

CHANOYU Quarterly

TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

No. 80

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The embossing on the cover is adapted from a gold embroidered fabric called *Hōun kinran*, favored by Sen Sōshitsu XV, fifteenth generation grand master of the Urasenke tradition of chanoyu. The motif is composed of a phoenix (*hō*) amid clouds (*un*), and is the graphic representation of his Buddhist name, Hōunsai.

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The names of Japanese and Chinese persons are written surname first, in accordance with the customary practice in these countries.

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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.

College Years

Sen Sōshitsu XV

Five years had passed since I started studying at Dōshisha Junior High School, and I was confident that I knew all there was to know about Christianity. So it was my wish to go to another school for college, especially one that was in Tokyo. However, my mother told me time and again that there were many things that I needed to attain from my father while I was still a student, and that the knowledge gained from being by my father would become wisdom that I would value as the successor of the Urasenke family. Thus, I decided to apply secretly to Waseda and Gakushuin University.

Just before the entrance exam, I managed to get my parents' approval to go to Tokyo with a friend, and we stayed at my uncle's home in Gotanda. Since my uncle, a rear admiral in the navy, asked us why we had come all the way to Tokyo, I had to confess the truth. Naturally, he was not very happy and lectured, "I understand how you feel, but this is not the right way to do things. Without your parents' approval, I can't let you stay here." I took the exam after all, but I had to defer to my parents and give up my admittance. And so, in the spring of 1941, I entered Dōshisha University as planned (!?).

When it came time to decide my major, my father suggested that I major in history or archeology; however, this time I expressed my intentions and convinced my parents of the merits of majoring in economics, reasoning that it would probably be helpful for me to study the subjects they recommended, but that I had abundant opportunities to study these in my daily chanoyu environment.

During our freshman and sophomore years, aside from English we were also required to take either German or French. Predictably for me, the reason I chose German was that it struck me as more masculine. In my mind, those who took French were snobbish, and I was burning with feelings of resistance towards that lot. Besides the basic economics classes such as principles of economics and statistics, there were many other interesting classes, including ones that took up current affairs such as colonial policy and diplomatic history. I was fortunate, also, to be taught by superb professors.

* Translated from the serial "*Watakushi no Rirekisho*" [My Personal History], *Nihon Keizai Shimbun*, 1986–87.

As was normal for a student of my time, I was a voracious book reader. The books I read were not only on economics, but I enjoyed poetry and avidly read Hermann Hesse and Shimazaki Tōson, too. My friends used to make fun of me and call me a "softy" for this.

My fondness for reading goes back to when I was in the fifth grade. I had a friend whose hobby was book hunting, and whenever he got some spending money, he would ask me if I wanted to go book shopping with him. I would borrow books from him, and, without even trying, I soon developed a passion for books.

In retrospect, other than these few warm memories, it is sad to say that our school days were not even remotely enjoyable, for it was just around the time I was matriculated into college that the Pacific War broke out.

It was still a while before I would have to take the physical for conscription, but about the only amusements available were to listen to music at some coffee shop or to drop into a movie theater. Moreover, there was a crackdown on things such as minors' smoking, and I felt as if I had to beware of the eyes of adults wherever I went, so I always felt uncomfortable. On top of this, food was becoming scarce. At the school cafeteria, the choices on the menu were dwindling, and we could only expect to get either *kitsune donburi* (a conventional rice dish having cooked, thin slices of deep-fried tofu on rice), curry with rice, or rice with a 'cutlet' of some dubious kind of meat on it.

Since things were in such a state, many of my friends who were far from home used to come over and have my mother treat them to dinner. At this time sukiyaki was regarded as a delicacy, and I remember it to be very delicious. My parents were amazed at the appetite of my starved friends, but they welcomed each one of them every time with open arms.

As the war front was expanding by the day, I spent those days in nervous anticipation of when I would be called to duty. Nevertheless, I was stimulated when I saw my friends from junior high who had enlisted in the training corps. Looking quite serviceable when they came home during New Year's wearing their noncommissioned officers' uniforms, they made me feel that I ought to help the country. So, by-and-by, I enlisted as a trainee hydroplane flier.

Rikyū's tearoom

the Taian at Myōkian

photos by Okamoto Shigeo



























The Microcosmic Space Created by Sen Rikyū

Hayakawa Masao

A two-mat room with a ceiling height of 1.81 m (6 *shaku*) is probably the smallest architectural space possible to encompass human activity. It is astonishing, even from a worldwide historical perspective, that such minimal architecture has been in existence for four hundred years and has had an enormous impact on a nation's cultural history. In this respect, the tearoom "Taian" (lit., "Waiting Hut") at Myōkian temple is fascinating.

待庵 妙喜庵

To describe it more accurately, the Taian is composed of a two-mat main room with a tokonoma which is 1.21 m (4 *shaku*) in width; a one-mat *tsuginoma*, or "next room," separated from the main room by two *taikobari shōji*¹ and having a 24.2 cm wide (8 *sun*) flooring plank on one side; and, beyond this, a one-mat service area (*katte*). (Fig. 1) Altogether, the Taian is only about ten square meters in area. It is attached to the main temple structure, and extends southeastward from the temple's *shoin*-style sitting room.² First-time visitors may wonder why this teahouse, appearing so compact and unpretentious from the outside, is a National Treasure.

次の間
太鼓貼り障子
勝手

書院座敷

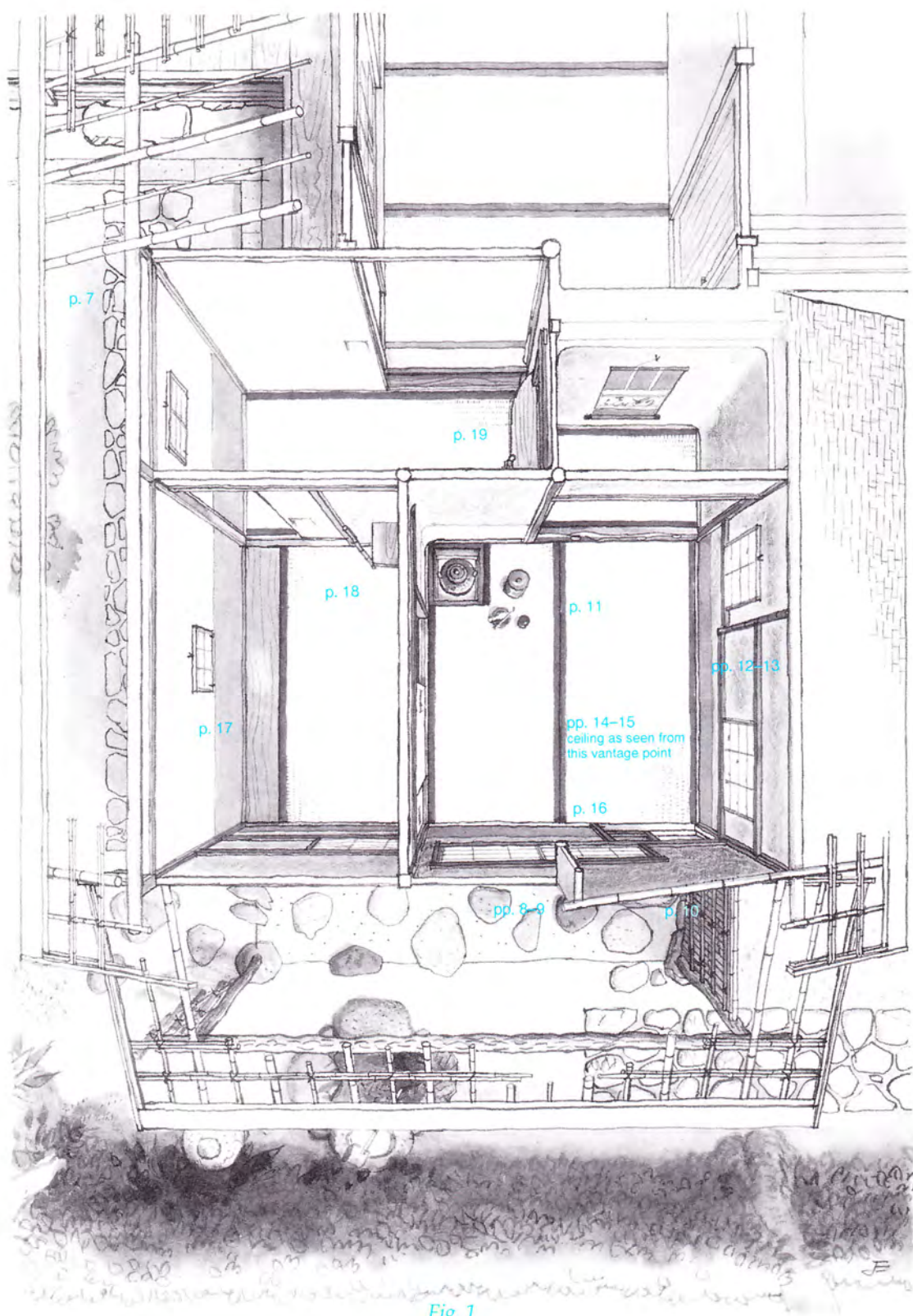
Putting on sedge sandals at the veranda of the temple's *shoin*-style sitting room, the visitor walks along the stone path through the tea garden (*roji*) [see p. 7] and comes to the south side of the teahouse, where the area is covered by extended eaves (*dobisashi*). From there a stone water basin (*tsukubai*) can be seen to the right, and the entrance to the teahouse, the *nijiriguchi*, further ahead on the left.

露地
土庇
蹲踞
躡口

¹ Sliding doors composed of a wooden framework, like that of *shōji*, covered on both sides with paper. "Taikobari" literally means "covered like a drum." This style of sliding door is characterized by its lack of an external border frame, and by its door pulls. The door pulls are formed by bringing a section of the paper diagonally inward.

² *Shoin*-style rooms are generally characterized by their formal use of square posts, floors entirely covered with tatami, and exterior perimeter of *shōji* screens. The *shoin* room at Myōkian temple serves as the temple's main hall (*hondō*). This hall was reconstructed during the Taishō era (1912–26), at which time major repairs were also made on the Taian tearoom.

Translated and adapted, by permission, from "Rikyū ga Kizuku Shugyoku no Shosekai" in *Fumetsu no Kenchiku* 9, *Myōkian Chashitsu 'Taian'* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1989). Photographs are by Okamoto Shigeo. Unless otherwise stated, footnotes are by the translator.



Upon opening the wooden door of the *nijiriguchi* and peering inside, most every visitor is momentarily spellbound, struck by the visual impact of the extraordinarily austere, delicate yet coarse interior space of the Taian — a dramatic sight which the visitor hardly expects from the structure's plain and sedate exterior. [see pp. 8–9, 10]

It is the dark gray earthen walls, contrasting so sharply with the bright new tatami mats and the white *koshibari*³ paper running along the lower parts of the walls, that first catch the eye. Roughly plastered, with coarse straw exposed on the surface, the earthen walls have blackened with the passage of time. The tokonoma, directly opposite the *nijiriguchi*, has the same finish as these walls and, because its inner edges have been rounded, it seems to possess an uncanny depth.⁴ Light entering through the windows reflects irregularly on the alcove post (*tokobashira*) and alcove rail (*tokogamachi*), fashioned from logs and left with rough knife marks and knots exposed. [see p. 11]

腰貼

床柱 床框

Opposite the white *taikobari shōji* doors on the left, which separate the main room from the *tsuginoma*, shōji window screens cover two small windows set apart in the right-hand wall, and create a delicately balanced composition as they softly refract the light entering from the *shitajimado* windows.⁵ The *koshibari* paper on this wall is dark blue and covers most of the lower part of the wall. The vertical mullion (*hōdate*) and the sills (*shikii*) and lintel (*kamoi*) for the shōji window screens intersect, forming a composition of dark brown lines which divide the wall into sections of beautifully balanced proportion. In its entirety, the wall gives the refreshing impression of a modern painting. [see pp. 12–13]

下地窓

方立

敷居 鴨居

The visitor might feel the strongest impact upon noticing the ceiling. The small 1 *tsubo* (3.3 m²) ceiling is divided into three parts: two rectangular, horizontal surfaces and the finished inside surface of the sloping roof. The two horizontal surfaces, one large and one small, meet perpendicularly and are made of thin slats girded by narrow bamboo poles. A plaque engraved with the Japanese characters 待庵 (Taian) is hooked to the small wall surface between the high and low ceiling levels. The three-dimensional ceiling seems to contribute much to the beautiful and intricate sense of composition of the entire room. [see pp. 14–15]

Proceeding into the room, sitting at the place for the main guest near the tokonoma, and looking back at the *nijiriguchi*, one notices the

³ *Koshibari* refers to the paper pasted along the lower part of a wall. This papering is usually done on earthen walls to prevent crumbling of the wall and soiling of clothing when the wall is touched.

⁴ This type of alcove with rounded corners is called *murodoko* 室床, or "chamber alcove." — Author

⁵ *Shitajimado*, or "foundation window," refers to unframed latticework windows formed by leaving a portion of earthen wall unplastered, exposing the reeds or other lattice foundation materials used to reinforce the wall.

brightness of the two shōji screens over the large window above the rustic plank *nijiriguchi*. The wall, the planks of the door, the waist-high *koshihari*, the delicate lines of the shōji, and the lines of the sills and lintel holding the shōji screens — all the elements comprising this wall surface create a pleasant harmony. [see p. 16]

客座 点前座

炉

In its correlation with the intricate ceiling and the four walls which are each of a differing composition, the floor, consisting of two tatami mats — one for the guest (*kyakuza*) and the other for the host (*temaeza*) — has the appearance of utter simplicity. The black tatami border runs boldly through the center of the room, emphatically separating the spaces for the guest and the host. The sunken hearth (*ro*) in the corner of the host's tatami is a small, distinct square defined by wide borders, and plays a pivotal role in the three-dimensional composition of the room as a whole.

掛障子

中柱

The one-mat *tsuginoma* with flooring plank is composed of relatively simple surfaces, perhaps partly because this room is not readily seen by guests. Nonetheless, the west wall, which faces the main room, has an interesting composition. It is a single plane without any division, simply having one third of the lower portion covered with *koshihari* paper, and, above that in the center slightly to the right, a small *shitajimado* window with a hooked-on shōji screen (*kakeshōji*). It has a charming air about it in contrast to the intense composition of each wall in the main room. [see p. 17] This wall, however, was not like this from the very beginning. Originally, there was a middle post (*nakabashira*) slightly to the left, and a window on the upper left. The wall appears to have been rebuilt around the end of the Edo period.

吊棚

桐

There is a suspended shelf (*tsuridana*) in the corner of the wall separating the *tsuginoma* from the sunken hearth in the main room. This shelf is considered to have been here from the beginning. It is made of a thin board of paulownia wood (*kiri*) and is suspended from the ceiling by a thin bamboo pole attached to its outermost corner. [see p. 18]

To the north of the *tsuginoma* is the one-mat service area, having a small window on the west side and a three-tiered suspended shelf in the southeast corner. [see p. 19] Separated by a *fusuma* on the north side, the service area connects with the tatami-covered hallway of the main temple structure. The threshold of the main structure is one step higher than the level of the service area. This is one of the major reasons why this tearoom is believed to have been moved to its present location from another site. Furthermore, the post to which the three-tiered shelf is attached does not reach the ceiling, and there is a polished, worm-eaten log post on the border between this room and the main structure. These elements in the service area, though interesting, seem somehow unnatural and lead us to think that this tearoom may not have been built here originally.

An Expression of Wabi Aesthetics

Taian is said to be the work of Sen Rikyū (1522–91). But is this really true? And when was it completed? To date, no records have been found to answer these questions, and a number of theories have developed in an attempt to solve the mystery surrounding this tearoom. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi defeated Akechi Mitsuhide at the Battle of Yamazaki in 1582 (Tenshō 10),⁶ Hideyoshi is said to have ordered Rikyū to design a tearoom there. Another theory states that it was Kōshuku Shibō, then chief priest of Myōkian and also a chanoyu enthusiast in close contact with the tea masters of Sakai, who had Rikyū design a tearoom. At that time, Rikyū owned a house near the temple, and some people believe the tearoom was built on the premises of this house and was moved to its present location after Rikyū's death.

千利休

豊臣秀吉 明智光秀

功叔士結

Which of the above theories, if any, is correct still remains uncertain. However, most agree that this tearoom is truly the work of Rikyū and was built around 1582, when Rikyū was in his sixties and had reached the height of his artistic maturity. It has been maintained down through the generations that this microcosm could not have been realized without the artistic genius of Rikyū, who played a leading role in developing the unique aesthetics of chanoyu and in popularizing chanoyu in the Momoyama period. No one but Rikyū could have created this architectural space.

Rikyū's way of tea centered around the wabi aesthetic. Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, whom Rikyū served as tea master, were both hegemonies with a taste for extravagance during an age of lawless civil war. It was they who built Azuchi Castle and the Jurakudai mansion, respectively, during the Momoyama period, an epoch-making era in Japanese cultural history which witnessed a flourishing of exuberant artistic splendor. Rikyū strove for an ideal of beauty which lay at the other end of the artistic spectrum — simple, refined beauty; and his expression of this in terms of architecture was the *sōan* tearoom — that is, a tearoom in the style of a 'grass-thatched hut' — as represented by the Taian at Myōkian. From such contrasting extremes as the monumental scale of a castle versus a minimal space, and gold and azure wall paintings versus plain earthen walls, Rikyū strove to realize a beauty of a higher order. And, indeed, his achievement of this in the Taian was of an astounding level. In originating the *sōan* tearoom,

織田信長

草庵茶室

⁶ Oda Nobunaga (1534–82), a hegemon of the Azuchi period, came under attack by a mutinous retainer, Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–82), and was forced to commit suicide at Honnōji temple, Kyoto. Only thirteen days after Nobunaga's death, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), an ally and disciple of Nobunaga's, took revenge and defeated Mitsuhide at Yamazaki, in the vicinity of Myōkian temple.

Rikyū was able to realize his bold and novel ideas by the use of finely detailed artistic expression, demonstrating his wide-ranging genius.

However, comparing, for example, the interior space of the two-mat Taian room to the voluminous space which opened up vertically through the many stories of the donjon at Azuchi Castle, the extremely diminutive Taian room seems toy-like. Compared to the reception rooms and sitting rooms common to the *shoin*-style architecture of the Momoyama period — rooms which, like the tearoom, were designed for entertaining guests — Taian is so undersized that one imagines people in those days may have doubted the judgement of the designer.

武野紹鷗

Of course, the spacious reception rooms of eighteen mats or more which were in common use at the time did not suddenly give rise to Rikyū's idea to build a two-mat room. Takeno Jōō, who originated the chanoyu based on the wabi aesthetic, was Rikyū's mentor and, even before Rikyū's time, he had built a four-and-a-half-mat room for chanoyu. And Rikyū himself, abiding by his mentor's formulations, taught his apprentices that the four-and-a-half-mat tearoom represented the basic tearoom size.

同仁齋 東求堂
東山殿 銀閣寺

The prototype of the four-and-a-half-mat room is considered to be the well-known Dōjinsai in the Tōgudō at the Higashiyama-dono (popularly known as Ginkakuji, the Temple of the Silver Pavilion), which was completed in 1486 (Bunmei 18), in the middle of the Muromachi period. In that this room represented the first appearance of a four-and-a-half mat room, it was of epoch-making significance in the history of Japanese housing. The Dōjinsai is also recognized as symbolizing the earliest stage in the history of the tearoom.

間

Japanese architecture in ancient times was built according to a unit of linear measure called "*ken*," or inter-post distance. Although the length of 1 *ken* was not standardized, approximately 6 *shaku* 5 *sun* (1.97 m) came to be used as the basic length of a *ken* in the houses of the mid-Muromachi period. When tatami mats began to be laid wall-to-wall in rooms, one square *ken*, or the area of two tatami mats laid side-to-side, came to be the prevailing measure of floor space, called "*ma*."⁷ The conventional eighteen-mat rooms called "*konomama*," or literally "nine-*ma*" rooms, were three *ken* square. This exemplifies that, as a rule, residential architecture was built based upon multiples of the *ken* unit. Yet the Dōjinsai was designed as a room one and a half *ken* square, a size referred to then as "*ikkenmanaka*," or something to the effect of "one *ken* plus mid-*ken*." The implementation of a unit smaller than the basic *ken* reflects that the Japanese were developing a keener, more detailed sense of architectural space. This marks a significant point in history.

九間

一間々中

⁷ "*Ma*" is written with the same character as "*ken*," 間. It is helpful to note that the length of a tatami is exactly double its width, and that it equals the length of a *ken*.

By Rikyū's time, therefore, it had apparently already been acknowledged that smaller rooms of four and a half mats were more appropriate than spacious rooms for chanoyu gatherings of a few people, as they fostered a warmer atmosphere. Here it should be emphasized, however, that Rikyū's two-mat room was not simply a miniaturized version of a four-and-a-half-mat room; it could not be designed as such, for, though the two are both square in shape, the functional character of a room two mats in area is totally different from that of a four-and-a-half-mat room.

Rikyū's Innovations

Rikyū manifested his remarkable ingenuity in many ways. The first was his conception of the *nijiriguchi* entrance. Although the entrance at Taian is slightly larger than the *nijiriguchi* seen on later-day tearooms, it is 78.8 cm (2 *shaku* 6 *sun*) in height and 71.5 cm (2 *shaku* 3 *sun* 6 *bu*) in width — just large enough to crawl through. The effect of entering a room by crawling through this type of entrance is striking in the sense that, to the person entering the room, the interior space appears to be more voluminous than it actually is.

The second was his technique of rounding the recessed wall corners to hide the posts. In the Taian, the corner where the sunken hearth is situated, as well as the tokonoma wall corners and even the tokonoma ceiling corners, have been rounded, making it difficult to accurately perceive the depth of the room. (Fig. 2)

The third of Rikyū's major innovations was the *shitajimado* window. The *shitajimado* window looks as if the underlying reinforcement of the earthen wall has been left exposed. Actually, the earthen material of the wall is plastered around the edges of an open window space instead of building a wooden frame around it. In this opening, reed shafts and bamboo are woven in a lattice pattern and then the ends of the reed and bamboo latticework are covered with more of the earthen wall material. (Fig. 3) A paper *shōji* screen is placed on the inside of the opening. This method allows windows of any size to be situated anywhere in a wall surface. By enabling free access to whatever amounts of natural light were necessary to alleviate the sense of confinement caused by unrelieved expanses of wall surface, this technique gave Rikyū the means to create a totally new kind of interior space.

Rikyū's fourth conceptual breakthrough had to do with his achievement of the optimal sizes for the Taian's interior elements. For four-and-a-half-mat tearooms, the sizes of such elements as the posts,



Fig. 2. Rounded ceiling corners of the *murodoko*-style tokonoma.

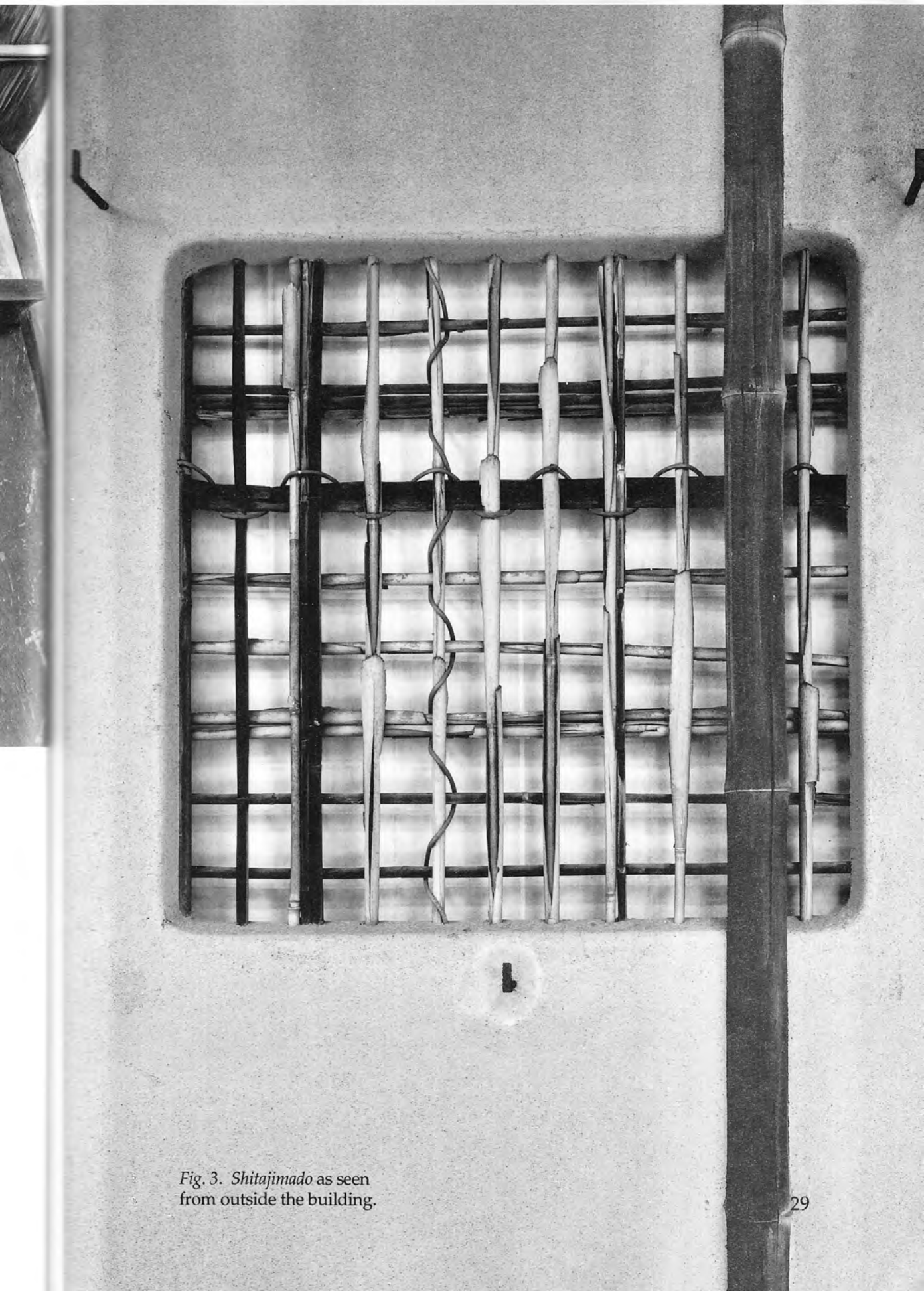


Fig. 3. *Shitajimado* as seen from outside the building.



Fig. 4. Shōji made of
delicately crafted split
bamboo components.

lintels, and shōji stiles (*kamachi*) and muntins (*kumiko*) had generally been standardized by this time. If the same sizes were adopted for the elements in a two-mat room, however, the diminutive size of the room would be exaggerated. If, on the other hand, the sizes of the elements were proportionally reduced, the room would assume a light and awkward quality, like a scaled-down model. Choosing to do neither of these and seeking the limits of practicality and harmony led to the success of Rikyū's design.

框 組子

For example, there is a physical limit to how much the diameter of a support post can be reduced. The smaller the size of a building, the greater the roof area each post must support. This is because there is a relative increase in the ratio of the area of the eaves to the number of posts. A post with its sides lightly planed but its corners left in their natural round state with bark intact (*menkawa-bashira*), or an altogether unprocessed log post is comparatively sturdy and at the same time appears thinner than its actual size. Rikyū took full advantage of these attributes and used them ingeniously.

面皮柱

Again, the sizes of the doors and windows in the Taian tearoom were determined through a subtle balance of practicality and visual effect, and then the detailed dimensions of their fittings were decided. As for the components of the small, papered shōji window screens in particular, those of a proportionally desirable thinness would have been hard to work with and would have been of questionable strength. Rikyū's solution was to have highly skilled craftsmen utilize straight-grained, good-quality wood or bamboo. (Fig. 4)

The fifth of Rikyū's innovations had to do with his consideration of colors. In contrast to *shoin*-style architecture which incorporated unfinished white cedar (*hinoki*) and walls of white plaster (*shikkui*), Rikyū's design favored Japanese cypress (*sugi*), Japanese pine (*matsu*), and Japanese hemlock (*tsuga*), and walls finished in earthy tones. Furthermore, he stained these woods and devised an original finish for the earthen walls. Writings on tea from later periods contain passages which variously describe Rikyū's style of design. For example, there is one which states, "Stain every element in a tearoom (*sukiya*); never use untreated wood." Another dictum states, "Darken the wall to create a wabi effect." However, descriptions in various writings on Rikyū's use of coloration are inconsistent; slight discrepancies exist between texts which describe Rikyū using darker tones, and those which claim that Rikyū considered the use of dark tones to be vulgar.

檜 漆喰
杉 松
榎

The techniques by which Rikyū achieved the colors that he desired are not clearly understood. More than likely, umber pigments consisting mainly of soot were dissolved in persimmon tannin or vegetable oil, or else lacquer, and this was painstakingly applied as a finish. The best color tone or glossiness of finish was probably carefully chosen

for each element in the room, so specifications for the finishes were not at all standardized.

The two-mat tearoom was realized by this series of astonishingly original and scrupulously ingenuous ideas. This creative process must have begun by reducing the four-and-a-half-mat room down to an analogous two-mat room size. But Rikyū persisted in looking for ways to create a not-so functionally practical yet perceptually comfortable room, and eventually went on to realize new concepts of beauty. Rikyū must have gone through numerous processes of trial and error in order to discover concrete methods of creating optical illusions which would divert attention from the smallness of the room. His determination finally led to the emergence of a unique minimal space that was totally innovative, profound, and austere.

The Origin of the 'Sukiya' Concept

The small-scale architecture of Rikyū's *sōan* style has been contrasted to the grand-scale architecture of the ornate Momoyama style associated with Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, and has always been viewed as the expression of the wabi aesthetic. Simplicity and tranquility, as expressed by the words "wabi" and "sabi," lie at the core of Rikyū's architectural principles. In fact, Rikyū's architecture, as manifested in the Taian, is on a par with palatial residences in terms of spiritual and technological value, and probably in financial terms as well. His was the creation of new artistic values. Rikyū points out, "A tearoom should be made crudely," a statement requiring contemplation before it is truly understood. This recalls two verses written long ago in the Nara period by Empress Genshō (r. 715–24) and Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–49), who were invited to the residential villa of Minister Nagaya-no-ō (Prince Nagaya, a grandson of Emperor Temmu; then Minister of the Left) in Sao (located in the north of Nara prefecture). The two verses, included in the *Manyō Shū*, are:⁸

This chamber built with barked wood
brought from the grove nearby,
and thatched with obana stems
shall stand a thousand years.

Empress Genshō

⁸ Translated by Honda Heihachirō in his *The Manyōshū* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1967). The cited poems are nos. 1637 and 1638, respectively.

We like this cottage built with trees
cut and from Mount Nara brought.
However oft we look,
it tires us not.

Emperor Shōmu

These verses depict a mountain villa of natural log construction with a thatched roof, which is being praised for its unique charm in contrast to the palaces in the capital. As a villa fit for an aristocrat of the highest position, one imagines that it is of the most exquisite construction. Yet the materials used for this villa were of the same coarse quality as those used by common people. Here one finds the source of two sets of values which prevailed in the 'graceful' architecture of the aristocracy. And therein lie the ancient roots of the *sōan* aesthetic.

The element of 'gracefulness' in architecture must have continued to grow alongside the tradition of poetry writing which was at the center of court culture. The world of poetry in the Middle Ages was characterized by the rise of *renga* (verse linking), which possessed the flavor of a polite accomplishment, and by an intellectual trend to long for freedom from worldly concerns, as represented by the poet-monk Saigyō (1118–90). At their residences, aristocrats erected structures — indeed, grass-thatched cottages (*sōan*) built in the manner of mountain-village hermitages — for the purpose of holding gatherings to enjoy *renga*. The poets who assembled at these country-style cottages hailed them as retreats in the midst of the city, or mountain hideaways.

Renga, a literary pastime of the aristocracy, quickly spread to the warrior class and the common people. A satirical verse included in the *Nijōgawara no Rakusho* [Nijōgawara Scribblings] (1334) describes how *renga* truly gained widespread popularity at that time. With this growing popularity, the element of playfulness in *renga* began to override its more refined aspects, whereby a category of light-hearted colloquial verse called *haikai* emerged. Riding on the same wave of popularity as group literature and other group pastimes, chanoyu also became extremely popular at the end of the Middle Ages. Common both to these literary activities and chanoyu was the idea of participating in an artistic pursuit as a group.

Although the origin of the word "*suki*," written 数寄, is not clearly understood, in essence the word means "to like," which is normally written 好き, and it may be that the 数寄 character combination was appropriated because it denotes "a gathering of many people." At any rate, as *renga* became popular, expressions such as "*uta-suki*" ("[to have a] liking for verses") or *sukimono* ("person/people with a liking") en-

二条河原落書

歌数寄
数寄者

tered the language. By the end of the Muromachi period, the word "suki" came to denote a person with a passion for *renga*. On the other hand, a person who was devoted to chanoyu was called *cha-suki*, that is, a person with a "liking for tea." By the time Rikyū had perfected chanoyu and it was flourishing, "suki" came to signify chanoyu. Words which signified the place for chanoyu were "*chanoyu zashiki*" ("sitting room for chanoyu") or "*kakoi*" ("enclosed area"). The word "*chashitsu*," literally "tea room," came into use much later, after the mid-Edo period. Rikyū is believed to have been the first to use "*sukiya*" to mean a place for chanoyu, and he may have used this word with the hope that the *chashitsu* architecture he had originated would be distinguished from other styles of architecture.

茶数寄

茶の湯座敷

囲い 茶室

数寄屋

From Jōō's time on, the artistic aspects of chanoyu were cultivated among the townspeople of Sakai. In the Momoyama period, the city of Sakai was unparalleled in its prosperity as the largest trade port. As a result of its exposure to European civilization via trade, this city also exhibited a great degree of interest in culture and, at the same time, possessed an abundance of financial resources. Nonetheless, the townspeople's houses are believed to have been surprisingly small. To provide moments for the enjoyment of refined pleasures away from their business as merchants, many townspeople built rooms for chanoyu on tiny plots of land, and they referred to these as mountain retreats in the city, like the aristocrats' *sōan*-style teahouses. The model for Rikyū's concept of the *sukiya*, which he originated in the late years of his life, can be traced to the modest yet abundant life-style of the townspeople of Sakai.

Still, from what concept was it that Rikyū's thinking evolved toward the creation of such a minimal space as is manifested in the Taian? Several clues to this mystery have been handed down to us in the form of legends. One points out that the idea for the *shitajimado* window was conceived when Rikyū was looking at the crumbling wall of a poor farmer's house. The idea for the *nijiriguchi* entrance is said to have been inspired by the door of a boat which was tied to a wharf in Hirakata, Osaka. Though these explanations are attributed to Rikyū himself, their true source remains dubious, making it difficult for us to believe them outright. Another story speculates that Rikyū came up with the idea of a totally enclosed, minimal space after looking at the cabin of a Portuguese ship in the port of Sakai. This theory, similar to another, that the manner of sharing a bowl of tea with others was adopted from a Christian ritual, is very intriguing. Rikyū certainly possessed imaginative capabilities sufficient to give credence to such theories regarding his ingenious appropriation of the latest cultural contacts. Extending these speculations one step further, Rikyū would have been the most likely person to have designed the golden tearoom

of which Hideyoshi was so proud — a tearoom which was very European in its selection of brilliant colors.

The Influence of the Taian on Modern Architecture

After Rikyū's downfall, he was succeeded in his position as leader in the world of chanoyu by daimyō and warlords such as Furuta Oribe (1544–1615), Kobori Enshū (1579–1647), and Oda Uraku (1547–1621). Each of them was a master of chanoyu who had studied under Rikyū, and each exhibited a talent for architectural design, creating lasting examples of structures representative of the early Edo period.

古田織部
小堀遠州 織田有楽

Among these successors, Furuta Oribe designed a three-and-three-quarter mat tearoom (*sanjō-daime*) having an added space for the guest's attendants (*shōban-seki*). Furthermore, he incorporated many windows into this tearoom, to create a light-filled, lively atmosphere. Thus, he originated the so-called Ennan-style tearoom. Oribe's ideas also differed from those of Rikyū in regard to the manner in which chanoyu gatherings should progress, and this led to his formulation of a style of architectural layout in which a *kusari-no-ma*, or "linking room," and a *shoin*-style sitting room were connected to the tearoom.

三疊台目
相伴席
燕庵形式
鎖の間

Along the same lines as Oribe, Kobori Enshū enthusiastically incorporated a series of innovations into the design of his tearooms. As seen in the Bōsen tearoom at Kohōan of Daitokuji temple, built by Enshū as his own temple, he created a dynamic architectural style distinctly different from Rikyū's *sōan* style by attempting to introduce the feel of a *shoin*-style sitting room into the tearoom. The finest example of his style is the Mittan tearoom, at Ryōkōin of Daitokuji. Enshū was a man of many talents. Due to his position as Commissioner of Public Works, he left a significant mark on Japanese architecture and gardens.

忘筌 孤蓬庵
密庵 龍光院

The best-known example of Oda Uraku's architecture is the the extraordinary tearoom named Joan. Uraku experimented with a variety of new ideas, and, as seen in the daring yet beautifully balanced design of the Joan, he succeeded in establishing a unique architectural style.

如庵

In the early part of the Edo period, there were many other capable military leaders who were also masters of chanoyu, such as Hosokawa Sansai, Kanamori Sōwa, and Katagiri Sekishū. However, as for all the above-mentioned individuals, their thinking on chanoyu was restricted by their position as military leaders bound to a feudal system of government. For example, the utilization of the *daime* size of tatami for the host — that is, a tatami three-quarters the usual tatami size — suggested the host's reservation with regard to guests of higher rank than himself. Rikyū held onto the spirit of equality of all men and re-

garded chanoyu as a way of discovering truth, but his philosophy could not remain in the mainstream of the changing times.

Chanoyu also came to be enjoyed by members of the imperial court. This was occasioned by the Kinchū chanoyu gathering held in 1585 (Tenshō 13), when Hideyoshi presented Emperor Ōgimachi with an offering of tea, and appointed Rikyū to serve as chief of the tea preparations. Notwithstanding this, however, the primary cultural activity of the court centered around the writing of 17-syllable poems called *waka*. The era extending from the early Edo period to the Kan'ei period (1624–44) was a time during which the culture of the court flourished. Aristocrats such as Emperor Gomizunoō (r. 1611–29), his brothers Konoe Nobuhiro and Ichijō Ekan, Imperial Prince Hachijō-no-miya Tomohito (the uncle of Emperor Gomizunoō), and his sons, Imperial Prince Tomotada and Imperial Prince Yoshihisahō, along with abbots, tea masters, and artists engaged in lively cultural activities.

In terms of the architecture built by members of the court, their *sukiya*-style works are noteworthy. As represented by works ranging from the well-known Katsura Detached Palace built by Imperial Prince Hachijō-no-miya Tomohito and his sons, to the Shūgakuin Detached Palace by Emperor Gomizunoō, the teahouse at Fushimi Inari Shrine and the Tōshintei pavilion at Minase Shrine — both also believed to be the works of Emperor Gomizunoō — and the Shikantei pavilion at Nishikamo Villa, by Ichijō Ekan, many of the outstanding structures of this period which remain today are among the best examples of *sukiya*-style architecture ever to have been built. All of these examples of court architecture except for the Shōkintei pavilion at the Katsura Detached Palace belong to the category of teahouse architecture. But the austere world of tea that Rikyū had pursued elicited a proud and isolated existence which did not easily lend itself to the world of court culture. The teahouse architecture of the court aristocracy adopted Rikyū's *sōan*-style *sukiya* architectural techniques in material selection, design details, as well as other aspects. As a whole, however, the structures convey an exquisite ambience of airiness and flamboyance — qualities of a culture totally alien to Rikyū's *sōan*. As *sencha* (infused tea) became more prevalent in the latter part of the Edo period, there evolved a popular and light-hearted *sukiya*-style architecture which reflected the general characteristics of this aristocratic stream of teahouse architecture.

The spirit of Rikyū's architectural ideal, as epitomized by the minimal space of the Taian on the premises of Myōkian, was unfortunately not carried on by any true successor. But the tangible aspects of his architectural concepts, including design details and techniques, had an enormous influence on modern architecture. It is not an exaggeration to say that all groups of modern architectural structures described as being in the *sukiya* style have been influenced in some way by Rikyū.

After Rikyū, chanoyu masters strove to validate their unique ingenuity by designing their own tearooms, and soon it became a custom to designate tearooms as having been built according to the style (*konomi/gonomi*) of this or that master. In viewing architecture as an art, this trend was significant in that each designer was expressing his distinct individuality and originality. Nonetheless, never again did a person of such vigor and influence as Rikyū emerge after the early part of the modern period.



Translated by Misaki Atsuko

Swords of the Tea Masters

Ikeda Hyōa

Preface

In symbolic reference to the spiritual quality of teascoops, or *chashaku*, it has long been said that "the teascoop is the sword of a tea master." However, teascoops are not the subject of this essay. Here, I would like to write about actual swords; that is, the swords worn at the hip or kept in the possession of men of tea who were also warriors.

This treatise will examine and deal only with those warriors who were involved with chanoyu during the period in which the practice of tea flourished — the Tenshō (1573–92), Bunroku (1592–96), and Keichō (1596–1615) eras, down into the Edo period (1615–1867) — and whose *sashiryō*, or swords,¹ are documented. I first became interested in pursuing this subject because of a suggestion by Mr. Yamazaki Masaru, a man sympathetic to my works. One evening, when I was invited to dinner by Mr. Yamazaki, our wide-ranging discussion of art happened to turn to the topic of swords, and we arrived at the subject of blades belonging to men of tea. This turn of events was chiefly due to the fact that Mr. Yamazaki possesses a great depth of knowledge with regard to swords. I understand that he became aware of the attraction of swords when he was fifteen or sixteen years old, and that at first he borrowed money from his father and began to purchase them. Then, once he reached the stage where he managed his own company, he made use of his own resources and threw himself into collecting them. Over the next thirty years, he matured into a highly reputed collector possessing many swords, including renowned pieces which have been designated National Treasures or Important Art Objects. Being that his

¹ *Sashiryō* refers specifically to those swords which were worn thrust through the sash at the hip.

Translated and adapted, by permission, from "*Chajin no Sashiryō*" appearing in the April 1988 issue of *Tankō* (Kyoto: Tankōsha Publishing Co.). Translation assistance, John Munroe. Unless otherwise specified, footnotes are by the editor. Photo courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co. Sketches, excluding fig. 1, are by the author.

wife was an enthusiast of chanoyu, she had him assist her in collecting tea utensils, and this led him to become interested in tea and the old artworks associated with its practice. Tea utensils and swords share a certain historical bond, and this apparently served to arouse Mr. Yamazaki's interest. In other words, our respective knowledge regarding swords and chanoyu shared some common ground, sparking off the novel topic of discussion, "swords of the tea masters." What fascinated me most upon hearing Mr. Yamazaki's remarks on this occasion was the correlation between the men of tea and the swords that they wore, causing me in some cases to nod in approval, and in others to remark in surprise, "Oh? That sword is antithetical to the spirit of tea." It was then that it occurred to me that these swords might more fittingly symbolize the attitudes and personalities of their owners as warriors, rather than as the men of tea known through rumors and anecdotes.

Having been engaged in work related to the 'way of tea' for over fifty years, I knew something about tea utensils, but about swords I had virtually no knowledge. Therefore, without embarking on a fresh period of study, I would hardly have been qualified to consider the subject, much less write about it. And so, from that point on I began to conduct research into this area for the first time in my life.

I requested Mr. Yamazaki to recommend some reference books on the subject, and soon thereafter a man named Mr. Sōma Munenori, who publishes a research journal sponsored by Mr. Yamazaki, came to visit me with a package of reference materials. These included copies of *Nippon-tō Meikan* [Directory of Japanese Swords],² *Nippon-tō Jūyō Bijutsuhin Zenshū* [Compendium of Japanese Swords Designated as Important Art Objects],³ and both the *Taitokuin-dono Gojikki* [True Chronicle of Lord Taitokuin] and *Yūtokuin-dono Gojikki* [True Chronicle of Lord Yūtokuin],⁴ along with some actual swords, and for the next three hours I was treated to an uninterrupted lecture — uninterrupted except by my own volley of elementary questions. And yet, I was still unable to immediately set pen to paper, for I evidently had yet to fully grasp the subject of swords.

As time passed I began to make every attempt to look at swords. Whenever a sword exhibition was held at a museum or art gallery, I made it a point to attend. And yet, this was not a subject to be mastered overnight. There are so many aspects of swords which require specialized knowledge to appreciate: the blade, the tang, and the mounting,

² 日本刀銘鑑. Ishii Masakuni, ed. Tokyo: Yūzankaku Shuppan, 1975.

³ 日本刀重要美術品全集. Hiroi Yūichi, ed. Tokyo: Myūjiamu Shuppan, 1985–86.

⁴ 台徳院殿御実紀 and 有徳院殿御実紀. Included in the historical work compiled by the Tokugawa shogunate, the *Tokugawa Jikki* [True Chronicle of the Tokugawas] (comp. 1809–49). "Lord Taitokuin," in the first title, refers to Tokugawa Hidetada (1579–1632); "Lord Yūtokuin," in the second title, refers to Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684–1751).

for example. Also, the field involves a great deal of special terminology. The number of swordsmiths and other associated craftspeople is immense. Several years passed as I acquainted myself with this knowledge. During this time I often spoke of swords, which prompted sword researcher Saitō Masatoshi and his wife Sakae to offer me assistance by presenting me with further reference materials, including a fully explicated version of the Hon'ami family's *Tōken Meibutsu Chō* [Album of Famous Swords],⁵ and *Bushō to Sono Aitō* [Military Commanders and Their Favorite Swords], by Satō Kanzan.⁶ In this way, the original proposal for the present article, "Swords of the Tea Masters," gradually began to take shape.



千利休 Now, any study of tea masters must begin by mentioning Sen Rikyū (1522–91). In spite of his origins as a member of the merchant class in Sakai, his status was equivalent to that of a samurai, enjoying as he did an annual stipend of three thousand *koku*⁷ from the regent Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–98), and he often accompanied Hideyoshi on his military expeditions to various regions during the latter's subjugation of Japan. Assuming, then, that Rikyū must naturally have had a sword, I attempted to locate some record of this. I was unable to discover any record of a long sword, but I learned that a *tantō*, or short sword, has been handed down through the Sen family. The blade is said to be a work by Awataguchi Yoshimitsu [Tōshirō],⁸ and, because it was formerly a hereditary possession of the Kobuya household in Kanazawa, it has the appellation "Kobuya Tōshirō."

短刀

栗田口吉光 藤四郎

こぶや藤四郎

柄

目貫

The mounting on this short sword (Fig. 2) was created to reflect Rikyū's taste, and has a beauty which shines with an understated magnificence to be expected from the sword of a tea master. The hilt (*tsuka*) is bound with rattan, and the hilt ornament (*menuki*), made of a gold-copper alloy known for its jet-black sheen, is finely engraved and de-

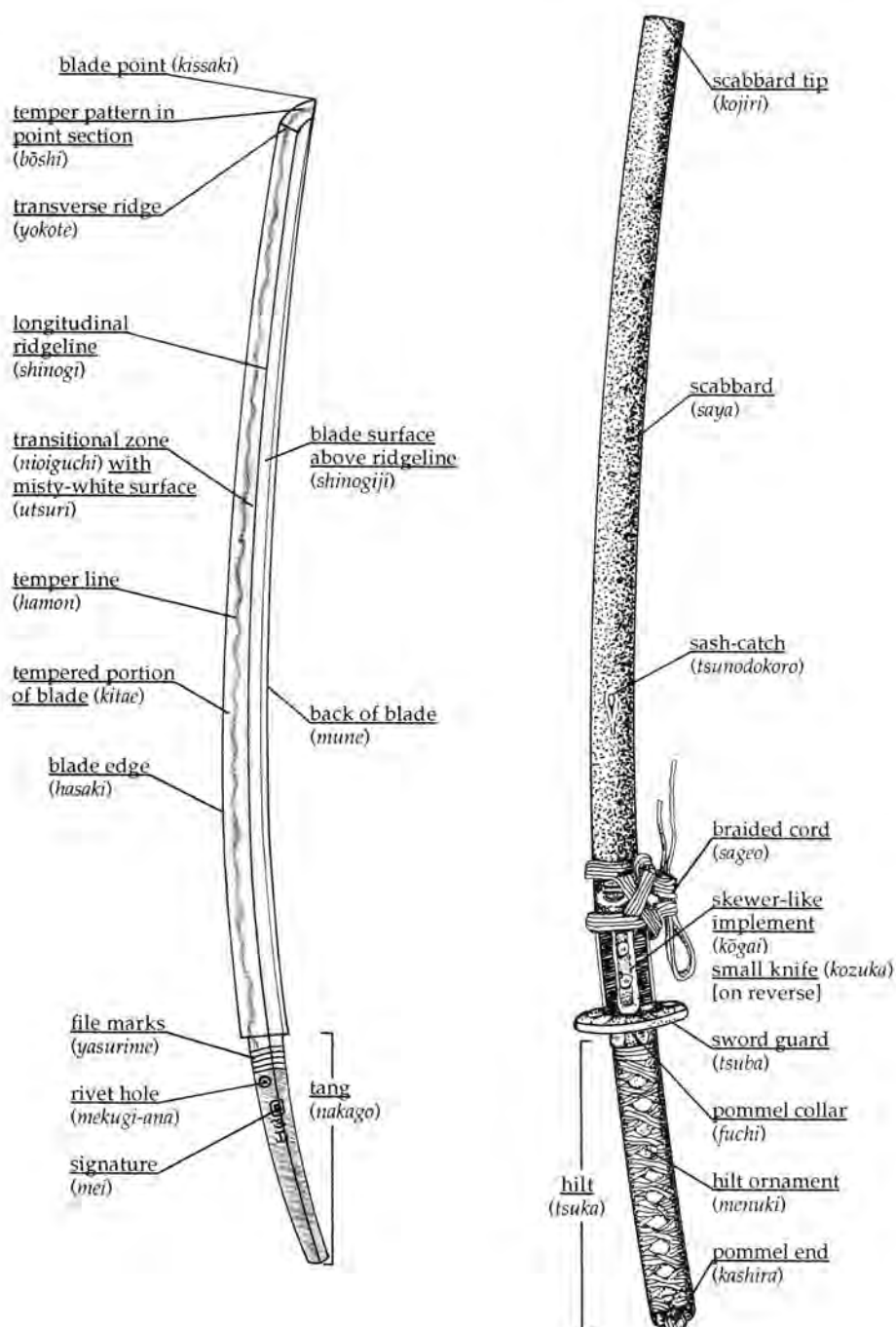
⁵ 刀剣名物帳.

⁶ 武將とその愛刀 by 佐藤寒山. Tokyo: Shinjinbutsuōraisha, 1971.

⁷ A measure of volume or capacity used generally for rice. In the Edo period, one *koku* of unpolished rice equalled about 180 liters; theoretically enough to feed one person for a year. The stipends of samurai as well as the wealth of daimyō were measured in *koku*. As a means of comparison, the distinguished warrior Gamō Ujisato (1556–1595), who rose to become one of Japan's five greatest daimyō, had a revenue of 919,320 *koku*.

⁸ Swordsmith active in Yamashiro (now part of Kyoto Prefecture) around the Kagen era (1303–06). He was a member of the Awataguchi (armorers' district of Kyoto) school of sword making, and is regarded as the finest swordsmith of the Old Sword (*Kotō*) period (ca. 900–1590).

Fig. 1
SWORD BLADE AND MOUNTING



鞘 (saya) is done in lacquer with a black
 鑑 (kojiri) has a round shape. The
 角所 'sash-catch' (tsunodokoro) is done in
 利休拵 This mounting, known as a "Rikyū
 mounting" (Rikyū koshirae) — exists to-
 day as a specific, recognized design. It
 is a mounting which speaks volumes
 about the aesthetic sense of Rikyū,
 whose insistence on adding his own
 touch to the objects he used extended
 even to his sword.

On the 28th day of the 2nd month, Tenshō 19 (1591), Rikyū used this short sword to commit *seppuku*, ritual suicide by self-disembowelment.

古田織部 The sword of Furuta Oribe (1544–
 1615) — a foremost disciple of Rikyū's
 who was praised by Rikyū with the
 words, "After I am gone, Oribe will
 国広 preside over the world of tea," is said
 to be the work of Kunihiro, a sword-
 smith who resided in the Horikawa
 district of Kyoto. This sword has sur-
 vived down to the present day, and is
 in the possession of an anonymous owner.

茎 The inscription on the tang (*nakago*), which explained that Oribe
 had the sword ordermade, has been completely ground off. However,
 traces of this inscription were detectable, and it has been discerned
 with the use of x-rays. The reason it was ground off can be conjectured.
 It was no doubt the deed of an Edo-period person who hoped in this
 way to avoid the same violent fate as had been met by Oribe himself,
 whose entire family was ordered to commit *seppuku* after they led a
 rebellion against the Tokugawa clan. Furuta Oribe's reputation was
 extremely debased during the era when Japan was ruled by the Toku-
 gawas; so much so that essays and tales that vilify Oribe remain to this
 day, and there were even those who would remove the man's name
 from the list of Rikyū's seven disciples. The sword of such an untoward
 individual was unfit to actually be carried as a sword, and could find
 no market. It was undoubtedly for this reason that the inscription was
 erased. This is one example of a sword being a corroboration of history.



利休拵

Fig. 2

A sword which suffered the same fate as Furuta Oribe's is one that was owned by Akechi Mitsuhide (?–1582). Mitsuhide gained notoriety as the traitorous vassal who attacked and killed his master, Oda Nobunaga (1534–82), at Honnōji temple. In recent times, research into the personalities of Nobunaga and Mitsuhide has been conducted from a wide variety of perspectives, and I have heard that there is now a theory sympathetic to Mitsuhide that lends some validity to those sentiments which led him to betray his master. However, let us consider the fate of Mitsuhide's sword in light of the fact that in the Edo period, which was thoroughly pervaded by Confucian beliefs, those who betrayed their masters were viewed with utmost contempt.

Mitsuhide's favorite sword was a Bizen Osafune Chikakage.⁹ It is dated "Ryakuō 3" (1340), which would indicate that it is a work of the first generation Chikakage. It is a sound blade measuring 2.36 *shaku* (71.5 cm), and is of the shape called *shinogi-zukuri*, which is characterized by a longitudinal ridge line between the edge and the back, and a transverse ridge at the blade point (*kissaki*). The back of the blade is hut-shaped (*iorimune*), the ridge is near the mid-line, the tempered section of the blade has a fine wood-grain pattern (*koitame*), there is an uneven misty whitish line running parallel to the temper line (*midare utsuri*), and the temper pattern in the point section (*bōshi*) curves backward following the shape of the edge. However, an Edo-period owner ground away the gold-inlay inscription that was engraved in the tang: "Bizen Osafune — Akechi Hinata-no-kami shoji" [forged at Bizen Osafune — owned by Akechi, Lord of Hinata]. The reason for its obliteration was the same as the one regarding Oribe's sword. The fact that the inscription is now missing is regrettable in that it represents a loss of historical reference material. In spite of this, however, the sword is such an outstanding work of art that it has been designated by the government as an Important Art Object.

Having murdered Nobunaga, Mitsuhide successfully attacked Azuchi Castle in Ōmi, and after putting his cousin Akechi Samanosuke Hidetoshi (d. 1582) in charge of protecting the castle, he himself proceeded to Yamazaki. There, he was attacked by Kinoshita Tōkichirō [i.e., Toyotomi Hideyoshi] and suffered defeat. At this point, Samanosuke, who had set out from Azuchi Castle to join forces with Mitsuhide, ran into the vanguard of Toyotomi Hideyoshi's army at Ōtsu, and, crossing Lake Biwa, he reached the shore at Karasaki and marched into the castle of Sakamoto. This castle was almost immediately surrounded by Hideyoshi's forces, but at this time Samanosuke

明智光秀
織田信長

備前長船近景

鑄造

切先
庵棟
小板目
乱れ映り
帽子

明智左馬助秀俊

⁹ Osafune is a village in Bizen (present-day Okayama Prefecture), known for its long history as a swordmaking center. The Chikakage was one of the leading lines of Osafune swordsmiths.

took the famous items that his cousin Mitsuhide had pillaged from Azuchi Castle, including the swords "Fudō Kuniyuki," "Niji Kunitoshi," and "Yakken Tōshirō," in addition to such tea utensils as the "Tarushiba-no-katatsuki" tea caddy and the "Otogoze" kettle, all of which were great treasures, and, wrapping them in a ceremonial robe, lowered them down to his enemies from the castle keep, whereupon he stabbed to death the women and infants in his protection, set fire to the castle, and committed suicide. This end came to be extolled by later generations as a concrete example of the respect with which samurai warriors regarded such treasures and of the composure they possessed at the time of death.

明智拵 The sword of this Akechi Samanosuke was one which bore the "Akechi mounting" (*Akechi koshirae*) favored by his master, Mitsuhide. The scabbard was thickly coated with untreated lacquer, and the hilt was bound with light green cord in a flat diamond pattern. The hilt ornaments were made of flat brass cut into diamond shapes, the pommel collar (*fuchi*) was of unadorned copper, and the pommel end (*kashira*) was of horn coated with black lacquer — certainly a rough mounting, but the lack of ornateness contained a refined quality that attested to the depth of Akechi Mitsuhide's cultivation. It is also said that this very cultivation came between Mitsuhide and Nobunaga, souring their relations.

Since it would be one-sided to discuss an Akechi sword without mentioning one of his master's, Oda Nobunaga, I would like to give some attention to the latter's sword, but first I must say that all the great rulers from Nobunaga to Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) had so many swords in their possession that it is virtually impossible to determine which of these were the ones they used for general wear. This is because, in their positions as rulers, these men were presented with great numbers of illustrious swords, and it would be fair to say that they were in fact surrounded by swords of renown.

左文字 However, I would like to write about one 'Samonji'¹⁰ sword that Oda Nobunaga treasured and had engraved with his own name, and which passed on to the national rulers Toyotomi Hideyori (1593–1615; son of Hideyoshi) and Tokugawa Ieyasu. Imagawa Yoshimoto (1519–60) wore this 'Samonji' sword during what was to become the most decisive battle in Nobunaga's quest for the domination of Japan, the Battle of Okehazama (1560). It was originally a favorite sword of Miyoshi Sōsan's (1507–49), which Miyoshi gave to Takeda Nobutora (1483–1573), who subsequently presented it to Imagawa Yoshimoto, so it was a famous sword known variously as the "Miyoshi Samonji" and

¹⁰ Samonji, meaning "left character," refers to a line of swordsmiths in Chikuzen (present-day Fukuoka Prefecture) who inscribed their blades with the character 左 (*sa*; "left"). The Samonji line was active between the late Kamakura to early Muromachi periods.



Fig. 3

the "Yoshimoto Samonji." Nobunaga was quite overjoyed to gain possession of this sword, and to commemorate his victory, he had the tang engraved and inlaid with gold with the inscription, "Eiroku 3 [1560], 19th day of the 5th month; sword carried by Yoshimoto when he was defeated and captured," and, on the back, "Oda Nobunaga, Lord of Owari," in this way attempting to convey his success to later generations. (Fig. 3)

Furthermore, Nobunaga prized the swords made by Osafune Mitsutada,¹¹ and, according to the *Jōzan Kidan* [Stories Recorded by Jōzan],¹² Nobunaga owned thirty-two works by the master swordsmith. And yet, the sword which Nobunaga was proudest to wear daily was the short sword, "Fudō Yukimitsu." It is recounted that when he was drunk and in high spirits, Nobunaga would slap his knee and sing, "I have the 'Fudō

Yukimitsu,' 'Tsukumogami,' and, among people, Gorōsa!" By "Tsukumogami," he was referring to the Chinese *bunrin* (apple-shaped) tea caddy passed down by Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and Yoshimasa, while "Gorōsa" referred to Nobunaga's prized retainer, Niwa Nagahide.

In sharp contrast to the noble tale concerning Akechi Samanosuke and the fall of Azuchi Castle, the tale is told of an end steeped in blind obsession met by the general Matsunaga Danjō (a.k.a Hisahide; 1510–77), who is remembered in connection with Nobunaga. Initially submitting to Nobunaga, Danjō later turned against him and entrenched himself in Shigisan Castle, where, surrounded by Nobunaga's forces and the castle about to fall, he packed gunpowder into his prized "Hiragumo" kettle, held his most highly prized sword (provenance unknown) to his breast, and ignited the gunpowder, killing himself in the blast. This appears to have been motivated by a spiteful refusal to let the treasures he cherished fall into the hands of his enemies.

¹¹ Mitsutada was a leading swordsmith of Osafune (see note 10), and was active around the year 1238.

¹² A twenty-five volume collection of anecdotes about famous warriors, written in 1739 by the Confucian scholar, Yuasa Jōzan (1708–81).

義元左文字

長船光忠

常山記談

不動行光

松永弾正 久秀

寺沢廣高

When the lord of Shima Province, Terazawa (Hiroataka; 1564–1633), a childhood friend of Furuta Oribe's who had been assigned to command Karatsu Castle, was on active duty during the Bunroku (1592) and Keichō (1596) battles, he was among the feudal lords who took part in the building of Hizen Nagoya Castle near Karatsu. There is said to be evidence that when Regent Hideyoshi occupied this castle as his headquarters for the dispatch of an expeditionary force to Korea, Terazawa requested Oribe, who had arrived with backup troops, to instruct him in the designing of tea utensils to be fired in the kilns of the Karatsu territory.

寺沢貞宗

The sword owned by Terazawa has survived to the present day, and is known as the "Terazawa Sadamune."¹³ (Fig. 4) In the *Tōken Meibutsu Chō*, this sword is mentioned in an entry pertaining to a different, unnamed sword, as follows: "Unnamed, 9.7 *sun* [29.4 cm] in length, presented to Lord Hidetada. As a memento, given to the Chief Councillor of Kii, to be worn along with the Terazawa Sadamune."

細川忠興 三斎

Like Furuta Oribe, Hosokawa Tadaoki (Sansai; 1563–1645) was a leading disciple of Rikyū's, and, along with his father, Yūsai, he was famous for possessing many illustrious swords. Sansai was also an expert connoisseur; so much so, in fact, that legends state: "People come from all directions asking for his appraisal; the real and the imitation do not escape detection."

加賀国信長

In Sansai's case, records clearly show that the swords which he collected and those which he used were two separate matters. Sansai's favorite sword was the "Kaga-no-kuni Nobunaga."¹⁴ This sword is 2.35 *shaku* (71.2 cm) long, has a ridge line between its tempered section and its hut-shaped back, with a transverse ridge at the point of the blade.

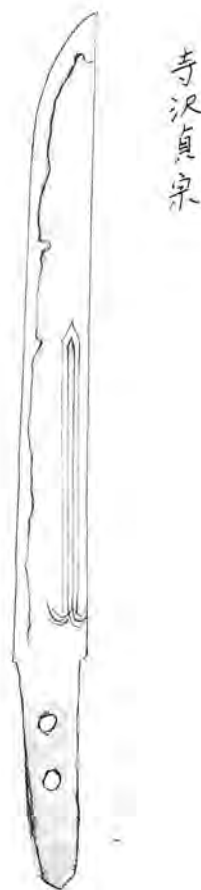


Fig. 4

¹³ Sadamune was a swordsmith of Sagami (present-day Kanagawa Prefecture), and was active around the Kemmu era (1334–36).—Author

¹⁴ This name refers to the swordsmith named Nobunaga, of Kaga Province (present-day Ishikawa Prefecture), who was active around the Eishō era (1504–21).—Author

Thus, it is of the type called *shinogi-zukuri*. The blade is broad with a sharply angled point, the tempered portion (*kitae*) has a wood-grain pattern (*itame*) that flows with a hint of texture, and the pattern of the temper line (*hamon*) is slightly wavy (*komidare*), and has zigzags (*gunome*) going back and forth. The transitional zone where the misty-white, fine martensite grain on the tempered area of the blade begins (*nioiguchi*) seems sunken into the body of the blade, and the formation of fine mirror-like particles along the temper line (*konie*) has the faint appearance of a strip of scattered sand (*sunagashi*). In its day, this was a utilitarian sword which was not an outstanding work, but it was at Sansai's side when he was exerting himself as a military commander on the battlefield and displaying feats of arms, and it witnessed this side of the man's life.

鍛
板目
刃文 小乱れ
互の目
匂口
小沸
砂流し

This sword has what is popularly known as a "Nobunaga mounting" (*Nobunaga koshirae*), and while it boasts a military style that was to Sansai's liking, the workmanship on the blade tempering is unostentatious and reveals a refined aesthetic taste. The scabbard is bound with shark skin which has been polished and covered with black lacquer. Where the lacquer is thin, it has a reddish tinge. The effect is serene and tasteful. The pommel collar is cloaked in lacquered leather, the pommel end has a zigzag "mountain road" design, and the round sword guard (*tsuba*) is very thinly wrought iron decorated on the right and left with openwork silhouettes of sea cucumbers. The rim of the sword guard is inlaid with silver in a zigzagging pattern. This is a superb piece in the Old Shōami style.¹⁵ The *kōgai*, or skewer-like implement held in a slot on the scabbard, is decorated with two pair of octopi carved in high relief on a raised dot ground of gold-copper alloy, and the hilt ornaments are also of gold-copper alloy and are engraved with octopus designs. These are said to be the work of Gotō Yūjō.¹⁶ Sansai, however, was unable to find a suitable design for the *kozuka*, or small knife to be held in a slot on the scabbard opposite the *kōgai*, and after many attempts to come up with one, he consulted Rikyū, who suggested that this sword mounting would be well complemented by a piece of plain, polished silver. It is said that Sansai immediately accepted this idea and had such a fitting made to use with this sword. From that time forward, this mounting was known within the Hosokawa clan as "the clan mounting," and it became popular throughout the fief. Still, not just anyone in the fief was permitted to incorporate this octopus motif in their sword mountings.

信長拵

鐔
古正阿弥 筭
後藤祐乘
小柄

¹⁵ Shōami refers to a style of sword-guard work which dates from the end of the Muromachi period. Examples which have no inscription and date to its early history are classified as Old Shōami (*Ko-Shōami*).

¹⁶ Gotō Yūjō (1440–1512) was a smith specializing in sword fittings. He served under Ashikaga Yoshimasa, and was founder of the highly reputed Gotō line.

In addition to this, tradition also states that Sansai took the famous "Kasen Kanesada" as his sword. (Fig. 5) Carved on the tang of this sword is the long inscription, "Work of Kanesada, resident of Minō Province." This is a short sword of less than two *shaku* (60.6 cm) in length, with a ridge line running its length, a hut-shaped back, and a sharply angled point. The blade's tempered portion has a whitish appearance, as though it is textured, and the temper line undulates just slightly and has zigzags going back and forth, with the mixed texture of the transitional zone between the tempered and untempered portions of the blade having a rather submerged feeling that gives the blade a lonely atmosphere.

The reason this sword was given the name "Kasen," or "Immortal Poets," some say, is that Tadatoshi (1586–1641), who inherited this sword from his father Sansai, beheaded thirty-six traitors with it. Another version has it that when Sansai was young, he used this sword to dispatch a gang of thirty-six villains in Kyoto. It is not known whether either of these stories is true, but, in both cases the allusion is to the Thirty-six Immortal Poets designated during the Heian period — a point which displays the literary sophistication typical of the Hosokawa clan. This style of mounting, called "Kasen mounting" (*Kasen koshirae*) has been handed down as a specific mounting style, and has a high reputation.

It is said that Sansai owned another sword, called "Kiyomizu Tōshirō." It is listed in the *Tōken Meibutsu Chō* with the note: "Kiyomizu Tōshirō, bears inscription, length: 7.5 *sun* [22.7 cm]." (Fig. 6) On the 2nd day of the 10th month, Kan'ei 2 (1626), when Lord Hosokawa Tadaoki (Sansai) went to pay his respects to Tokugawa Hidetada, the latter gave Tadaoki the "Kiyomizu Tōshirō." It is recounted that on this occasion Hidetada said, "When I was with you and the others conversing in the presence of Regent Toyotomi, you looked at this short sword and said that if you could wear it in your sash and host a tea gathering using

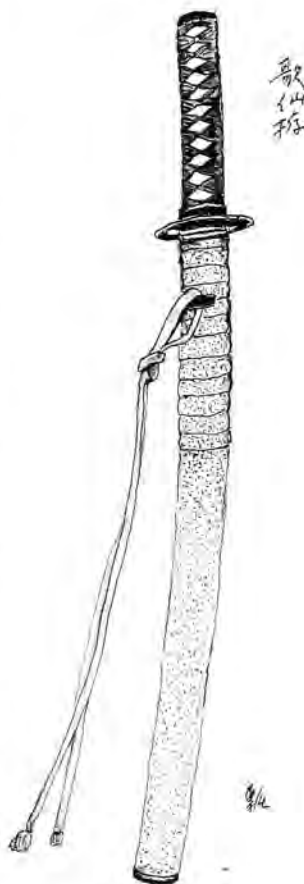


Fig. 5

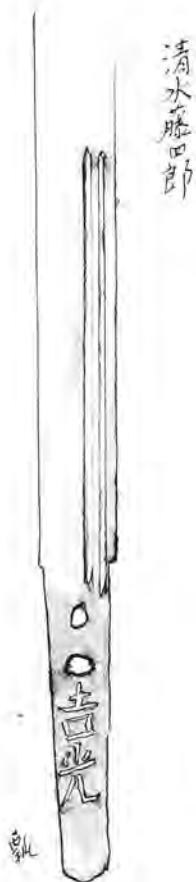


Fig. 6

Rikyū's *shirifukura* (wide-bottom) tea caddy, it would give you a lifetime's worth of enjoyment; those words still linger in my ears, and so I present you with this short sword." The *shirifukura* tea caddy had already been presented to Sansai by Hidetada on the 13th day of the 3rd month, Keichō 6 (1602), as a reward for Sansai's success in the Battle of Sekigahara.

Here, another tradition has been passed down. In Sansai's later years, a famine struck his fief in Higo (part of present-day Kumamoto Prefecture), and the people of the fief were suffering exceptionally, so Sansai opened up his storehouses, and, along with many tea utensil masterpieces, exchanged this sword for money, which he then used to buy rice and barley in Osaka to save his people. It is somewhat difficult to believe that Sansai would have sold off even his most beloved sword, but this story has come down to us as a legend about him.

There is another famous sword that was owned by another of Rikyū's disciples, Gamō Ujisato (1556–95). Ujisato was daimyō of Aizu (in present-day

Fukushima Prefecture), and so the sword is called the "Aizu Shintōgo." This sword was handed down through the Gamō clan, and from Ujisato's grandson Tadasato to his vassal, who then passed it on to Lord Maeda Toshitsune, who eventually offered it to Shōgun Tsunayoshi. [Shintōgo] Kunimitsu's inscription is on the tang.¹⁷ Ujisato also possessed another famous sword known as the "Aizu Masamune."¹⁸ This has been passed down and is now in the possession of the Imperial Household.

Among warrior teamen who are known to us, Matsuura Shigenobu (1549–1614) owned the "Matsuura Nobukuni," Kanamori Nagachika (1524–1607) was the owner of the "Kanamori Masamune," and Oda

蒲生氏郷

会津新藤五

国光
会津正宗

松浦鎮信
松浦信国 金森長近
金森正宗

¹⁷ Shintōgo Kunimitsu was a swordsmith of Sagami (present-day Kanagawa Prefecture), and was active between the Einin to the Genkō eras (1293–1324).—Author

¹⁸ Masamune was a swordsmith of Sagami, and was active between the Bun'ei to the Kōei eras (1264–1345).—Author

織田有楽 有楽来国光 Uraku (1547–1626) owned a famous sword known as the “Uraku Rai Kunimitsu.” (Fig. 7)

In the *Tōken Meibutsu Chō*, the following mention of this latter sword is recorded: “Uraku Rai Kunimitsu,¹⁹ carries inscription, length 9.15 *sun* [27.7 cm], property of Lord [Toyotomi] Hideyori. Received by Lord [Oda] Nobunaga’s younger brother Gengorō Taira Nagamasu, whose Buddhist name was Uraku; sought after and purchased by [Maeda] Toshitsune through [Hon’ami] Kōhō; presented by Toshitsune to the lord of Awaji; passing through many hands, it came into the possession of the Kashū [i.e., Kaga] clan.” This sword is so illustrious that it has now been designated as a National Treasure. Oda Uraku was Nobunaga’s younger brother, and later he served Hideyoshi and Ieyasu as a tea master, but what most readily comes to mind for us is the tearoom

Joan, designed by Uraku, and his famous Ido teabowl. Seen in the light of Uraku’s orderly tastes, this sword, the “Uraku Rai Kunimitsu,” impresses one as being highly fitting of him.

This is quite a leap forward in time, but I would like to touch upon the sword of the feudal lord of Matsue in Unshū (part of present-day Shimane Prefecture), Lord Matsudaira Fumai (1751–1818). Last year when I visited the Tabé Museum of Art in Matsue to give a lecture, I asked Mr. Iwaki Jisuke, the museum’s director of art studies and a researcher on Fumai, to look into the swords worn by Fumai. Some days later I received a reply from him, reporting his discovery of a single sword in the museum within Matsue Castle. (Fig. 8) According to him, in the explanation offered by the museum it is written:

Short sword, no inscription, 6.1 *sun* [18.5 cm] in length; no backward curve; beautiful blade with straight grain pattern; mounting

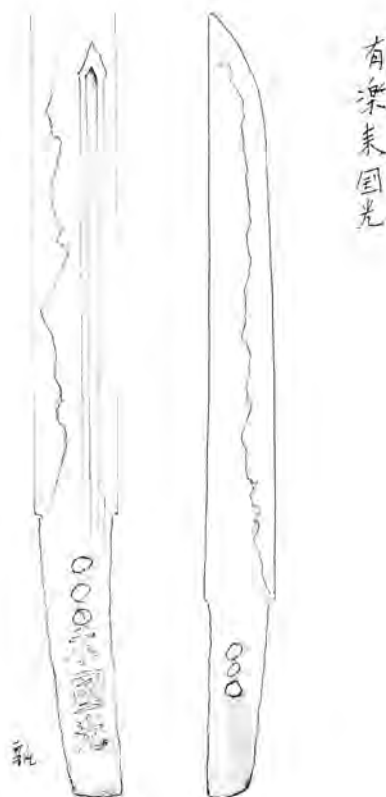


Fig. 7

¹⁹ Rai Kunimitsu was a swordsmith of Yamashiro (present-day Kyoto Prefecture), and was active between the Shōwa to the Gen’ō eras (1312–21).—Author



Fig. 8

consists of a black lacquered sheath with the name *Setsuzan* ("Snowy Mountain") in gold lacquer in high relief, below which is written, "When the World-Honored-One [Buddha] saw the morning star, he entered upon the path of awakening. To whose power this owes, it is unclear." This is a reference to a Zen training kōan based on the story about the Buddha when he was still a prince. Wanting to renounce the world in spite of the opposition of his father, the king, the young prince finally snuck out of the palace when he was nineteen and climbed up Mount Dandaloka, where he practiced austerities under the guidance of the two sages Alara and Kalama. Eventually, at the age of thirty, on the 8th night of the 12th month, he saw the morning star appear, and at that moment was enlightened and became a Buddha. That a sword cherished by Fumai bears this inscription is extremely appropriate, as Lord Fumai felt a deep devotion for the way of Zen since his youth.

Regressing for a moment, I would now like to mention a few details that were left out concerning the Hosokawa clan. Tadaoki's (Sansai's) father, Hosokawa Fujitaka, better known as Yūsai, owned a famous sword inscribed "*Konote-kashiwa*" Kanenaga.²⁰ This sword was destroyed in the great Kantō earthquake of 1923, but record of it is found in the *Kemwa Roku* [A Record of Sword Discussions] by Imamura Chōga,²¹ and there are also illustrations of the blade. (Fig. 9) The origin of the inscription "*Konote-kashiwa*" (lit., Child's-hand Oak; an Oriental arbortivae) is found in a poem contained in the sixteenth volume of the ancient poetry anthology, the *Man'yō Shū*. On both sides of the sword blade, there is a large wavy pattern having translucent blotches, and thus the temper line differs

細川藤孝
幽齋 児手柏包永
劍話録
今村長賀

kawa clan. Tadaoki's (Sansai's) father, Hosokawa Fujitaka, better known as Yūsai, owned a famous sword inscribed "*Konote-kashiwa*" Kanenaga.²⁰ This sword was destroyed in the great Kantō earthquake of 1923, but record of it is found in the *Kemwa Roku* [A Record of Sword Discussions] by Imamura Chōga,²¹ and there are also illustrations of the blade. (Fig. 9) The origin of the inscription "*Konote-kashiwa*" (lit., Child's-hand Oak; an Oriental arbortivae) is found in a poem contained in the sixteenth volume of the ancient poetry anthology, the *Man'yō Shū*. On both sides of the sword blade, there is a large wavy pattern having translucent blotches, and thus the temper line differs

²⁰ Kanenaga was a swordsmith of Yamato Province (present-day Nara Prefecture), and was active around the Shōō era (1288–93).—Author

²¹ Tokyo: 1880; two vols.

on the two sides. This was metaphorically likened to the child's-hand oak in the poem. One could say that, since Yūsai is highly noted for having received transmission of the *Kokin Denju*, the 'secret teachings' on the *Kokin Shū* poetry anthology, it is appropriate for his sword to have a name taken from an ancient poem.

Although the following anecdote regarding Yūsai and the *Kokin Denju* is familiar to many people, allow me to mention the incident which occurred in Keichō 5 [1600] at Maizuru Castle. Tadaoki (Sansai), lord of the castle, had taken his army out to do battle at Sekigahara, and his

father, Yūsai, was left to take care of the castle. Finding the castle under siege, surrounded by enemy troops led by general Onogi Shigekatsu, Yūsai at that point faced the potential crisis of losing the castle and, along with it, the secret teachings which he had mastered. Prepared for the worst, he offered the *Kokin Denju* to the God of Poetry, and the power of this god was great, for the emperor's brother, Prince Tomohito, who had received instruction in poetry from Yūsai, had a divine vision of this, and word of it soon reached Emperor Goyōzei. The emperor, taking pity on Yūsai because of the precious knowledge he possessed, dispatched Karasumaru Mitsuhiro to order a peaceful reconciliation. Thus, the enemy army was hard put to take action, and pulled back to Fujioka. Rescued in this way, Yūsai proceeded to lecture Mitsuhiro on the secret transmission of the *Kokin Shū*, and it is said that Yūsai's calm and composure at the time was as always. Yūsai wrote a poem, "In this realm, unchanged both past and present, seeds of the heart have borne these leaves of words," to go with the bamboo basket containing the *Kokin Denju*, and he presented these, along with a summary of the *Tale of Genji*, to Prince Tomohito. The Imperial Court was loathe to see Yūsai lose his life, and, through the envoy, ordered the complete removal of the siege against him, and so the story goes that Yūsai was able to march out of Maizuru Castle and arrive safely at Kameyama Castle in Tamba. This anecdote illustrates the refined sophistication of the warrior class.

As I mentioned earlier, Hosokawa Yūsai and his son Sansai possessed many swords, and they were expert sword connoisseurs. A con-

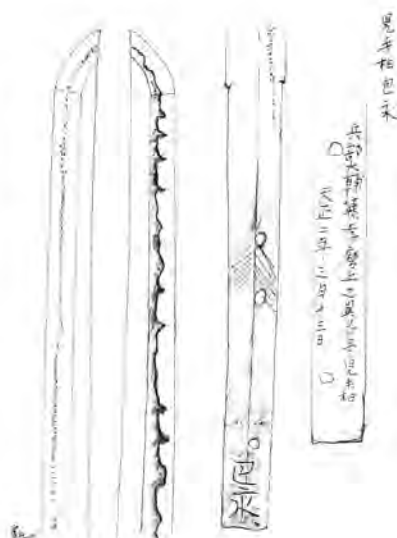


Fig. 9

sultation of the *Tōken Meibutsu Chō* handed down by the Hon'ami clan also reveals that several swords which Yūsai owned were passed to hands other than Sansai's. This is perhaps an indication that Yūsai's expertise in the appraisal of swords was so highly regarded that there were many military leaders desiring to acquire pieces owned by him.

The Hon'ami family *Tōken Meibutsu Chō* records frequent instances of Hon'ami Kōtoku (1554–1620) and Kōho (1603–84) having acted as intermediaries in the transfer of swords. Since the Muromachi period, the Hon'ami clan flourished as sword appraisers for the shōgunate, served the Imperial Household, and worked as sword polishers for Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi. In the Tokugawa era, twelve different branches of the family each received a stipend from the Tokugawa shōgunate, and they enjoyed great prestige as sword experts, even into the modern age. Their sword polishing was known as "clan polishing" (*oie-togi*), which garnered greater respect than "town polishing" (*machi-togi*). When a sword was to be appraised, the various branches of the family would choose a day and meet together in one place, and, after having a joint consultation, they would issue an appraisal certificate. This certificate of authentication was called *origami*.

本阿弥光徳 光甫

折紙

本阿弥光悦

Hon'ami Kōetsu's (1558–1637) name appears only infrequently in books on swords, and I have no idea why this is the case. His grandson Kōho, who also had the name Kūchūsai, was one of the foremost sword appraisers in the history of the Hon'ami clan, and the latter's book, *Kūchūsai Hisho* [Kūchūsai's Confidential Writings], is regarded as one of the finest instruction manuals on swords even to this day.

空中斎秘書

Hon'ami Kōho is known to us as a remarkable man whose works, such as his Raku ware, teascoops, and Kūchū Shigaraki water containers, display artistic genius, but the fact that he enjoyed a great reputation in his main occupation as a sword appraiser lends weight to the adage that an expert in one field is usually an expert in many, and deepens our admiration for this man.

Tawaraya Sōtatsu (?–1643?) was among the men who associated with Kōetsu and Kōho, and records reveal that he also possessed a famous sword. The *Tōken Meibutsu Chō* notes: "Tawaraya Ryōkai, length 8.9 *sun* [26.9 cm], owned by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, donated to Lord Tai-tokuin [Tokugawa Hidetada], bestowed upon the lord of Kashū Hida, Maeda Toshitsune."

俵屋宗達

俵屋了戒

I have also heard that there are records which indicate that the merchants of Sakai (in Osaka Prefecture) possessed many fine swords. This would only have been natural in an era when the merchants of Sakai, embracing a resolution and attitude toward life on a par with the warrior class, even came to the brink of war with Nobunaga at one point. It is also natural that a city with the economic might of Sakai would have been able to gather many famous swords together.

Afterword

This treatise has linked together a number of disparate sources, and I fear that it is a rather superficial treatment of the subject. Of the swords taken up, only Hosokawa Sansai's "Immortal Poets" and "Nobunaga," and two or three others fit the title "Swords of the Tea Masters," and I regret that I am unable to say which swords were worn and which ones were kept privately as treasures by their owners. My knowledge of swords is minimal at best, and my insight no keener than an unsharpened blade. It is perhaps presumptuous of me to write this essay when I am unqualified to judge either the beauty or the value of swords, and in fact as I researched and wrote this piece I was often so overcome by the immensity of the task that I found it difficult to make headway. Still, I considered that introducing this topic would encourage other more qualified people to investigate it further, and complete more definitive studies of the swords of the tea masters, and so I have decided to release this essay, with all its flaws, to this end. The world of swords has a long history, and I have heard that the swordsmiths and mounters and metal workers alone number in the thousands. This project has taught me that a profound knowledge of related fields is required, since swords contain the essence of Japan's technical craftsmanship, and even this realization has made the effort well worthwhile. I therefore thank all those who assisted me so generously, and this gratitude is foremost in my mind as I bring this essay to a close.



Book Reviews

Taizansō and the One-Mat Room. By Henry D. Smith II. Edited by the ICU Hachiro Yuasa Memorial Museum. Tokyo: International Christian University, 1993. 260 pp. in Japanese and English, including documentary materials, endnotes, and bibliography. US\$30.00, including postage & handling.

This work recounts the extraordinary history of a small group of buildings, collectively known today as 'Taizansō,' centered on a unique single-mat room which now occupies part of the International Christian University campus 20 kilometers west of central Tokyo. The One-Mat Room of the title is a tiny lean-to structure originally built in 1886 as a private study attached to the Kanda home of the late-Edo-period explorer, connoisseur, and aesthete, Matsuura Takeshiro (1818-88). Besides its diminutive scale, the One-Mat Room derives its distinctiveness from the fact that it was constructed entirely from scraps of material purloined by Matsuura's friends from famous sites all over Japan. As such, the author explains, the room served as both a reservoir of Matsuura's personal memories and a microcosm of Japanese history in general.

Ironically, the builder of this miniature historical capsule made his reputation as a pioneer in the recording of Japan's largest and newest territory, 'Yezo,' having provided the northern island with its modern name of Hokkaido. It was only late in life, in a conscious change of direction at the age of sixty, that Matsuura turned his attention to traveling the historic sites of western Japan in search of his country's cultural heritage, an activity which eventually led to the building of the One-Mat Room.

In explaining Matsuura's motives for building the room, Henry Smith refers to the *Mokuhen kanjin*, the original text written to accompany its completion on the last day of 1886, which details the donors and origins of all ninety-eight of the historic 'wood scraps' from which the room was constructed. He argues, convincingly, that Matsuura, in soliciting these 'donations' from friends, was consciously mimicking the practice of *kanjin* (soliciting contributions for pious purposes), by which financial and other types of donation are traditionally collected for the construction or repair of Buddhist temples, and that the One-Mat Room was therefore conceived by Matsuura primarily as a sacred space. The religious origins of the vast majority of its components, including Izumo and Ise shrines and many of the larger temples, certainly serve to reinforce this view. In the postscript to his account of the One-Mat Room, Matsuura explained that from his youth he had been an inveterate traveler

and collector, never able to settle in one place for any length of time. In bringing together this array of historic relics to create a final resting place at the end of his wandering, Matsuura was summing up a life which had been devoted equally to the furtherance of traditional Japanese culture and numerous close friendships. And here Henry Smith makes one of his most telling observations, highlighting Matsuura's obvious delight in material objects and human relationships while recognizing the necessity of finally relinquishing such worldly attachments, a tension which the author sees as similarly inherent in the Tea tradition.

In fact, had Matsuura's wishes been followed after his death, the materials collected in the form of the One-Mat Room would have served as fuel for his cremation. Fortunately for posterity, however, this particular instruction was not carried out. But in making the request Matsuura was linking himself to both the ancient Shinto rite of burning a dwelling on the death of the head of the household and the Zen-inspired concept of the ephemeral 'grass hut' underlying the tearoom. Indeed, the latter connection is confirmed by Matsuura's choice of the term 'Kusanoya,' or "Grass Hut," as the informal name for his One-Mat Room.

While Matsuura's study-room never actually served as a tearoom itself, the parallels are unmistakable, most notably in the tea traditions of using 'as found' building materials and historically significant utensils, balanced by an ultimate negation of such worldly attachments. Indeed, as Henry Smith points out, Matsuura made an oblique reference to Rikyū's famous tearoom in his explanation of his own One-Mat Room, and it was evidently part of his intention to carry the great tea master's quest for simplification to its logical conclusion.

Besides the extraordinary life of its builder and the complex motives underlying its design, the history of the One-Mat Room provides a revealing record of early-modern Japan, having been owned at various points by a Tokugawa aristocrat, an executive of a financial combine, an aircraft manufacturer and leading politician of the Shōwa era, and finally a Christian educational institution. The room was first moved in 1908 to the Azabu home of the patrician Tokugawa Yorimichi, who, after moving it once more to Yoyogi-Uehara in 1924, attached a six-mat tearoom to the structure. Following Yorimichi's death, the two rooms were moved together in 1936 to their present location in Mitaka, where they formed part of a new private estate, 'Taizansō,' designed by the Urasenke tea master Kameyama Sōgetsu (1878–1953) for the Nissan executive Yamada Keisuke.

Among the guests at the series of tea gatherings held to celebrate the formal opening of this estate in May 1939, there were several leading members of Japan's ruling elite of the time, including the then head of Urasenke, Sen Sōshitsu XIV, Tantansai. Appropriately enough, then, it was Tantansai's son and successor, Hōunsai, who four decades later hosted a gathering in the same tearoom to mark the successful restoration of the Taizansō structures by the International Christian University, who inherited the buildings when they purchased the land containing the Taizansō estate in 1950.

In turning his considerable talents to the telling of this extraordinary tale, Henry Smith has in many ways provided a classic illustration of Matsuura Takeshiro's twin passions: exploration for its own sake, and tireless gathering of scattered material. Besides forming a fittingly poetic tribute to the builder of the One-Mat Room, these characteristics are of course also essential hallmarks of a genuine scholar.

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Zenkōji and its Icon: A Study in Medieval Japanese Religious Art. By Donald F. McCallum. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994. xviii + 268 pp. with 51 b & w illustrations. US\$39.50, £33.50, clothbound.

The study of Japanese sculpture has a long and distinguished history in the United States. Since the posthumous publication in 1959 of Langdon Warner's seminal *Japanese Sculpture of the Tōmyō Period*, there has been a steady stream of scholarly articles and exhibitions devoted to various aspects of Japan's rich sculptural tradition.¹ Most of these have focused on canonical works — those images deemed by art historians to have established or to be representative of the sculptural standards of a particular period or icon type. Such studies might include John Rosenfield's study of the "portrait" of Yuima at Hokkeji, Lucie Weinstein's analysis of the Yumedono Kannon, and Samuel Morse's examination of the Amida in Byōdōin.² Although the methodology and intellectual thrust of each of these articles differs, all share the unspoken assumption that works in temples and shrines in the Kyoto and Nara regions best illuminate dominant trends in Japanese sculptural history. In scholarly publications spanning more than two decades, Donald McCallum has challenged this approach by directing his attention to the stylistic analysis of less familiar regional works, most notably those in Nagano Prefecture.³ In many respects, the present volume may be seen as the culmination of this scholarly inquiry.

¹ This publication was based on a manuscript written between 1915 and 1940 and brought to completion by James Plumer. Originally published in two volumes, it was reissued in a one-volume edition by Harvard University Press in 1964.

² John Rosenfield, "Studies in Japanese Portraiture: The Statue of Vimalakirti at Hokkeji," *Art Orientalis* 6 (1966): 213–22. Lucie Weinstein, "The Yumedono Kannon: Problems in Seventh Century Sculpture," *Archives of Asian Art*, 42 (1989): 25–48. Samuel Morse, "Jōchō's Statue of Amida at the Byōdō-in and Cultural Legitimization in late Heian Japan," *Res* 23 (Spring 1993): 96–113.

³ See, for instance, Donald F. McCallum, "Heian Sculpture at the Shinano Art Gallery," *Oriental Art* N.S. 24.4, (1978): 445–453 and "Buddhist Sculpture of the Seisuiji, Matsushiro," *Oriental Art* N.S. 25.4 (1979–80): 462–470.

McCallum's use of the Zenkōji icon to draw attention to the importance of provincial imagery involves a leap of faith. Not only are the statues representing Amida and two Bodhisattvas secret images (*hibutsu*), unseen by priest and devotee alike, but they are so deeply shrouded in mystery that their physical features are unknown. Thus, the characteristics of the Zenkōji icon type must be identified on the basis of surviving copies. These "replicas," of which over a hundred survive, hardly constitute a homogeneous group in media, style, or size, but they do form a recognizable corpus on the basis of iconography: the two Bodhisattvas flanking the standing Amida invariably hold their hands together in front of the chest, and are either grasping jewels or have their palms joined.

McCallum's concern, however, is not simply to identify an influential provincial icon type and trace its geneology and geographic distribution. In drawing attention to the Zenkōji icon, he seeks rather to address broader questions about Japanese patterns of belief and practice, particularly as they relate to devotional imagery. How and why did the Zenkōji icon become the object of such reverence? Why was it so widely copied and disseminated? How did it function?

The history of Zenkōji and its icon as delineated by McCallum is extremely complex, but its general outlines may be summarized as follows. Zenkōji is a temple located in a mountainous area of Nagano Prefecture, formerly known as Shinano Province. Though remote from major urban centers, the area's scenic beauty and the fame of its icon have attracted pilgrims since ancient times. References to Shinano appear already in the *Koji Ki* and *Nihon Shoki*, and it is possible that the predecessor of Zenkōji was in existence already by the Nara period. This temple may have housed the original but now lost gilt-bronze triad representing the Buddha Amida and two attendants that became the focal point of worship at Zenkōji. This icon, it was held, was not a likeness or symbol of the deity but was the Living Buddha.

The crystallization of the Zenkōji cult with devotion to Amida at its center occurred in the late Heian and early Kamakura periods. Religious and socio-political conditions, most notably the growth of Pure Land Buddhism and rise of warrior society, fostering the diffusion of spiritual and political power from metropolitan centers to the provinces, were the catalysts for this development. Itinerant holy men (*hijiri*), especially affiliates of the Ji sect, were instrumental in promoting devotion to Amida in the Shinano region. Patronage by Minamoto Yoritomo and the Hōjō clan — motivated in large part by the shogunate's desire to reinforce its control over the Kantō — also played a role in the spread of the cult. During the Kamakura period, many new Zenkōji temples, each housing a replica of the "original" triad, were constructed throughout the country, but especially in the Kantō region. The pattern of distribution of these temples is not altogether clear, but the cult seems to have spread primarily along the major road systems.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the movement of the Zenkōji icon itself promoted still further diffusion. In 1555, after Zenkōji was destroyed during the battles for control of Shinano, the victor, Takeda Shingen,

appropriated the Amida triad and installed it in the Zenkōji in his headquarters in Kōfu, Kai Province. In 1597, Hideyoshi ordered the icon moved to Hōkōji in Kyoto, but the following year it was returned to Shinano. This peripatetic pattern continued in the Tokugawa period as part of Zenkōji's efforts to raise funds for reconstructing and expanding the temple. In 1692, the icon was displayed in Edo, Kyoto, and Osaka, and in 1701 and 1706 it was displayed at selected locales throughout the provinces. (Since the Zenkōji Amida was a secret image, a surrogate known as the Maedachi Honzon, the "Image that Stands in Front," was revealed to devotees.) Such public exhibitions helped to transform Zenkōji from a regional cult into a national one.

McCallum's account, while rich in descriptive detail, is far more than a historical narrative, however. The history of Zenkōji and its icon simultaneously comprises and illuminates a rich array of topics, and throughout his study the author underscores structural components, such as the role of *hijiri*, pilgrimage, and replication, that Zenkōji has in common with other traditions. He also analyzes those features which distinguish the cult, most notably the belief that the Zenkōji icon was the Buddha incarnate. With the publication of this clear, impressively detailed, and meticulous account of the development of Zenkōji and its icon, the author has staked out new territory that will be mined by many scholars.

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Vietnamese and Chinese Ceramics Used in the Japanese Tea Ceremony. By Hiromu Honda and Noriki Shimazu. The Asia Collection. Singapore, Oxford, and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. 230 pp., including 223 color plates. US\$75.00, hardback.

Traditional Southeast Asian ceramics are in the art world spotlight. Collectors frustrated with high prices and slim pickings in the East Asian field have become enticed by the beauty and comparative affordability of Thai, Cambodian, and Vietnamese wares (see "Tired of Chinese? Try Vietnamese," *New York Times*, April 2, 1995, p. 45). Excavations in Thailand and Vietnam, many of them joint ventures between local and outside scholars, are contextualizing the better-known wares and uncovering entirely new types. This has also led scholars and curators to reinvestigate traditional modes of trade, consumption, and taxonomy. For example, in 1993 the Nezu Museum in Tokyo held an exhibition centered around "Nanbanmono" and "Shimamono," categories that emerged in the late medieval and early modern tearoom to describe vessels from Okinawa, southern China, and Southeast Asia. In the published

symposium proceedings that followed the Nezu show (see *Tōyō Tōji*, vols. 23–24, 1995), there is a level of information and analytical sophistication unimaginable a decade ago.

Oxford University Press has been quick to seize upon this wave of interest. Included in the Asia Collection series are a general survey of Southeast Asian ceramics, a focused study on the ritual ewer called *kendi*, and volumes dedicated to Khmer and Thai wares. The book under review here begins with a general introduction by Barbara Harrison and follows with three chapters, one on Vietnamese ceramics (mostly 13th–16th c. wares but with a few earlier examples), one on Chinese porcelains (late Ming–early Qing dynasty wares from common-ware kilns at Jingdezhen and other southern centers), and Chinese “stonewares” (actually earthenwares and stonewares of the enamel-on-biscuit type known as *Kōchi* in Japan, after the southern China/northern Vietnam region historically called Cochin).

In their preface, the authors state that an aesthetic point of view was what they found most wanting in earlier works on the subject, and in a visual sense they have provided a remedy. The color plates are of fine quality and probably all the wares are illustrated for the first time in an English-language publication. It is in its informational and conceptual aspects that the book is a disappointment. First, the text totals a mere sixteen pages; discussion meanders between historical, commercial, and aesthetic domains without any sure sense of direction, and that is frustrating to serious students and connoisseurs. Information about how or where the authors obtained the wares is scant. The captions are brief, and when they are expanded it is with unsubstantiated remarks about how a certain pot is “a beautiful collector’s piece” or how another “has particular appeal in Japan.” There is also some questionable and erroneous information: long-necked bottles of the type illustrated in color plate 21 are identified as *meiping* (prunus vase) shape, although the term conventionally refers to the high-shouldered, short-necked type; on page 159, the founders of the Qing dynasty are identified as Mongols rather than Manchus. One is not even totally sure of who is responsible for what part of the book, for on the back of the cover Harrison is credited with what appears to be all of the text, but that seems to be at odds with the credits inside.

Even more objectionable, if not downright deceptive, is the discrepancy between title and contents. Certainly, Vietnamese and southern Chinese ceramics were used in the tea ceremony. The wares of preference can be discerned in period diaries and didactic literature such as the late seventeenth century ceramics primer, *Wakan Shō Dōgu* (Encyclopedia of foreign and Japanese tea utensils), and in recent excavations of commercial and residential sites in urban centers such as Nagasaki, Sakai, and Kyoto. Furthermore, certain Vietnamese blue-and-white teabowls (a type historically called *Annam shibori-de*) and Chinese *Kōchi*-style incense containers have, for example, been handed down as heirlooms and occupy an important place in teaware history. However, *Vietnam and Chinese Ceramics Used in the Tea Ceremony* covers very little of this, and, while there is some typological overlap between the famous heirlooms and the pots illustrated in the book, none of the latter have a de-

monstrable or direct connection to tea history. In the book title, chanoyu is invoked to provide a historical and aesthetic aura for pots of uncertain provenance. One can understand such a strategy in the pedigree-conscious Japanese art market, but not in a title from a respected university press.

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A Poet's Anthology: The Range of Japanese Poetry. By Ōoka Makoto. Preface by Donald Keene. Translated by Janine Beichman. Santa Fe: Katydid Books, 1994. (Distributed by University of Hawaii Press). xv + 198 pp., including indexes. US\$29.95, hardback; US\$19.95, paperback.

There are a few Japanese poets who are exceedingly prolific, but none tops Ōoka Makoto (b. 1931). What makes him a household name in Japan, however, is not so much his staggering output — by the early part of this decade he had published well over 200 books, 19 of them devoted to his own poems — or, for that matter, his constant visibility in select literary circles. Rather, it is his daily appearance on the front page of the *Asahi Shimbun*. There, for as long as one remembers, he has been writing a column called *Oriori no Uta* (Poetry, on Occasion) where he cites a poem — the whole thing if it is as short as a tanka or haiku, a fragment if it is long — and gives a succinct summary of the poet, his or her career, and, though not always, an explication of the poem. Considering his stature and his medium, this is rather like John Ashbery citing and discussing a poem every day on the front page of *The New York Times*.

To write this review, I picked up the latest edition of the *Asahi* in my office, the one for March 24, 1995, and there under the bold, outsize headline announcing the police seizure of large volumes of chemicals at the Aum Shinri Kyō facilities in Kamikuishiki Village, primly in his usual corner sat his famous column. As it turned out, fortuitously, this issue also carried the announcement of the two awards he received from the Japanese Academy of Arts, but no matter: the poem selected for the day was a haiku by Hashi Kanseki: *Kao jū o tampopo ni shite waraunari*, "Turning her whole face into dandelions she laughs." In the commentary, Ōoka tells us that this piece appeared in a collection called *Nigitae*, published in 1983; that the poet was a scholar of English literature; that he was more a *haikaishi* than a *haijin*, who practiced *renku*; and that he was a rare man of *haikai* in modern times who opened up a realm of "relaxation and laughter" for himself. Ōoka then cites another haiku by the same poet, *Katatsumuri nure hitosumi o terashiori*, "A snail, wet, illuminates his own corner," and ends by telling us that Hashi died in 1992, at age 89.

There must be something that suits the Japanese temperament about the format of presenting a poem — short, please — accompanied by a brief commentary, for *Oriori no Uta* is notable only because it is a daily column in a national daily and it has continued so long. The use of the format itself is ubiquitous. This said, it must be noted that Ōoka's daily jottings have the distinction of being routinely collected to add to the *Oriori no Uta* series of paperbacks published by Iwanami Shoten — and this on top of the luxury editions, complete with fancy nature photographs, that the Asahi publishes from time to time.

This particular enterprise has proved so successful, indeed, that at least one other national daily decided to follow suit several years ago, picking a different poet to do a similar column. At about the same time perhaps, the English-language arm of the *Asahi Shimbun* set up a weekly column translating a selection from *Oriori no Uta*, commissioning Janine Beichman to do the job. Ms. Beichman established her reputation as a biographer of the literary reformer Masaoka Shiki (1867–1902). *A Poet's Anthology* is a collection of her translations that have seen print in the *Asahi Evening News*.

How do the English versions come across?

One is first struck by what appears to be Ms. Beichman's main concern: to create the immediate impression that the matter she is dealing with is a poem. Obviously because a poem, to most English readers, is lineated, Ms. Beichman goes out of her way to lineate — and indent — everything. Take the first poem in this collection, which is by the tanka poet Maeda Yūgure (1883–1951):

Fuyu ga kita. Shiori kigi no hikari o karada no uchi ni chikuseki shiteoite, yoru fukaku nemuru

Yūgure wrote this in his experimental phase, during which he ignored the syllabic patterns and count (this one is well-nigh impossible to scan for five- and seven-syllable units and consists of a total of 39 syllables, not the standard 31), adopted modern or colloquial phrasings in place of pseudo-classical locutions almost universal to tanka poets, and incorporated punctuation which is normally not used (here a single period and a single comma). Yūgure nonetheless stuck to the traditional one-line format. Ms. Beichman breaks it up:

*Fuyu ga kita.
Shiori kigi no hikari o
karada no uchi ni chikuseki shiteoite,
yoru fukaku nemuru*

As far as the transcription is concerned, this misleads, and that is not merely because Yūgure wrote it in one line. First, part of what makes this piece a tanka lies in the fact that it is written in monolinear form. Second, there are tanka poets who have and do break up their tanka into four (or any other number of) lines — if not exactly with these gradated indentations. Third, there are non-tanka poets who write four-line poems. (Ms. Beichman cites a tanka by the most famous tanka lineator, Ishikawa Takuboku, 1886–1912, in

the correct three-line format that this poet favored, albeit with added indentations. However, she then goes on to translate it into five lines.)

It is worth noting that Ōoka himself has stated that to break up haiku (hokku) by, let us say, Matsuo Bashō (1644–94) into lines is to render them “meaningless,” although he has argued that in translating them lineation may be necessary. I am certain that, if asked, he would say the same thing about tanka. For now I must leave his idea about translation alone, but I think Ms. Beichman could have been less cavalier in lineating the unlineated poems and lines — for that matter, in indenting unindented lines — in reproducing the originals in Japanese, for which she is given the room (transliterations accompany the Japanese originals). Were she a poet, wouldn’t she want to see her poems reproduced as they were written?

Of her translations, Donald Keene says in his preface that they are “exceptionally successful,” but sometimes I wonder. Take a haiku by Bashō: *Umi kurete kamo no koe honokani shiroshi*, which is famous for synesthesia and an unorthodox syllabic formation of 5-5-7. Ms. Beichman translates this as:

The waters fade
and the wild ducks’ cries
are faintly white

Reading this, my immediate thought was: Why not be more literal and say “the sea darkens” for the first five syllables? What does “waters fade” mean? Besides, in translating a tanka by Ōoka’s father, Hiroshi (1907–91), *Mizutori no se ni nokori iru yū-akari umi kure-yukeba tada honoka naru*, does she not give “the lake darkens” for *umi kure-yukeba*? (Here the Chinese character applied makes it clear that a lake is meant by *umi*.)

Evening light lingers
on the wild ducks’ backs,
then, as the lake
darkens,
grows pale

And having cited this translation, I also wonder why she has chosen “wild ducks” for the generic term *mizutori* (“waterfowl”) — not only a wrong choice, but also a choice that forces an inelegant locution, “ducks’ backs.”

A few spots of disagreement such as these may not mean much; after all, this anthology has 171 pieces of poetry selected from a wide range of sources. So I might ask: Does the kind of format I discussed at the outset work for the English reader? The answer is: Generally, yes. Although this English translation contains certain things that strike me as out of place, such as a Japanese translation from French (Jean Cocteau’s couplet) and a Japanese translation of Greek (a poem by Sappho), short Japanese poems often need explication — even for the Japanese, I dare say — and Ōoka’s vast knowledge and resourcefulness can be a great help.

The danger here is that Ōoka, writing originally for the Japanese, often assumes too much knowledge on the part of the reader or ends up restating what the poem says, with the occasional addition of what in literary criticism is called intentional fallacy.

Let us take a haiku by Yosa Buson (1716–84), *Tsuki tenshin mazushiki machi o tōrikeri*, which Ms. Beichman translates,

Moon sky center
I pass
through ghetto streets

Ōoka tells us how he initially — when he read this in a school textbook — mistook *tenshin* for Okakura Tenshin (1862–1913), of *The Book of Tea* fame. This is an entertaining confession which reminds me of an American translator who, working on a Japanese haiku with the word *ryōma*, rendered it as “ferocious horse,” when in fact it referred to the samurai Sakamoto Ryōma (1835–67). Ōoka, at any rate, does not tell us how this haiku works as haikai. He also ends his comment by saying, “This poem taught me the importance of the break (which here comes after *tsuki tenshin*) in haiku” — a statement which Ms. Beichman the translator may well have contemplated, but which can only be mystifying to the English reader.

Conversely, talking about Yūgure’s tanka cited earlier — which in Ms. Beichman’s translation reads

Winter has come.
I pile up
the white light of the trees
in my body,
and sleep deeply at night

— Ōoka ends by saying, “Now that their leaves have fallen, the winter trees have become brighter and the winter sun shines on them whitely. The poet bundles up the light in his body and sleeps soundly in the black womb of night.”

Black womb of night? But who needs such an explication anyway?

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Editor's note

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