of where and how to attach the handles for coffee cups, though he might have observed that the very manufacture of such a non-traditional item is itself symptomatic, and the technique of pulling handles was unknown in Japan until Leach is said to have introduced it. Even now it has hardly taken root, perhaps because of clay quality, though more likely from a deep-rooted distrust among Japanese potters of innovation in manual, as distinct from technological, skills. The items mentioned may be functional in late-twentieth-century terms, but there seems to be a qualitative difference between them and the storage jars, rice bowls, and other domestic items which the Onta potters once made for daily use in their neighborhood.

The aesthetics and current demands of chanoyu, and to some extent also of ikebana, have also had an impact on potters' work. So-called folk craft potters everywhere in Japan now produce high-priced bowls and other special utensils for chanoyu, as well as vases for flower arrangement—items which had once been the prerogative of artist potters. The Onta potters are for the most

part slow to accept the fact that now (though certainly not traditionally) these items have to be "name" wares, made by an individual potter whose reputation is climbing, and who, when "known," can ask "unreasonable" prices for his work. That is to say, prices which in no way reflect the cost of manufacture, but which belong more properly to the world of "art," in the same way as do the prices of paintings. One or two Onta potters are already some way along this road, however. It is a process which may be irreversible, but which poses the Onta potters the question, as Moeran points out, not of whether they can make such wares, but of whether they can ask high prices for them and at the same time remain "folk craft" potters—the very basis of their claim to existence. They shrug off this question, just as they also avoid involving themselves in too deep a discussion of many of the Folk Craft movement ideas and theories.

The slight drawbacks of the book, of which Moeran is himself already aware, include the presentation of very detailed material, including elaborate information on family genealogy and household connections, and on pottery processes, which may be of interest to a specialist either in anthropology or pottery production, but which is unlikely to be read with the same degree of attention by both. The origin of the book as a doctoral thesis is reflected in its layout and its language. I found that the useful but lengthy "conclusions" to each chapter sometimes tended to repeat rather than summarize the information. There are one or two possible lacunae concerning technical matters, perhaps arising from Japanese potters' traditional and understandable reluctance to divulge too much information about glaze technology or firing—partly, I am sure, because they do not actually "know" many answers to technical questions, having developed their techniques by trial and error. Some of the technical explanations given (for example, pp. 198-200), are not sufficiently detailed to be of practical use to other potters and smack just a little of the "amateur."

There are a few typographical errors, and some curious omissions in the Bibliography. For example, not listed are Herbert Sander's *The Way of Japanese Ceramics* (Kodansha, 1967), which explored many Japanese techniques of making pottery as well as ideas about aesthetic quality; the books by Daniel Rhodes, including excellent contributions to various technical aspects of ceramic manufacture, and his somewhat less satisfactory *Tamba Pottery* (Kodansha, 1970), which nevertheless contains many interesting parallels to Onta; Hugo Munsterberg's books, including *The Folk Arts of Japan* (Tuttle, 1958 and frequent reprintings), which helped to spread certain ideas about folk crafts as "arts"; my own *Toboku-no Yakimono* (Yuzan Kaku, 1974), in which I made some general observations on "command" (*goyo*) and "folk" (*min'yo*) kilns, post-war kilns, "artist potters," and the influences of contemporary aesthetics; and Rand Castile's *The Way of Tea* (Weatherhill, 1972), which gives something of an "official" view of chanoyu and its aesthetics that are so involved in the economic and other aspects of current pot-making in Japan.

Moeran's book has an interesting selection of black-and-white illustrations, both of some aspects of production and of some of the products themselves. The only pity is that no color plates were included. For example, if the pieces represented on pages 218-220 had been presented in color, they would have shown, as clearly as a photograph can, why Yanagi and Leach responded so warmly to the undeniable quality of traditional wares from the Onta kilns.

David Hale
Visiting Lecturer
Kyoto University

Zen Guide: Where to Meditate in Japan. By Martin Roth and John Stevens. Tokyo and New York: John Weatherhill, Inc. 1985. xxiv + 122 pp. US\$7.50, ¥1,200.

Although a Zen guidebook—a guide to where a non-native student of Zen may practice in Japan—would seem to be a natural item in any Japanese bookshop, it was not until the publication of *Zen Guide* that such a book has existed. As the subtitle to the book indicates, this is not a “how to,” but rather a “where it is located” book. A look at the Table of Contents shows that Martin Roth and John Stevens had to have done a lot of traveling in order to compile all the information that they have gathered here: information on over 100 temples and *shukubo* (a cross between a Japanese style hotel, a restaurant, and a youth hostel) where the beginner as well as the advanced student of Zen may practice in Japan.

Personally, being the type of person who rarely, if ever, reads the introduction to a book, I had to make an effort not to skip over the one in this book, and it was well worth the effort. The beginner will especially appreciate the invaluable commonsense advice regarding various practical matters in Japan, such as how to present donations, the eating and drinking customs in temples, the sleeping arrangements, and how to address priests. Also, the admonition to “Be observant, be polite, be sincere, obey directions carefully and cheerfully, use common sense, and you will be welcome anywhere” should be written either in bold type or in capital letters.

The sections on the language barrier regarding the requirement of a solid command of Japanese may sound excessive to many people, but in my own experience, the rule that “if some is good, a lot is better,” definitely applies. It shouldn't be too difficult to understand that if a person has truly devoted his or her life to the study and practice of Buddhism, then it can hardly be expected that such a person should have mastered English on the side as well.

On the opening page of the Preface, there is a very apt and important cautionary remark: “When using this guide book keep firmly in mind . . . ‘All things are impermanent,’ ‘All things are imperfect,’ and ‘Everything depends.’”

Just since the time Martin Roth was gathering information on temples in the Kansai area—Osaka, Hyogo, Kyoto, Shiga, Nara, and Mie prefectures—many changes have occurred in temple schedules and activities. In a book of this nature, of course, this is unavoidable, so I can only encourage the prospective Zen student not to forget this in utilizing this book to look for a place to practice and study. I think if I were to have desired more from a book such as *Zen Guide*, I would have requested about ten or so blank pages in the back of the book, to write down such changes. Perhaps the authors will consider such an addition for the book's second printing, which is bound to come about in the not too distant future.

One more comment I might add for whoever uses *Zen Guide* to find an appropriate place to practice: the difference between the ideal and the real can be as wide as the distance between heaven and earth. The situation here in Japan is far from ideal. Certainly there would appear to be a temple on every corner at which one could practice. In reality, however, there is far less than one in a hundred where anyone, Japanese or foreigner, would be welcome with or without introduction. I was surprised to find that the authors were able to include over a hundred places. This might seem to be quite a large number, but when one considers that there are some 15,000 Soto sect Zen temples alone, it gives one a different perspective on those hundred. The fact is, the vast majority of temples in Japan are "family" temples, meaning that the right to operate these temples is passed on from father to son regardless of whether the offspring possesses either the desire or the ability to run it.

I'm sure many people, especially if they keep the things I have mentioned in mind, will find *Zen Guide* well worth the cost.

Thomas Wright
Zen Priest
Kyoto

Glossary

() denotes alias, [] denotes Japanese reading.

<i>Banshun</i>	晩春	<i>ichijū sansai</i>	一汁三菜
<i>Baso Dōitsu</i>	馬祖道一	<i>Ichimokukō</i>	一黙稿
<i>Chadō Koten Zenshū</i>	茶道古典全集	<i>ikkanbari</i>	一閑張
<i>Chadō no Genryū</i>	茶道の源流	<i>Isozaki Arata</i>	磯崎新
<i>Chadō Shiso Densho</i>	茶道四祖伝書	<i>Itoh Teiji</i>	伊藤ていじ
<i>Chadō Shūkin</i>	茶道聚錦	<i>iwasaka</i>	磐境
<i>Chadō Zasshi</i>	茶道雑誌	<i>kabedoko</i>	壁床
<i>chajin</i>	茶人	<i>Kakumei Ki</i>	隔葉記
<i>Charwa Shigetsu Shū</i>	茶話指月集	<i>Kakyō</i>	花鏡
<i>Cha Zen Dō-ichimi</i>	茶禪同一味	<i>kami</i>	神
<i>cha Zen ichimi</i>	茶禪一味	<i>Kanamori Sōwa</i>	金森宗和
<i>Chiga Shirō</i>	千賀四郎	<i>Kanō Tan'yū</i>	狩野探幽
<i>daimyō-cha</i>	大名茶	<i>Kan'untei</i>	寒雲亭
<i>Daishi</i>	大師	<i>Kaoku Yuzurijō</i>	家尾謙状
<i>Dōan</i>	道安	<i>Karasumaru Mitsuhiro</i>	烏丸光広
<i>Dōan-gakoi</i>	道安閣い	<i>kashi no cha</i>	菓子の茶
<i>Dōnyū (Nonkō)</i>	道入(ノニコウ)	<i>kasshiki</i>	喝食
<i>Fujimura Yōken</i>	藤村庸軒	<i>Katagiri Sekishū</i>	片桐石州
<i>Fujiwara Seika</i>	藤原惺窩	<i>katōguchi</i>	火灯口
<i>Fujiwara Teika</i>	藤原定家	<i>ke (ki)</i>	気
<i>Furuta Oribe</i>	古田織部	<i>kehai</i>	気配
<i>fūryū</i>	風流	<i>kekka</i>	結界
<i>Fushin'an</i>	不審庵	<i>kirei-sabi</i>	綺麗寂び
<i>Gamō Ujisato</i>	蒲生氏郷	<i>Kobori Enshū</i>	小堀遠州
<i>Gomizuno'o</i>	後水尾	<i>Kokei Sōchin</i>	古溪宗陳
<i>Gotō Shōsai</i>	後藤少斎	<i>Komparu Kunio</i>	金春国雄
<i>Goyōzei</i>	後陽成	<i>Konnichian</i>	今日庵
<i>gyō</i>	行	<i>Konoe Nobuhiro</i>	近衛信尋忠山
<i>Gyokushitsu Sōhaku</i>	玉室宗瑠	<i>Ōzan</i>	
<i>Hashi</i>	橋	<i>kōshitsu no chanoyu</i>	皇室の茶の湯
<i>Hiki Ikkan</i>	飛来一閑	<i>kū</i>	空
<i>hima</i>	隙	<i>kuchikiri chakai</i>	口切茶会
<i>Hon'ami Gyōjō Ki</i>	本阿弥行状記	<i>Kure</i>	くれ
<i>Hon'ami Kōetsu</i>	本阿弥光悦	<i>Kurokawa Kishō</i>	黒川紀章
<i>Hōrin Shōshō</i>	鳳林承章	<i>ma-dori</i>	間取
		<i>Matsuo Bashō</i>	松尾芭蕉
		<i>Matsuoka Seigow</i>	松岡正剛

Matsuya Hisashige	松屋久重	Shōan	少庵
Matsuya Kaiki	松屋会記	Shōan Meshi-dashijō	少庵召出狀
Matsuya Nikki	松屋日記	shoin	書院
Miyake Bōyō	三宅仁羊	Shōkadō Shōjō	松花堂昭乗
Miyamoto Musashi	宮本武蔵	Shōnantei	湘南亭
mu	無	Shun'oku Sōen	春屋宗園
Murai Yasuhiko	村井康彦	sō	草
Nagai Shinsai (Naomasa)	永井信齋(尚政)	Sōken	宗見
Nambō Roku	南坊録	Sō'on	宗恩
Nambō Sōkei	南坊宗啓	Sōsa	宗左
Nampō Roku	南方録	Sōsetsu	宗拙
Nihonbi no Tokushitsu	日本美の特質	Sōshu	宗守
Nihon Design Ron	日本デザイン論	Sōtan Denju	宗旦伝授
Ninin-Shizuka (Futari-Shizuka)	二人静	Sōtan no Shōgai	宗旦の生涯
Nintokusai	認得齋	Sōtan to Sono Jidai	宗旦とその時代
Nishida Kitarō	西田幾多郎	Sōtei-gakoi	宗貞囲い
Nose Asaji	能勢朝次	Sugimoto Hayao	杉本捷夫
Oda Uraku	織田有楽	Suigan Sōmin	翠巖宗珉
Okame (Sōkei)	お亀(宗桂)	Takuan Sōhō	沢庵宗彭
Oku no Hosomichi	奥の細道	Teika	定家
otozureru	訪れる	Tōfukumon'in Kazuko	東福門院和子
Ozu Yasujirō	小津安二郎	Totsutotsusai	咄々齋
Pang [Hō]	龐	tsumagure	爪紅
rakugo	落語	Tsutsui Hiroichi	筒井絳一
renga	連歌	wabi-cha	侘び茶
sadōguchi	茶道口	Watsuji Tetsurō	和辻哲郎
Seigan Sōi	清巖宗潤	Yagyū Munenori	柳生宗矩
Sen Rikyū to Sono Shūben	千利休とその周辺	Yamada Sōhen	山田宗編
Sensō	仙叟	Yoshimura Teiji	吉村貞司
Sen Sōshitsu	千宗室	yūgen	幽玄
Sen Sōtan	千宗旦	Yuima	維摩
Shibayama Zenkei	柴山全慶	Yūin	又隱
Shikadō Shō	至花道書	Zangetsutei	残月亭
shimenawa	注連縄(七五三縄)	Zeami Jūrokubu Shū Hyōshaku	世阿弥十六部集評釈
shin	真	Zeami Motokiyo	世阿弥元清
Shinkei	心敬	Zencha Roku Kaidai	禅茶録解題
		zōsu	蔵主

Chronology

Asuka period, 538-645
Hakuho period, 645-710
Nara period, 710-794
Heian period, 794-1192
Kamakura period, 1192-1336
Muromachi period, 1336-1568
Momoyama period, 1568-1603
Edo period, 1603-1868
Modern period, 1868-

ANNOUNCEMENT

Due to the recent steep devaluation of the US\$ versus the Japanese ¥, we are forced to raise the international (US\$) prices of the *Chanoyu Quarterly*. Beginning with issue no. 47 (Autumn 1986), the new international prices will be:

single copy/back issue	US\$ 7.00
four-issue subscription	US\$25.00

The final date to order back issues at the current price of US\$5.50 will be September 30, 1986. New subscriptions/renewals commencing with issue no. 46 will be the last to be accepted at the current subscription price of US\$20.00.

Design and English typesetting, by the *Chanoyu Quarterly* staff, Foreign Affairs Section, Urasenke Foundation, Kyoto. Printing and binding, by Nissha Inc., Kyoto.

ERRATA *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 45, p. 34, 8th line from bottom. "... with the fold at the top" should be "... with the fold at the bottom."

CHANOYU Quarterly thanks you for your interest, and welcomes your order. To order, fill in the back side and send this card, together with payment, to:

U.S.A. residents:

CHANOYU Quarterly
Urasenke Chanoyu Center
153 East 69th Street
New York, New York 10021

Elsewhere:

CHANOYU Quarterly
Urasenke Foundation
Ogawa Teranouchi agaru
Kamikyo-ku, Kyoto, Japan 602

four-issue subscription:

Japan ¥4,400

Elsewhere US\$20.00* (airmail,
add US\$14.00)

single copy/back issue:

¥1,100

US\$5.50 (airmail,
add US\$3.50)

per *genkin kakitome*
per check or money
order payable to CHA-
NOYU Quarterly

Subscriptions commence with the current issue. Delivery of the journal constitutes acknowledgement of order. Please allow six weeks. Receipt and/or back issue list sent upon request.

〒602 京都市上京区小川寺の内上る 裏千家今日庵 茶の湯クォーターリー TEL 075-431-3111

Urasenke Foundation
Urasenke Chanoyu Center

Kyoto, Japan
New York, U. S. A.