

CHANOYU Quarterly  
TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

No. 61





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# CHANOYU Quarterly

TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

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The names of Japanese persons are written surname first, in accordance with the Japanese practice. Kanji for names, titles of works, and other terms marked with the symbol † are given in the Glossary.

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*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 Sōshitsu XV, the Urasenke Foundation seeks to encourage the further development of these arts and to promote a worldwide understanding of the spirit of chanoyu.

# Rikyū Remembered

## Sen Sōshitsu XV

Already, we are several months into the year 1990, which, on the sexagenary cycle of the Chinese zodiac, comes as the seventh year of the cycle: *kanoe uma* (metal-yang horse). It is indeed a special year for us, being the four-hundredth anniversary of the death of Sen Rikyū (according to the traditional *kazoe toshi* method of calculating age and years, wherein the actual year of birth or death is counted as the first year). In addition, 1990 marks the twentieth "birthday" of this journal, the *Chanoyu Quarterly*. Although one score is but a tiny drop in the bucket as compared with the twenty score — four centuries — which have come and gone since Rikyū's death in 1591, I consider the *Chanoyu Quarterly's* contributions ever since the first issue was published, in the spring of 1970, as extremely significant.

These days, the movement towards internationalization has spread well beyond the bounds of the world of economics, and has become an important issue even in the realm of culture. People have begun to realize that economic friction is only the first of our problems; that cultural differences account for a great deal of that friction, and that the key to achieving mutual understanding is to learn to appreciate those differences. In other words, it might be said that attention is now shifting away from materialistic concerns, and towards more humanitarian and spiritual concerns.

When the first issue of the *Chanoyu Quarterly* was published, the idea behind it was to create and support a journal which could be read by people around the world, and which would help to promote international knowledge and understanding of the spiritual and aesthetic traditions of Japan, as reflected in and represented by the Way of Tea. That was a time when Japan, having successfully sponsored the International Olympic Games in Tokyo, was receiving a good deal of attention from abroad. Nevertheless, the country still seemed isolated from the rest of the world, and it was difficult to even imagine that the peculiar cultural values that the Japanese had nurtured through the centuries — among them, especially those which lay at the core of the Way of Tea — could ever provide a medium for international understanding.

Over four hundred years ago, Rikyū, who perfected the Way of Tea, explained that its philosophy is based upon the principles of Harmony, Respect, Purity, and Tranquility—in Japanese, *Wa, Kei, Sei, Jaku*. The words themselves are simple; but we are indebted to Rikyū's gift of insight for providing us with such a succinct crystallization of the profound, indeed universal principles of the Way of Tea, which, as those words make clear, is really a Way of Life.

I have long believed that, by following the path indicated by the principles underlying the Way of Tea, all mankind can coexist peacefully on this planet. A single bowl of frothy green tea held in the palms of one's hands. . . . This bowl of tea, charged with the spirit of Harmony, Respect, Purity, and Tranquility, is Sen Rikyū's splendid legacy to us, from which universal peace can be achieved. With this conviction, I have tried with all my heart to spread knowledge and understanding of the Way of Tea both within and outside of Japan, personally travelling far and wide for this purpose, which I like to call "Peacefulness Through a Bowl of Tea." I believe that the *Chanoyu Quarterly* has served a meaningful role towards this same end.

Last year, on the "eve" of the four-hundredth anniversary of Rikyū's death, I had the great honor of being named a Person of Cultural Merit by the Japanese government. The title was given to me, but it belongs to all of those—foremost of whom I should say is Sen Rikyū himself—who have provided me with guidance and supported me in my life's work. The receipt of this distinction, and our special commemoration this year of Rikyū's death, marks a significant milestone in my own life, as well as in the long history of the Way of Tea. It is a time for retrospection, and to head towards the future with fresh vitality. 

# A Biography of Sen Rikyū

Murai Yasuhiko

## Introduction

Sen Rikyū<sup>†</sup> was born in Sakai (city south of Osaka) in Daiei 2 (1522)<sup>1</sup> and ended his life in Kyoto in Tenshō 19 (1591). In retrospect, his lifetime of seventy years seems to be divisible into two main periods: the first, preceding his appointment as official tea master (*sadō*) to Oda Nobunaga (1534–82) when he was already over the age of fifty; the second, following this appointment. Most of his activities which eventually were to exert such a profound influence on Japanese culture, and which form our present-day image of Rikyū, fall into the second period, of about twenty years' duration. Indeed, through his appointment to the post of tea master to Nobunaga and then Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), Rikyū seems to have at last found a suitable setting to demonstrate his talents.

Rikyū was not alone in the post of official tea master. What set him apart from the others, however, was that he departed from the existing canons of chanoyu and established a style which exhibited his own unique sense of beauty. In many ways, this splendid development was deeply connected with his official position as *sadō*. It would perhaps be no exaggeration to say that if it were not for this official appointment, he would never have become the outstanding man of tea that he did. Again, if it were not for the circumstances of his birth and upbringing, he would never have received this appointment.

In this sense, the fact that Rikyū was born and brought up in the city of Sakai is of great significance. There were, of course, other great cities at the time, such as Kyoto and Nara. However, none of them could compare with Sakai in growth and vitality in the period following the Ōnin War (1467). This may be inferred from the *Ocha Dōgu Mokuroku* [Catalogue of Tea Utensils] recorded in Sakai by a person called Sōrō, which enumerates

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<sup>1</sup> This generally accepted year of Rikyū's birth is based upon references to his age given in scattered sources of the time; most notably, Rikyū's own statement, "A life of seventy years," in his farewell verse composed three days before his death. For details, see Sen Sōsa 千宗左 et. al., supv. ed., *Rikyū Daijiten* 利休大事典 (Kyoto: Tankosha, 1989), pp. 39–40.

<sup>†</sup> Translated and adapted from the chapter "Rikyū no Shōgai" in *Chadō Shūkin* vol. 3, *Sen Rikyū* (Tokyo: Shogakukan Inc., 1983), by permission. Annotations are by the Chanoyu Quarterly editor, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the author. ©1990 by Chanoyu Quarterly.

some 430 famous tea utensils (*meibutsu*) along with the names of their owners, numbering 190. Sakai's total—190 items and 70 owners—is far ahead of the next most numerous, Kyoto, with 51 items and 29 owners, or Nara, with 35 items and 11 owners. This catalogue also mentions other cities such as Osaka, Yamaguchi, Hakata, Fuchu, and Hirado, as well as provinces such as Echizen (present-day Fukui Prefecture) and Suruga (present-day Shizuoka Prefecture), indicating the extent to which the desire for tea utensils had spread throughout the nation; but in fact Sakai was the nexus of this expansion. It was a city of economically influential upper-class townsmen, many of whom were warehouse owners (*nayashū*) or participated in the local government as members of the city council (*egōshū*). The "Tembun *chakaiki*" [records of Tembun-era chanoyu gatherings]<sup>2</sup> of this city record the details of invitations exchanged among tea friends in the informal tea huts built to serve as "mountain villages within the city." Rikyū's early life was spent in Sakai during this prosperous period of chanoyu.

Rikyū, who developed the style of tea known as *wabicha* (tea of the wabi aesthetic), has attracted a great deal of interest and research. In this article, I shall examine the life of this chanoyu master, tracing his steps from the time of his first appearance in history to the dramatic final moments after he received Hideyoshi's order to commit suicide. ■

<sup>2</sup> "Tembun *chakaiki*" 天文茶会記 is a general term referring to the records of chanoyu gatherings that began to be kept during the Tembun (also pronounced Temmon) era; namely, the *Matsuya Kaiki*, *Tennōjiya Kaiki*, and *Imai Sōkyū Chanoyu Nikki Nukigaki*.

The first of these, the *Matsuya Kaiki* 松屋会記, consists of the records kept by three generations of the Matsuya Genzaburō family of lacquer craftsmen of Nara: Hisamasa (d. 1598), whose entries cover the years Tembun 2–Keichō 1 (1533–96); Hisayoshi (d. 1633), covering Tenshō 14–Kan'ei 3 (1586–1626); and Hisashige (1566–1652), covering Keichō 9–Keian 3 (1604–50). The entries in the *Matsuya Kaiki* all pertain to chanoyu gatherings which the three attended as guests (such records are referred to as *takai-ki* 他会記), and were edited by Hisashige. The originals are no longer in existence; however, there are a number of variant copies available today.

The *Tennōjiya Kaiki* 天王寺屋会記 consists of the records kept by three generations of the Tsuda family, owners of the Tennōjiya merchant house of Sakai: Sōtatsu (1504–66), whose entries cover the years Tembun 17–Eiroku 9 (1548–66) and pertain to chanoyu gatherings he himself hosted (*jikai-ki* 自会記) as well as those which he attended as a guest; Sōgyū (d. 1591), whose *takai-ki* covers Eiroku 8–Tenshō 13 (1565–85) and *jikai-ki* covers Eiroku 9–Tenshō 15 (1566–87); and Sōbon (dates unknown), whose entries basically cover the one year, Tenshō 18 (1590), and are of chanoyu gatherings he attended as a guest. The originals are still extant. See Sen Sōshitsu 千宗室 et. al., ed., *Chadō Koten Zenshū* 茶道古典全集 (Kyoto: Tankosha, 1956), vols. 7–8.

The *Imai Sōkyū Chanoyu Nikki Nukigaki* 今井宗久茶湯日記抜書 consists of excerpts of Imai Sōkyū's (1520–93) records of his own gatherings as well as those he attended as a guest, and covers the years Tembun 23–Tenshō 17 (1554–87). The one existing transcription is in the Seikado Bunko Collection, Tokyo.

乾英宗單膳寫

圓鑑回師春屋和尚贊語

文祿第四乙未歲金季秋念四日

係上充香供云

宋慶照之請贊伽陀一絕

利休居士肖像常隨信男

若新翁爭得知

像旧時姿趙則且坐喫茶底

頭上巾兼手中扇儼然遺



Sen Rikyū.  
Property of the  
Urasenke Foundation.

## What is Known about Rikyū's Youth

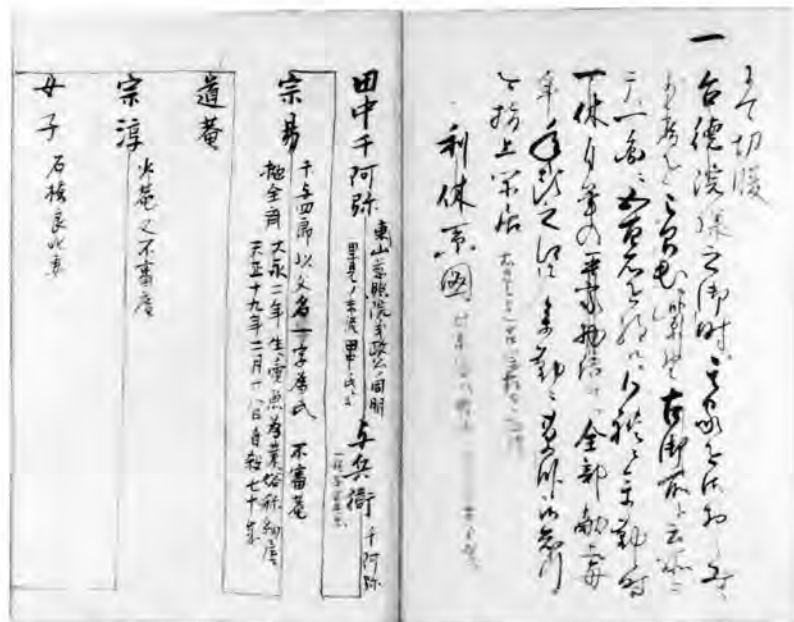
The first mention in historical sources of the man who later took the name Sen Rikyū is in the *Nembutsu Sachō Nikki*,<sup>†</sup> dated the 28th day of the 4th month, Tembun 4 (1535). This document is a subscription list of donations collected from Sakai citizens to restore Nembutsuji temple, which had been damaged in the great fire of the 12th month, 1531, that destroyed most of the city. Among some 114 names, there is that of "Imaichi town; Master Yoshirō,<sup>†</sup> Sen" (the childhood name of Rikyū). If we assume that he was seventy years old when he died, then he would have been fourteen at the time.

In this list, there are eleven repetitions of merchant house names, and among these, the name Naya appears seven times. The name Naya refers to the Imai family, the most famous of the great merchant houses of Sakai. It is difficult, however, to imagine that these names all referred to heirs—or, in other words, heads of households—of the one family. Thus, although Yoshirō is the only member of the Sen family in Imaichi town appearing in the list, we cannot say with certainty that he was the head of the Sen household at the time. Apparently, his father was still alive, and thus had probably not yet bequeathed his estate.

According to the *Sen no Rikyū Yuishogaki* [Genealogy of Sen Rikyū],<sup>3</sup> Rikyū's father was called Yohei.<sup>†</sup> Calculating from his memorial services—the 33rd in 1572 and the 50th in 1589—it may be deduced that he died in 1540, five years after the aforementioned *Nembutsu Sachō Nikki*, when Rikyū would have been about nineteen years old. Yohei's posthumous name was Itchū Ryōsen<sup>†</sup> while that of his wife, Rikyū's mother, was Gesshin Myōchin<sup>†</sup> (her name in life is not known). Tradition has it that at age nineteen, Rikyū became a chanoyu disciple of Takeno Jōō<sup>4</sup> at the intro-

<sup>3</sup> The *Sen no Rikyū Yuishogaki* 「千利休由緒書」 consists of the oral information given by Rikyū's great-grandson, Kōshin Sōsa (1613–72), when he served as tea master for the Kishū Tokugawa family, as well as information gathered from other sources of Sōsa's time. Two copies are said to exist: one, handed down in the Kishū Tokugawa family; the other, dated the 7th month of Kambun 6 (1666), handed down in Kōshin Sōsa's family (Omotesenke; Fushin'an). For a complete transcription of the latter, see *Rikyū Daijiten*, pp. 652–659.

<sup>4</sup> Takeno Jōō (Shingorō; 1502–55) was a townsman of Sakai. During his father's time, the family, originally named Takeda, moved to Sakai in order to take refuge there after the Ōnin War. Jōō's father changed the family name, and began a prosperous leather business. As a young man, Jōō underwent Buddhist training at the Honganji temple in Yamashina, south of Kyoto, but left the temple in 1532, at which time he adopted the name Jōō. By then, he had become an enthusiastic student of classical literature and poetry under the tutelage of the courtier, poet, and polymath of the Sengoku period (1467–1568), Sanjōnishi Sanetaka (1455–1537). He called his residence in Kyoto the Daikokuwan, after the God of Good Fortune, Daikoku. The *Nampō Roku* (see fn 20) states that he received his chanoyu training under Murata Shukō (1421?–1502), Sōchin (identity uncertain), and [Jushiya?] Sōgo; however, it is not known when he began this training. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Takeno Jōō.") Generally in chanoyu history, Murata Shukō is considered the founder of chanoyu, while Jōō instilled in it an appreciation for things possessed of a wabi quality, and finally Rikyū brought this chanoyu of the wabi aesthetic, *wabicha*, to its culmination.



Sen no Rikyū Yuishogaki [Genealogy of Sen Rikyū], portion. Fushin'an collection.

duction of Kitamuki Dōchin.<sup>5</sup> This event may have been connected in some way to Rikyū's succession to the estate on his father's death. It was also around this time that he began instruction in Zen under Dairin Sōtō<sup>6</sup> of Nanshūji temple, and took the monastic name Sōeki.<sup>6</sup>

We know from the will compiled immediately before his death—the so-called *Matsugo no fumi*<sup>7</sup> [Final Message]—that his inherited property included rent collections from warehouses and from the fish-salters guild

<sup>5</sup> Kitamuki Dōchin (1504–62) was a resident of Sakai; perhaps a physician by profession. The "Oboegaki" (memoranda) section of the *Nampō Roku* states that Dōchin learned the *shoin-daisu* style of chanoyu—that is, the style based on the use of a lacquered utensil stand called *daisu* and conducted in large rooms called *shoin*, which was practiced at the Higashiyama Villa of the Ashikaga shogun—from a close friend of his named Kūkai, of Kyoto, who in turn had learned it directly from Nōami, one of the Ashikaga shogun's *dōbōshū* in charge of art treasures and cultural affairs. The "Oboegaki" further states that "Sōeki, when he was still known as Yoshirō and was seventeen, was interested in tea and received training under Dōchin." (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Kitamuki Dōchin.")

<sup>6</sup> Dairin Sōtō (1480–1568) was a Zen monk at the Rinzaï sect temple Daitokujī, in Kyoto, becoming that temple's chief abbot in 1536. In 1556, he became the founding abbot of Nanshūji temple in Sakai, built by Miyoshi Chōkei. He was Zen master to numerous tea men of Sakai, including Takeno Jōō, Kitamuki Dōchin, and Tsuda Sōtatsu. These three received from him the monastic names Ikkan, Kōshin, and Dōitsu, respectively. Although Rikyū also trained under Dairin, it is not certain exactly when or from whom he received the name Sōeki. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Dairin Sōtō"; "Sōeki-gō no yurai.")

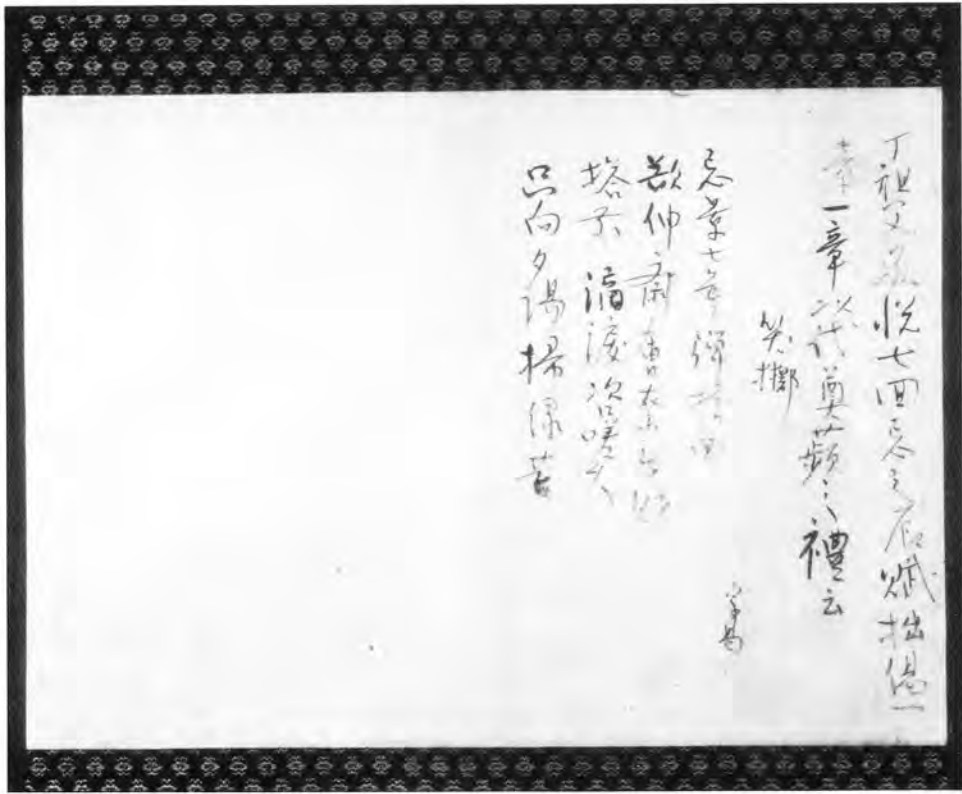


**Dairin Sôtô.** Property of Nanshūji temple, Sakai.  
Photo courtesy of the Sakai City Museum.



**Grave of Kitamuki Dōchin.** Located at Myōhōji temple, Sakai. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

(*shio-uoza*), plus land and buildings in Mozu and Fukai. This was probably average for a merchant of Sakai, but could not have been on the same scale as that of Imai Sōkyū,<sup>+</sup> who was a Naya, or Tsuda Sōgyū,<sup>+</sup> of the merchant house named Tennōjiya, both of whom later worked as Rikyū's colleagues under Nobunaga and Hideyoshi. It seems that Rikyū even experienced a period of extreme poverty after the death of his father. The so-called *Ryokutai Bokuseki* + [Green Moss Calligraphy] in the collection of Fushin'an, attributed to Rikyū, is a poem dating from the 7th memorial service of his grandfather, Dōetsu<sup>+</sup> (dates unknown). The name *Ryokutai* comes from the statement in the poem that poverty prevented him from holding a complete service, so he simply faced the setting sun and ceremonially waved a bunch of green moss.



*Ryokutai Bokuseki* [Green Moss Calligraphy]. Fushin'an collection.

## The Genealogy of the Sen Family

Rikyū's grandfather's name is given as Tanaka Sen'ami<sup>+</sup> in the *Sen no Rikyū Yuishogaki*, which describes him as follows:

Sen'ami was originally an official court servant (*dōbōshū*) of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–90). At the time of the Ōnin War, however, he was among twelve close servants to Yoshimasa who were accused of being in collusion with Yamana Sōzen, leader of the Western forces, and who were exiled at the request of Hosokawa Katsumoto, general of the Eastern forces. Sen'ami escaped to Sakai in Senshū, and, changing his name, lived in hiding. In Bummei 5 (1473), when Sōzen and Katsumoto died one after the other and Yoshimasa bequeathed his estate to his son Yoshihisa,

Sen'ami took the opportunity to return to Kyoto and reenter government service. However, upon the sudden death by illness of Yoshihisa while on a campaign in Chōkyō 1 (1487), Sen'ami decided to retreat to Sakai. His son Yohei changed the family name, Tanaka, to Sen, after Sen'ami, and operated a merchant house in Imaichi town. In turn, Yohei's son Rikyū also operated a business in the same area, but his love for the way of tea led him to become a disciple of Jōō and take the tonsure under the name Sen Sōeki.

From this we know that, among the Sen family of the early Edo period, it was thought that Rikyū's grandfather was Sen'ami, officially employed as a *dōbōshū* by Yoshimasa and Yoshihisa.

Historical documents reveal that, indeed, one member of Yoshimasa's *dōbōshū* was a man called Sen'ami, and that this man was exiled in Ōnin 1 (1467) for the reasons given above. In addition, a work entitled *Sōgo Ōzōshi* [Sōgo's Writing]<sup>7</sup> mentions two men called "Sen'a" and "Soa," who, it appears, were appointed "keepers of the Chinese treasures" (*karamono bugyō*), having the job of collecting, evaluating, storing, and displaying the Chinese art objects collected by the Muromachi shogun. It is known from a number of catalogues of the time, such as the *Onryōken Nichiroku* [Onryōken Date List],<sup>8</sup> that the job involved the care of incense containers and teabowls. Considering this, we could say that Sen'ami was a suitable candidate to be named as the grandfather of Rikyū.

In order to place them as grandfather, father, and son, the deducible age differences among Sen'ami, Yohei, and Rikyū are not implausible, either. Still, however, there exists some doubt regarding the identification of the grandfather, Dōetsu, who lived until Rikyū was a young man, with Sen'ami, the *dōbōshū* of Yoshimasa. This doubt arises from the fact that historical sources dealing with Rikyū, including the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* [Record of Yamanoue Sōji],<sup>9</sup> mention the so-called "three Amis"—Nōami, Geiami, and Sōami—yet Sen'ami's name does not appear at all. This

<sup>7</sup> The *Sōgo Ōzōshi* [宗伍大草紙] is a record dating to the year 1528, containing information pertaining to shogunal protocol, etiquette, and so forth. For a full transcription, see Hanawa Hōkinoichi 堀保己, ed., *Gunsho Ruijū* [郡書類] (Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 3rd-revised ed., 1959), vol. 22, *Buke bu* 武家部 (section on warrior households), pp. 537–626.

<sup>8</sup> The *Onryōken Nichiroku* [紫涼軒日録], begun in 1435, is an official daily record of events concerning the Ashikaga shoguns Yoshinori (r. 1429–41), Yoshimasa (r. 1449–74), and Yoshihisa (r. 1474–89), recorded by monks at the shogunal Onryōken within Shōkokuji temple in Kyoto. Though the original was destroyed in the Kanto region earthquake of 1923, it had already been published within vols. 133–137 of the *Dai Nihon Bukkyō Zensho* [大日本仏教全書] (1912–22; 151 vols.)

<sup>9</sup> There are four known versions of the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* [山上宗二記] which Yamanoue Sōji (1544–90) presented to four different people, respectively. All, however, were written by Yamanoue Sōji and derived from one original manuscript of his. One version, entitled *Chaki Meibutsu Shū* [茶器名物集], is included in Hanawa Hōkinoichi, ed., *Zoku Gunsho Ruijū* [続群書類]

somewhat disturbing fact suggests that Rikyū and his immediate circle were not concerned with anyone by the name of Sen'ami.

Since it is clear, from the mention of "Tanaka Sōeki" and "Tanaka Jō-an" (Dōan) in the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki*, that Tanaka was Sen Rikyū's original name, it seems that Sen was a use-name (*tsūshō*) of the Tanaka family. Thus, although there is no concrete proof to support the theory, I believe that if the name Sen indeed derives from the name Sen'ami, the person in question who possessed this Buddhist "-ami" name (*ami-gō*) was a believer of one of the Nembutsu sects, such as the Jishū—such believers having been common among Sakai townsmen. Besides Nembutsuji, another great temple in Sakai was Insetsuji. This was a temple of the Jishū sect, built in 1347 by Miyake Jūgorō,<sup>†</sup> who was also known as Sen'ami [written, however, with a different kanji for Sen]. After Jūgorō's time, a number of members of the Miyake clan took -ami names. Furthermore, when Nobunaga was imposing the "arrow money" tax (*yasen*), which I will describe later, one of the families who encouraged resistance to this, the Notoya, were important parishioners of Nembutsuji, among whom names ending in "ami" had been numerous since the Namboku Period (1333–92). It is thus not at all improbable that a Sen'ami should exist in the Tanaka family. Was the genealogy showing Rikyū's grandfather as one of Yoshimasa's *dōbōshū* simply an invention of the early Edo period? Elucidation of this point is a theme for further research.

### Discipleship under Jōō

The first time Rikyū's name appears in connection with a chanoyu event is in the *Matsuya Kaiki*, in the entry for the 27th day of the 2nd month, Tembun 13 (1544). Rikyū had invited two men who were visiting Sakai to a tea on this day: Matsuya Hisamasa<sup>†</sup> and Keison,<sup>†</sup> abbot of Shōmyōji temple in Nara. At this time Rikyū was about twenty-three years old.

The *Matsuya Kaiki*, even before this, in Hisamasa's entry for the 13th day of the 7th month, Tembun 6 (1537), mentions "Kyoto, at Master Yoshirō's," with the notation "that is, Sōeki" jotted in. This would place Rikyū as the host of a chanoyu gathering in Kyoto in 1537. Rikyū would have been about sixteen years old at the time and, judging from this, a precocious young "man of tea." In that the notation "that is, Sōeki" was

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類從) (Tokyo: Keizaizasshi sha, 1912), vol. 19, *Inshoku bu* 飲食部 (section on food and drink), pp. 1374–1409. Another appears in *Sakai-shi Shi* 〔堺市史〕 (Sakai City Hall, 1930), vol. 4, pp. 420–454, as well as in *Sen Sōshitsu* 千宗室 and *Sen Sōshu* 千宗守, supv. eds., *Chadō Zenshū* 〔茶道全集〕 (Osaka: Sōgensha, 1936) vol. 5, pp. 565–624. For a detailed explanation of theories pertaining to the various versions, and Kuwata Tadachika's carefully researched version based on the above-mentioned versions and theories, see *Chadō Koten Zenshū*, vol. 6, pp. 117–129.

added sometime later than the original entry, however, the reliability of the notation needs to be questioned. The name Yoshirō appears in the aforementioned *Nembutsu Sachō Nikki* in reference to three other people besides Rikyū, so it seems to have been an extremely popular name at that time.

As mentioned earlier, tradition has it that Rikyū first learned tea under Kitamuki Dōchin, and at Dōchin's suggestion, began to study under Takeno Jōō when he was nineteen (1540). Jōō, like Dōchin, was a resident of Henomatsu township [in Sakai], and is mentioned in the *Nembutsu Sachō Nikki* as "Jōō, leather trade (*karwaya*)."<sup>1</sup> He was a maker of weapons, and, through wealth acquired from this, took up an interest in art. According to the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki*, he was a poet of linked verse (*renga*) until the age of thirty. The *Sanetaka-kō Ki* [Diary of Lord (Sanjonishi) Sanetaka] records that Jōō (then named Shingorō<sup>2</sup>) visited the home of Sanetaka (1455–1537) in the company of the *renga* poet Insei on the 9th day of the 3rd month, Daiei 8 (1528). This began a relationship between Jōō and Sanetaka that lasted until Sanetaka's death, in the 10th month of 1537. On the 21st day of the 3rd month, 1530, Jōō, who studied classic literature under Sanetaka throughout those nine years, was given the book *Eiga Taigai*—Fujiwara Teika's definitive introductory work on Japanese *waka* poetry. The *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* states that, "Hearing the introduction of the [*Eiga*] *Taigai* and [thereby] understanding chanoyu, he was able to become a master." Jōō was twenty-nine at the time, and would therefore have been forty, and at the height of his career, in the year of Rikyū's discipleship.

In fact the Tembun era (1532–55) altogether was a thriving period for the chanoyu of Sakai. As indicated by the "Tembun *chakaiki*," tea gatherings took place almost daily among the townsmen of Sakai, with such military leaders as Miyoshi Chōkei (1523–64) and his younger brother Jikkyū (1528–62), Zen priests such as Dairin Sōtō, and also townsmen of Kyoto and Nara often participating. The records also reveal that tearooms at that time were set at four-and-a-half tatami mats in size. Chanoyu gatherings were much more than simple exchanges of courtesies; they served the function of transmitting chanoyu etiquette. Indeed, the succession of chanoyu gatherings had the effect of furthering the spread of chanoyu, and Jōō was at the forefront of these developments. The custom among tea devotees to practice Zen and to take monastic names may be traced directly to Jōō, who was a disciple of Dairin Sōtō of Nanshūji temple. The young Rikyū was molded by his teacher, Jōō.

On the 29th day of the 10th month, Tembun 24/Kōji 1 (1555), Jōō died. His son-in-law, Imai Sōkyū,<sup>3</sup> rushed to his side as soon as he was informed by Jōō's son, Shingorō (1550–1614). The tea that Jōō held on the 2nd of the month, with Sōkyū and Yamanoue Sōji as his guests, had probably been his last. Rikyū's own final encounter with his teacher had been at an early morning tea on the 1st day of the 4th month, when he had invited Jōō as



Takeno Jōō. Private collection. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.



Grave of Takeno Jōō. Located at Nanshūji temple, Sakai. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.

well as Mozuya Sōan<sup>101</sup> and Imai Sōkyū, and had brought out his secret treasures—an ink painting by Muqi (Jp., Mokkei) and a Korean teabowl—for their enjoyment. Jōō had been at the apex of his tea career just before he died, but due to his death, the leadership in the tea world passed to the next generation; notably, to Imai Sōkyū, Tsuda Sōgyū,<sup>†</sup> and Rikyū, who was about thirty-four years old at the time.

### Rikyū's Middle Years

Perhaps it was owing to his having lost his father and grandfather in his teens that Rikyū chose to marry early. His wife's name in life is not known, but her posthumous name was Hōshin Myōju,<sup>†</sup> and she bore him one son and three daughters. The son, Jōan (later called Dōan), was born in Tem-

<sup>101</sup> Mozuya Sōan (d. 1594) was a townsman of Sakai, originally named Shintarō, who later served, together with Rikyū, as one of Toyōtomi Hideyoshi's tea masters. Around the year 1577, he married Rikyū's daughter Osan (Rikyū's second daughter by his first wife). (*Genshoku Chadō Daijiten*, s.v. "Mozuya Sōan"; *Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Mozuya Sōan tsuma.")

bun 15 (1546); and since the daughter who later married the Sakai merchant named Ishibashi Ryōshitsu<sup>17</sup> was Dōan's full elder sister, we may assume that Rikyū married around the age of twenty. It might be noted here, however, that this wife passed away in the 7th month of 1577, several years after Rikyū had begun serving as Oda Nobunaga's official tea master.

It is only from fragmented historical sources that we can learn of Rikyū's tea activities during the twenty-odd years between the time his name first appeared in a chanoyu record and his appointment to Nobunaga when he was around the age of fifty. From his attendance with Matsuya Hisamasa at a tea hosted by a certain Men'ya Sōrin of Nara on the 3rd day of the month and year that Jōō died, it seems that his tea acquaintances extended to other cities. It is also apparent, from his frequent invitations to the chanoyu gatherings of Miyoshi Jikkyū after 1558, that his connections with military men were steadily deepening.

This Miyoshi clan had held the fief of Sakai from the time Motonaga, father of Chōkei and Jikkyū, entered that city in 1527 as the chief retainer of General Hosokawa, until it came under the control of Nobunaga. Owning to this headship during the prosperous period of chanoyu, the family were in close contact with the tea men of the city. In addition, it was Chōkei who, in honor of his father, Motonaga, and with the help of the Daitokuji priest, Dairin Sōtō, founded Nanshūji temple, which was to become so deeply bound to the fortunes of the Sakai tea men. An interesting sidelight to this is that, in turn, the subtemple Jukōin within the precincts of Daitokuji temple, Kyoto, was built in honor of Chōkei by his son Yoshitsugu, and this is where Rikyū's tombstone stands,<sup>18</sup> next to the five-tiered stone pillar marking the grave of Chōkei. In Tenshō 17 (1589), not long before his death, Rikyū made donations to Jukōin to pay for prayers in perpetuity for his dead parents and children, his wife, and himself.

Rikyū entered his forties during the Eiroku era (1558–70). To learn about his attitudes at the time regarding chanoyu, we can look at the paper cutouts he made of tea utensils, preserved at the Ryōkōin subtemple of Daitokuji. Rikyū cut out the shapes of about 50 different tea articles that he saw at various chanoyu gatherings, and wrote his observations on these cutouts. For example, about the famous tea caddy known as the "Jōō nasu," he commented as follows:

<sup>17</sup> There exist three tombstones for Rikyū. While Rikyū was alive, he selected Jukōin as his grave site, writing, in his 1589 donation pledge to that temple, the stipulation: "the tombstone shall be a stone lantern; 'Rikyū' and 'Sōon' are to be inscribed in vermilion on it." The newest of Rikyū's tombstones is that at Nanshūji temple in Sakai. According to the engraving on it, it was erected in Genroku 13 (1700)—110 years after Rikyū's death—by a certain Takagi Tosaburō, who was a disciple of Rikyū's descendant, Jōsō Sōshitsu. The third tombstone is behind the abbot's chamber (*hōjō*) at Daitokuji temple, where lies the tombstone of that temple's founding abbot. It is not known by whom or exactly when this tombstone was erected. Apparently, however, it existed at its present location at the time Takuan Sōhō's (1573–1645) work entitled *Kinlōshō* was written (early 17th c.).



Paper cutouts of tea containers, attributed to Rikyū. Property of the Ryōkōin subtemple of Daitokuji. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.

4th day of the 1st month, Eiroku 5 (1562)

Viewed at Sōkyū's; my second view since [seeing it at] Daikokuan's (i.e., Takeno Jōō's).

Upper and lower glaze both very fine. Glaze a little thick.

Clay light reddish color and very smooth. Inside glaze resembles a snowslide (*nadare*). Two finger marks.

Observations of this kind may be encountered in almost any chanoyu diary, but Rikyū's are the only instances of using paper cutouts as a device for illustrating the objects. His use of such a device reveals the keen sensibility he possessed in regard to the plastic arts. Such cutouts were commonly used as models for making actual utensils, and Rikyū's early utilization of them can be recognized as having formed the groundwork for his later creation of tea ceramics, such as the teabowls which Raku Chōjirō,<sup>†</sup> whom I shall describe in a later section, produced according to his directions. In any case, we can safely state that Rikyū cultivated his aesthetic sense and his connoisseurship of chanoyu artifacts during this period of his life.

The following episode, centering around Rikyū's aesthetic sensibility, shows another aspect of his character. The *Tennōjiya Kaiki* records that on the 12th day, 11th month, Eiroku 11 (1568), Tsuda Sōgyū was invited along with another tea enthusiast of Sakai named Dōha to an impromptu noontime tea given by Rikyū. The record of this tea ends with the words, "This winter, Sōeki has fallen into obscurity. There are no morning tea gatherings. This state of affairs dates from the time when he tore up the calligraphic work and such."

According to the *Rikyū Kōji Densho* [Transmissions pertaining to Layman Rikyū],<sup>12</sup> the problem of the calligraphic work which resulted in Rikyū's "falling into obscurity" was as follows: Rikyū had found a calligraphic work by the Song Dynasty Zen priest, Mian Xianjie (Jp., Mittan Kan-ketsu), in Ōmi Province, and used it for a chanoyu gathering. The guests, Kitamuki Dōchin and a townsman of Sakai named Matsue Ryūsen† (dates unknown), failed to admire it. When Rikyū asked what was wrong, they replied that it might be a forgery, whereupon Rikyū burned the scroll on the spot. [According to other transmissions of the story, Rikyū tore up the scroll.] This was because he did not want anyone in after years laughing at him for his mistake in buying it. As Dōchin's death occurred in the 1st month of 1562, several years before this episode, there seems to be some error in the story's transmission. At any rate, the episode left an unpleasant taste, and Rikyū's subsequent falling-out with Ryūsen lasted two years. During this time, Dōshitsu† [the younger brother of Tsuda Sōtatsu†] and [Sōtatsu's nephew] Sōgyū—both, of the Tennōjiya—tried to heal the breach between the two, with Dōshitsu inviting Ryūsen and Sōgyū to a reconciliation party (*nakanaori no furumai*) on the 28th day of the 12th month of the following year. Eventually, on the 3rd day of the 2nd month, 1571, Rikyū invited the three to an early morning chanoyu gathering and put an end to the rift.

During the years from 1568–71, the city of Sakai was on the horns of a dilemma. Oda Nobunaga, from his position in Kyoto, had levied "arrow money" (*yasen*)—a tax to pay for military equipment—in the amount of 20,000 *kan* on the city. This was also a time when Rikyū had fallen into obscurity, due to the insult received from his fellow chanoyu associates, as explained above, or, more accurately, to his own self-mortification. It was the very eve of his appointment as official tea master to Nobunaga.

<sup>12</sup> The *Rikyū Kōji Densho* [利休居士伝書] constitutes the section on Sen Rikyū in Matsuyama Ginshōan 松山吟松庵, ed., *Chadō Shiso Densho* [茶道四相伝書] [Transmissions pertaining to the Four Pioneers of the Way of Tea] (1933), which is based on the late-Edo tea man Kobori Sōshū's handwritten copy of transmissions pertaining to Rikyū, Furuta Oribe, Hosokawa Sansai, and Kobori Enshū, compiled by Matsuya Hisashige (see fn 2), in the archives of the National Diet Library. Hisashige's original manuscript is lost. A modern edition of Matsuyama Ginshōan's work, edited by Kumakura Isao 熊倉功夫, was published by Shibunkaku (Kyoto) in 1974.

## Nobunaga Seizes Sakai

The reaction of the Sakai townsmen to the tax levied by Nobunaga in 1568–69 has been studied as a symbol of the fate of the "free city" in Japan at that time. First of all, outlaws and masterless samurai were gathered under the leadership of the diehard faction, including the Notoya and Beniya merchant houses, and began to erect towers, dig deep trenches, and fit sluices for flooding at the edges of the town. This resistance organization plunged the city into confusion. However, according to the *Tennō-jiya Kaiki*, it seems that even during this period, chanoyu gatherings were being held almost daily. Even Rikyū, though "in obscurity," hosted gatherings on the 16th day of the 11th month and the 11th day of the 12th month, [1568]. At a gathering hosted by Imai Sōkyū on the 3rd day of the 1st month, 1569, Rikyū met with Tsuda Sōgyū and Takeno Sōga<sup>†</sup> (son of Jōō), and, needless to say, they made use of this venue to discuss measures to be taken. I will omit the details, but when Nobunaga expressed his intention to crush Sakai once and for all, taking his chance from the Miyoshi faction's invasion of Kyoto on the 5th day of the New Year, the resistance in the city collapsed and the pacifist faction emerged triumphant. As a result, Sakai paid the 20,000 *kan* levy as a ransom and yielded to Nobunaga. Both Sōkyū and Sōgyū were members of this pacifist group, so it is probably safe to assume that Rikyū was, too.

In the 2nd month, Nobunaga's generals seized the city of Sakai. At that time Tsuda Sōgyū entertained over one hundred military men at a dinner, while in the previous year, Imai Sōkyū had already presented Nobunaga with the "Matsushima" leaf-tea storage jar (*chatsubo*) and the "Jōō nasu" tea caddy, both of which had been handed down from Jōō. In the 7th month of the year of Sakai's capitulation, he went to Gifu, where he was warmly received by Nobunaga. Sōgyū was not idle, either. He went to Mino in the 1st month of Tenshō 2 (1574), staying for about a month, and while in residence at Gifu Castle, he was instructed by Nobunaga to make a list of all the famous tea utensils he would like to see, and was busy viewing treasured utensils (*meibutsu dōgu*) as a result. In this way, both Sōkyū and Sōgyū had actively entered upon intimate relations with Nobunaga, and even became officially sanctioned merchants under him. It is well known that Sōkyū had procured gunpowder for Nobunaga's use at the Battle of Anegawa (1570). Similarly, when Nobunaga was on campaign in Echizen, he wrote a black-sealed letter to Hōsensai<sup>†</sup> (that is, Rikyū) which said, "Arrival of one thousand musket balls—fortunate receipt of gift from afar." This tells us that Rikyū fulfilled the same kind of role, which was one facet contributing to his appointment as official tea master.



Black-sealed letter from Nobunaga to Rikyū. Nobunaga, in the letter, thanks Rikyū for sending him a supply of musket balls. Dated 16th day, 9th month [Tenshō 3]. Fushin'an collection.

### Tea Master under Nobunaga

From the above sequence of events, it would appear that Imai Sōkyū and Tsuda Sōgyū preceded Rikyū in the post of official tea master to Nobunaga, and Rikyū's appointment was on the recommendation of Sōkyū. However, it is difficult to believe the account in the *Sen no Rikyū Yuishogaki*, which states that this took place when Sōkyū arranged for him to have an audience with Nobunaga at Azuchi Castle. The reason is that, although this castle was built in 1576, Rikyū and his colleagues had, even before this, participated in chanoyu gatherings with Nobunaga, who often went to Kyoto. It is apparent that, through this connection, these three men were already in a privileged position.

For example, although Rikyū's name is not mentioned, there is record of Sōkyū accompanying a certain Shioya Sōetsu and the previously-mentioned Matsue Ryūsen to [Nobunaga's] chanoyu gathering at Myōkakuji temple on the 23rd day of the 11th month, 1573, where Baisetsu<sup>13</sup> prepared the tea. Again, at [Nobunaga's] chanoyu gathering at Shōkokuji temple at

<sup>13</sup> Baisetsu—known more fully as Fujūan Baisetsu (dates unknown)—was a townsperson of Kyoto, and was considered the leading tea master in that city. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Fujūan Baisetsu.")

noon on the 24th day of the 3rd month, 1574, to which townsmen of Sakai were invited, and at which the governor of Sakai, Matsui Yūkan,<sup>†</sup> prepared the tea, we find Sōkyū, Sōgyū, and Rikyū viewing the famed "Chidori" censer afterwards in the study. A few days later, on the 3rd day of the 4th month, another noontime chanoyu gathering was held by Nobunaga at Shōkokuji, at which the above-mentioned Baisetsu prepared the tea. Of all the circle of men from Sakai attending, only Sōkyū and Rikyū were afterwards presented with some Ranjatai incense,<sup>14</sup> together with fans. The following year (1575), on the 28th day of the 10th month, Nobunaga held a chanoyu gathering at Myōkōji temple, inviting a total of seventeen tea men from Kyoto and Sakai, including Sōkyū and Sōgyū. On this occasion, he brought out such treasures as the "Otogoze" kettle, the "Enji Banshō" ink painting scroll by Yujian (Jp., Gyokukan), and the "Mikazuki" leaf-tea jar, and "the tea was made by Sōeki"—Rikyū himself.

From the above, we may deduce the following points: firstly, that at this stage Sōkyū, Sōgyū, and Rikyū were already receiving special treatment from Nobunaga; and secondly, that even though a person might fulfill the role of maker of tea at a chanoyu gathering hosted by Nobunaga, this was not necessarily directly connected with the post of official tea master (*sadō*). Therefore, it is not necessarily appropriate to assume that, because Rikyū's first appearance as the person in charge of making tea at one of Nobunaga's tea gatherings occurred in the 10th month of 1575, he became Nobunaga's official tea master around that time. Rather, considering the first of the above two points, we may assume that all three friends were appointed tea masters around 1573, at the latest.

One thing that Nobunaga's official tea masters had in common was the fact that they were all townsmen from Sakai. It is true that, at first, the Kyoto tea man Baisetsu participated in Nobunaga's teas, but he was never elevated to an official position. Although the reason for this may well have been connected with Baisetsu's general lack of creative spark (as he is described in the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki*), fundamentally this was a reflection of Nobunaga's policy toward the town, and most probably he never had any intention of choosing a Kyoto tea man as his tea master.

<sup>14</sup> The Ranjatai incense was an imperial treasure brought to Japan from China during the reign of Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–749), and housed in the Shōsōin Imperial Treasure Repository of Tōdaiji Temple in Nara. The kanji for "Ranjatai" includes the characters for Tōdaiji, and the incense itself is also known as "Tōdaiji." When the Muromachi shogun, Ashikaga Yoshimasa, came to power, he took a portion of this famous incense, as a symbolic act of supremacy. Similarly, in the 3rd month of 1574, Nobunaga removed this incense from the Shōsōin and cut off some portions. According to the *Sōgyū takai-ki* report of the tea event at Shōkokuji on the 3rd day of the 4th month, Sōkyū and Rikyū were each given a packet of the incense because they each owned a renowned censer (Sōgyū, the "Fuwa" censer; Rikyū, the "Jukō" censer. (*Kōjien*, s.v. "ranjatai"; *Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Oda Nobunaga no sadō" and "Imai Sōkyū."))



Oda Nobunaga. Property of the Kobe City Museum.

### Rikyū's Second Marriage

As was mentioned earlier, in Tenshō 5 (1577)—a few years after his appointment by Nobunaga—Rikyū lost his first wife. Soon afterwards, he married his second wife, Sōon,<sup>†</sup> the widow of Miyaō Saburō Sannyū,<sup>†</sup> a noh actor specializing in the Hiyoshi Sarugaku sacred dance. She had given birth to a son, Shōan,<sup>†</sup> in Tembun 15 (1546), and her husband passed on in the 2nd month of 1553. As Rikyū had known Sannyū since his younger days, and had even learned noh chanting from him, it seems

unlikely that Sōon was a stranger to him. After the marriage, she became a most sympathetic companion to Rikyū, even in the field of chanoyu.

One problem, however, is that we do not know the date of the marriage. Popular tradition places it sometime in the year after Rikyū's first wife died, but there is no factual basis for this. If we tentatively guess that Sōon was fifteen when she gave birth to Shōan, that would make her forty-seven at the time of her second marriage, which seems too late. Based on information given in the donation pledge submitted by Rikyū to Jukōin in the 1st month, 1589, "the child Sōrin,<sup>+</sup> (death date) 18th day of the 8th month, and the child Sōgen,<sup>+</sup> (death date) 17th day of the 7th month" are assumed to have been born to Sōon and Rikyū. Even if their premature deaths are to be attributed to Sōon's advanced age, it is hardly conceivable that she gave birth to two children at or over the age of forty-seven. It may be, rather, that all this actually occurred before the first wife's death, in the early years of the Tenshō era; that is, around the time when Rikyū was appointed as Nobunaga's official tea master.

In any case, this second marriage apparently caused a great deal of discord in Rikyū's household. His full son, Dōan, in particular, must have been deeply wounded by the reality of Shōan, who was exactly the same age as himself. The complete absence of Dōan's name from historical records of chanoyu gatherings in the ten years from 1571 to 1581 is no small matter. It is thought that he was living as a vagabond during this time.

Rikyū's duty as a father would not allow him to let things remain as they were, however, and the solution he arrived at was to separate the two by sending Shōan to Kyoto. By 1580, at the latest, Shōan thus set up residence in Kyoto, living at the so-called Murasakino estate facing the gate of Daitokuji temple. From the *Kōshin Gegaki*<sup>15</sup> we learn that Shōan was hailed by Kyoto people as "the famed man of tea" (*meiyo no sukisha*), and we may infer that his arrival in Kyoto occasioned much interest. Dōan, on the other hand, returned to the world of tea around 1581, and thereafter helped his father Rikyū and was active as a tea man in his own right as well.

In passing, we may note that Shōan moved several years later, at the request of Rikyū, from the estate at Murasakino to Nijō Koromodana, and again afterwards, to a location in front of the gate of Hompōji temple. In later years, after Rikyū's death, Shōan and his son Sōtan<sup>+</sup> remained at this residence. Dōan, who inherited the estate of the Sen family in Sakai, became tea master to Hideyoshi like his father, and resumed this position after Rikyū's death. On the death of Hideyoshi, however, he returned to Sakai. In this way, the Sen family was divided in Rikyū's sons' generation into the Kyoto Sen and the Sakai Sen, and the Kyoto branch survived after

<sup>15</sup> The *Kōshin Gegaki* [親岑夏書] was written by Rikyū's great-grandson, Kōshin Sōsa (1613–72), between the 4th–7th months of 1662, and consists of memoranda of oral information received from his father, Sen Sōtan. The original manuscript, in two volumes, is in the collection of Fushin'an, Kyoto. It is published in vol. 10 of *Chadō Koten Zenshū*.



Donation pledge from Rikyū to the Jukōin subtemple of Daitokuji. Dated Tenshō 17, New Year's (1st month). Property of Jukōin. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

the extinction of the latter. It could be said that all these various movements had their origins in the second marriage of Rikyū, to Sōon.

### Friendship with Hideyoshi

Oda Nobunaga, on his path to power in Kyoto, made use of his so-called *meibutsu* hunts as a means toward this end.<sup>16</sup> And in his relations with his military commanders, too, "Tea [was his] way of politics" (*chanoyū goseidō*).

<sup>16</sup> It seems that Oda Nobunaga's vast collection of treasured tea utensils had its start with the "Matsushima" leaf-tea storage jar and "Jōō nasu" tea caddy presented to him around Eiroku 11 (1568) by Imai Sōkyū. Nobunaga conducted his first "meibutsu hunt" in the 2nd month of the following year, confiscating six treasured items from the Daimonjiya merchant house of Kyoto. In the 4th month of 1570, Sakai became the target of his second hunt. Through such tactics, Nobunaga utilized tea to manipulate the wealthy townspeople of Kyoto and Sakai. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Oda Nobunaga.")

This term appears in a letter which Toyotomi Hideyoshi wrote to the retainer of Nobunaga's heir, Nobutaka, after Nobunaga's death, as follows:

His Highness [Nobunaga] rewarded me many times, even giving me tea utensils (*dōgu*) at Kanayama in Tanshū. Even though tea [was his] way of politics, I was the exception to the rule. He said that I was to be allowed to practice chanoyu. I will never forget [his kindness] even in future lives.

This does not mean that Nobunaga made chanoyu the basis of government, but that he prohibited anyone from practicing chanoyu without his permission. Yet conversely, the military commanders who received tea utensils as rewards from Nobunaga's hand consequently became all the more devoted to tea. To this extent, it may be said that chanoyu did in fact have extremely far-reaching political effects. It is no surprise that relationships that went far beyond the mere practice of tea should spring up between these military men and the official tea masters. This is exactly how Rikyū's relationship with Hideyoshi progressed in later years; but the seeds were sown during Nobunaga's time.

Hideyoshi often received tea utensils from Nobunaga. In the 7th month of 1576, he was awarded an ink painting of the moon by Muqi for his part in the construction of Azuchi Castle; and in the 12th month of the following year, he was given the "Otogoze" kettle as a reward for conquering Tajima and Harima. Hideyoshi hung the scroll and used the kettle at a chanoyu gathering for the unsealing of a leaf-tea storage jar (*kuchikiri chakai*). This gathering was held on the 15th day of the 10th month, 1578, at the siege castle in front of Banshū Miki Castle (Harima), with Sōgyū as guest, and was no doubt a very proud occasion for Hideyoshi. The siege of Miki Castle was to take over two years of arduous fighting; and it was only in the first month of 1580 that the castle finally fell and Hideyoshi was able to return to Nagahama Castle. There he hosted a chanoyu on the 19th day of the 2nd month for Sōgyū, the Sakai merchant Zeniya Sōtotsu<sup>1</sup> (d. 1590), and Makimura Hyōbu<sup>1</sup> (1546–93),<sup>17</sup> using the precious leaf-tea storage jar he had received from Nobunaga.

However, even more significant than these was the occasion in 1581, after Hideyoshi's triumphant return from the occupation of Tottori Castle

<sup>17</sup> Makimura Hyōbu was a warrior who served under Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Although he is counted as one of Rikyū's seven closest chanoyu disciples (*shichitetsu*), there are only four recorded occasions of him having had tea together with Rikyū: at a gathering hosted by Hideyoshi at night on the 28th day, 12th month, Tenshō 11 (1584); at a grand tea event hosted by Hideyoshi at Osaka Castle on the 15th day, 10th month, Tenshō 12; and as Rikyū's invited guest, together with two other warriors under Hideyoshi—Toda Mambu and Shibayama Kemmotsu—on the morning of the 28th day, 10th month, Tenshō 18, as well as with Toda Mambu, again, at noon on the 25th day of the 1st month, Tenshō 19—only one month before Rikyū's death. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Makimura Hyōbu.")

and defeat of Yoshikawa Tsuneie, when he was awarded eight different famed tea utensils. In a letter written to Imai Sōkyū and Sōkyū's son Sōkun,<sup>†</sup> dated the 23rd day of the 12th month of that year, he states, "I was given leave to enjoy chanoyu with the tea officials from Sakai." This means that Hideyoshi was not only given tea utensils by Nobunaga, but was also allowed to invite Nobunaga's tea masters to his own chanoyu gatherings. It was probably this that Hideyoshi was referring to when he wrote, "Despite the fact that tea [was his] way of politics . . . I was to be allowed to practice chanoyu."

During this time, exchanges of tea utensils were made between Rikyū and Hideyoshi. Rikyū used a ceramic tea caddy received from Hideyoshi at a chanoyu gathering on the 22nd day of the 4th month, 1579, while Hideyoshi used a kettle given to him by Rikyū at a chanoyu gathering at Himeji Castle on the 12th day of the 6th month, 1581.

Taking these things into consideration, it can be said that the men who acted as Nobunaga's official tea masters were not limited to relations with Nobunaga alone, but came to embody the authority which he exercised over his generals through the medium of chanoyu. Chanoyu gatherings functioned as a type of official ceremony, and Nobunaga's tea masters acted as substitutes for him at these gatherings. This role of the tea masters was manifested to the highest degree after Hideyoshi came to power.

### About Chōjirō

After becoming Nobunaga's tea master, Rikyū made many contacts with military leaders as described above, and at the same time polished his own tea technique and refined his aesthetic sense. In the years 1579–80, when he was deepening these contacts, we should take note of one remarkable omen: his choice of utensils at a morning chanoyu gathering given on the 9th day of the 12th month, 1580, at which Tsuda Sōgyū and Yamanoue Sōji were his guests. The list, recorded in the *Tennōjiya Kaiki*, is as follows:

Morning, 9th day of the 12th month, Sen Sōeki's meeting.  
Sōkyū, Sōji.

Item: hearth—droop-shouldered kettle on a hook; first appearance.

Item: tokonoma—calligraphy by Dongyang Dehui. In front, a leaf-tea storage jar (bought from Maisuke).

Item: during the break (*chōzu no ma*), in tokonoma, a narrow-mouthed flower container, "Kiri no Hashi," with white plum blossom.

Item: flared-rim teabowl, lacquered tea container (*natsume*). . .

The calligraphy mentioned in the list, by the Yuan period Chinese Zen priest Dongyang Dehui (Jp., Tōyō Tehi), was one of Rikyū's treasures, and, as mentioned in his *Matsugo no fumi*, written in Sakai just before his suicide, he bequeathed this work to the priest Kokei of Daitokuji. However, of particular interest here are the "droop-shouldered kettle" (*kata no taretaru kama*) and the "flared-rim teabowl" (*hata no soritaru chawan*). The kettle is believed to have been freshly cast by Rikyū's metalworker, Tsuji Yojirō,<sup>18</sup> while the "flared-rim teabowl" is thought to refer to a very early work of Raku Chōjirō (d. 1592); either the red Raku teabowls "Kōtō" or "Dōjōji." Chōjirō was originally a maker of ceramic roof tiles, but began making tea wares when Rikyū, who had been observing his technique, gave him a paper pattern and requested him to make a bowl to his specifications. Cooperating in this new venture were one Tanaka Sōkei and his sons Sōmi (dates uncertain) and Jōkei (1561–1635). Early "Chōjirō ware" is actually a general term for the work of these several men.<sup>19</sup>

As may be deduced from his name, Tanaka Sōkei is thought to have been some family relation of Tanaka Sōeki; in other words, of Sen Rikyū. One theory even postulates that he was Rikyū's son. He was born in 1536, about fifteen years after Rikyū, as we know from the carving on the belly of his tricolored lion-shaped censer, which states, "60 years of age—Tanaka, 'Foremost in the Realm' (*tenka ichi*) Sōkei." This is dated "Bunroku 4 [1595], a fortunate day in the 9th month."

On the portrait of Rikyū made in 1595 by Hasegawa Tōhaku, in the Fushin'an collection, the inscription by Shun'oku Sōen, of the subtemple Sangen'in in Daitokuji, states that the work was commissioned by "the faithful believer who is always attending on Rikyū, Sōkei." This kind of portrait is usually commissioned by the children or relatives of dead nobility as a commemorative act, and so "the faithful believer, Sōkei," undoubtedly had some extremely close connection with Rikyū. However, we will here reserve judgement as to whether he was indeed Rikyū's son.

To return to the "flared-rim teabowl," this was an innovation of Rikyū's fashioned through the above-mentioned collaboration. The shape seems to take after Korean teabowls of the Komogai type. Teabowls of the more 'proper,' 'dignified' shape known as the "Sōeki shape" [or Rikyū shape] are also thought to take after Korean bowls; in the case of the latter, however, after those of the cylindrical type (*tsutsu-gata*). In short, Korean bowls played a noticeable role in Rikyū's modelling ideas.

<sup>18</sup> Tsuji Yojirō (dates unknown) is said to have learned his trade from the kettle maker Nishimura Dōji. He was active during the period when Hideyoshi was in power, and he earned the title "*tenka ichi*" (foremost [kettle maker] in the realm). There exist several kettles of his which he made according to Rikyū's design (*Rikyū-gonomi*), including the "Amidadō" kettle, the "Unryū" kettle, and the "Yohō" kettle. (*Genshoku Chūdō Daijiten*, s.v. "Tsuji Yojirō.")

<sup>19</sup> For more on the origins of Raku ware, and an explanation of "Chōjirō ware," see Hayashiya Seizō, "Teabowls—Part II," *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 36 (1988), pp. 32–39.



Teabowl named **Kōtō** [勾当], Red Raku; attributed to the 1st generation Raku Chōjirō. Property of the Tekisui Art Museum in Ashiya, Hyogo.

It is noteworthy that in 1580, when Rikyū began to use the "flared-rim teabowl," Makimura Hyōbu was using a "distorted" (*yugami*) teabowl. This was on the 14th day of the 1st month, 1580, when the latter invited the warrior Sakuma Jinkurō (Masakatsu; 1556–1631) and Tsuda Sōgyū to a night tea at his residence within Azuchi Castle. It is thought that the bowl in question was an irregularly shaped bowl, but not like Rikyū's, and that it may have been linked with the "twisted" (*hizumi*) teabowls promoted later by Furuta Oribe in the Keichō era (1596–1615). In any case, the above use by Makimura of a "distorted" teabowl constitutes the first recorded use of such a bowl. From around 1585, references to "distorted" teabowls appear frequently in tea records, and such bowls would thus appear to have become something of a fad. It is hypothesized that this design arose in contrast to the more conventional Rikyū-shape bowl, and I will take up this subject later, in connection with Rikyū's death.

At any rate, as the flared-rim teabowl indicates, Rikyū's aesthetic sense seems to have begun to express a high degree of individuality from 1579–80, when he was in his late fifties. It was possibly a little later than

this that, [according to the "Metsugo" (posthumous) section in the *Nampō Roku*,]<sup>20</sup> Imai Sōkyū was receiving criticism as "a tea man lacking in enthusiasm" (*omoiire-tarukoto naki chajin*). Rikyū, on the other hand, was burning with creative spirit at this time, and his innovations became even more remarkable after he became Hideyoshi's official tea master.

## The Greatest Tea Master of All

After Oda Nobunaga met his violent end in the Honnōji Incident on the 2nd day of the 6th month, Tenshō 10 (1582), the services of Rikyū and most of Nobunaga's other tea masters were transferred to Hideyoshi. Even when Nobunaga was alive, close contacts had existed between these tea men and Hideyoshi, so there was probably no obstacle to this transfer. At the time, the official tea masters included Rikyū, Imai Sōkyū, Tsuda Sōgyū, Imai Sōkun, Yamanoue Sōji, and Zeniya Sōtotsu (among others). The *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* lists eight people under the heading of "chanoyu people serving Hideyoshi" [in the 1st month, 1584]. The names listed are Tanaka Sōeki, Imai Sōkyū, Tsuda Sōgyū, Yamanoue Sōji, Jū Sōho, Sumiyoshiya Sōmu, Mozuya Sōan, and Tanaka Jōan (Sen Dōan). This shows that some deletions and additions had been made after Nobunaga's time. Furthermore, in the words of Sōji, these eight men, including himself, were "almost all men of tea [the likes of whom had not been seen] in a hundred and fifty years." Here, too, all were Sakai townsmen, but the latter four were distinctly lacking in influence compared to the first four. One senses that

<sup>20</sup> The *Nampō Roku* [南方録] is, in form, a compendium of Sen Rikyū's way of tea recorded by a close disciple and Zen monk, Nambō Sōkei (dates uncertain). The full title is *Kissa Nampō Roku* [喫茶南方録] [Record on the Drinking of Tea, which Comes from the South], alluding to a statement from the *Cha Jing* of Luyu that tea is a plant native to the southern quarter. According to an account in the oldest manuscript copy, that of Tachibana Jitsuzan (1655–1708), the text as it was discovered by Jitsuzan had section titles but no general title, and the title *Kissa Nampō Roku* was provided by Jitsuzan's Zen master, Kōgai Sōshō (dates uncertain). Some later texts use the character "bō" (坊; monk's quarters) instead of "hō" (方; direction), changing the meaning "The Record of Nambō [Sōkei]." The seven sections of the *Nampō Roku* are: (1) "Obogaki" [覚書] (literally, "Memoranda"; a record of statements by Rikyū on various aspects of tea); (2) "Kai" [会] (literally, "Gatherings"; a record of tea gatherings hosted by Rikyū); (3) "Tana" [棚] (literally, "Shelves"; proper methods of using various utensil stands); (4) "Shoin" [書院] (methods of displaying utensils in a shoin room); (5) "Daisu" [台子] (methods of using the daisu tea utensil stand); (6) "Sumibiki" [墨引] (literally, "Brushed Over with Ink," i.e., rendered illegible, because matters best transmitted orally are revealed; a treatment, in particular, of the measurements governing utensils and tea procedures); and (7) "Metsugo" [滅後] (literally, "Posthumous"; a record of words and deeds of Rikyū recalled after his death). The first six of these are shown, in copy, to have borne Rikyū's seal, certifying that he reviewed the contents. The last section was written two years after Rikyū's death. Annotated texts of the *Nampō Roku* are included in vol. 4 of *Chadō Koten Zenshū*, and in Nishiyama Matsumosuke 西山松之助 et. al., ed., *Nihon Shōshō Shisō Taikēi* [日本思想大系], vol. 61 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972). A full translation of the "Obogaki" section, and translation of one portion of the "Metsugo" section, are given in Dennis Hirota, "The Practice of Tea 3—Memoranda of the Words of Rikyū: *Nampōroku* Book I," *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 25 (1980).



Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Property of the Itsuo Art Museum in Ikeda, Osaka. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

as the group of official tea masters entered the second generation, the significance of their existence was declining. Viewed from another angle, the fact that Rikyū's son Jōan and also his son-in-law Sōan were on the list seems to indicate that his own position was becoming stronger. Although Rikyū played a less prominent role than Sōkyū and Sōgyū during Nobunaga's time, his relations with Hideyoshi were such that, after Nobunaga's death and Hideyoshi's assumption of power, Rikyū became a figure of prominence—Hideyoshi's chief official tea master.

In this connection, it is necessary to consider how Hideyoshi and Rikyū perceived their relationship. For Rikyū, Hideyoshi was no more than a general of his one-time lord, Nobunaga. In Rikyū's early-period letters to others, he would toss off the name Hideyoshi or Chikushu [i.e., governor of Chikuzen] without affixing any expression of honor. By this, we can gain an idea of his attitude. As might be expected, however, as

Hideyoshi advanced to the post of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal (*naidaijin*) and finally to *kampaku*, or Regent, Rikyū came to refer to him using expressions of honor or even as "*tenka-sama*" (His Highness). But his sense of himself as a retainer was always shallow, and it is possible that this formed an undercurrent leading to tragedy in the relationship between these two men.

With the beginning of Hideyoshi's rule, the role of the official tea master changed considerably, at least in Rikyū's case. This change took the form of a greater closeness to the ruler and an increased involvement in politics—phenomena already detectible in a letter from Rikyū to the priest Kōshuku (d. 1594) of Myōkian temple in Yamazaki, dated the 8th month of Tenshō 10 (1582), just after the Battle of Yamazaki. [In it, Rikyū states that if Hideyoshi were going to Myōkian, he might also go.] There exists a letter to Shimai Sōshitsu,<sup>21</sup> dated the 20th day of the 6th month of the following year, in which Rikyū urges the latter to go to Kyoto, stating: "Hideyoshi often talks about you. Day and night, I wish you would come back to Kyoto. Hideyoshi would also certainly be glad to see you." In the postscript, he adds: "If you have any request, you should let me take care of it for you." These are surely not the words of a mere tea master.

Another incident shows Rikyū's position even more clearly. The Christian daimyo Ōtomo Sōrin (1530–87), who had come from Kyushu to appeal against the oppression of the Shimazu clan, had received numerous invitations to banquets, from Hideyoshi on down. He was entertained by Hideyoshi's half-brother, Toyotomi Hidenaga, who was Chief Councillor of the State (*dainagon*) and governor of the Nara area. When he was leaving Hidenaga's villa in the evening, the latter took his hand and said, "No matter what happens, I will always look out for your interests, so don't worry. For private matters, go to Sōeki, and for public matters, come to me. Nothing bad should happen to you." Sōrin, very impressed by this, wrote a detailed letter the next day at his quarters in Sakai, to his chief retainer in his home province. Part of his report was as follows:

[We will] have to rely on [Hidenaga] if there is anything we need. But we must proceed with great care. It is truly indescribable how Rikyū supported and worked for us. We must never forget this. As far as I can see, Rikyū is the only person who can speak to the Regent. It is vital that we take care not to offend either Hidenaga or Rikyū. Please ensure that our dealings with them are without fault.

<sup>21</sup> Shimai Sōshitsu (1539–1615) was an affluent merchant of Hakata who made his fortune through the import of goods from China and Korea. His influence in Kyushu, and friendly relations with Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi—for which he tactfully used the good offices of Rikyū and others—placed him in a key political position with the two warlords in their attempts at controlling the country. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v. "Shimai Sōshitsu.")

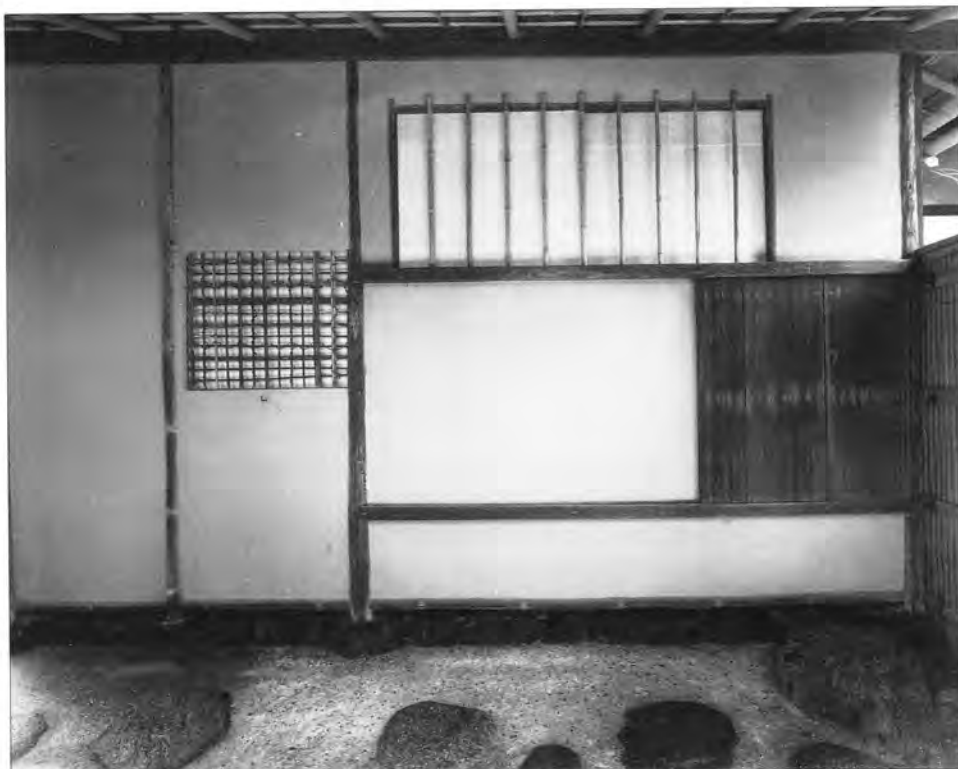
He noted with surprise the extent of Rikyū's influence. This peculiar phenomenon, wherein certain select individuals could wield such influence, reflects the fact that the power structure was not yet completely established. Yet it is probably safe to say that, were it not for the strength of the man Rikyū, he would never have come to wield the kind of influence that he did.

### Breaking the Canons of Chanoyu

As mentioned earlier, Rikyū's aesthetic sense began to show some change around 1579–80. Following Hideyoshi's assumption of power, this tendency gathered speed, as evidenced in the small-size tearooms [of his innovation] which first appeared at this time. Although we lack absolute proof that the two-mat tearoom called Taian, within Myōkian in Yamazaki, was Rikyū's work, certain facets of the architecture, and Rikyū's close connection with the priest Kōshuku, lead us to accept the popular opinion that it was built by Rikyū sometime soon after Tenshō 10 (1582). This opinion is supported by statements in the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* that, in the days of Jōō there was only one person in all the country—a disciple of Jōō's named Yamamoto Sukegorō—who had a two-and-a-half-mat tearoom; anyone who owned even one Chinese tea article (*karamono*) would build a four-and-a-half-mat room. Jōō himself had a room of four-and-a-half mats, which was widely copied by the townspeople of Kyoto and Sakai. The four-and-a-half-mat room was something of a canon in chanoyu, and Rikyū, too, "in his practice up to the age of thirty or forty, followed the dictates of the canons; the tearooms he had were, until the age of around sixty-one, copies of Jōō's four-and-a-half-mat [room]. . . . This changed after age sixty-one . . . and during the ten years after the honorable regent's accession, he used three-mat or two-and-a-half-mat rooms for both upper and lower [status people]." In addition, the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* reports that "Sōeki made the first one-and-a-half-mat tearoom in Kyoto." It is probably no accident that around the age of sixty-one, that is to say when he began serving as Hideyoshi's tea master, Rikyū departed from the canons which had been observed since Jōō's time, and embarked on the pursuit of a freer expression of beauty.

The fact that Rikyū was now Hideyoshi's chief tea master and was on intimate terms with the new ruler engendered in him a self-confidence and pride which inspired him with new ideas and a fresh aesthetic consciousness. With Rikyū, worldliness and artistic expression were not only coexisting elements of his very being, but, one might say, were inseparable to his being.

It was at this time, also, that the term *yamazato-(maru)* (mountain hamlet) came to be applied to clusters of tearooms built within castle



Tearoom named Taian [待庵]; exterior wall with *nijiriguchi* entrance. On the premises of Myōkian temple in Ōyamazaki, Kyoto. Photo by Tabata Minao.

grounds, and in this, too, we can see the hand of Rikyū. Hideyoshi built Osaka Castle in Tenshō 11 (1583), his Jurakudai Villa in Tenshō 15 (1587), Hizen Nagoya Castle in Bunroku 1 (1592), and Fushimi Castle in Bunroku 3 (1594)—all of which featured such "mountain hamlets." These tearooms within a castle's grounds were a version of the earlier "mountain dwelling within the city."<sup>22</sup> And here, similarly, it was through the contrast between the imposing castle keep and the "mountain hamlet" that the beauty of chanoyu was to be realized.

### The Title "Rikyū Koji"

Of the ten years or so of Rikyū's relationship with Hideyoshi, the period between 1586 and 1588 could be called their honeymoon period. A

<sup>22</sup> Moriya Takeshi presents a discussion of this phenomenon in "The Mountain Dwelling Within the City," *Chanoyu Quarterly* no. 56 (1988), pp. 7–21.

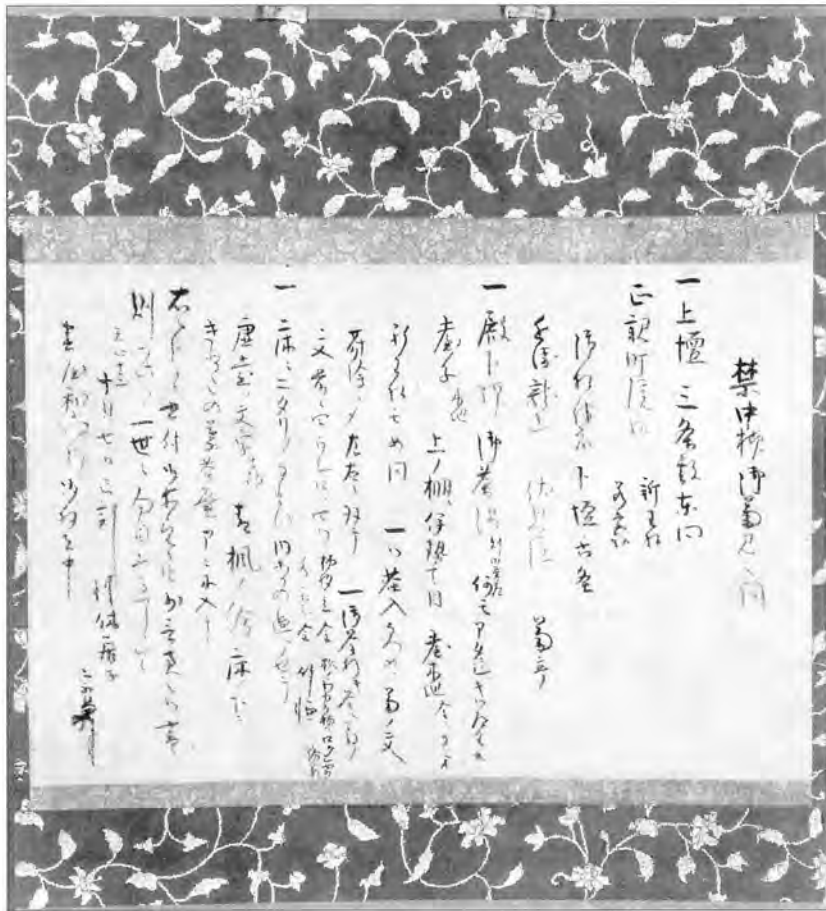
chanoyu gathering at the subtemple Sōken'in in Daitokuji on the 8th day of the 3rd month, Tenshō 13 (1585), and a chanoyu gathering at the Imperial Palace—the so-called *Kinri* or *Kinchū Chakai* (Imperial Chanoyu Gathering)—on the 7th day of the 10th month, same year, were products of their collaboration. In the former, Hideyoshi took the opportunity of a memorial service for Nobunaga at Daitokuji to hold a chanoyu gathering. The site was spread over many subtemples within the Daitokuji compound, including the chief priest's quarters of Sōken'in, and many famed utensils from Hideyoshi's collection were displayed. The guests consisted of Hideyoshi's cavalry officers and high-ranking daimyo, about fifty Kyoto townspeople, and also about twenty-five townspeople who came from Sakai in response to a circular letter from Rikyū and Sōgyū. These two are said to have made as many as 200 bowls of tea that day. It is noteworthy that Imai Sōkyū was not present.

The Sōken'in gathering was intended to commemorate Hideyoshi's assumption of the office of Keeper of the Privy Seal, while the *Kinchū Chakai* on the 7th day of the 10th month was to commemorate his elevation to the office of *kampaku*. On that day, Hideyoshi visited the Imperial Palace during the Hour of the Snake (around 10 a.m.) and conducted a ceremony known as *ikkon no gi*, involving sakè, first with Emperor Ōgimachi, in the residential apartments of the palace, and next with Konoe Nobusuke and other aristocrats in the Shishinden, the hall for official functions. Following this, Hideyoshi himself made tea and offered it in the Kogoshō, or reception hall, in the presence of the Emperor, Empress, and four others. Rikyū was waiting in another room during this time, and after the departure of the Emperor, he prepared tea using a *daisu* in a room adjoining the reception hall, and offered it to the aristocrats, entertaining them thus until sunset.

Rikyū's prestige and renown were assured after he assisted Hideyoshi at this event, and further, it is reported in the *Uno Mondo Ki* and the *Hoankō* that the event occasioned the bestowal of the name Rikyū as an Imperial gift.<sup>23</sup> In actuality, as we know from the *Ichimokukō*, this was a name given to him by Dairin Sōtō of Nanshūji, when Rikyū was in his late forties and was studying under Takeno Jōō.<sup>24</sup> That he took this same name

<sup>23</sup> The *Uno Mondo Ki* [宇野主水記] is the diary, covering the years 1580–86, of Uno Mondo (dates unknown), who was a retainer of Ken'nyō Shōnin (1543–92), the 11th chief priest of the Jōdo Shin sect temple, Honganji. The *Hoankō* [蒲庵稿] is a record of the sayings of the Daitokuji priest Kokei Sōchin (1532–97), published in 1804 by Matsudaira Fumai. (*Genshoku Chadō Daijiten*, s.v. "Uno Mondo Ki" and "Hoankō.")

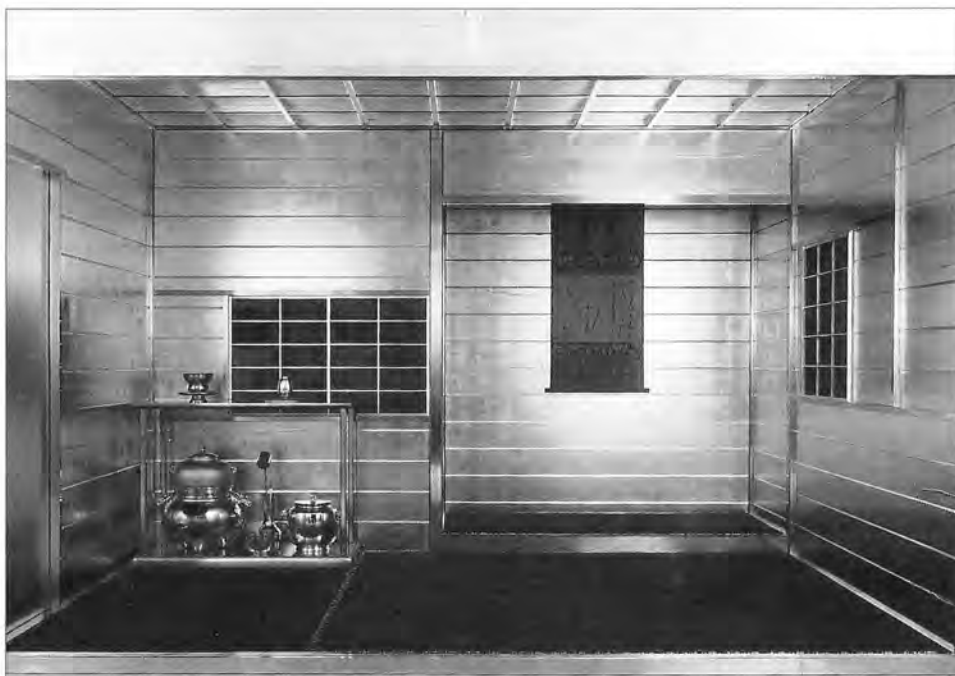
<sup>24</sup> The *Ichimokukō* [一點稿] is a record of the sayings of the Daitokuji priest Shun'oku Sōen (1529–1611). Included are his opinions regarding the religious names of a number of notable tea figures, including Sen Rikyū and Sen Shōan. A transcription is preserved in the archives of Daitokuji temple. On the occasion of Shun'oku's 350th memorial in 1961, a limited edition, titled *Taihō Engan Kokushi Ichimokukō* [大正圓鑑國師一點稿], was published by Konnichian under the editorship of Fujii Sōshō 藤井宗省.



*Kinchū Chakai Ki* [Report of the Imperial Tea Gathering]. This was Rikyū's report of the event, written to the priest Shun'oku Sōen. Fushin'an collection.

anew at the *Kinri Chakai* would suggest that it was probably Hideyoshi's idea to chose to name this an Imperial gift at this time. Rikyū himself originally thought of it as a "temporary name for one day only," but this became embellished in his mind by the happiness of the event, and from then on he used it regularly as his "true name."

There is one postscript to the story of the *Kinri Chakai*. In the first month of Tenshō 16 (1588), Hideyoshi again came to the Palace to host a chanoyu gathering. On this occasion, his famous golden tearoom was brought in and set up in the reception hall. This was a portable three-mat room with the ceiling, walls, pillars, and lintels covered in gold leaf; the ribs of the translucent shoji doors likewise of gold; and the wainscot made of red gossamer material with round crests. A three-tiered shelf finished in clear lacquer over gold dust (*nashiji*), and having gold metal fittings, held



Hideyoshi's Portable Golden Tearoom (*Ōgon no chashitsu*; replica). Property of the MOA Museum of Art in Atami, Shizuoka.

a portable brazier, round kettle, container for fresh water shaped like a rice vat, a "citron-mouth" ladle stand, and waste-water receptacle, among other things—all of these made of gold. The only items not of gold were the bamboo ladle and the bamboo whisk.

Certainly this taste for gold befitted Hideyoshi, but whether Rikyū played a role in creating this tearoom remains a question. According to Luis Frois (1532–97), the man who actually made the tearoom was a poverty-stricken goldsmith of Sakai, who for this was rewarded so handsomely by Hideyoshi that he could live like a nobleman and never had to work again. The room may not have been in Rikyū's taste, but, as the era's foremost tea master, he could have totally disassociated himself from it; indeed, his pride probably would not have permitted this. It is more likely that he did play some part in its creation. This golden tearoom was brought into the worship hall at the Grand Tea at Kitano, which I shall describe later, and was carried to Hizen Nagoya Castle in the 5th month of 1592. Hideyoshi seems to have taken great pride in it.

## Changing Times

On the 2nd day of the 1st month, Tenshō 15 (1587), when the Hakata merchant Kamiya Sōtan (1551?–1635) was enjoying a noontime tea at the invitation of Tennōjiya Dōshitsu of Sakai, a message suddenly arrived from Sōgyū. It said that on the following day, the Regent would be holding a great chanoyu gathering for daimyos, at Osaka Castle. Sōtan was included among those to be given tea, so he should quickly prepare a gift and hurry to the castle. Sōtan, an influential figure in Kyushu, had set out eastward in the 11th month of the previous year accompanied by an entourage of several men, and had been making a round of visits to tea men in Kyoto, Nara, and Sakai. He had come at the request of Hideyoshi, because the latter had wished him to conciliate the citizens of Hakata before the planned subjugation of the Shimazu, to take place in the 3rd month. Sōtan arrived at Osaka Castle after nightfall, and was met by Sōgyū and Ishida Mitsunari, the latter hospitably offering him food and drink. The following day, Hideyoshi's manner of welcoming Sōtan at the castle was extraordinary. As Sōtan was viewing the tea utensils with the group from Sakai in the large reception room, Hideyoshi called out, "Which is the fellow from Kyushu?" At Sōtan's acknowledgment, he ordered, "You others, move out of the way and let the fellow from Kyushu have a good look by himself," whereupon the Sakai group was obliged to withdraw. Afterwards, as they waited in the next room to be summoned to a meal, Hideyoshi again ordered, "Give this fellow from Kyushu something to eat." He was served a meal just like the daimyos, while none of the Kyoto or Sakai tea men were permitted to be present. Ishida Mitsunari was detailed to serve Sōtan during the meal.

The above, which is part of the entry for that day recorded in the *Sōtan Nikki* [Sōtan's Diary],<sup>25</sup> gives us an idea of the ties among Sōtan, Mitsunari, and Hideyoshi. It was Sōgyū who had promoted the relationship, so it would probably be premature to conclude that the appearance of "the fellow from Kyushu" spelled the immediate downfall of Rikyū and the Sakai group. Still, it was an event which foreshadowed the future. In the 3rd month, Hideyoshi traveled west to oversee the subjugation of the Shimazu.

The so-called *Kitano Ō-chanoyu*, or Grand Tea at Kitano, was a large-scale chanoyu gathering held by Hideyoshi after he had returned to Osaka in triumph from his subjugation of the Shimazu, on the 14th day of the 7th month, and was to commemorate the completion of the construction of his

<sup>25</sup> The *Sōtan Nikki* 「宗湛日記」 covers the years 1586, when Kamiya Sōtan first visited Kyoto, to 1613. The whereabouts of the original manuscript are unknown. An edited version based on scattered transcriptions of various portions of the work is included in *Chadō Koten Zenshū*, vol. 6.

Jurakudai Villa in Kyoto. Judging from the placards, however, Hideyoshi's true intention was the exhibition of the famed tea utensils he had collected. In fact, on that day, Hideyoshi's utensils were displayed in the worship hall of Kitano Temmangu Shrine, in three portable tearooms of identical dimensions, the golden tearoom being in the center. The guests were to view these from a one-meter-wide walkway which had been set up across the front. Not only this, but Hideyoshi and his official tea masters were waiting in rooms surrounding the worship hall, to offer tea to the guests, whose seating was decided by lottery. Those drawing the number "one" received tea from Hideyoshi; those drawing "two," from Rikyū; "three," from Sōgyū; and "four," from Sōkyū. Naturally enough in Hideyoshi's case, the utensils used were from his own collection; and this was also true in the other three cases.

Rikyū's family played a central role in this event. Even before the actual day, they participated in a sacred service held by Hideyoshi at the Kitano Temmangu Shrine, together with Sōgyū (here, too, Sōkyū was absent), and then sent letters out to the Sakai party, calling upon them to participate in the Grand Tea. The *Gunsho Ruijū*, in the section pertaining to the Grand Tea, reports that on the day of the Grand Tea, before the opening, Hideyoshi and the others assembled in the worship hall. Hideyoshi seated himself in front of the golden tearoom, and to his left and right were ranged the military leaders, aristocrats, priests, and tea men. Of the seven tea men present, there was of course Rikyū, plus four who were related to him by blood or marriage: Dōan, Shōan, [Mozuya] Sōan, and Enjōbō.<sup>26</sup> Of them, Shōan and Enjōbō were not even official tea masters of Hideyoshi.

It seems that Rikyū's son Dōan was substantially useful in assisting his father at the Grand Tea. On the 2nd day of the month—the day following the event—a certain Yoshida Kanemi, who had been looking after the Kyoto aristocrats, went out to express his thanks to Dōan, taking with him a gift of money. In return, Dōan went to call the next day with a gift of a well-bucket type fresh-water container, but Kanemi was not home. The following day, Kanemi wrote a letter to Hosokawa Sansai, asking Sansai to relay the message to Dōan that he was very sorry to have missed him.

### "Black is of the Old Spirit"

After the turning of the year, on the 14th day of the 4th month, 1588, Hideyoshi received Emperor Goyōzei at Jurakudai and hosted four days

<sup>26</sup> Enjōbō Sōen (dates unknown) was a monk at Honnōji Temple in Kyoto, and the husband of one of Rikyū's daughters. It is reported in the *Furuichi Sōan Se Denki* 「古市宗庵世伝記」 of his son-in-law, Furuichi Sōan, who served as *sadō* for the Hosokawas and was the first of the Furuichi line of tea masters, that Enjōbō was a tea man of high repute in Kyoto, having, as Rikyū's son-in-law, received Rikyū's teachings. (*Rikyū Daijiten*, s.v., "Enjōbō Sōen tsuma.")

of banqueting. Among the invited guests at this banquet were the daimyo Ōtomo Yoshimune (son of Sōrin), who had come up from Bungo in Kyushu, and his high-ranking retainer, Uragami Sōtetsu. Before Hideyoshi was to receive the Emperor, he invited these two to a chanoyu gathering on the 5th day of the 3rd month. Sōtetsu's letter to Wakabayashi Dōkan of his home province, reporting on this gathering, mentions that there was a rumor going about in Bungo to the effect that tea utensils in Rikyū's taste—bamboo lid rests, bentwood waste-water receptacles, fresh-water containers made like well buckets, and teabowls of modern make (*imayaki chawan*)—were outmoded. He states, however, that as Hideyoshi himself was using them, there was no truth to the rumor. Hence, though Sōtetsu dismissed the rumor as untrue, we see that such a rumor did exist in Kyushu, and this seems to deserve some note.

It was mentioned above that Kamiya Sōtan, the "fellow from Kyushu," received a warm welcome from Hideyoshi on the occasion of the chanoyu gathering at Osaka Castle a year before (1st month, Tenshō 15). Barely ten days after this, Sōtan was a guest, along with his companion Sōden, at Rikyū's home, and received tea prepared by Rikyū's hand. He reports that during their conversation about tea-related things, when the topic focused on a red tray, Rikyū stated, "Red is of a coarse and vulgar (*zatsunaru*) spirit; black is of the old (*furuki*) spirit."

This remark brings to mind the color sense evident in Rikyū's choice of black Raku teabowls. As described earlier, Rikyū's sense of beauty first manifested itself in the "flared-rim" teabowls of 1579–80, and then, only a few years later, in the proper and dignified "Rikyū shape." The black Raku bowls such as "Ōguro" and "Kitano" are, both in their shape and color, typical of Rikyū's latter aesthetic taste. The birth of Rikyū's unique realm of tea ceramics, as evidenced in these black Raku bowls, actually occurred in the period around 1586–87, when Rikyū said to Sōtan, "Black is of the old spirit." This "old" spirit, as opposed to the "coarse and vulgar" spirit, does not mean trite or outmoded, but refers to the severity and dignity which appear only after a long passage of time. It seems that Rikyū's obstinate rebellion against the fashion of the moment was manifest in his use of "the old."

From this time on, Rikyū continued to be partial to black. Another story, occurring some years later, in 1590, relates that Rikyū returned to Kyoto a few days earlier than Hideyoshi, whom he had accompanied to the Odawara campaign, and on the day of his return, the 10th day of the 9th month, he invited Kamiya Sōtan and a certain Kyūshuso to his residence at Jurakudai.

Rikyū prepared tea for them in the study, using a *daisu* tea utensil stand, and first made tea with the black Raku teabowl placed on top of the *daisu*. After the tea, he brought out another bowl, of Seto ware, and placed it on the *daisu* instead of the Raku one, saying, "I made the tea with the



**Teabowl named Kaburo [禿].** Black Raku; attributed to the 1st generation Raku Chōjirō. It is said that Rikyū was very fond of this teabowl, and used it so much that it became worn down, earning it its name, "Worn Down." Fushin'an collection.

black bowl, but as my lord [Hideyoshi] dislikes it, I will change it to this." If Hideyoshi disliked the bowl as he said, he should certainly not have used it in front of a man in a responsible position under Hideyoshi. That he did nevertheless use it probably means that there were feelings of frustration that he wished to express through this act. Although there is no room here to give details, during the Odawara campaign, a heated power struggle developed in Hideyoshi's army, between the faction led by Tokugawa Ieyasu and that led by Ishida Mitsunari. This power struggle was soon to lead to Rikyū's tragic end. At any rate, in this instance, Rikyū's behavior undoubtedly was meant to convey his challenge to Hideyoshi himself, in front of Sōtan.

However, Rikyū's aesthetic taste did not differ from Hideyoshi's alone. As I have already mentioned, around the time that the "Rikyū shape" bowl was in its formative stage, the "distorted" teabowl was beginning to attract attention in the world of tea, and to be used quite often at chanoyu gatherings. It was becoming something of a fashion.

It is not known exactly what differences existed between this "distorted" (*yugami*) style of bowl and the "twisted" (*hizumi*) bowl conceived by Furuta Oribe, which attracted notice in the early Keichō era. It is thought that the difference lay in the former being distorted as an accidental result of the firing process, and the latter being intentionally deformed. In any case, some kind of connection must have existed between the two, and if so, the "distorted" bowl can be said to have existed in opposition to the proper and dignified quality exhibited by the "Rikyū shape" bowl. As introduced above, around 1588, it was believed in Kyushu that Rikyū's taste was outmoded. This rumor may have arisen from the growing estrangement between Rikyū's aesthetic sense and that of the public in general. One reason for Rikyū receiving the order to commit suicide may have been, as tradition has it, his selling new tea articles at an exorbitant price; but if we choose to put a favorable interpretation on his selling of articles at high prices, the above-mentioned estrangement may have been the cause for his doing so.

### Rikyū's Death

Why was Rikyū commanded by Hideyoshi to commit suicide? This is a topic both old and new in research circles. The facts themselves are open to ceaseless interpretation. The various images of Rikyū held by respective scholars are projected upon these facts; and there are those who seek to verify their own view of chanoyu using their interpretation of the facts. So the debate will probably never be exhausted.



Gate of Daitokuji, named Kimmōkaku. This is the gate to which Rikyū contributed the upper floor, and where his statue was erected. Photo courtesy of Tankosha Publishing Co., Ltd.

Two immediate reasons given for Rikyū's death sentence, however, were, firstly, his corruption in association with his sale of tea articles, as mentioned above, and secondly, the arrogant behavior he was considered to have shown in placing a wooden statue of himself within the upper story of the gate of Daitokuji. On the 25th day of the 2nd month, Tenshō 19 (1591), just prior to Rikyū's suicide, this wooden statue was crucified on Kyoto's Ichijō Modoribashi bridge. It was observed by a retainer of Datē Masamune named Suzuki Shimbei, who happened to be in Kyoto at the time, and in a letter dated the 29th day, which he sent to Ishimoda Kageyori, the chief retainer in his home province, he wrote:

The greatest tea master (*chanoyu no tenka ichi*), Sōeki, has been banished due to his long years of corruption, and it is said that his whereabouts are unknown. Not only this, the wooden statue that he made of himself and had put up on the gate of Daitokuji has been removed by Hideyoshi and crucified on the Modoribashi bridge in front of the Juraku gate! I never



Wooden statue of Rikyū erected in the Daitokuji gate. Property of Daitokuji temple. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

heard of such a thing. It is the topic of gossip all over Kyoto, and huge crowds of noblemen and commoners alike are filing past it all day. Beside the statue is a placard stating his various crimes, whose wording is incredibly peculiar.

It is a pity that Shimbei did not note down the details of that "incredibly peculiar" passage, although he saw the placard enumerating the charges against Rikyū which was erected beside the statue. Be that as it may, the two points mentioned above would surely have appeared there.

To describe the Daitokuji gate affair: this structure had been burned down during the Onin and Bummei Wars, and was rebuilt by the *renga* master, Sōchō (1448–1532), in a one-story style. Rikyū's family, having become parishioners of that temple, added a second story, apparently to commemorate the 50th memorial of Rikyū's father's death. However, over and above the usual name written on a placard or beam, a wooden statue of Rikyū was enshrined in the upper level. Though not unprecedented, this act was considered audacious, as this was the Imperial messenger's gate. Still, since the gate was completed at the end of 1589, and the statue, possibly a little later, but the problem only arose sometime in 1591, it would almost seem that the airing of old grievances was involved.

The most unfortunate turn of events for Rikyū was the death by illness of his dependable collaborator, Hidenaga, on the 22nd day of the first month of 1591. This provided an opportunity for the Ishida Mitsunari faction to spearhead the attack against Rikyū in the power struggle that had been fermenting since the previous year. There is evidence that Rikyū was himself active for a time in pursuing a solution to the struggle; but the situation did not improve. This was because it was recognized, first by the Mitsunari faction and finally by the faction sympathetic to Rikyū, that his execution would help to prevent any further state of unrest. This means that Rikyū was a kind of sacrificial victim, and the two charges against him were possibly trumped up for this very purpose.

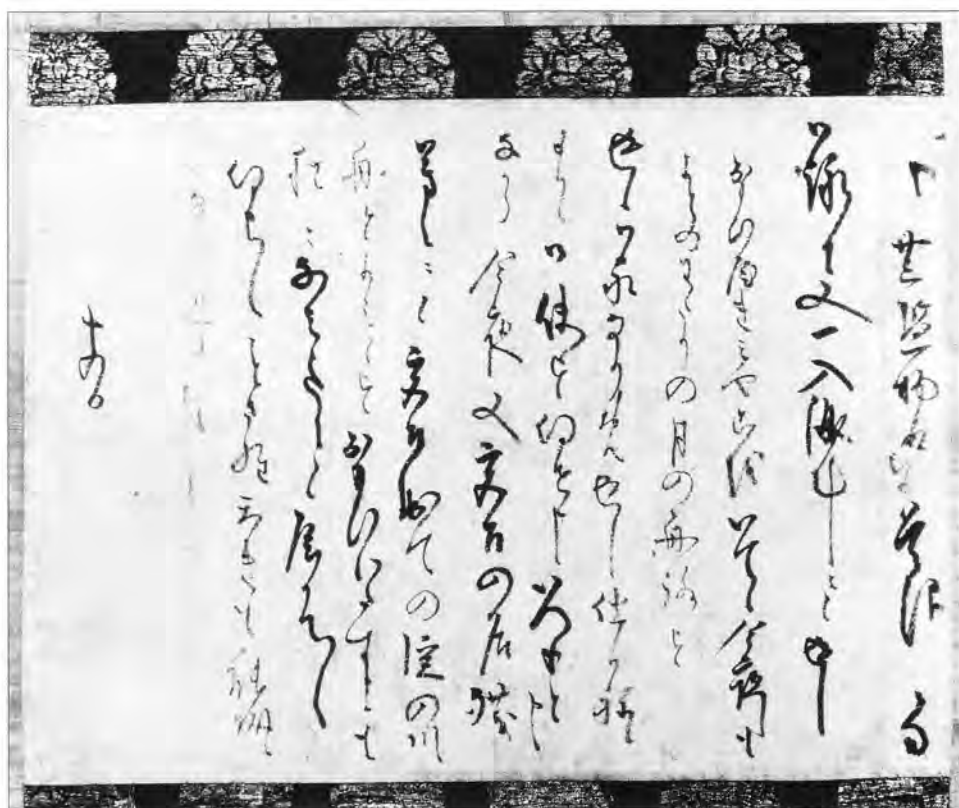
When word of Rikyū's misfortune reached them, Matsui Yasuyuki, Shibayama Kemmotsu, and other disciples of Rikyū's sent him letters of condolence. Rikyū's replies to these were all written after he returned temporarily to Sakai. Among them, the following is the reply to Kemmotsu, which is believed to be the last letter actually written by Rikyū.

To Shiba Kemmotsu, respectful greetings.  
When I read your poem, I dissolve in tears. In return:

Think of my loneliness as I left Kyoto tonight  
and boarded the moonlit boat  
crossing the Yodo River.

Gazing at your poem, I cannot reply at once; I am keeping  
your messenger waiting. Even though I have traveled this  
route many times, tonight I am full of nostalgia for Kyoto.  
When I composed the poem above, I kept remembering old  
times and I could not help crying. I await the inevitable. The  
weather might improve. Ah, I am so sad. Good-bye.

The 15th day.

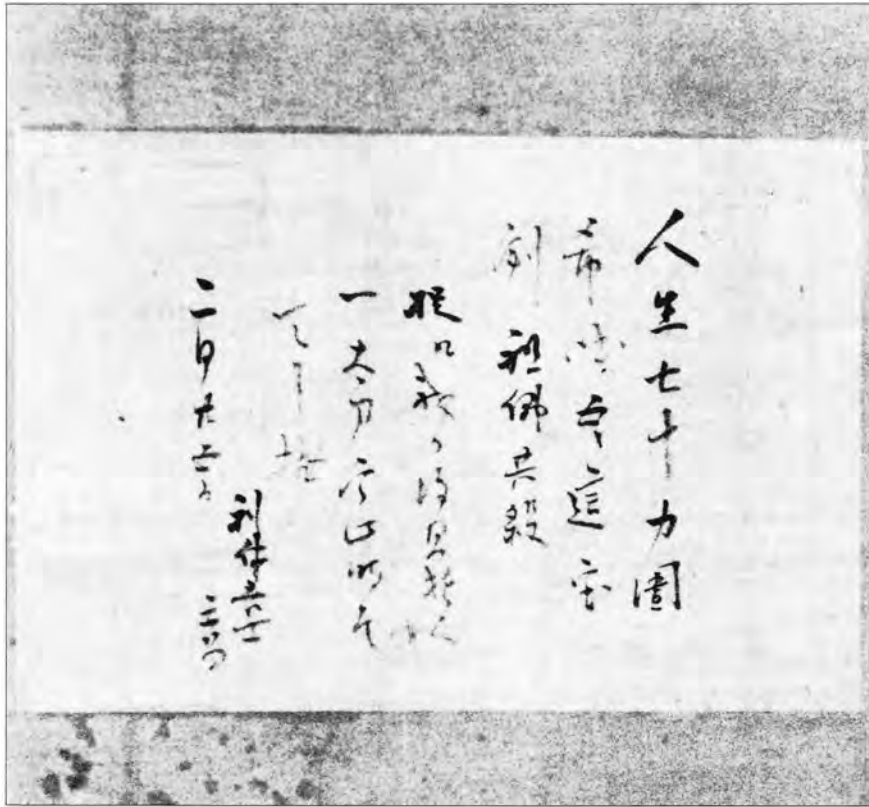


Letter by Rikyū, to Shibayama Kemmotsu. Dated (1591, 2nd month), 15th day. Private collection. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

In no other document had the stoic Rikyū given vent to such emotion.

Having been unexpectedly put under house arrest on the 13th day of the 2nd month, Rikyū spent the next ten or so days in arranging for the distribution of his Sakai property. Among his property was the residence in Imaichi town, where he had been born, about which he noted: "Komochi is not to open the door for twelve months after my death." This man, Komochi Zembei (dates unknown), was a magistrate who had served Rikyū for a long time; and in Rikyū's words to him, asking him to look after affairs after his death, were manifest the immeasurable resentment that Rikyū held. The writing of this document pertaining to the property distribution was witnessed by Rikyū's son Dōan.

It is not known whether Rikyū's farewell gatha and poem, dated the 25th day of the 2nd month, were composed in Sakai or after he was summoned back to Kyoto. They read as follows:



Rikyū's farewell verse (*yuige*). The copy seen here is a transcription by his grandson, Sen Sōtan. Fushin'an collection.

A life of seventy years,  
Strength spent to the very last,  
With this, my jeweled sword,  
I kill both patriarchs and buddhas.

I yet carry  
One article I had gained,  
The long sword  
That now at this moment  
I hurl to the heavens.<sup>27</sup>

Spring, Tenshō 19  
25th day  
Rikyū Sōeki Koji

<sup>27</sup> Tr. Alfred Birnbaum, in Sōshitsu Sen XV, ed., *Chanoyu: The Urasenke Tradition of Tea* (Tokyo: Weatherhill Inc., 1988), p. 36.



**Rikyū's grave.** At the Jukōin subtemple within the Daitokuji complex.  
Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Ltd.

It was also on that day that the wooden statue was crucified. And three days later, Rikyū committed suicide at his residence in Jurakudai, with the warrior named Maita, Lord of Awaji, acting as his second. Heavy rain and hail fell in the Kyoto area that day, with thunder and lightning.

Tradition has it that Sōon placed a white twill kimono over the corpse of her husband as it lay in a pool of blood. ☂

Translated by Rebecca Otowa

## Chronological Chart of Major Historical and Tea Events Centering Around the Life of Sen Rikyū

| Japanese Era | Year | Western Year | Rikyū's Age | (month/day by lunar calendar)                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bummei       | 6    | 1474         |             | Murata Shukō (b. ca. 1423) thought to have become Zen disciple of the priest Ikkyū Sōjun in this year.                                                                                                                                 |
|              |      | 1475         |             | [Michelangelo born.]                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|              | 9    | 1477         |             | Ōnin war ends.                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|              | 13   | 1481         |             | Ikkyū Sōjun dies.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|              | 14   | 1482         |             | The 8th Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimasa (r 1449–74), begins construction of his Higashiyama Sansō villa (Ginkakuji temple) (2/4).                                                                                                           |
|              | 15   | 1483         |             | Yoshimasa moves into his Higashiyama Sansō villa (6/27).                                                                                                                                                                               |
|              | 17   | 1485         |             | Yoshimasa begins construction of the Tōgudō pavilion, containing a 4-1/2 mat shoin room named "Dōjinsai," on the grounds of his Higashiyama Sansō villa.                                                                               |
| Entoku       | 2    | 1490         |             | Ashikaga Yoshimasa dies.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Meiō         | 6    | 1497         |             | [Vasco da Gama sails around Africa; discovers sea route to India.]                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Bunki        | 2    | 1502         |             | Priest Rennyo founds Ishiyama Honganji temple.<br>Murata Shukō dies (5/15).                                                                                                                                                            |
| Eishō        | 1    | 1504         |             | Takeno Jōō (common name, Shingorō) born in Nara.<br>Kitamuki Dōchin born in Sakai.                                                                                                                                                     |
|              |      | 1519         |             | Tsuda Sōtatsu born.<br>[Fernando Magellan sets out to circumnavigate the globe.]                                                                                                                                                       |
|              | 17   | 1520         |             | [Leonardo da Vinci (b. 1452) dies.]<br>Imai Sōkyū (common name, Hikohachirō) born in Yamato Imai.                                                                                                                                      |
| Daiei        | 2    | 1522         | 1           | Ameya, father of Raku Chōjirō, naturalized; takes up residence in Kyoto.                                                                                                                                                               |
| Kyōroku      | 2    | 1529         | 8           | Sen Rikyū (childhood name, Yoshirō) born in Sakai.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Tembun       | 1    | 1532         | 11          | Warrior Miyoshi Chōkei born.<br>Priest Shun'oku Sōen born.                                                                                                                                                                             |
|              | 2    | 1533         | 12          | Takeno Shingorō takes tonsure and assumes the name Jōō.<br>Priest Kokei Sōchin born.                                                                                                                                                   |
|              | 3    | 1534         | 13          | <i>Matsuya Kaiki</i> begun (3/20).                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|              | 4    | 1535         | 14          | Oda Nobunaga born.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|              | 5    | 1536         | 15          | First appearance of Rikyū's name ("Master Yoshirō, Sen") in a historical document ( <i>Nembutsu Sachō Nikki</i> , 4/28.)<br>Tembun Hokke Riot (7th month).<br>Potter Tanaka Sōkei (according to some theories, the son of Rikyū) born. |
|              | 6    | 1537         | 16          | Kinoshita Hiyoshimaru (later known as Toyotomi Hideyoshi) born in Owari. (Some scholars give the date as 1537.)                                                                                                                        |
|              | 7    | 1538         | 17          | First recorded usage of a "Kōrai" (Korean) teabowl—by Jūshiya Sōgo at a morning tea gathering to which he invited Matsuya Hisamasa (9/12).                                                                                             |
|              | 9    | 1540         | 19          | Rikyū begins learning chanoyu from Kitamuki Dōchin (cf <i>Nampō Roku</i> ).<br>Rikyū becomes student of Takeno Jōō (cf <i>Nampō Roku</i> ).<br>According to some theories, he begins using the name                                    |

|        |    |      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|--------|----|------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        |    |      | Sōeki at this time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        |    |      | Rikyū's father, Tanaka Yohei, dies (12/8).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Tembun | 11 | 1542 | 21 Tokugawa Ieyasu born.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | 12 | 1543 | 22 [Polish scholar Nicolaus Copernicus publishes <i>On the Revolution of Heavenly Bodies</i> giving theory that the earth revolves around the sun.]                                                                                                                                                               |
|        |    |      | Landing of first Portuguese in Japan, at Tanegashima; introduction of firearms to Japan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | 13 | 1544 | 23 First record of a tea gathering definitely hosted by Rikyū ( <i>Matsuya Kaiki</i> , 2/27).<br>Yamanoue Sōji born in Sakai.<br>Warrior Furuta Oribe (common name, Sasuke) born in Mino.                                                                                                                         |
|        |    |      | First Christian missionaries arrive in Japan.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | 14 | 1545 | 24 According to some theories, Rikyū receives the religious name "Rikyū Sōeki" from Kokei Sōchin (4/8).                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | 15 | 1546 | 25 Rikyū's son Jōan (Dōan) born in Sakai.<br>Rikyū's stepson Shōan born.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | 16 | 1547 | 26 [Ivan IV ("the Terrible") crowned as Czar of Russia.]<br>Oda Nagayoshi (Uraku; younger brother of Nobunaga) born in Owari.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | 17 | 1548 | 27 Takeno Jōō receives the religious name and title "Ikkan Kōji" from the priest Dairin Sōtō.<br><i>Tennōjiya Kaiki</i> begun (12/6).                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | 18 | 1549 | 28 Portuguese missionary Francisco Xavier arrives in Kagoshima.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | 20 | 1551 | 30 Merchant Kamiya Sōtan born in Hakata.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | 23 | 1554 | 33 <i>Imai Sōkyū Chanoyu Nikki Kakimuki</i> begun (10/28).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Kōji   | 1  | 1555 | 34 Takeno Jōō dies (10/29; age 54).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|        | 2  | 1556 | 35 [Akbar the Great becomes Mogul emperor of India.]<br>Miyoshi Chōkei converts the Nansōan in Sakai into Nanshūji temple; Dairin Sōtō becomes the founding abbot.                                                                                                                                                |
| Eiroku | 1  | 1558 | 37 [Queen Elizabeth I ascends the English throne.]<br>Kinoshita Tōkichirō (Toyotomi Hideyoshi) enters Oda Nobunaga's service.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | 3  | 1560 | 39 According to one theory, Yamanoue Sōji begins learning chanoyu from Rikyū around this year. (Another theory places this in 1565.)                                                                                                                                                                              |
|        | 5  | 1562 | 41 Kitamuki Dōchin dies (1/18; age 59).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|        | 7  | 1564 | 43 Warrior Hosokawa Tadaoki (Sansai) born in Kyoto.<br>[Michelangelo dies. William Shakespeare born. Galileo Galilei born.]<br><i>Bunrui Sōjimboku</i> written (ed., Shunshōsai Shunkei).                                                                                                                         |
|        | 8  | 1565 | 44 Miyoshi Yoshitsugu erects Jukōin subtemple in the Daitokuji temple compound, as cemetery temple for his father Chōkei (d. 1564, 7/4; age 43); Kokei Sōchin becomes the founding abbot.<br>The 13th Ashikaga shogun, Yoshiteru (r 1547–65), assassinated by Miyoshi Yoshitsugu, Matsunaga Hisahide, and others. |
|        | 9  | 1566 | 45 Matsuya Hisashige born.<br>Tsuda Sōtatsu dies (8/2; age 63).<br>Tsuda Sōgyū receives the religious name "Tenshin" from Dairin Sōtō.                                                                                                                                                                            |
|        | 10 | 1567 | 46 Great Buddha Hall at Tōdaiji temple, Nara, burns down                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

|        |    |      |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------|----|------|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        |    |      |    | in conflict between the Miyoshi faction and Matsunaga Hisahide.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Eiroku | 11 | 1568 | 47 | [High point of Dutch Renaissance—painters Rubens, Van Dyck, Hals, Rembrandt.]<br>Dairin Sōtō dies (1/27; age 89).<br>Nobunaga gains military control of Kyoto (9th month), and levies "arrow" tax on Sakai (10th month). Matsunaga Hisahide presents Nobunaga with his treasured "Tsukumo nasu" tea caddy; Imai Sōkyū presents Nobunaga with the "Matsushima" leaf-tea storage jar and "Jōō nasu" (alt. name, "Miotsukushi") tea caddy.<br>Rikyū falls into a period of obscurity. |
|        | 12 | 1569 | 48 | Nobunaga's generals seize the city of Sakai.<br>Nobunaga establishes Nijō Castle in Kyoto, and commences "meibutsu hunts" in Kyoto and Sakai.<br>Rikyū's first known use of a sunken hearth ( <i>ro</i> ), at a morning tea gathering with Tsuda Sōgyū as guest (11/23).                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Genki  | 2  | 1571 | 50 | Nobunaga holds tea gathering at Tōfukuji temple, inviting influential townsmen of Kyoto; Imai Sōkyū in charge of arrangements for the tea (3rd month).<br>Nobunaga's forces burn down the Enryakuji Monastery on Mount Hiei in Kyoto (9/12).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Tenshō | 1  | 1573 | 52 | Nobunaga displaces Shogun Ashikaga Yoshiaki, ending the Muromachi Bakufu.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|        | 2  | 1574 | 53 | At Nobunaga's tea gathering at Shōkokuji temple, Rikyū, Tsuda Sōgyū, and Imai Sōkyū are privileged to inspect the famed "Chidori" censer (3/24).<br>Rikyū and Tsuda Sōgyū receive Ranjatai incense, taken from the Imperial Shōsōin Repository in Nara, from Nobunaga (4/3).                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | 3  | 1575 | 54 | Rikyū supplies Nobunaga, waging battle in Echizen, with musket balls; in Nobunaga's thank-you letter (9/16), first appearance of Rikyū's name "Hōsensai." First documentation of Rikyū serving as person in charge of making tea at a tea gathering hosted by Oda Nobunaga ( <i>Nobunaga-kō ki</i> , 10/28).                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | 4  | 1576 | 55 | Nobunaga builds Azuchi Castle.<br><i>Shū-cha ron</i> written.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|        | 5  | 1577 | 56 | Rikyū's first wife (posthumous name, Hōshin Myōju) dies (7/16).<br>Rikyū builds a 4-1/2 mat tearoom in his Sakai residence (7th month).<br>Hideyoshi sets out on Chūgoku Region military campaign.<br>Matsunaga Hisahide, faced with defeat by Oda Nobunaga, smashes his prized "Hiragumo" tea kettle and commits suicide (10/10).                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | 6  | 1578 | 57 | First recorded instance of Toyotomi (then known as Hashiba) Hideyoshi hosting a tea gathering (10/15), having been granted permission to practice tea by Nobunaga.<br>First appearance of the use of an Ido teabowl; at a morning gathering hosted by Yabunouchi Sōwa (10/25).<br>Rikyū's grandson Sōtan born (traditional theory places Rikyū's stepson Shōan as his father, and daughter Kame as his mother).                                                                    |

|        |    |      |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Tenshō | 7  | 1579 | 58 | Christian missionary Organtino builds a church in Azuchi (Shiga Prefecture).<br>Kobori Masakazu (Enshū) born in Ōmi.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|        | 8  | 1580 | 59 | First appearance of the use of a "distorted" teabowl ( <i>yugami chawan</i> ); by Makimura Hyōbu at Azuchi castle (1/14).<br>Ishiyama Honganji temple makes peace with Nobunaga. English trading ships land at Hirado in Kyushu.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|        | 9  | 1581 | 60 | Hideyoshi uses a "hailstone-surface" kettle ( <i>arare-gama</i> ) presented to him by Rikyū at a tea gathering (6/12).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|        | 10 | 1582 | 61 | Rikyū visits Nobunaga at Azuchi Castle, together with Tsuda Sōgyū, Imai Sōkyū, Yamanoue Sōji, and Imai Sōkun, to offer congratulations on the New Year (New Year's Day).<br>The Ōtomo, Ōmura, and Arima clans send a mission to the Vatican (1/28).<br>The influential merchants of Hakata, Kamiya Sōtan and Shimai Sōshitsu, visit Oda Nobunaga in Kyoto (6th month).<br>Oda Nobunaga attacked by Akechi Mitsuhide at Honnōji temple; takes own life (6/2; age 49).<br>Battle of Yamazaki (6/13); Toyotomi Hideyoshi succeeds in avenging Oda Nobunaga.<br>Rikyū attends a tea gathering hosted by Hideyoshi at Himeji Castle; the first known instance of Rikyū and Hideyoshi's direct relationship (6th month).<br>According to some theories, Rikyū begins construction of "Taian" tearoom in Yamazaki around this year. |
|        | 11 | 1583 | 62 | First appearance of Rikyū serving as Hideyoshi's <i>sadō</i> ( <i>Sōgyū takai-ki</i> , 5/24).<br>Hideyoshi moves into his newly constructed Osaka Castle (6th month).<br>Rikyū contributes five famous tea caddies from his collection for Hideyoshi's " <i>dōgu-zoroe</i> " (display of amassed utensils) held at Osaka Castle (9/16).<br>Kokei Sōchin dies (11/29; age 79).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | 12 | 1584 | 63 | Hideyoshi invites Rikyū and Tsuda Sōgyū to a tea gathering to celebrate opening of the 2-mat Yamazato tearoom within Osaka Castle (1/3).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|        | 13 | 1585 | 64 | Rikyū serves as <i>sadō</i> with Tsuda Sōgyū at a grand tea gathering held by Hideyoshi at Daitokuji temple (3/8).<br>Hideyoshi becomes imperial regent ( <i>kampaku</i> ) (7th month).<br>Kokei Sōchin sends Rikyū a congratulatory poem on imperial bestowal of the name and title "Rikyū Koji" (9th month).<br>Rikyū assists Hideyoshi's serving of tea to the Emperor at the Imperial Palace, and is officially bestowed with the name and title "Rikyū Koji" (10/7).<br>Hideyoshi shows his portable golden tearoom to guests at Osaka Castle; Rikyū helps with the entertainments (12/20).<br>Rikyū builds 4-1/2 mat tearoom named "Fushin'an" within his residence in front of the Daitokuji temple gate around this year.                                                                                            |
|        | 14 | 1586 | 65 | Yamanoue Sōji becomes Hashiba (Toyotomi) Hidenaga's                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|--------|----|------|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|        |    |      |    | <p><i>sadō</i> (9th month).<br/>First appearance of the use of a "Sōeki-shape teabowl" (<i>Sōeki-gata no chawan</i>); by Nakanobō Gengo of Nara (10/13).<br/>First appearance of the use of a "teabowl of contemporary make" (<i>imayaki chawan</i>); by Ozaki Kisuke of Yamato Kōriyama (10/23).<br/><i>Sōtan Nikki</i> begun (11/23).<br/>Hideyoshi appointed grand minister of state (<i>dajō daijin</i>), and given surname "Toyotomi" (12/19).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Tenshō | 15 | 1587 | 66 | <p>Hideyoshi gains control of Kyushu (5th month).<br/>Hideyoshi, in Hakata (Kyushu), issues prohibition of Christianity (6/19).<br/>Hideyoshi moves from Osaka Castle into his newly completed Jurakudai villa, Kyoto (9/13).<br/>Hideyoshi holds grand outdoor tea gathering at Kitano Shrine, Kyoto (10/1); Rikyū, Tsuda Sōgyū, Imai Sōkyū serve as <i>sadō</i>.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | 16 | 1588 | 67 | <p>Hideyoshi receives Emperor Goyōzei at the Jurakudai villa (4th month).<br/>Hideyoshi issues "sword hunt" order (7/8).<br/>Rikyū holds a clandestine morning tea gathering at his quarters within the Jurakudai villa, inviting Kokei Sōchin, who was being exiled to Dazaifu in Kyushu (9/4).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|        | 17 | 1589 | 68 | <p>Rikyū succeeds in securing Kokei Sōchin's pardon (7/16).<br/>Rikyū has second story added to the Daitokuji temple gate; holds Buddhist service celebrating its completion (12/5).<br/>Rikyū's grandson, Sōtan, becomes an acolyte at the Sangen'in subtemple within Daitokuji around this year.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|        | 18 | 1590 | 69 | <p>Rikyū accompanies Hideyoshi to the battle camp in Odawara (3/1).<br/>Yamanoue Sōji incurs Hideyoshi's wrath and is put to death at Odawara (4/11; age 47).<br/>Tokugawa Ieyasu takes up residence in Edo Castle (8/1).<br/><i>Rikyū Hyakkai ki</i> begun (8/17).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|        | 19 | 1591 | 70 | <p>Rikyū's daughter commits suicide (1/18) (cf <i>Nampō Roku</i>).<br/>Rikyū's statue within the Daitokuji gate becomes a problem (from about 1/20).<br/>Toyotomi Hidenaga dies (1/23; age 52).<br/>Rikyū holds a morning tea gathering at his quarters within the Jurakudai villa, inviting Tokugawa Ieyasu (1/24).<br/>Rikyū entrusts his treasured "Hashidate" leaf-tea storage jar to the Jukōin subtemple of Daitokuji (2/4).<br/>Rikyū returns to Sakai and lives under house arrest, by order of Hideyoshi (2/13).<br/>Rikyū's statue within the Daitokuji gate removed and crucified on the Ichijō Modoribashi bridge (2/25).<br/>Rikyū writes his death verse (2/25).<br/>Rikyū, summoned back to Kyōto, returns to the Jurakudai villa (2/26).<br/>Rikyū commits ritual suicide at the Jurakudai villa (2/28).<br/>Rikyū's son Dōan goes to live under the protection of Kanamori Nagachika in Takayama; Rikyū's stepson</p> |

|         |   |      |                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------|---|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|         |   |      | Shōan goes to live under the protection of Gamō Ujisato in Aizu.                                                                                   |
|         |   |      | Tsuda Sōgyū dies (4/20; age unknown).                                                                                                              |
|         |   |      | Hideyoshi completes military reunification of Japan.                                                                                               |
|         |   |      | Hideyoshi hands over the title kampaku and the Jurakudai villa to his nephew Hidetsugu, and names himself Taikō (great lord) (12th month).         |
| Bunroku | 1 | 1592 | Hideyoshi has his portable golden tearoom carried to Hizen Nagoya Castle, Kyushu, and hosts a tea gathering using it (5/28).                       |
|         |   |      | Hideyoshi sends first expedition to Korea.                                                                                                         |
|         | 2 | 1593 | Raku Chōjirō dies during this year.<br>One of Rikyū's seven direct disciples, Makimura Hyōbu (warrior vassal of Hideyoshi's), dies (7/10; age 48). |
|         | 3 | 1594 | Imai Sōkyū dies (8/5; age 73).                                                                                                                     |
|         | 4 | 1595 | Tokugawa Ieyasu and Gamō Ujisato send letter of summons to Shōan (11/13).                                                                          |
|         |   |      | One of Rikyū's seven direct disciples, Gamō Ujisato, dies (2/7; age 40).                                                                           |
|         |   |      | One of Rikyū's seven direct disciples, Seta Kamon, is put to death for his involvement in the Toyotomi Hidetsugu treason affair (7th month).       |
|         | 5 | 1596 | Hideyoshi sentences 26 Christians to death in Nagasaki.                                                                                            |
| Keichō  | 2 | 1597 | Kokei Sōchin dies (1/17; age 66).                                                                                                                  |
|         | 3 | 1598 | Matsuya Hisamasa dies (4/4; age unknown).                                                                                                          |
|         |   |      | Hideyoshi holds a grand flower-viewing tea gathering at the Sampōin subtemple of Daigoji temple (3/15).                                            |
|         |   |      | Toyotomi Hideyoshi dies (8/18; age 63).                                                                                                            |



# Memoirs of Monk Honkaku

Inoue Yasushi

## *Editor's Preface*

The main character in this novel is a man known as Honkakubō Senko<sup>+</sup>; the term -bō of Honkakubō has the double meaning of "monk" and "monk's residence." Although little is known about him, he was a true figure—a monk at the Tendai sect temple, Miidera (also known as Onjōji), in present-day Shiga Prefecture. There exists a letter from Rikyū addressed to Honkakubō, dated the 19th day of the 7th month (year unspecified). It seems that Honkakubō had requested Rikyū to make a jizai (a bamboo implement used to hang a kettle from) for him. In the Rikyū Hyakkai Ki<sup>+</sup> [record of one-hundred chanoyu gatherings hosted by Rikyū], Honkakubō appears as the sole guest at a morning tea on the twenty-third day of the ninth month, Tenshō 18 (1590). And, according to a work entitled Chanoyu Saisho no Shidai<sup>+</sup> [how to experience chanoyu for the first time], he was one of the four guests at Rikyū's confidential farewell tea for Kokei Sōchin of Daitokuji, who was Rikyū's close and revered friend, and who had been banished to Kyushu by the despot, Toyotomi Hideyoshi. To have been a part of this tea, Honkaku-bō must have been highly trusted by Rikyū. This tea took place on the fourth day of the ninth month, Tenshō 16 (1588). The Chanoyu Saisho no Shidai is of uncertain date and authorship; but, judging from the manner of its wording, it appears to be the work of Monk Honkaku himself.

The second character, Tōyōbō Chōsei<sup>+</sup> (1515–98), was a priest at the Pure Land sect temple Shinshō Gokurakuji, familiarly known as the Shinnyo Hall.

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This novel, entitled *Honkakubō Ibum* in Japanese, was first published serially in the January-August issues of *Gunzō* in 1981, and appeared in book form in November of the same year (Tokyo: Kodansha Inc.) Presented here is a preview translation of the first chapter, by permission of the author, and special permission of the translator. English translation © Y. Inoue.

### Translator's Note

In this story, speakers attach the respectful suffix *-sama* to the names of their superiors, and the friendlier *-dono* or *-san* to the names of their equals and honored subordinates. The antagonist is Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), who is referred to throughout by his title, Taikō (Grand Minister of State), or the euphemism, "Great Lord."

Dates are those of the traditional lunar calendar, whose months usually lag one to two months behind those of the Western solar calendar. In instances where differences between the two calendric systems may result in confusion, the author has provided the equivalent dates in the Western calendar.

James T. Araki

## Preface

I have in my possession a piece of writing by a man of tea who was active in the Keichō and Genna eras (1596–1623). Rather than "man of tea," "a person steeped in the world of chanoyu" might be a more accurate description of this man. Bound in five booklets, each of twenty sheets of rice paper crammed with tiny, fine-lined graphs, it is composed in a narrative style that mixes the confessional, diaristic, and descriptive modes. Indeed, it may be faulted insofar as consistency of style is concerned, but the writer has expressed himself with unusual facility.

Among the disciples of Sen Rikyū was one Honkaku, a monk, who I have reason to believe is the author of this document. Although I had long shut these volumes away in a wicker storage box, it was with a sense of urgency that I began to recast them into a narrative in modern prose so that they would be accessible to present-day readers. In the process, I have edited some parts for clarity and consistency, filled in obvious gaps, and interspersed explanatory passages throughout the text. The original document is untitled. I shall call it *Memoirs of Monk Honkaku*.



"You, sir . . . from Mii Temple . . ."

When you addressed me, I pretended not to hear and thought to walk away, but you followed me. Evidently you recalled my having been at Mii Temple, but not my name. I quickened my pace. But, again, you called out.

"You, sir, from Mii Temple . . ."

For a man of your advanced age, your legs were surprisingly firm, and you kept up with me.

"Aren't you Monk Honkaku of Mii Temple? Honkaku-san, wasn't it?"

I could no longer ignore you. So I stopped, and we exchanged greetings. We had last met six years before. Truly, I was pleased to see you. "I'm now eighty-three," you said, but you looked much younger — indeed, quite the same Tōyōbō-sama as when my teacher Rikyū was living.

"Stop for a moment." Those few words, and all constraint dissolved. I had merely wanted to see the autumn foliage in the Shinnyo Hall compound, for I had not been there in several years. I had strolled through the great gate into the grounds when, only moments later, it seemed, you caught sight of me.



Shinnyo Hall at sunset. Photo by Mizuno Katsuhiko.

It was around the Hour of the Sheep (two o'clock) when we entered your tearoom, and we were there until the shrubs and the stone basin in your garden were completely wrapped in darkness. How quickly the time passed! In this way I spent an enjoyable — yes, I must say, it was enjoyable — a very satisfying afternoon. The scroll that hung in the alcove was a calligraphy of the sacred name of Amida Buddha, by the priest of the blood, Son'en, which had been mounted on paper. The teabowl was an Ise Temmoku. From the sunken hearth came a sigh as gentle as a breeze passing through a forest of pines. Your pleasure in keeping a heated kettle sighing perpetually is well known. I had been privileged to be seated there once before, together with my teacher Rikyū. Everything was exactly the same as then. Yes, it was a tearoom that dignified your reputation as a connoisseur of the restrained wabi style of tea. There, I received tea prepared by your masterful hand. It was as though I were living a dream.

Then you brought out the teabowl, that contemporary original which my teacher Rikyū had given to you, and set it down before me. I was infinitely grateful for this thoughtful gesture. I felt as though I were once again seated before my teacher Rikyū. How many years had it been, I wondered, since I had last held in my palm that indescribably exquisite teabowl — thin-walled; amply distended; the black glaze, so beautiful. Chōjirō, who had made it, had died two years before my teacher Rikyū. I have a few remembrances of my own associated with that black teabowl. And I am delighted that it should now be in your possession.

It is now deep into the night. Leaving your quarters just south of Shinnyo Hall, where you have resided since you retired, and returning to my own quarters in the hamlet of Shūgakuin, I have since been lost in solitary thought ruminating over our unexpected encounter, over what you said and what I said to you, matters I should have mentioned but did not, questions I should have asked but failed to. Why did I answer that particular question in the way I did? I know the reply I should have given! Why didn't it occur to me then? Such thoughts have been swirling in my mind. There is an expression, "thoughts sundered into a thousand fragments." Today, sitting in that tearoom, and owing also to my emotion at seeing someone who had been close to my teacher, Rikyū, my thoughts indeed seem to have been sundered into a thousand fragments.

"You are still young," you said. "Why have you withdrawn from chanoyu? Shouldn't you make your living doing what you were trained to do? Can you manage to get by some other way?"

It is true. Well, I am in my mid-forties, no longer young. But, that aside, I could not explain to you why I had secluded myself. Certainly it was not with any noble purpose such as dedicating myself to the memory of my teacher. I was not endowed with talent. Involved though I have been with tea, I have neither sufficient strength of mind nor resolve to sacrifice myself to the memory of my teacher.

I grew up in one of the minor temples affiliated with Mii Temple. It was when I was thirty-one that, as the result of a chance opportunity, I became an aide to my teacher Rikyū and was permitted to serve him in the capacity of what one might call a "behind-the-scene" chanoyu assistant. On the side, I also received his personal instruction in chanoyu. When he was sentenced to death, or, as we say, "awarded death," I was forty years old. So, although I may say that I have studied tea, I am not nearly so accomplished as to be called a "man of tea" or "tea master," and I have not participated in many tea gatherings that would be considered important. Yet, because I assisted my teacher in daily matters as well as more formal affairs pertaining to chanoyu, those persons who shone most brightly among the many who stood at the forefront in that elevated society addressed me by my name and occasionally invited me to join their tea gatherings. I was a recipient of their many kindnesses.

Unworthy though I was, once in his late years my teacher invited me to join him as his sole guest in a setting for chanoyu. Memories of that occasion shall be precious to me as long as I live. Whenever I recall it I feel a quickening in both my body and mind.

It was the morning of the twenty-third of the ninth month, Tenshō 18 (1590). The tearoom was of four and a half mats, in his residence in the Jurakudai Villa. This was exactly a half a year before he was awarded death.

Autumn flowers in an Old Bizen vase.

A broad-bottom tea caddy.

A combination of utensils consisting of a Mishima teabowl, a squarish kettle, and a ceramic water jar of foreign origin.

The repast: rice, soup, and burdock simmered in arrowroot starch — a "one-soup, one-green" fare.

For sweets: miso rolled in wheat wafer, and roasted chestnuts.

I realize now that my teacher must have invited me so that we could be together in an intimate ceremonial setting for the last time. We were at peace and said little as he, the host, prepared tea for me, his guest.

I cannot boast of having studied and mastered the way of tea, but I did acquire some experience and am acquainted with a number of people in the society of chanoyu. Yet, when I am removed from that society, I am of no worth. You are right, Tōyōbō-sama. Had I sought help from the many who had valued their association with my teacher Rikyū when he was living, I might have put my experience to appropriate use. Indeed, there were persons who urged me to do so.

I declined those kind offers. When my teacher's estate was settled, I sought recourse in former acquaintances and was able to seclude myself in the rustic environs of Shūgakuin. It was not with any assurance of earning a living that I settled in the northern outskirts of the city. But when I

actually began my life of retirement, matters fell conveniently into place for me. Kyoto merchants with whom I had long maintained a cordial relationship asked me to serve them as an appraiser of tea wares and, occasionally, as a consultant in buying and selling. I have thus managed to get along without wanting for food to sustain me.

In my cramped quarters in Shūgakuin, I have set off a room of a mat and a half where I indulge in chanoyu. Just large enough for myself, it scarcely deserves to be called a tearoom. That is where I have been sitting since early evening, my thoughts disquieted, conversing with you, Tōyōbō-sama.

Again I can hear you saying, "You are still young. Why have you withdrawn from society?" I wanted to answer your question earlier, but I could not. Even now I must grope, turning over thoughts, wondering how I might reply. Let me, instead, describe a certain occurrence exactly as it happened. Whether or not it will suffice as an answer remains to be seen. I shall describe a dream I had.

Some twenty days after my teacher Rikyū met his untimely death, I was back in Ōmi, my native province. At dawn I had this dream.

There was a road, cold and sere—the bed of a dried-up river. It seemed no one else could set foot on it. It was a long, long pebbled road without a tree or blade of grass. I felt as though I had been walking along it for many hours since leaving the Myōkian tea house in suburban Yamazaki.

Presently I began to wonder: "Wouldn't the road to the next world be one such as this? If not, why does this lonely road that chills the soul lead ever on and on? The air was suffused with a light so faint that I could not tell whether it was day or night.

Then I noticed a figure treading the road some distance ahead. I saw immediately that it was my teacher Rikyū. Surely, I thought, I am accompanying my teacher on the lonely path to the world beyond.

It may be the road to the afterworld, yet I would be satisfied. But, then, I realized that it led not to the next world but to the city of Kyoto, the capital. "Yes," I thought, "I am accompanying my teacher to the Jurakudai Villa." Doubtless this cold and sere river-bed road, upon which others could not step, would eventually take us to the capital. But why, I wondered, did this road lead to Kyoto instead of the afterworld?

Soon my teacher Rikyū stopped and turned toward me. He did so in a leisurely way as if to suggest that he wished to make certain I was following him.

A short while later he again looked back at me. This time his glance seemed to say, "Now, you turn back from here." I thought it best to comply with his wish. I bowed my head very low, bidding my teacher a last farewell.

Here I awoke from my dream. I sat erect on my bedding, but my head long remained bowed. In my dream I had made obeisance to my teacher, and, though now awake, I maintained that respectful pose.

I felt terror, but only after the dream had ended. Walking the road to the afterworld had not been so dreadful, but when I realized that this road would pass not into the world beyond, but through Kyoto, to my teacher's residence within Jurakudai Villa — to be more precise, the instant I became aware that this cold, sere, river-bed road passed through the heart of Kyoto and beyond, to the Jurakudai Villa — I felt fear reaching into me, clenching my soul. This was not a road which someone such as I should have dared to enter on. Such were my thoughts.

Well, after I had this dream — it was not, I must say, solely because of it — I withdrew from the society in the midst of which my imagination tended to detect my teacher's presence. And, curiously, I found myself increasingly unwilling to meet with anyone who had been closely associated with him. I felt that, given the choice, I would rather not see them. Consequently, I have oftentimes been guilty of neglecting each of them. In the first month past, Kokei-sama of Daitokuji monastery passed away. Not only was he my teacher's instructor in Zen, he had selected for him the Zen Buddhist name, Rikyū. He was an exceptionally close friend to my teacher, and for many years even I was included in his circle of acquaintances. Of course, I should have gone to the monastery to pay my last respects the moment I learned of his passing, and I should have gone to help at the funeral. I wanted to, but I did neither because I wished to avoid meeting those persons who had made up the circle of people surrounding my teacher Rikyū. I was distressed. In other instances involving Rikyū's disciples with whom I had been close, as well, I have been shamefully derelict, attending neither funerals nor services on the anniversaries of their deaths.

Today, after many years having passed in this way, I unexpectedly encountered you, Tōyōbō-sama. And, when I did, I was so greatly pleased — more so than I can have imagined — to see you again.

This is the second year of the Keichō era (1597). The six years since my teacher Rikyū died by ritual suicide have passed quickly. I stated that I gradually withdrew from the society of tea, in the midst of which my imagination tended to detect my teacher's presence. I meant to say that I withdrew from the society of tea, but not from the memory of my teacher Rikyū. Indeed, I feel as if I have been serving my teacher Rikyū faithfully ever since I retired to Shūgakuin. I hear my teacher's voice several times daily. I speak to him. I observe him serving up a bowl of tea in that effortless style that reveals total mastery of mood and tempo, and I hear him commenting, for instance: "Tea is essentially a product of tension between heat and water." I often ask him questions, which he answers promptly.

But there is one question to which he will not give me an answer. I once asked him about that otherworldly path he had trod in my dream, and received no reply. I was reminded of something similar that happened between us while he was yet living. Responding to a certain question of mine, he said, "You should think that one out for yourself. It's not a question you should ask others." His expression suggested that he refused

to entertain such a question. As for that seemingly endless, desolate road of my dream, I suppose he was indicating that it was a matter for me to contemplate.

I must confess that I have been troubled these six years by thoughts of that road my teacher walked in my dream. What could it have been, that desolate road which, I realized, someone such as I should not have dared enter onto? What could it be, that road from which I retreated so willingly at my teacher's urging?

Who else besides my teacher, I wonder, is walking the road that I saw in my dream? I have tried to visualize others on it, but none of them quite belong there. Only my teacher is fixed in my vision of that desolate scene, walking serenely as if to say, "I have been treading this road a very long time." You have been walking a road you have chosen, Tōyōbō-sama. But it is not the road which my teacher, Rikyū, was walking. I do not mean to offend you by saying this. But why, I again wonder, was my teacher walking that road, and by himself?

When my teacher was living, he used to say that the ultimate awareness one conceives in chanoyu is a withered, barren, cold state of mind. But the attributes of the road in my dream were darker, lonelier, and harsher than the realm my teacher had described. Whenever this thought enters my mind, I tend to dwell on it, and become oblivious to the passing of time.

"Did Priest Kokei of Daitokuji monastery die at the end of the year," you asked, "or was it in the New Year?"

"It was the middle of the first month," I answered.

"Nowadays I have trouble remembering things. The worst part of it is that I tend to forget what's most important."

You paused to sift your thoughts.

"That means Priest Kokei lived on for about six years after Rikyū-dono died," you continued. "Now that he's dead, an era has ended. Those two men shouldered the era, and now it's over!"

You spoke with obvious feeling. Perhaps an era had indeed passed. Having been told so, even I felt that it was true. What a remarkable person Kokei-sama must have been.

"The tea of violent years is ended," you added thoughtfully.

"The tea of violent years?"

"Wasn't it so? A man would come into a tearoom, sip a bowl of tea, then leave for the battlefield, where he would plunge into the fray and die fighting. That era is over. I doubt that it will ever be repeated. The era of Rikyū-dono will be succeeded by the era of Oribe-dono. The new era has probably begun. The manner of chanoyu will change. I'd like to see the restrained wabi style of tea preserved, but that won't happen."

"But we have you," I remarked.

"I'm grateful to hear you say that, but I'm afraid I don't have many years left. That aside, Rikyū-dono's style of tea was something to behold.

His personality made him unique among men of tea. He was a man who staked his life on tea. There were a great many who enjoyed the title 'man of tea,' but none was a match for Sen Sōeki. And, as one might expect, he was a man in whom passion smoldered. Because he was passionate, he cut his own life short. People wonder why he was awarded death, and they still talk about it. But, after all, didn't Rikyū-dono bring it upon himself?"

You cast a glance at me, as if you expected an expression of agreement, but I kept silent.

"Well, isn't that so? His temperament invited disaster. A rumor circulating since last year says he was awarded death because he reaped huge profits by selling tea wares at inflated prices. He might have done that. You can't convince the rabble of the worth of such articles except by pricing them high. Selling price is the most easily understood indicator of value. Rikyū-dono selected the wares from among those he used. Without exception, whatever he picked out was of fine quality. Set them out for use at a tea and their worth was immediately evident. He had the best eye of any appraiser in the country. He would display one of his select items — a teabowl, for instance — together with celebrated Chinese items. Lest the combination be seen as incongruous, he would name a price for the bowl to match that of the Chinese items. That's how Chōjirō's teabowls made their way into the select society of chanoyu. And there was that other rumor — that it was slander that brought about his downfall. There could be truth in that one. Many people would have been tempted to slander him. Small men have minds that can't be cultivated. It's those small men who may have plotted against him. I wouldn't put it past them. Compromising was out of character for Rikyū-dono, and he made enemies. And that other rumor . . . what was it now?"

"Concerning what happened at the great two-storied gate of Dai-tokuji?"

"That's it. All sorts of rumors circulated, but Rikyū-dono was in no way involved. Nor was Priest Kokei. That scandal was the result of someone's stupidity at the monastery there. Believe me, neither Rikyū-dono nor Priest Kokei could have thought up anything so ridiculous. Rikyū-dono's place was in the tearoom. To say he had stood or sat high atop a gate! Rikyū-dono, who dwelled perpetually in wabi tea! I don't want to talk about it anymore. I tend to lose my temper these days. The next time I do I'll keel over. And if I do, I'll be off to the next world."

Indeed, I feared you might. For a change, however, I felt as though my mind had been swept clear of troubling thoughts. Whenever I heard rumors concerning my teacher Rikyū's death, I would be overwhelmed by unspeakably dark, depressing thoughts. Your impassioned defense of my teacher Rikyū put an end to my brooding. That aside, I wondered about the meaning of an unfamiliar phrase you had used.

"What did you mean by 'dwelt perpetually'?"

" . . . 'in wabi tea'? It's a phrase I learned from Rikyū-dono. Let me explain. I'm an impoverished eccentric bonze whose only possessions are



**Kettle named Tōyōbō.** By Rikyū's kettle maker, Tsuji Yojirō. Height, 18.0 cm.; diameter of mouth, 10.5 cm.; diameter of body 15.6 cm.; diameter of base, 14.0 cm. The underside of the lid of the inner storage box bears Rikyū's grandson Sen Sōtan's writing, "Tōyōbō" 東陽坊, and Sōtan's cipher. Hatakeyama Collection, Tokyo.

an Ise Temmoku teabowl and a calligraphy by the revered Prince Son'en. That's what people think. If they only knew what other truly legitimate treasures I own! I've shown you one of them — a teabowl made by Chō-jirō. Another is the cylindrical kettle with a hairline joint visible around the middle. It's a recent design from the foundry of the Kyoto guild of artisans, and was given to me by Rikyū-dono. I'd be happy to show it to you, although I'm sure you've seen it before. Those are the two tangible gifts I received from Rikyū-dono. He also gave me something without form — the words 'dwell perpetually in wabi tea.' You see, I once asked Rikyū-dono if there were a secret tradition of chanoyu. It was the year before he died. His answer was, 'How could there be any such thing? Nevertheless, if you insist on my dispensing some such idea, I suppose I would offer these words; Dwell perpetually in wabi tea; give importance to chanoyu. I wrote out this phrase of ten graphs, *wabisuki jōjū chanoyu kan'yō*, a few years ago for the benefit of a friend who is devoted to chanoyu.'"

My teacher Rikyū was especially fond of that cylindrical kettle, so naturally I had had many occasions to see it. But those words about wabi tea were new to me.

Tōyōbō-sama elaborated: "*Wabisuki jōjū* — whether you are asleep or awake, the spirit of tea must be alive within you at all times. *Chanoyu kan'yō* — preparing a bowl of tea is equally important. This is what I think this two-part phrase means. The other I can do, but *wabisuki jōjū* would be difficult. Impossible, I'd say. I can't imagine any stricter injunction on self-discipline. Rikyū-dono meant to maintain it, and he did so twenty-four hours a day, right up to the moment he carried out his mandated suicide."

Tōyōbō-sama paused. "Would such a man peddle tea utensils for his own gain?" he resumed, testily. "Would such a man think of installing a statue of himself atop the gate of a Zen temple?" He cut himself off. "I must stop. I'll lose my temper again!"

I knew then that my teacher Rikyū had a staunch defender, and I could not subdue the emotion that surged within me. How very fortunate I was to have met Tōyōbō-sama today! . . . Fortunate for my teacher and for myself. This was all I could think as I sat in silence, looking down, fighting back tears.

Tōyōbō-sama spoke again: "Why don't you take a turn at preparing tea. It might cheer us up."

I bowed and rose from my seat.

I had been told that Tōyōbō-sama was the first to prepare tea in larger amounts so that a bowlful may be passed around, and that my teacher Rikyū adopted this practice. Perhaps Tōyōbō-sama himself does not know that "Tōyō serving" used to be our code for such a large serving of tea. I recalled this fondly, and took the liberty of preparing a "Tōyō serving." I offered the bowl to Tōyōbō-sama, who sipped from it, then passed it back to me.

When we had finished our tea, the atmosphere was noticeably brighter. Despite the gap in age and station that separated us, our words took on the intimate tones of a conversation between fellow members of the Rikyū School of tea.

"Rikyū-dono favored slightly smaller teabowls and slender teascoops — probably because he was a large man. I never asked, but that's my guess. He must have given it considerable thought. He gauged the size of the teascoop according to the size of the teabowl. And he gauged the size of the teabowl against the width of a tatami mat."

Tōyōbō-sama's comments were illuminating, for in those days I had thought that my teacher just happened to be fond of smaller bowls and slender teascoops. I had not thought about the implications of his choices.

"Definitely he was surpassing in the way he prepared tea. His movements were grand and unfettered, with none of the fussiness sometimes associated with chanoyu. Merely watching him brought me peace of mind. I could easily have dismissed his flowing style of alternating tension and release as something god-given, but I knew it had to be the product of invention and effort.

"Rikyū-dono's chanoyu had a quality about it that suggested a confrontation, but without the use of swords. You might think he would have chosen intellect as the basis for contention. But, no. His would be a contest between two men stripped of any advantage of status."

As I listened, I recalled events that acquired new significance in the light of what Tōyōbō-sama was saying. My teacher's style of tea did seem to have such a quality about it.

"Being that kind of tea master, he was bound to make enemies."

"But my teacher always conducted himself with perfect decorum," I interjected. "He never failed to humble himself in speech to persons of respected status. He always fulfilled every requirement of accepted etiquette."

"Certainly he was faultless in that respect. He accorded the title of "lord" to every samurai who bore the title daimyo — the courtesy due a daimyo. He honored the lesser daimyo equally with the more powerful. When it came to Taikō-sama, the Great Lord, I should think he was mindful even of the disposition of a single teabowl. For instance, he never presented any teabowl to a favored disciple until it had been used for a tea offering to Taikō-sama. He never took the liberty to do as he wished with a teabowl, or even a teascoop, until he'd first brought the matter before Taikō-sama."

Tōyōbō-sama pondered his own remarks. "Even so, he incurred his lord's displeasure! Indeed, it's the very reason he incurred his displeasure!"

Our conversation quite naturally turned to the enigma of the Dai-tokuji affair, which no one dared speak openly of. Both Tōyōbō-sama and I wanted the satisfaction of penetrating the web of rumors in order to peer into that black maelstrom that had claimed my teacher Rikyū.

"Anything else come to mind?" Tōyōbō-sama asked, after we had talked about it for some time.

"This might not be important," I said, "but I remember a disruption in my teacher's daily routine a few days before the incident. He left for Daitokuji in great haste to meet with Kokei-sama. No sooner had he returned from the monastery than he composed a letter for immediate delivery to Kokei-sama. Also around that time, he had many letters carried to Lord Hosokawa Sansai. If those letters pertained to matters that led up to the incident, Kokei-sama and Hosokawa-sama should have been familiar with the details. This is only conjecture, of course."

"Priest Kokei is no more," Tōyōbō-sama said. "And, surely, being a man of stern character, Hosokawa Sansai-sama will not say a word about it. There's one other person who might be familiar with that incident . . . Furuta Oribe-sama." He paused again for a moment of thought, then continued.

"That affair still baffles me, but I'm certain about Rikyū-dono's reaction to his banishment. He left promptly for the city of Sakai and, at that point, at least, he believed that if he bided his time in exile in Sakai, the Great Lord's anger would melt away and he would be able to return to the capital. I learned recently that Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama were at the ferry at Yodo that day to see him off. The person who told me this couldn't say enough about the exceptional courage and character of the two men. I wouldn't deny them such praise. What they did was out of the ordinary. But, I might add, they believed that Rikyū-dono would eventually return. Who would have dared to give a send-off to a man who had incurred Taikō-sama's wrath and was leaving for the site of his own execution? No one in all of Japan! It stands to reason that Rikyū-dono's death had not yet been decreed. The decision to order his death must have been made after he got to Sakai."

I envied the two men who had escorted my teacher to the Yodo River on that very special day when he embarked for Sakai. I wished I could have done the same. As Tōyōbō-sama had said, they most likely assumed my teacher's eventual return, for otherwise they probably would not have been at the ferry. I dare say they meant to give courage to my teacher as he left for Sakai, to assure him that he need endure only a brief period of travail. I am grateful when I think how their heartfelt gesture must have gladdened him.

The intentions I attribute to Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama notwithstanding, they had, in fact, bid my teacher Rikyū a final farewell. They would not see him again.

When Tōyōbō-sama fell silent, I saw in my mind's eye my teacher Rikyū seated in the boat that would take him to Sakai. I had not been able to be at the ferry. But what I visualized was what I would surely have seen had I been there. I could not imagine how Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama had parted from him, but the image of my teacher, his gaze directed at the receding figures of his two well-wishers, was clear in my mind. What emotions did my teacher have? Those two men of the warrior caste were

bidding farewell to a friend and teacher they expected to see again. I do not think that my teacher's thoughts were so carefree. I believe that he foresaw his eventual fate, and yet he remained calm. This conjecture persists in my mind. I am certain that my teacher knew he was seeing Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama for the last time.

I related these thoughts to Tōyōbō-sama.

"No, I doubt that," Tōyōbō-sama said. "Rikyū-dono must have believed that he would live to see Kyoto again. Sansai-sama's and Oribe-sama's presence at the ferry meant that the Great Lord would soon relent and summon him back to Kyoto. That should have been apparent to him. Besides, he may have known why Taikō-sama was angry, and how angry he was. And there's another possibility — Taikō-sama may have sent those two men. He may have banished Rikyū-dono with the intention of having the two serve as conciliators when the right time came. Clearly it was a possibility — a very definite one, I'd say. There were other possibilities, and Rikyū-dono was in a position to have been aware of them all.

"But things didn't turn out as expected. Rikyū-dono never came back to Kyoto. His departure for Sakai was the start of his death journey. I don't know how this came about. Whatever it was that changed the course of events, it happened later, after Rikyū-dono got to Sakai. I don't think he was deeply troubled when he was seen off by his two samurai disciples."

Even as Tōyōbō-sama related his opinion, I visualized the look on the face of my teacher Rikyū as he contemplated his approaching fate — only a little more than twenty days away, as it turned out — and though I tried, I could not exchange that look for one less somber. The ambiguity of Tōyōbō-sama's comments confirmed my own belief. I had to be right! After all, one of the parties in that conflict was Taikō-sama, who has the power to decree the death of any individual. Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama never doubted that my teacher Rikyū would return to the capital. They may have been acting out Taikō-sama's wish. In any event, they had taken the trouble to come to the ferry. I visualized my teacher Rikyū, sitting erect in the boat, facing his well-wishers. What Sansai-sama and Oribe-sama may have thought of the incident did not matter. What mattered was Taikō-sama's intention, which no one could fathom. Depending on his whim, the situation could have developed in a number of different ways. The position of my teacher Rikyū was, at best, insecure.

Not wishing to contradict Tōyōbō-sama, I refrained from further expressing my feelings. I am convinced that my teacher Rikyū had foreseen everything, even his fated death, but said nothing. I must believe that he had dedicated his entire life to tea, in anticipation of such a day. I know my teacher well; I had attended him daily when he was living, and still am able to be close to him daily. Although I may be wrong, the above is my impression, my interpretation of that curious scene which unfolded on the bank of the Yodo River six years ago.

I also did not tell Tōyōbō-sama that the expression my teacher Rikyū wore as he sat in the boat about to course down the Yodo River was an

expression I had seen before. I have in my mind's eye an identical image of my teacher, but in a different setting.

In the ninth month of Tenshō 16 (1588), my teacher Rikyū held a tea gathering in the tearoom of his Jurakudai residence, with Priest Shun'oku of Daitokuji as the principal guest. It was a morning affair and, if my recollection is correct, was held on the fourth day of the month. There were two other guests—Kokei-sama and Gyokuho-sama. My teacher had invited the three eminent guardians of the light of the dharma of Daitokuji monastery.

The actual purpose of this tea gathering was to honor Priest Kokei on the eve of his departure for the Island of Kyushu. I would not be so brazen as to speculate on the reason Priest Kokei had incurred Taikō-sama's displeasure. He had been condemned to exile, rumor said, as a result of some discord with Ishida Mitsunari-sama over the building of Tenshōji monastery.

Since it was a ceremony to honor a man who was the object of Taikō-sama's ire, it was carried out in secrecy. I would not be surprised if even you, Tōyōbō-sama, did not know about it.

The gathering was held in the room of four and a half mats, which, as you know, is in the eastern wing. The softness of diffused light from the latticed window in the north wall, and the pair of windows of dissimilar size above the crawl-in entrance in the east wall, lent an unmatched elegance to the morning affair. In this setting my teacher prepared tea, using utensils set upon a display stand, as well as a Temmoku bowl placed on a Temmoku stand rather than directly on the mat. Although my teacher rarely engaged in chanoyu requiring the use of a display stand, apparently he had decided to conform to the style preferred at Daitokuji, as his guests were from that monastery.

The scroll that hung in the alcove was a calligraphy of a four-line poem, by Xutang.

Within the display stand were a teat-footed brazier and kettle with hailstone surface pattern; a metal water jar of foreign origin; a metal ladle stand; a copper waste-water receptacle, relatively deep and tapered toward the base; a three-pronged lid rest.

Atop the stand were a Temmoku teabowl on a stand; and a broad-bottom tea caddy in a protective bag, on a square tray.

My role was that of endmost guest. Only because this affair was held in secrecy was I admitted to such select company. I was, furthermore, allowed to record the proceedings of this tea gathering. I have that irreplaceable document, in which I describe in most detailed fashion my teacher's deportment, as well as the utensils that adorned the tea stand.

The calligraphy by Xutang had been entrusted to my teacher by Taikō-sama — his title then, I believe, was Chancellor of the Empire — in any event, by the Great Lord, who had asked my teacher to have the scroll remounted. I knew that Xutang, the renowned Zen master of the Southern Song Dynasty, was revered by monks of Daitokuji as a distant founder of their monastic faith. His calligraphy was the perfect piece to display in the alcove that morning. And his poem was the perfect expression of the sentiment of we who would bid farewell to Kokei-sama: "The leaves have parted from their branches, the sky of late autumn is cold and clear. You, of surpassing learning and virtue, will leave the Zen hall anon. At your journey's end, you will find not another soul though you might scan the four quarters. Return soon, and tell us what you will have stored in your heart."

The clandestine tea gathering, at once congenial, intense, splendid, and subdued, the hearts of the host and guests as one, was indeed a fitting send-off for an eminent priest of high attainment whose destination was the western provinces, where he would "find not another soul though he might scan the four quarters."

Having seen off our guests from Daitokuji, I returned to the tearoom, thinking to put it in order. My teacher Rikyū was then seated in the host's place. I thought it prudent to remove Xutang's calligraphy from the alcove, and made to take it down.

"Let's keep it there for a while," my teacher said. I left it for him to put away.

Later, that evening, I went to retrieve some items from the room where the tea gathering had been held. Sensing the presence of someone within, I stopped short of entering. It was near dusk; still early for a lamp. I peered in and saw my teacher Rikyū seated, as earlier he had been, in the host's place.

"Oh, is that you, Honkaku?" my teacher said after a while. I had been observing him from the entrance. He sat very erect, his hands folded on his lap, his head turned a little to one side and his face tilted slightly upward. I had seen him that way before. It was an attitude he tended to assume when he was deep in thought.

This time, I remained seated outside the host's entrance until my teacher spoke to me, all the while closely regarding the expression on his face. This is not to say that the expression was an unusual one for him, but there was something pensive and solemn about it that prevented my intruding on his privacy. What was my teacher contemplating? . . . rather, what was it that held him captive in his thoughts? His attitude, his look, made me wonder.

"Perhaps I should have you put the scroll away," my teacher finally said.

"I shall, then," I answered, surprised to notice Xutang's calligraphy still displayed in the alcove. A gathering to honor a man about to be exiled for having incurred Taikō-sama's displeasure, and held on the grounds of the Jurakudai Villa, right under the Great Lord's nose — this was risky

enough. Adding to the seriousness of the transgression was the unsanctioned display of a treasured possession of Taikō-sama. Furthermore, Xutang's poem could be interpreted as an implicit criticism of the man who would banish an eminent Buddhist of superior learning and virtue to a place where he would scan the four quarters but find no companion.

Had my teacher been sitting those many hours in that room, with Xutang's calligraphy before him?

I took down the scroll from the alcove wall and rolled it up. As I was leaving the room I glanced again at my teacher. He sat there as he had when I came to the room.

"Shall I bring a lamp?" I asked.

"Is it that time already?" My teacher at last stirred and left the host's place.

I served my teacher closely for more than ten years. My impression of him on that evening remains particularly vivid in my memory. Whenever I recall that scene, always it is Taikō-sama whom I imagine to be the object of my teacher's attention, for my teacher would have had to face up to Taikō-sama for hosting a tea gathering in honor of Priest Kokei and, more serious, daring to use Xutang's calligraphy to grace the setting for that event. He would have needed the mettle to come face to face with Taikō-sama and maintain that determined posture, his gaze fixed on Taikō-sama, throughout the silent confrontation.

Tōyōbō-sama, you are familiar with what followed — Kokei-sama's release from exile and return from the western provinces to Kyoto a little more than a year later. And on the fourteenth of the ninth month of Tenshō 18 (1590), a tea gathering was held in the same room, with the same invited guests — this time, however, with Kokei-sama the principal guest, as a gesture, you might say, of commiseration and of welcome on his return. I stayed in the background, serving as attendant, and was not a direct participant.

When I reminisced with you earlier today about my teacher Rikyu's departure for Sakai, for some curious reason the look on his face and the way he held himself, which I chanced to glimpse on that day in 1588 following the clandestine tea gathering in honor of Priest Kokei, became the look and bearing of my teacher Rikyū as he sat in the boat which would carry him down to Sakai.

Now, back at my dwelling in Shūgakuin, I am pondering a thought that occurred to me as I conversed with you earlier: the object of my teacher Rikyū's contemplation as he departed for Sakai was none other than Taikō-sama. The more I think about it, the more firmly convinced I am. I am almost certain that his look and posture as he sat in the tearoom of his residence in the Jurakudai Villa were those of a man defying Taikō-sama's authority, and that his look and posture as he sat in the boat taking

him to Sakai were those of a man steeling himself against Taikō-sama's retaliation.

On the basis of the farewell tea gathering for Priest Kokei, the only such affair in which I was a participant, I believe that my teacher Rikyū had put himself in the position of having invited Taikō-sama's retaliation. I believe that he may well have anticipated more than just one or two acts of retaliation, and I believe that he was prepared to endure them.

Yes, it was retaliation, but, it seems to me, the retaliation was delayed. Perhaps my teacher also thought so as he sat in that boat.

As you said, Tōyōbō-sama, my teacher Rikyū's circumstance when he was on the boat headed for Sakai may not have been precarious. It probably took a turn for the worse, putting him in danger, after he moved to Sakai. Regardless, I believe that he foresaw his destiny, and knew that its coming was inevitable. Whether or not his position was precarious did not matter to him. He was always prepared to face the most dreaded of eventualities.

Why did my teacher put himself in such a predicament? This is a question of such complexity that one such as I, Honkaku of Mii Temple, cannot hope to answer. Even though I would like to ask someone who was closely acquainted with my teacher to help me, I doubt that I can, for I have cut my ties with the world of chanoyu.

It is now very late. Perhaps it is time to end our conversation, which began in midday and has continued on to this late hour. ☂

Translated by James T. Araki

# Glossary

( ) denotes alias

|                          |                |                  |        |
|--------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------|
| Baisetsu                 | 梅雪             | Nembutsu Sachō   | 念仏差帳日記 |
| Chanoyu Saisho no Shidai | 茶湯最初之次第        | Nikki            |        |
| Dairin Sôtō              | 大林宗套           | Raku Chōjirō     | 樂長次郎   |
| Dōetsu                   | 道悦             | Rikyū Hyakkai Ki | 利休百会記  |
| Dōshitsu                 | 道叱             | Ryokutai         | 緑苔墨蹟   |
| Gesshin                  | 月岑妙珎           | Bokuseki         |        |
| Myōchin                  |                | sadō             | 茶頭     |
| Honkakubō Senkō          | 本覚坊暹好          | Sen Rikyū        | 千利休    |
| Hōsensai                 | 抛筌斎            | Shingorō         | 新五郎    |
| Hōshin Myōju             | 宝心妙樹           | Shōan            | 少庵     |
| Imai Sōkyū               | 今井宗久           | Sōgen            | 宗幻     |
| Ishibashi                | 石橋良叱           | Sōkun            | 宗薫     |
| Ryōshitsu                |                | Sōmi             | 宗味     |
| Itchū Ryōsen             | 一忠了専           | Sō'on            | 宗恩     |
| Jōkei                    | 常慶             | Sōrin            | 宗林     |
| Keison                   | 恵遵             | Sōtan            | 宗旦     |
| Makimura                 | 牧村兵部           | Takeno Sōga      | 武野宗瓦   |
| Hyōbu                    |                | Tanaka Jōan      | 田中紹安   |
| Matsue Ryūsen            | 松枝隆専<br>(松江隆仙) | (Dōan)           | (道安)   |
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