

CHANOYU Quarterly

TEA AND THE ARTS OF JAPAN

No. 82

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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.

Tsuchiura Naval Air Corps

Sen Sōshitsu XV

I chose to join the navy so that, among other things, I could make something of my hydroplane training. Thus, on the 10th of December, 1943, I became a member of the naval corps based in Maizuru.

Upon entering the corps, I was at once disappointed by the uniform I received. For second-class sailors and below, like me, it was a common sailor suit without even a rank badge; the type of uniform they called "*jonbera*" ("jumper") or "*karasu*" ("crow"). I had imagined that I would immediately be allowed to wear one of those sharp looking officers' uniforms with short sword hanging at the side, but that calculation had been hasty.

Corps policy was to divide us into units according to the college we attended. This resulted in school rivalry among the units, and we were pushed to train with a great deal of hustle. Day after day, there was one exam after another. To make things worse, students of literature and law were under further pressure because they were being challenged in their weak subjects, mathematics and physics.

To top all this off, there was a test in order to gain officer's status. I took one for the flight division as well as one for short-term pay officer, and, owing to my pilot training and good eyesight, was placed in the flight division. Thus, on the 25th of January, 1944, I was proudly assigned to the Tsuchiura Naval Air Corps base, as a reserve student of the 14th Special Flight unit.

That was when I first received an officer's uniform. Before having a chance to take a breather, however, my group was threatened by the prospect of three more months of severe officer training. We were told: "You confounded men came in as recruits, and from second-rank sailors are becoming officers; but you haven't shed your sailor mentality. There's no telling how many of you will drop out during the next three months of officer training, but you'd better prepare yourselves!" Here again, there was a battery of exams and aptitude tests. It was jarring, how full of exams and tests this place was.

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

Once we completed the officer's training, we would be divided into three details — flying, reconnaissance, and important duty — according to the results of the aptitude tests and other factors. I was confident that I would naturally be assigned to flying detail, since I had training as a pilot. One day, however, the instructing officer suddenly announced that we were all to undergo an analysis of our physical features. Entering the room one by one, we were not made to do anything extraordinary. The officer in charge simply stared at our faces and, after a bit, commanded, "turn to the side," "turn about-face," "put your hands out." It was over in two or three minutes.

Soon after, the announcement was made as to what detail we had been assigned to. I had gotten an "A" on the aptitude test for hydroplane flier, and had no doubt I would be assigned to flying detail, so when I was told "reconnaissance," it came as a surprise. It baffled me as to why a man who would prove immediately useful on a hydroplane would be assigned to reconnaissance work. Wanting an explanation, I went to the chief officer, Commander Saito, and inquired. But he was not forthcoming with the reason, and his response and my plea went back and forth.

"It has been decided, so resign yourself to it."

"I cannot resign myself to it unless I hear the reason."

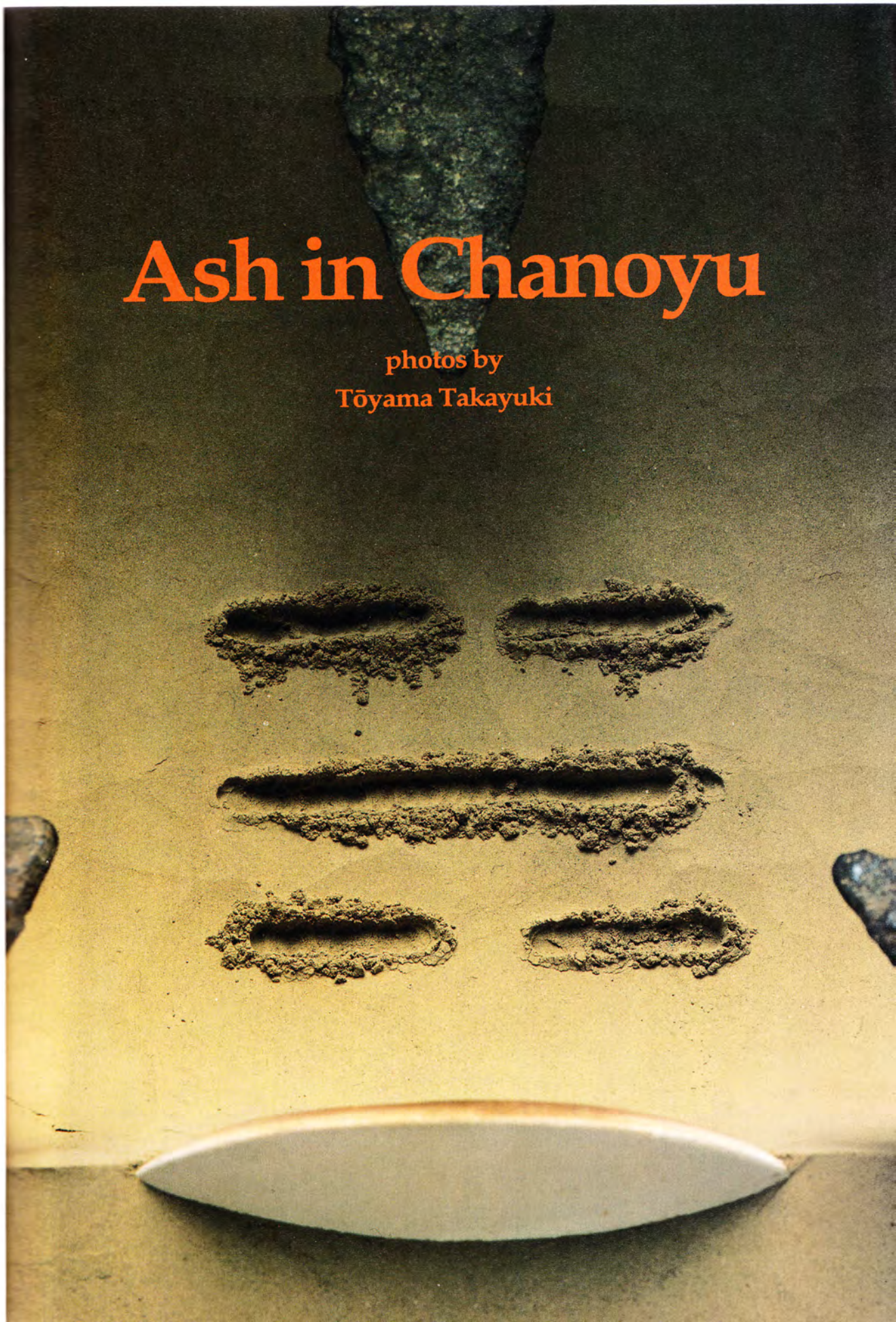
Finally the lieutenant commander in charge of education, who was there in the room with us, came to my rescue and persuaded Commander Saito to satisfy my query. Commander Saito thus explained: "I was notified of five people in our corps, including you, whose physical features were evaluated as revealing signs of death. You might not believe this, but, up till now, when I have given in to men like you and allowed them their wish to become fliers, ninety-nine percent have died in accidents. Knowing this, it would be unjustifiable to your parents as well as to the nation."

Being told to think this over for one night, I went back to the barracks. Nishimura Kō, the well-known actor today, happened to be resting in a hammock, so I pondered aloud to him, "I wonder what I should do." I knew Nishimura from the Maizuru training camp, and we both followed the same course after this, too. His response was short and clear: "There's nothing that can be done about it. I'm in reconnaissance, too. Let us all die together; let's go together." Hearing those words, I made up my mind that, yes, I would accompany this fellow.

In our officer's training at Tsuchiura, we were firmly taught to uphold the "three 'S's": to be Smart, Steady, and Silent. As far as my own discipline and attitude were concerned, however, I had a certificate of guarantee. This was because, ever since my early childhood, my parents had been strict about my conduct. I think that this was an added benefit of being brought up in the Way of Tea.

Ash in Chanoyu

photos by
Tōyama Takayuki



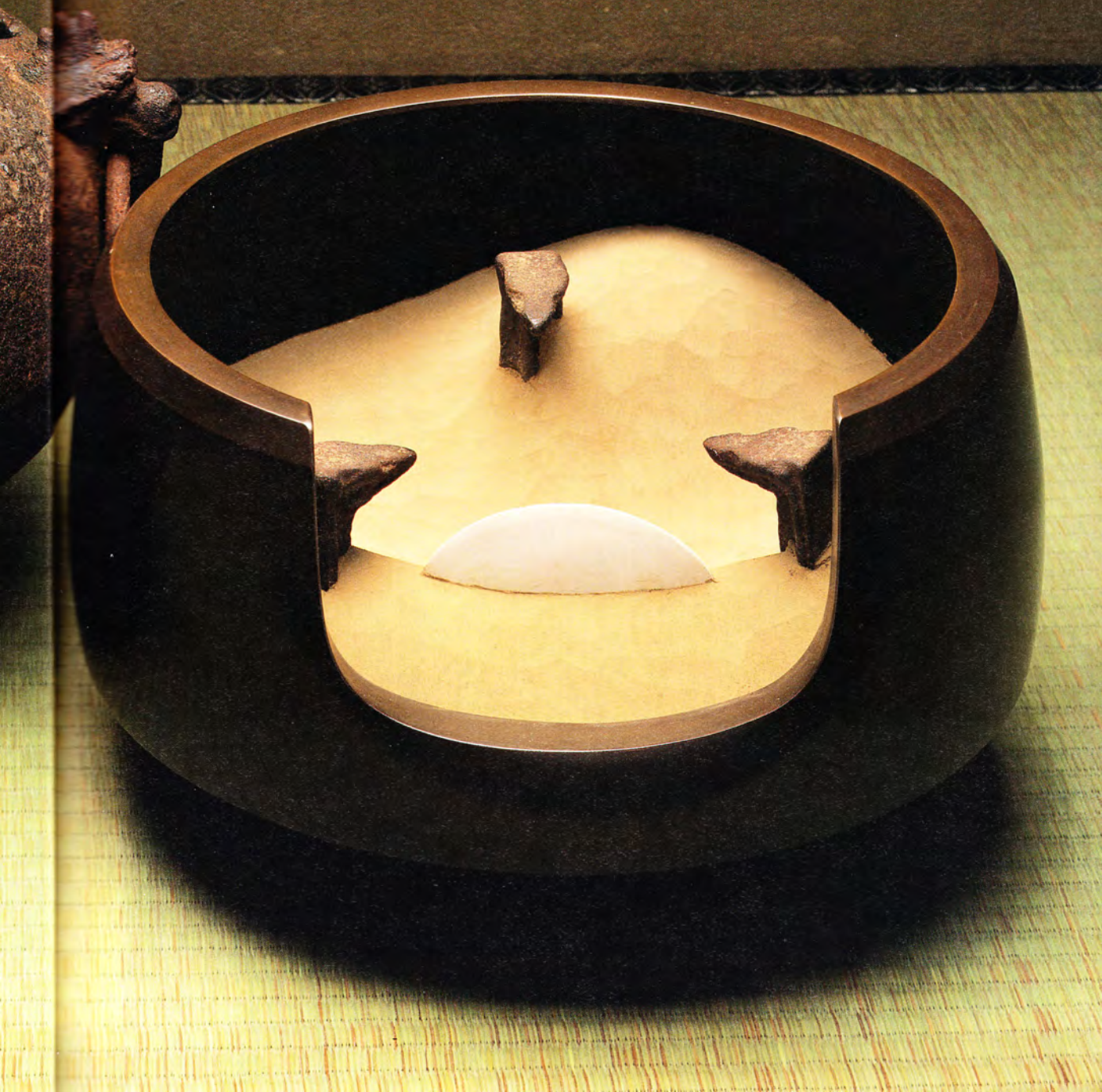
Between the two ridges of the sculpted ash in a black-lacquered earthenware brazier, the charcoal begins to glow. The bright white wisteria ash sprinkled on the mellow-colored, silky ash gives the creation a refreshing touch. During the charcoal-laying procedure at a tea gathering, the host consciously destroys the perfection of the sculpted ash by making a crescent-shaped cut in the front, symbolizing that the ash form was created for that one occasion only.







At the left is a 'haggard' iron brazier (*yatsure-buro*) with ash in the form of 'two straight ridges' (*nimon-ji*) etched with a lined pattern, and a reddish clay fire-guard (*maekawarake*). This type of brazier is only used during the final days of the brazier season, in the autumn. At the right is a bronze 'beveled' brazier (*mentori-buro*), characterized by its beveled rim. The ash is in the 'single distant mountain' (*tōyama hitotsu-yama*) form, featuring a curved ridge in the front and a gently sloping mountain in the back. Here, a white clay fire-guard has been chosen, to accentuate the pure, fresh quality of the arrangement.

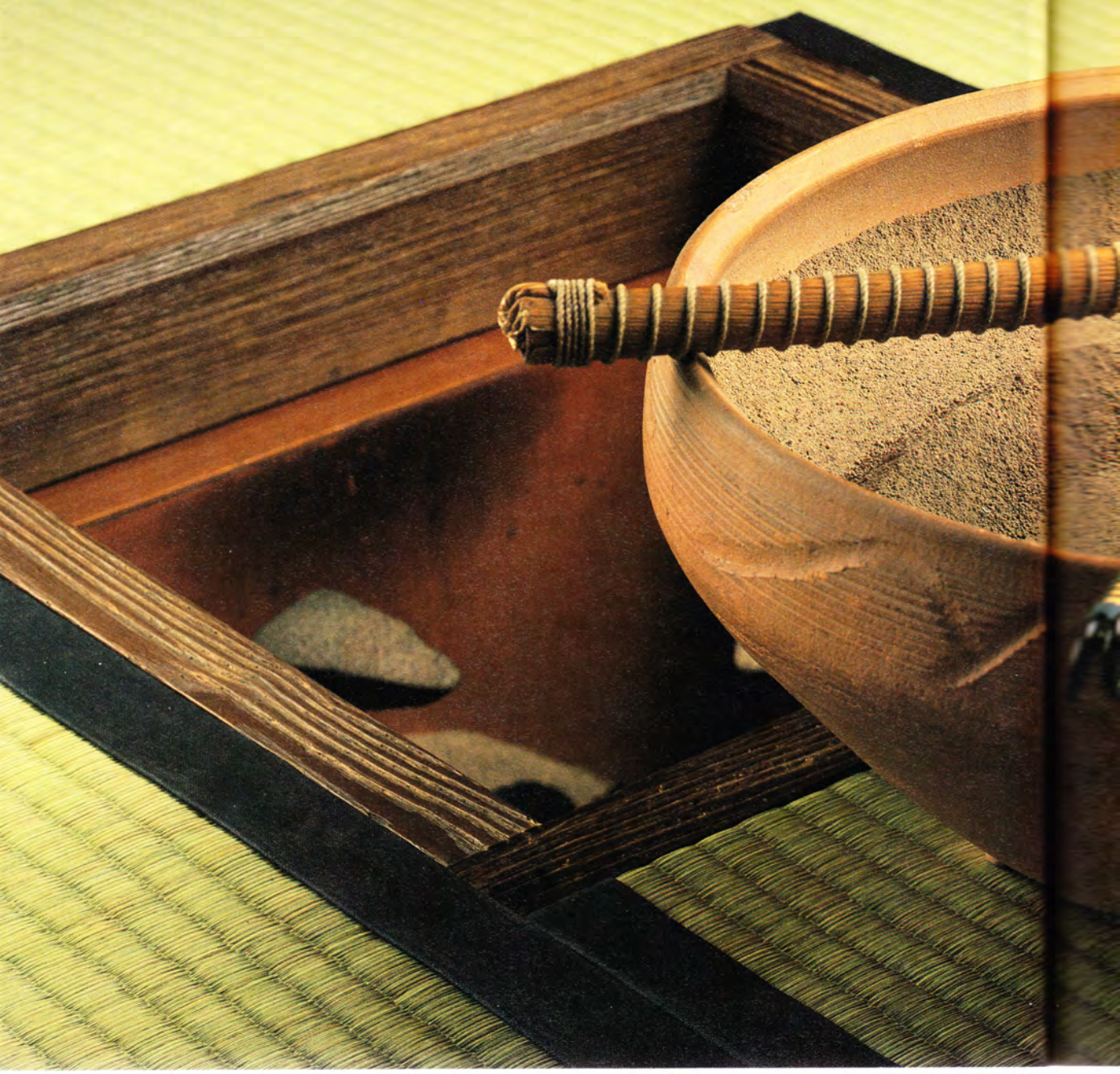




For the charcoal-laying procedure at a tea gathering in the brazier season, the host will carry in this set of items. In the ash bowl is a small mound of wisteria ash (*fuji-bai*), with an ash spoon standing sideways in it. The ash spoon is used to make the crescent-shaped cut in the front of the sculpted ash in the brazier. During the rekindling of the charcoal fire in the latter part of the gathering, this spoon is used to fill the crescent with a small amount of the wisteria ash, symbolically restoring the ash form to its original shape.



The large bowl used to carry ash into the tearoom for repairing the ash in a sunken hearth is called a *handa*. In it, the somewhat coarse ash for sunken hearth use is spread out from the center to form a *tomoe* or 'swirl shape,' using a large ash scoop (*sokotori*). Thus prepared, it is referred to as a *tomoe handa*. The ash scoop and a pair of metal chopsticks, used for handling the ash and the charcoal, are placed on top in a set manner.







In addition to the 'silky' ash for brazier use, the coarser ash for the sunken hearth, and the white wisteria ash used for sprinkling on the brazier ash, there are the reddish caltrop ash and black, stick-like straw ash, for special uses. Here we see caltrop ash arranged in a pipe-lighter container on a 'tobacco tray,' and, behind it, straw ash spread around the charcoal in a hand warmer.

Ash Forms: Their History and Development

with a look at the *Hai no Sho* by Ii Naosuke
and Gengensai's Ash Form Models

Tsutsui Hiroichi

Introduction

The style and combination of the various elements comprising a chanoyu gathering — the utensils used, such as the scroll and the kettle, the flowers for the alcove, the tearoom itself, the cuisine, the tea procedures — are manifestations of the theme the host has chosen for the gathering, and of the host's creative inspiration. The 'group-in-fusion' quality of a tea gathering comes about because the host and guests are conscious of the uniqueness of the moment, and because there is a harmonization of 'self' and 'other' within this consciousness. At such times, the essential reality of the event lies in the fact that the guests share in experiencing the host's intentions.

Considering the various elements of a chanoyu gathering, all of which convey some aspect the host's intentions to the guests, it is clear that they differ in many respects. A major distinction between the various elements is whether they exist as concrete objects — natural focal points in the scheme of chanoyu — or as dimensions of the host's own approach to the particular occasion. The former would include the scroll in the alcove, which is the first thing to meet the guests' eyes when they enter the tearoom, and the many different kinds of utensils assembled, whose combination of shape, color, and form give the most immediate pleasure to the eyes. Special exceptions aside, such items are not the host's own creations. Through their display, the host's discernment and perceptiveness find expression, rather than his or her creativity.

Translated and adapted, by permission of the author, from the feature article "*Hai to Haigata: Rekishi to Tenkai*" [Ash and Ash Forms: Their History and Development] in the May 1993 issue of *Tankō*. All footnotes are by the editor. Unless otherwise specified, photos courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Kyoto.

千利休 南方録 In the case of flowers for the tearoom, deliberate artfulness is dis-
dained. As emphasized by the words of Sen Rikyū (1522–91) in the
Nampō Roku [Southern Record],¹ “The flowers should be as they are in
the field” and should have a natural appearance which captures the
fleeting feeling of the season.

Another of the host’s concerns is the meal. In Rikyū’s time, when
the ideals of chanoyu were being perfected and its fundamental formal
aspects were established, teahouse interiors were not as bright and
well lit as today, and only the slightest bit of light filtered through the
windows. Therefore, the first half of the tea gathering, when the meal
was served, took place in a dim atmosphere unified by the principle of
yin — secrecy, darkness, obscurity — in order to sharpen the contrast
with the second half of the gathering in which the tea was served in a
brighter, open atmosphere unified by the principle of yang. Accord-
ingly, since it was difficult to see the food itself, the host’s main con-
cern was with its flavor and effect on the tongue.

風炉 点前 In the brazier (*furo*) season, when the kettle of water is heated on a
portable brazier instead of in a sunken hearth (*ro*), the first laying of
charcoal takes place after the meal is finished, while the room is still
dark. (In the season when the built-in sunken hearth is used, the char-
coal is laid before the meal is served, so the order is slightly different.)
For the first laying of the charcoal, the host removes the kettle from the
brazier and adds more charcoal to the three pieces that have been burn-
ing there since before the guests entered the tearoom. This is the first
time the host undertakes a formal act in front of the guests. The white
ash of the burned charcoal, the partially burned black charcoal, and the
ash setting which surrounds these can, to some small extent, be seen by
the guests. Although the guests can catch only fleeting glimpses of the
host’s actions as the host adds the new black charcoal to the fire, the
quality of the host’s movements gives them a clear picture of what the
charcoal formation must look like. In a sense, this is one of the rare
occasions during the course of a tea gathering when the host exhibits
an act of creativity.

点前 The beauty of a flowing *temae* (set of formalized steps and move-
ments for preparing a bowl of tea) also constitutes a display of the
host’s grace of movement, but a *temae* is just that, a series of move-
ments. Moreover, those movements should not appear conscious or de-
liberate, but should seem so natural that the guests cannot distinguish
just when and where each step begins and ends. This is comparable to the
ideals that govern the arrangement of the flowers for display in the tea-
room alcove.

¹ The *Nampō Roku* is basically a compendium of the teachings of Sen Rikyū, the most influ-
ential tea master in the history of the Way of Tea.

In this article, we will examine the historical development of one of the principal areas where the host is able to display a concrete creation of his own to the guests, the ash formation in the brazier.

From Metal Braziers to Earthenware Braziers

First, in order to understand how the ash in the brazier developed through history, it is necessary to inquire into the origin of the brazier itself.

Lu Yu begins the "Utensils" section of his work, *The Classic of Tea* (陸羽茶經; *Cha Jing*; completed about 760), by taking up the subject of braziers, and provides a description: "Braziers are cast from bronze or iron in a shape like the ancient *ting*." From this, we know that an implement called a *ting* in Chinese (Jp., *kanae*), used in ancient China for sacred rituals and everyday cooking, was the original model for the tea brazier. (鼎) Lu Yu adds that the walls of these braziers were 3 *bu* (9.09 mm) thick and the rim around the mouth was 9 *bu* (approx. 2.73 cm) wide. The 6 *bu* of empty space inside the brazier under the wide rim of the mouth and down along the body was plastered with mud. These braziers had three legs, each with a seven-character inscription on it in archaic script. Around the bottom portion of the brazier, there were three vents, and there was another opening in the base. These were designed to let air into the brazier and to let cinders fall out.

As for the contents of these braziers, we are told that they held ash which was formed into three small mounds. One of these represented a pheasant, a bird related to fire. On this mound was drawn the trigram for fire, ☲ (*li*). One mound represented a tiger-cat, a beast of the wind. The trigram for wind, ☳ (*son*), was drawn on this mound. The other mound represented a fish, a creature of the water. Thus the trigram for water, ☵ (*kan*), was drawn on this mound. It is written that the reason these trigrams were drawn on the mounds was that wind helps fire burn well, and that fire makes water boil.

Japanese historical records concerning braziers date back to the early middle ages. The *Chadō Sentei* [Primer on the Way of Tea; hereafter referred to as *Primer*]² states, "The earthenware brazier came after the metal brazier; the metal brazier is exceedingly ancient." It explains the history behind the earliest metal brazier used in chanoyu in Japan, as follows:

陸羽
茶經

鼎

茶道筌蹄

² The *Chadō Sentei* is a kind of chanoyu encyclopedia written in 1816 by Inagaki Kyūsō.

乳足
台子

The first metal brazier, a Chinese item with a demon-mask motif and teat-shaped legs (*nyūsoku*), was a brazier for a formal display stand (*daisu*); it was brought back by Nampo Jōmyō, passed from Sōfukuji temple to Daitokuji temple, and later was destroyed in the Ōnin War [1467–77].

南浦紹明 Nampo Jōmyō (1235–1308; regarded as the founder of the Rinzaï school of Zen in Japan) made the journey to Song Dynasty China [in 1259] to study Zen, and became a disciple of Xutang Zhiyu (Jp., Kidō Chigu; 1185–1269). According to Inagaki's account above, when Nampo returned to Japan, he brought with him a formal display stand for tea equipment, referred to as a *daisu*, together with this brazier bearing demon-mask designs.

君台觀左右帳記
御飾書

The *Kundaikan Sauchō Ki* [Register of the Shogunal Family, Left and Right Volumes] and the *Okazari Sho* [Writings Regarding Decorations] contain information about the objects used to decorate the rooms in the villa of Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–90),³ and give examples of early brazier usage in chanoyu. They show that these braziers were made of metal and were the type referred to as 'braziers with fitted kettles' (*kirikake*), where a matching kettle is shaped to rest snugly over the brazier's mouth. It is likely, therefore, that the brazier brought back from China by Nampo was this type.

土風炉
村田珠光

Later, earthenware braziers (*doburo*) appeared in conjunction with the development by Murata Shukō (also read Jukō; 1423–1501) and others of the rustic style of chanoyu suited for enjoyment in *sōan*, or "thatched huts," and the serious consideration given to the spirit of wabi by tea masters such as Takeno Jōō (1502–55). Judging from lists of brazier types available at the time, such as those found in the *Chagu Bitō Shū* [Survey of Chanoyu Utensils and Accoutrements; hereafter referred to as *Survey*] and the *Uso Shū Shikan Sho* [Crow and Rat Collection in Four-volumes; hereafter, *Crow and Rat Collection*],⁴ the advent of the 'Nara brazier' (*Nara-buro*) and 'Bungo brazier' (*Bungo-buro*) — earthenware brazier types whose names indicate their place of production —

武野紹鷗
茶具備討集
烏鼠集四卷書

奈良風炉
豊後風炉

³ The authorship and dates of these historical works, the *Kundaikan Sauchō Ki* and *Okazari Sho*, have yet to be positively verified, but indications point to their compilation by Sōami (d. 1525), who served as a curator at the villa of Ashikaga Yoshimasa. Several variant copies are extant.

⁴ The *Chagu Bitō Shū*, by Ichōken Sōkin, consists of a categorized list of tea utensils and their historical backgrounds. Dated 1554, it is regarded as the oldest chanoyu textbook. The *Uso Shū Shikan Sho* is an early Edo period document combining two works which were enjoying popularity at the time of its compilation, the *Chagu Bitō Shū* and the *Sōami Chanoyu no Sho*, which relates stories pertaining to the chanoyu of the days when Murata Shukō and Sōami (see fn above) were active, and which itself probably dates to the Keichō era (1596–1615). "Shikan Sho" in the title *Uso Shū Shikan Sho* refers to the fact that it is a four-volume work. There also exists a single-volume *Uso Shū*.



A formal black-lacquered display stand (*daisu*) and 'brazier with fitted kettle' (*kirikake-buro*). Note the brazier's stout legs (probably similar to the "teat-shaped legs" on the brazier brought from China by Nampo), and the "demon-mask" ring lugs. The entire set seen here dates to the Momoyama period (16th c.), making it the oldest set in existence today. Brazier: height, 26.6 cm; body diameter, 36.4 cm. Kettle: height, 19.6 cm; mouth diameter, 12.4 cm. Property of Omotesenke Fushin'an. Photo courtesy of Fushin'an, Kyoto.



A modern-day 'wood spacer brazier' (*sukigi-buro*), with wooden spacers placed along its rim.

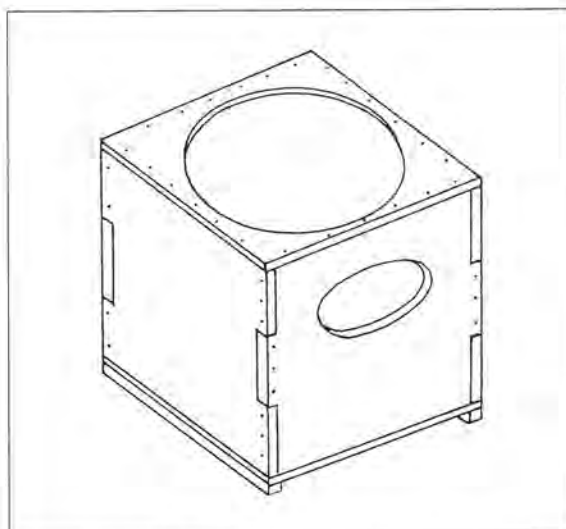
相阿弥 seems to have occurred sometime between the years when Sōami (see
fn 3) and Takeno Jōō were active. The *Primer* records that in Jōō's time
宗四郎 there was a maker of Nara braziers named Sōshirō. He was succeeded
by a second generation Sōshirō who worked during Rikyū's time and
received Toyotomi Hideyoshi's acclaim as Best Under Heaven,
thereby solidifying the reputation of the Sōshirō name. Around the
善五郎 same time, a maker of earthenware braziers named Zengorō gained
茶湯古事談 recognition in Kyoto,⁵ and, according to the *Chanoyu Kojidan* [Discus-
sions Regarding Early Chanoyu],⁶ his skill rivaled that of Sōshirō.

Concerning the shapes of the early earthenware braziers, both the
類当風炉 *Survey* and the *Crow and Rat Collection* mention 'cheek-guard braziers'
(*hōate-buro*),⁷ and point out that there were two types of legs: 'teat-
shaped legs,' and cylindrical legs. Another clue to the shapes of early

⁵ This Zengorō is the ancestor of the Eiraku family, well known for their production of decorative ceramics, but who continue to make earthenware braziers as well. Originally, the family name was Nishimura. It was changed to Eiraku during the era of the eleventh-generation Zengorō, from whose time the family started producing ceramics.

⁶ The *Chanoyu Kojidan* is a collection of chanoyu-related anecdotes, written by Chikamatsu Shigenori and published in 1731.

⁷ The name 'cheek-guard brazier' (*hōate-buro*) derives from the resemblance of this type of brazier to the piece of face-protection armor that covers the cheeks. 'Cheek-guard braziers' are characterized by the fact that the large opening on the front of the brazier — the 'window' — is open rather than connected across the top; that is, it has no "eyebrow" (*mayu*).



Drawing of the kind of 'board brazier' (*ita-buro*) believed to have been designed by Rikyū.

braziers can be found in the *Primer*. It explains that trivets (*gotoku*) — the three-pronged stands placed inside a brazier or sunken hearth to support a kettle — did not exist prior to Jōō's time, and that Murata Shukō originated the 'wood spacer brazier' (*sukigi-buro*), an earthenware brazier with a broad-rimmed mouth on which wooden spacers were positioned to support kettles with wide flanges or skirts.

五徳

透木風炉

Entering Rikyū's era, the variety of braziers increased. A search of the *Primer* for braziers mentioned as having been favored by Rikyū turns up seven varieties: 'braziers for round kettles' (*marugama-buro*), 'braziers for wide-bottomed kettles' (*shiribari-buro*), 'braziers for Amidadō kettles' (*Amidadō-buro*), 'braziers for square kettles' (*yohō-buro*), 'braziers for "crane's-neck" kettles' (*tsurukubi-buro*), 'braziers for "cloud-and-dragon" kettles' (*unryū-buro*), and 'beveled braziers' (*men-buro*). In addition to these, there was the 'board brazier' (*ita-buro*) that Rikyū created for his journey with Hideyoshi's army to Odawara. This was a square wooden box with a round mouth on the top. It had a small window in front for ventilation, and was plastered on the inside with clay. The *Chaji Hiroku* [Confidential Record Concerning Tea Gatherings]⁸ notes that there was also a type of brazier called a 'light-yellow brazier' (*asagi-buro*) that seems to have become very popular in Rikyū's time. It explains that Governor Ōtomo of Bungo (present-day Ōita Pre-

丸釜風炉

尻張風炉

阿弥陀堂風炉

四方風炉 鶴首風炉

雲龍風炉 面風炉

板風炉

茶事秘録

浅黄風炉

⁸ The *Chaji Hiroku* is a kind of tea encyclopedia for beginners. It was written by one Ekifū Yūjin, whose identity is uncertain, and contains an introduction dated 1841.

fecture) had this brazier ordermade by Sōshirō. Apparently, however, it would discolor when subjected to intense heat, and therefore it soon fell out of use.

In the Edo period, further diversity occurred in the variety of braziers, as well as in the ways in which they were used. By this time, earthenware braziers had entered mainstream use, and the master earthenware brazier craftsman Tsujii Harima had become well-known. In addition, the Ōnishi and Nishimura families of master kettle casters were producing bronze and iron braziers. Among the new types of braziers that appeared were 'Doan's brazier' (*Dōan-buro*), the 'brazier for Darumadō kettle' (*Darumadō-buro*), the 'phoenix brazier' (*hōō-buro*), the 'Ryūkyū brazier' (*Ryūkyū-buro*), the 'round, iron brazier' (*tetsu maru-buro*), the 'demon-mask brazier' (*kimen-buro*), the 'jūjube brazier' (*natsume-buro*), the 'rouge-pot brazier' (*benibachi-buro*), and the 'haggard brazier' (*yatsure-buro*).⁹

Apparently, brazier sizes were not set, but were simply recognized as "large," "medium," or "small." The *Sekishū Sambyakkajō* [Sekishū's Three Hundred Articles]¹⁰ explains these sizes as follows:

Braziers referred to as "large" are those over 1 *shaku* 2 *sun* 5 *bu* (41.25 cm) in diameter.

Braziers referred to as "medium" are those between 1 *shaku* 2 *sun* 5 *bu* and 1 *shaku* 1 *sun* 5 *bu* (37.95 cm) in diameter.

Braziers referred to as "small" are those less than 1 *shaku* 1 *sun* 5 *bu* in diameter.

This indicates that one-*sun* (3.03 cm) increments in diameter were the basis for the distinctions between different brazier sizes.

⁹ 'Dōan's brazier' is so named because it was favored by Sen Dōan, son of Sen Rikyū; the 'brazier for Darumadō kettle' is for use with the style of kettle that had originally been made from an incense burner in the Darumadō, or Daruma Hall, at the subtemple Kōtōin of Daitokuji temple; the 'phoenix brazier' has a phoenix (*hōō*) pattern cast in its side; the 'Ryūkyū brazier,' a type of iron brazier with fitted (*kirikake*) kettle, is thought to have this name because it was introduced from the Ryūkyū Islands; the 'demon-mask brazier' is characterized by ring lugs in the shape of demon masks (*kimen*); the shape of the 'jūjube brazier' resembles a jūjube (*natsume*); the 'rouge-pot brazier' is so named because it resembles the mortar bowls used for pulverizing saffron (*beni*) into face rouge; and the 'haggard brazier' (*yatsure-buro*) is an iron brazier having chipped or cracked-and-mended portions, often made this way intentionally.

¹⁰ The *Sekishū Sambyakkajō* is a compilation of the chanoyu teachings of Katagiri Sekishū (1605–73), probably dating to the years soon after his death.



Kettle suspended over a sunken hearth using a *jizai*, an adjustable pole-and-hook device.

Early Use of the Trivet

Nowadays we tend to assume that, other than when a suspended kettle is used over a sunken hearth, or a 'brazier with fitted kettle' is used, the kettle rests on a trivet (*gotoku*). It was not always so, however.

There is an interesting anecdote in Yamada Sōhen's *Chadō Yōroku* 山田宗徧 [Important Notes on the Way of Tea; hereafter, *Important Notes*],¹¹ about 茶道要録

¹¹ Yamada Sōhen (1627–1708), founder of the Sōhen line of chanoyu, was one among the closest chanoyu disciples of Rikyū's grandson, Sōtan. His work, the *Chadō Yōroku*, was published in 1691, and contains historical and technical information about chanoyu.

the origin of the trivet and how it got the name meaning “five virtues.” According to this account, there was a monk who was boiling tea while reading a book. This monk had set the kettle on an iron ring which could not be adjusted up or down. Pondering how to remedy the situation, he came up with the idea of hanging the kettle on an adjustable pole-and-hook device suspended from the ceiling. This device later came to be called a *jizai*, literally, an “at-one’s-will.” It just so happens that there is a Buddhist text which lists a set of “six virtues” (*rokutoku*), the first of which is the virtue of being “at one’s will.” Using that one virtue from the six for the freely adjustable pole-and-hook, there remained five virtues, or *gotoku*. From this came the present practice of using the word *gotoku* to refer to the iron trivet that supports the kettle.

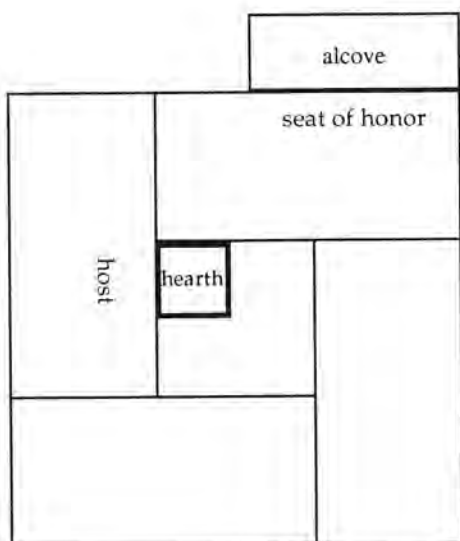
自在

During the early history of tea, before the advent of rooms designed specifically for the enjoyment of *chanoyu*, tea was a part of the social entertainments held in formal reception rooms called *shoin*. In these rooms, tea was prepared using utensils set out on the same kind of display stand that Nampo Jōmyō brought back from China, as mentioned earlier. In that age, metal ‘braziers with fitted kettles’ were the only type being used, and so there was no need for trivets. As also mentioned earlier, the first type of earthenware brazier was a ‘wood spacer brazier,’ an innovation which made use of wooden spacers placed on the rim of the brazier to support the kettle above the fire. However, it was not long before there arose the idea of setting the kettle on a trivet, making it possible to use kettles of various shapes. The *Primer* informs us that the first use of a trivet in an earthenware brazier occurred during the period when Takeno Jōō was active, which corresponds to about the middle of the sixteenth century.

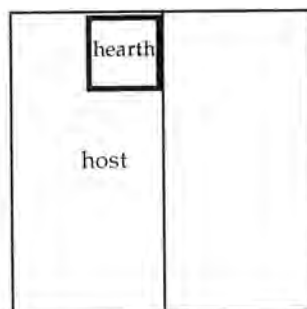
松屋会記

In the *Matsuya Kaiki* [Matsuya Tea Gathering Records]¹² there is actual evidence concerning very early usage of trivets in the tearoom. The entry for Tenshō 5 (1536), 1st month, 6th day, pertains to a gathering held at Tōdaiji temple’s Shiseibō, to which Matsuya Hisamasa (d. 1598) was invited. It includes the notation, “Hanging [kettle] for the sunken hearth.” Also, for Tenshō 11 (1542), 4th month, 5th day, there is, “[Brazier] on a square board, a hanging [kettle].” From this it appears that hanging kettles were used over both sunken hearths and braziers. However, in the entry for Kōji 2 (1556), 3rd month, 9th day, regarding a gathering given by one Hachiya Matagoro, we find, “Hanging [kettle] with a trivet.” Here, a trivet was placed under the kettle hanging over the sunken hearth. This is the first recorded instance of a trivet being used in a sunken hearth, and it seems to indicate that there was still no set manner for its use. After this, the entries in the *Matsuya Kaiki* record

¹² The *Matsuya Kaiki* is a record of the tea gatherings attended by three generations of the Matsuya family of Nara over the years 1534 to 1650.



Typical 'outer hearth' floorplan.



Typical 'inner hearth' floorplan.

the use of the trivet in both sunken hearths and braziers with greater frequency.

Placement of the trivet inside the sunken hearth came to be governed by the location of the sunken hearth within the room; that is, the location of the sunken hearth dictated which direction the trivet's three prongs would face. A major determining factor was whether the sunken hearth was an 'outer hearth' (*de-ro*), meaning that it was located in the floor space bordering the host's tatami and thus extended out into the center of the room, or whether it was an 'inner hearth' (*iri-ro*), in which case it was situated within the host's tatami space and, therefore, it was at one side of the room. The difference in the orientation of the trivet is explained by Yamada Sōhen in his *Important Notes* as follows:

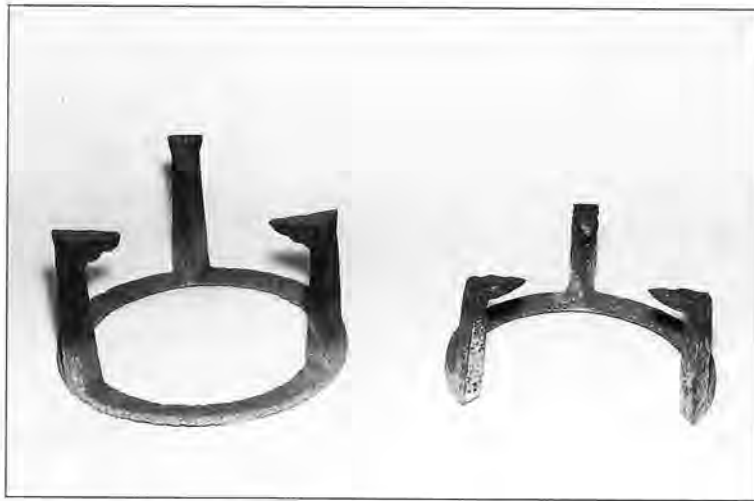
出炉

入炉

When the sunken hearth is outside, one of the [trivet] prongs must point toward the 'seat of honor' (*kamiza*; upper seat in the room), to the host's right or left. When the sunken hearth is inside, one prong is pointed toward the host — just as it is in the brazier — regardless of where the 'seat of honor' is located.

Broadly speaking, the 'seat of honor' (*kamiza*) in a room is the area in front of the alcove. This is usually located at the 'top' end of a tea-room, and, as a rule, is where the main guest will be seated. Given the

上座



Left: Standard present-day trivet for use in a sunken hearth. Right: Standard trivet for use in a brazier.

fact that the orientation of the trivet within a sunken hearth effects the orientation of the charcoal, we can see the reason for specifying that the point of one prong should face the 'seat of honor' in the case of a hearth located toward the center of the room — that is, an 'outer hearth.' For an 'inner hearth,' located to the side of the room, in the same general area that a brazier would be located, it was specified that the trivet should be placed so that the point of one prong faced the host. This is identical to its placement in a brazier.

A list in the *Primer* shows that there were a variety of trivet types such as the 'small prong' (*ko-zume*), 'Rikyū shape' (*Rikyū-gata*), 'duck talon' (*kamo-zume*), 'Satsumaya shape' (*Satsumaya-gata*),¹³ 'long prong' (*naga-zume*), and 'Hōren.' The 'Hōren' trivet took its name from the village in Yamato (present-day Nara Prefecture) where it was made, and was characterized by prongs whose height could be adjusted.

Today there are two standard trivet types. The larger of the two, for use in the sunken hearth, has a full ring at the base; the smaller one, for brazier use, has a semi-circular base. For the small braziers called *binkake*, used with iron kettles which have spouts and handles, there is a small, full-ring trivet; but, generally speaking, the two kinds described above are the main types.

¹³ Satsumaya was the name of the family business establishment of Yamanoue Sōji (1544–90), Sen Rikyū's disciple and the author of the *Yamanoue Sōji Ki*. According to one theory, "Satsumaya shape" is tantamount to "Yamanoue Sōji shape"; that is, a shape designed or favored by this tea master.

The Development of Ash Forms

It is traditionally said that with braziers it is the ash that is admired, while with sunken hearths it is the charcoal that is singled out for attention. This is the reason that, in the brazier season, guests do not usually ask to take a look at how the charcoal has been laid.

The various prescriptions for handling ash in chanoyu might seem rather unrelated to the main concerns of the Way of Tea, and might seem to merely factor in as a part of the preparations for the laying of the charcoal. Yet, in a tea practitioner's cultivation of the Way, matters concerning ash most readily reveal the degree of his or her accomplishment.

The *Yamanoue Sōji Ki* [Notations by Yamanoue Sōji (1544–90)], which relates the circumstances surrounding chanoyu as they existed in Rikyū's day, contains this passage on how the ash should be laid: "The charcoal should be put in with formality; the ash should be put in so that it appears unintentional." When braziers all had fitted kettles or used wooden spacers, the ash inside them could not be seen, since the kettle would cover the entire mouth of the brazier. Once the trivet was conceived of and new types of braziers were created, however, it was only natural that the handling and arrangement of the ash would receive more attention, and that certain styles would also develop.

山上宗二記

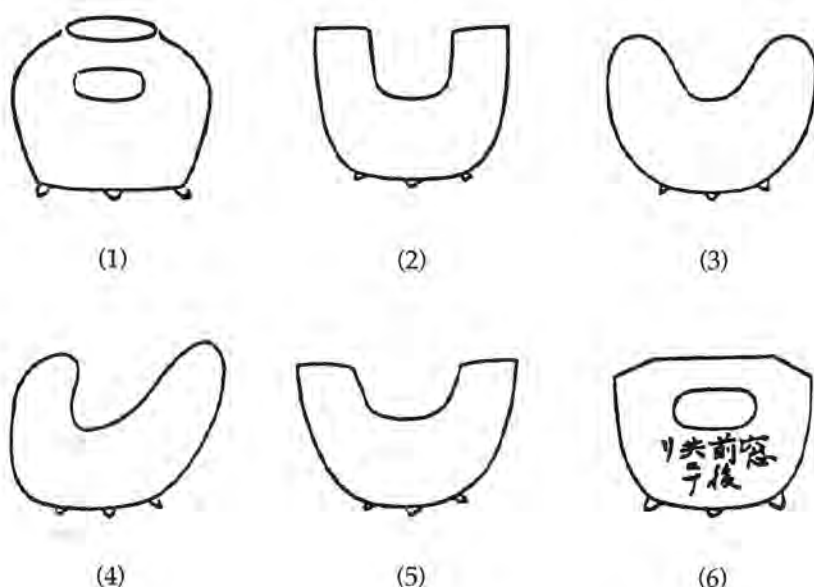
The *Chanoyu Kojidan* relates this tale: In the 18th year of Tenshō (1590), when Rikyū accompanied Hideyoshi on his Odawara campaign, Rikyū and Furuta Oribe were passing a beach on horseback and Rikyū commented, "Wouldn't it be interesting to somehow incorporate the scenery of this seashore into Tea? Do you have any ideas on how to do that?" Oribe responded that he could not think of any, whereupon Rikyū suggested, "How about using the ash in the brazier to convey the feeling of waves rolling onto the shore?" Oribe was quite surprised at Rikyū's suggestion, an idea that he could not have come up with himself.

古田織部

As this story indicates, until Rikyū's time the issue of 'ash form[s]' (*haigata*) was practically nonexistent. one of the earliest extant sources explaining ash forms is the *Hosokawa Chanoyu no Sho* [Writings on the Chanoyu of Hosokawa Sansai (1563–1645)], which was written in 1668. It contains the following passage:

灰形
細川茶湯之書

The ash should be arranged very conservatively in small braziers and braziers up to medium size; in large braziers, it is also arranged so as to have an interesting appearance. There are oral traditions about this, but writings are hard to find.



Drawings in the *Kai Ki* of braziers favored by Kanamori Sōwa.

This means that for small or medium braziers, the ash should be arranged very primly, while for larger braziers there were secret oral traditions revealing esoteric methods of constructing more unusual ash formations.

槐記 Within the diary-like work entitled *Kai Ki*,¹⁴ in the entry for the 7th day of the 4th month, Kyōho 14 (1729), there are drawings of braziers favored by the tea master Kanamori Sōwa (1584–1656). [See reproductions above.] According to the text, the brazier numbered (1) was to be paired with a ‘cloud-and-dragon’ kettle, with the trivet being small and set high up, close to the mouth of the brazier. The ash was to be formed into a straight horizontal ridge (*ichimonji*) in the front, and into a shape resembling a distant mountain (*tōyama*) in the back. The small clay fire-guard referred to as *maekawarake*, usually found in the front of the brazier ash, was, in this case, to be entirely buried and invisible. The braziers numbered (2) and (5) were of the ‘rouge-pot’ type, within which the ash was to be combed up from the sides. The braziers numbered (3) and (4) were to have their ash formed into low mountains, with the

¹⁴ The *Kai Ki* consists of a record kept by Yamashina Dōan of the words and deeds of Konoe Iehiro, covering the years Kyōho 9–20 (1724–35).

front area made flat. Example (6) had a window in the front and back, and a wide rim around the mouth so that the kettle could be set atop it on wooden spacers (*sukigi*) [as opposed to using a trivet]. The ash was to be formed into two straight horizontal ridges (*nimonji*). From this it is clear that, during the Edo period, particular ash forms were devised to suit particular brazier types. 二文字

The Varieties of Ash

There is a story which Sen Sōtan (1578–1658), grandson of Sen Rikyū, supposedly told his three sons. According to this story, young Sōtan once accompanied his uncle Dōan to a tea gathering hosted by Furuta Oribe, and when they were seated in the reception room connected to the tearoom, Oribe requested Dōan to lay the charcoal. Taking up the ash bowl (*haiki*), Dōan swiftly repaired the ash in the sunken hearth and then deftly laid the charcoal. The charcoal on this occasion looked especially good. 千宗旦 道安 灰器

On the way back, Sōtan asked Dōan, “Lord Oribe is presently considered the greatest tea master of our time. Don’t you think it was a bit presumptuous to fix the ash in his sunken hearth?” To this, Dōan replied, “He may have taken the title ‘master,’ but with ash that is not done well, it is impossible to lay the charcoal. Therefore, I simply repaired it.”

The role played by ash is explained in the *Crow and Rat Collection*, “Ash should hold the fire well and be beautiful.” That is, the important factors are that the ash should facilitate steady burning of the charcoal and retain the heat of the fire, and should also be beautiful.

Since ancient times, chanoyu practitioners have employed many innovative varieties of ash in the sunken hearth. The *Survey*, which dates to the year 1554, refers to three kinds of ash used at that time: ‘burnt ash’ (*koge-bai*), ‘granular ash’ (*tsubu-bai*), and ‘bean-powder ash’ (*mame-no-ko-bai*). In corroborating this, tea records from that era reveal that ‘burnt ash’ and ‘granular ash’ were the norm. For example, looking at two entries in the *Tennōjiya Kaiki* [Tennōjiya Tea Gathering Records]¹⁵ in the year 1549 (Tembun 18), there is, 焦灰 粒灰 豆粉灰 天王寺屋会記

¹⁵ The *Tennōjiya Kaiki* is a multi-volume record of tea gatherings given or attended by three generations of the Tsuda family who owned the Tennōjiya merchantile establishment in Sakai. Altogether, it covers the years 1548 to 1590.

- sunken hearth (*irori*), flat kettle, *jizai*, 'burnt ash' (1st month, 26th day; Adachi's tea gathering)
- sunken hearth (*irori*), flat kettle, 'granular ash' (11th month, 9th day, morning; Lord Chūsuke Kurō's tea gathering)

I would conjecture that the kind of ash referred to as 'burnt ash' was something like the wisteria ash (*fuji-bai*) or caltrop ash (*hishi-bai*) used today in the brazier, which is made by burning wisteria or caltrop seed pods. As for 'bean-powder ash,' I believe this was the same as the "fine-dust ash" (*mijin-bai*) mentioned in the *Matsuya Kaiki* entry for a morning tea gathering held by Tsutsui Junkei on the 26th day of the first month of Tenshō 11 (1583). In the *Matsuya Kaiki*, there is also mention of an ash described as *mizore* or "sleet," and one described as "coarse sleet" (*araki mizore*). These types of ash are only recorded for the sunken hearth season, however, and there is not a single entry mentioning the ash used in the brazier.

In the *Chanoyu Hishō* [Secret Selections on Chanoyu]¹⁶ as well as the *Mujūshō* [Selections of 'the Non-attached'],¹⁷ there are statements claiming that the only kind of ash used in the sunken hearth during ancient times was 'silky ash' (*fukusa-bai*), finely sifted ash with a silky texture. However, in tea records kept during the Tembun era (1532–55), when Takeno Jōō was alive, we find no mention of the use of 'silky ash,' but mostly 'granular ash,' 'burnt ash,' and 'sleet ash.' In considering the claims of the two records listed above, the question naturally arises — why is there no mention of 'silky ash' in the tea records of the time? My hunch is that the term "*mijin*" (fine dust), which does appear in these tea records, describes the same kind of ash. This is substantiated by a passage in Yamada Sōhen's *Important Notes*: "'Silky ash,' which is *fine as dust*, and 'hailstone ash' are mixed together and used in the sunken hearth."

In tea records dating to the years immediately following the Tembun era, the majority of references to ash indicate that 'granular ash' and 'hailstone ash' (*arare-bai*) were used. In the above-mentioned *Mujūshō*, a work connected with the Sekishū line of chanoyu, we find:

Jōō saw cobblestones, and, hoping to incorporate this image into the sunken hearth . . . took lumps of damp

¹⁶ The *Chanoyu Hishō*, a book relating chanoyu methods and ancient practices, was written by Dōmon Motoaki and completed in 1738.

¹⁷ The *Mujūshō* consists of Mujūken Koizumi Ryōa's (dates uncertain) annotation of the *Sekishū Sambyakkajō* [(Katagiri) Sekishū's Three Hundred Articles] (see fn 10). Mujūken Koizumi Ryōa was a disciple of Katagiri Sekishū's close disciple, Ikei Sōetsu (see fn 19).

ash, broke them up and scattered them [in his hearth]. Jōō used 'hailstone ash' exclusively. Rikyū, however, used a mixture of 'hailstone ash' and 'silky ash' after visiting the hot springs in Arima where he saw stones mixed with sand after a landslide and decided to incorporate this image into his sunken hearth. The ancients were always doing this sort of thing; whatever they saw, they tried to incorporate into their chanoyu.

Jōō's 'hailstone ash,' which was made from dampened ash, is what is referred to in the *Survey* as 'granular ash.' Inspired by a gravelly landslide, Rikyū, on the other hand, used a mixture of 'hailstone ash' and 'silky ash.' In the *Chanoyu Hishō* as well, it has, "Sunken hearth ash: the archaic style was only 'silky ash'; Rikyū mixed this with 'hailstone' [ash] to make 'sleet ash'; Lords [Furuta] Oribe and [Kobori] Enshū did the same thing." When making this 'sleet ash,' the proportions were 7 parts 'silky ash' to 3 parts 'hailstone ash.'"

Later, in Yamada Sōhen's *Chadō Bemmōshō* [Elementary Text on the Way of Tea], there is this entry dating to the year 1680 :

During the winter, add 'silky ash' to 'hailstone' [ash]; in spring, sift out the 'silky ash' and use just the 'hailstone' [ash]. It is laudable for those without 'hailstone ash' to use 'silky ash' all the time; our predecessors thought so, too.

Sōhen's *Important Notes* expands upon the above, explaining:

It is best to use a mixture of 'hailstone ash' and fine 'silky ash' in the sunken hearth. As the season turns warmer, it is good to sift out the fine 'silky ash' and use just the 'hailstone ash.' However, it is fine for wabi tea people to use only 'silky ash,' regardless of the season. There are some lineages in which the use of 'hailstone ash' involves distinctions between different grades of coarseness, but this not good. In the Sōtan school it is considered appropriate to use 'hailstone ash' of mixed coarseness. Ash having a yellow tint is considered to be of superior quality. When putting either 'hailstone ash' or 'silky ash' into the sunken hearth, the ash must be thoroughly dampened with water.

湿し灰 This indicates that the ash had to be dampened in a process necessary to create 'moist ash' (*shimeshi-bai*). It also shows that, despite the fact that it was common to use various types of ash in the sunken hearth, it was nevertheless considered appropriate for wabi-tea practitioners to use only 'silky ash.' Interestingly, Ii Naosuke (1815–60) was an adherent of the Sekishū school, yet his book *Hai no Sho* [Writings About Ash] mentions only one type of ash for the sunken hearth, 'silky ash,' and says that 'hailstone ash' should not to be used.

井伊直弼 灰の書 On the other hand, what kind of ash was used in the brazier? According to a work of the Hosokawa lineage, the *Hosokawa Sansai Chadō Godenju no Oboegaki* [Memoranda of Hosokawa Sansai's Transmissions Regarding the Way of Tea]:¹⁸

Ash used in large braziers needs to be light; this will lend an interesting appearance to the brazier interior. For medium braziers the ash should be somewhat dry; this will contribute to a more sedate atmosphere. The ash in small braziers should be extremely dry; this is to eliminate even the slightest unusual appearance, making it very sedate.

古灰 Referring again to the *Hai no Sho*, we find that Ii Naosuke recommends aged ash (*ko-bai*) as the "first choice" for brazier ash. Furthermore, he explains that the best quality aged ash is dry and light. Yamada Sōhen says in his *Important Notes*, "For brazier ash, use the lightest." These passages suggest that the lighter the ash, the better it was considered to be for use in a brazier. The most favored light ash was that gathered from the tea-leaf dryers (*hoiro*) used at the tea plantations in Uji.

焙炉 There are conflicting stories as to when the ash from these dryers began to be used in braziers, and who first thought of using it. One account, in the *Ikei Chūkai* [Ikei's Annotations]¹⁹ says:

In ancient times, there was no special ash for use in braziers; the usual fine ash or extra-fine ash [from the sunken hearth] was used. In his later years, Rikyū noticed that the ash that collected in the tea-leaf dryers in Uji was light and friable, and so he began to use this ash [in his brazier].

¹⁸ The *Hosokawa Sansai Chadō Godenju no Oboegaki* is an anonymous work believed, from the quality of the paper and calligraphy, to date from the middle of the Edo Period.

¹⁹ The *Ikei Chūkai* is the Daitokuji priest Ikei Sōetsu's (1644–1714) annotated version of the *Sekishū Sambyakkajō*. Ikei was one of Katagiri Sekishū's top chanoyu disciples.

Elsewhere, in the *Chanoyu Hishō*, Furuta Oribe is named as the first to use ash from tea-leaf dryers. Yet again, a conversation reported in an entry in the *Matsuya Kaiki* indicates that the first use of this kind of ash occurred somewhat later. The entry in question is for Kan'ei 17 (1640), 4th month, 17th day, and pertains to a tea gathering hosted by Hosokawa Sansai. Noticing the ash in the brazier, one of the guests, Tsuji Kansai, asked Sansai if it was ash from the tea-leaf dryers. Sansai is said to have replied that it was ash from an ordinary kitchen stove (*kamado*) which had been sifted and mixed with an equal amount of ash from the sunken hearth. He said that Rikyū had done something similar, and that the use of ash from the Uji dryers was a recent thing.

細川三斎

An early-eighteenth-century work entitled *Chadō Mochizuki Shū* (also read *Chadō Bōgetsu Shū*) [*'Full Moon' Collection on the Way of Tea*]²⁰ informs us that, at the time this document was written, the practice was to use light-colored ash collected from the Uji tea-leaf dryers, while "the old practice" was to use finely sifted ash from the sunken hearth. In the *Chadō Kyūbun Roku* [Record of Old Things Heard about the Way of Tea],²¹ dating from about the same period, there is a passage recommending that ash from tea-leaf dryers for use in braziers was best obtained from Uji "before the new tea," as "after the new tea [is processed], the color is poor."

茶道望月集

茶道旧聞録

Brazier Preparation as a Refined Art and Skill

Next, I will take a look at several historical documents and the detailed discussions they contain regarding the preparation of the brazier and the laying of ash. First among the concerns of this discussion is the matter of actually positioning the trivet inside the brazier.

In this regard, the *Kai Ki* explains: "The trivet should be placed in the very center of the brazier, so that there will be an equal amount of space all around the kettle." Continuing, it says that once this is done, the trivet should be moved forward two *bu* (0.66 cm) [in the direction of the host], so that when the kettle is set on it in the recommended manner — that is, tilting slightly forward — the space around the kettle will still be even. Three separate works — the *Primer*, the *Hosokawa Chanoyu no Sho*, and the *Mujūshō* — indicate that when setting the trivet in a

²⁰ The *Chadō Mochizuki Shū* (*Chadō Bōgetsu Shū*), completed in 1723, is a manual regarding the tea methods of the (Fujimura) Yōken (1613–99) line of chanoyu.

²¹ The *Chadō Kyūbun Roku*, consisting of information regarding the tea methods of the (Fujimura) Yōken line of chanoyu, was edited by Yōken's son, Fujimura Seiin (1650–1733), and contains an afterword by him dated 1712. The work was published in 1930.

brazier, the two front prongs should be set equidistant from the sides of the brazier, and, if the brazier is large, the back prong should be set five or six *bu* (approx. 1.52–1.82 cm) farther from the brazier wall than the two front prongs. For a small brazier, the back prong should be set four *bu* (approx. 1.21 cm) farther from the wall. The *Mujūshō* also explains that once the trivet is correctly set in place, “the prongs are twisted slightly to the left, and the brazier is twisted slightly to the right, whereby the arrangement is made even.”

歪 Making certain ‘flexions’ (*hizumi*) in the brazier, trivet, and ash space was considered essential. The forms these flexions took were even clearly enumerated, and were known as “the seven flexions of the brazier.” The *Mujūshō* explains this as follows:

It has commonly been said that there are seven brazier flexions. The kettle is brought forward about one *bu*; the trivet is drawn slightly to the right; the clay fire-guard is drawn slightly to the left; the left edge of the ash form is made longer than the right; the water ladle is angled slightly to the right; the brazier is turned slightly to the right; the [host’s] right knee is turned slightly [in from] the standard position. Together, these are what are commonly known as the seven flexions.

The *Kai Ki* contains a similar explanation:

The seven flexions of the brazier involve two for the placement of the brazier itself, bringing it forward and turning it slightly; adjusting the host’s body; adjusting the ash; adjusting the kettle; adjusting the trivet; and adjusting the water ladle.

It is reasonable to conclude, then, that to a large degree the host’s skill was proven by how well he handled the balance between the brazier, trivet, and kettle.

Once the trivet has been placed in the proper position, the ash is added. In the *Kai Ki*, Yamashina Dōan records that Konoe Iehiro had this to say about arranging ash in the brazier:

First, position the trivet inside the brazier. Then, to the center of the brazier, add the amount of ash you think necessary. Position the clay fire-guard and, with an ash spoon, push the ash that is heaped up in the center over to the sides, in the process making natural, unintentionally-formed mounds.

Concerning the amount of ash, the *Furuta Oribe no Kamidono Chanoyu Kikigaki* [Notes on Chanoyu Questions Asked of Lord Furuta Oribe] explains that it was generally the practice in former times to have seven to eight *bu* (approx. 2.12–2.42 cm) of ash in the center of the brazier, whereas “the recent practice” in his day was to have eight to nine *bu* (approx. 2.42–2.73 cm) of ash. The same work contains these remarks on how to stand the clay fire-guard in the ash:

古田織部正殿
茶湯聞書

The clay fire-guard should be stood up very straight, so that it does not lean over. Its position should be located in from the outer corners of the trivet, and its upper edge should be lower than the prongs of the trivet.

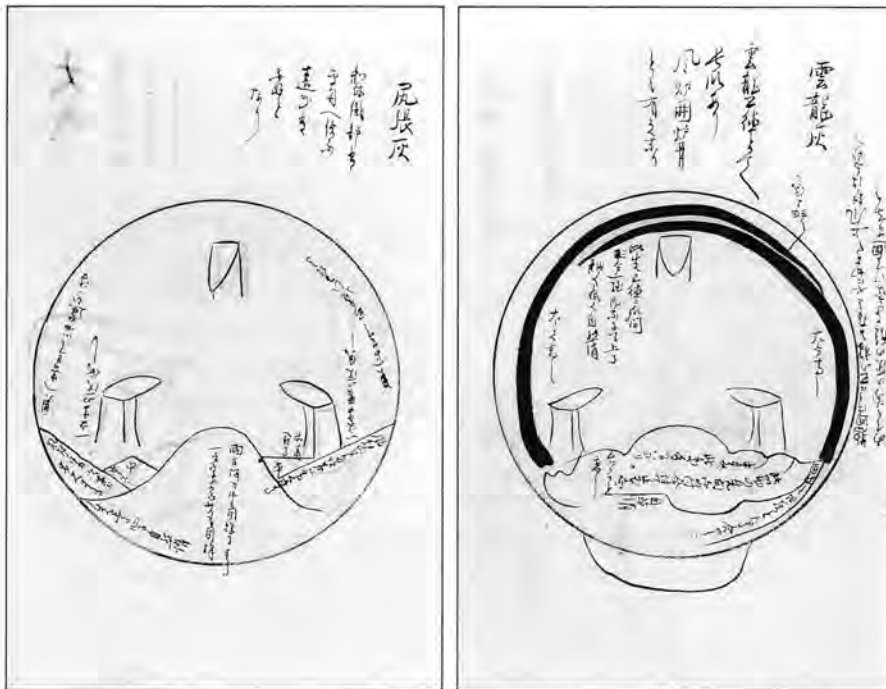
Of course, the reason for positioning the clay fire-guard so that it did not extend above the height of the trivet prongs was because otherwise it would get in the way of the kettle. The heights of the trivet and the clay fire-guard themselves, however, were not standardized.

After correctly positioning the clay fire-guard, the next step is to shape the ash. It seems that one of the earliest ash forms had two ridges — one straight across the back of the brazier, and the other curving along the front. This was something like a combination of the present-day *nimonji* (lit., “character ‘two’”) ash form, which has two straight horizontal ridges, and the front section of the modern *tōyama* or ‘distant mountain’ ash form. [See illustrations on pp. 40–42.]

Following the instructions quoted above on how to put the ash into the brazier, the *Kai Ki* provides instructions on how to create a variety of ash forms. It says that the way to shape the ‘distant mountain’ ash form, for example, is to utilize the crests and troughs which formed naturally when the ash was pushed up in all four directions away from the center of the trivet. It also warns that the mountain should not be lower than the front ridge, and that it is not pleasing to have the slopes of the mountain coming down equally on both sides of the back prong of the trivet. Rather, it is better if the mountain is located to one side of the prong and gently slopes down toward the other side.

As the preferences and innovations of various tea masters were inherited and codified by their disciples in the mid-Edo period, distinct chanoyu lineages began taking shape. In this context, ash form styles also became fixed, with different forms being prescribed for different occasions. Naturally, the styles differed depending upon the chanoyu lineage. According to Ii Naosuke’s *Hai no Sho*, the Sekishū school had six basic ash styles: formal, semi-formal, and informal (*shin*, *gyō*, and *sō*) for use in large braziers, and the same three styles or levels of formality for small braziers. These ash forms consisted of variations on three basic shapes: the ‘far-side straight ridge’ (*nukō ichimonji*), the ‘distant

真行草



Examples from the *Enshū-ryū Furo-bai no Zu* [Enshū School Brazier Ash Form Drawings]. Left: "Flaring-bottom ash form." Right: "Dragon-and-clouds ash form." Photos courtesy of the Chadō Research Center, Kyoto.

遠州流風炉の図

mountain' (*tōyama*), and the 'circular ridge' (*marubai*). Furthermore, only one clay fire-guard was ever used. In contrast, the *Enshū-ryū Furo-bai no Zu* [Enshū School Brazier Ash Form Drawings], from the latter half of the Edo period, shows that the Enshū school used as many as thirty-five ash form styles.

玄々斎
楽慶入

At Urasenke, the eleventh-generation grand master, Gengensai (1810–77), had Raku Keinyū produce ceramic models of ash forms, which served as a concrete means of passing down the prescribed styles. The models shown in the appendix [pp. 63–67] were made by disciples of Gengensai's, and bear Gengensai's cipher on them as verification of his approval. This particular group of models consists of eight styles, but there is another extant set, produced by a certain Fukakusa Sōsen, which has the inscription, "Hand made by Gengensai; copy of Tayasu family heirloom; nine brazier ash form styles of the Sen tradition."

深草宗峯

The basic styles in use today at Urasenke [see illustrations on the following pages] are listed here:

- ▶ *Nimonji oshikiri* — two straight ridges, smoothed and carved 二文字押切
- ▶ *Nimonji kakiage* — two straight ridges with etched lines 二文字搔上
- ▶ *Marubai oshikiri* — circular ridge, smoothed and carved 丸灰押切
- ▶ *Marubai kakiage* — circular ridge with etched lines 丸灰搔上
- ▶ *Mukō-ichimonji mae-tani* — far-side straightridge, front valley 向一文字前谷
- ▶ *Tōyama hitotsu-yama* — single distant mountain 遠山一山
- ▶ *Tōyama futatsu-yama* — double distant mountain 遠山二山
- ▶ *Mukō-yama* — far-side mountain 向山
- ▶ *Uroko-bai* — fish-scale pattern (reserved for use only with the most formal tea procedure) 鱗灰

Afterword

The study presented on the above pages highlights the historical development of the ash forms used in chanoyu braziers. Here, within the brazier more than anywhere else, this seemingly insignificant substance, ash, a virtual symbol of the Buddhist concept of impermanence (*mujō*), takes on the form of a work of art. But the Way of Tea teaches us to exercise artistic sensitivity and care in all the objects we use, and so the attention given to ash extends to every instance of its use in the practice. Among the more obvious of these would be its use in the sunken hearth, as touched upon briefly in this paper. Also, there is its use in the pipe-lighter containers that are provided in the tearoom when it is time for the relaxed enjoyment of a bowl of thin tea (*usucha*), and which are also provided in the waiting areas at tea gatherings. The practical function of ash in any of these instances is to serve as a bed for the charcoal. In order for it to play this important supporting role well, however, its preparation requires skill and careful attention. Tantan-sai, the fourteenth-generation Urasenke grand master, observed: “Arriving at a tea gathering, you will at once know the quality of the host’s sensibility and refinement by the ash in the pipe-lighter container in the waiting room.”



Translated by Gary Sōka Cadwallader

The *Hai no Sho* and Gengensai-period Ash Form Models appear from page 54.

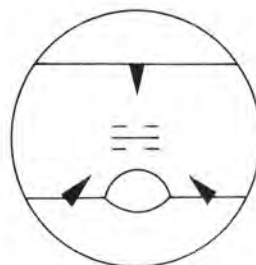
Urasenke Ash Forms

In addition to the ash's practical function of channeling air to the charcoal fire and holding its heat, the distinctive ash forms which have been developed for the brazier serve a decorative function within the tearoom environment. The eight basic Urasenke ash forms are those shown below, with a 'reverse' (*gyakugatte*; *hidarigatte*) version possible in the case of the 'single distant mountain' (*tōyama hitotsu-yama*) ash form. The term "*oshikiri*" in a name means that the ash form is prepared by smoothing and carving it into shape, and "*kakiage*" refers to the fact that it is etched with a lined pattern after having been smoothed and carved into shape.



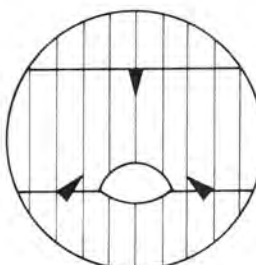
Nimonji oshikiri

Two straight ridges, smoothed and carved



Nimonji kakiage

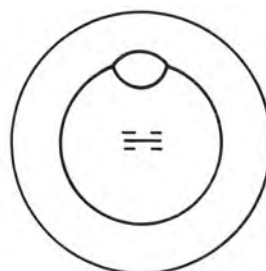
Two straight ridges with etched lines



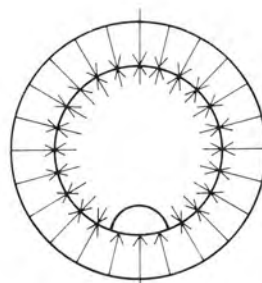


(view from back side of the brazier)

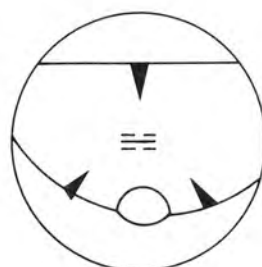
Marubai oshikiri
Circular ridge, smoothed and carved



Marubai kakiage
Circular ridge with etched lines

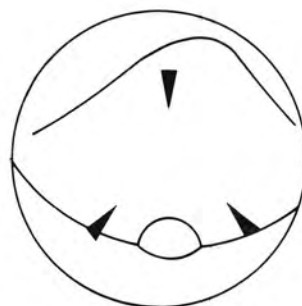


Mukō-ichimonji mae-tani
Far-side straight ridge, front valley

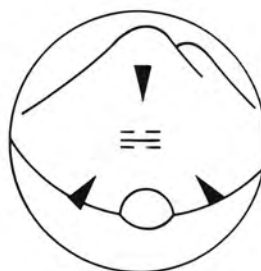




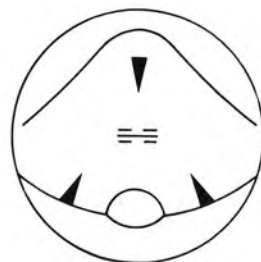
Tōyama hitotsu-yama
Single distant mountain
(version for standard orientation [*hongatte*],
before final sprinkling of wisteria ash)



Tōyama futatsu-yama
Double distant mountain
(before final sprinkling of wisteria ash)



Mukō-yama
Far-side mountain



Ash Tools



photo by Tōyama Takayuki

Shaping the *Nimonji Oshikiri* Ash Form

To protect the brazier and the underlying board from the heat of the charcoal fire, a sheet of thick paper, folded into fourths, is placed in the bottom of the brazier, and a clay dish (*sokokawarake*) is set on top of it. Ash is then scooped into the brazier. The amount of ash ultimately depends upon the appropriate balance between the brazier, trivet, and kettle. Next, the trivet is set in position and pressed down into the ash. The kettle, empty, is set on the trivet to check the visual balance. If necessary, the trivet's alignment, height, and centering are adjusted. Then, with the finished ash form in mind, the ash is roughly distributed within the brazier. The clay fire-guard (*maekawarake*) is pressed into place in the ash. Once again, the empty kettle is set on the trivet to check the visual balance. When the correct balance between the kettle, fire-guard, and brazier itself has been achieved, the ash is then smoothed and shaped as shown in the following photos.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)

for "water" has been drawn in the center, where the charcoal will be laid, white wisteria ash is lightly sprinkled over the surface, to add an atmosphere of freshness.

Once the form has been completed and the trigram

wara-bai
straw ash



shimeshi-bai
moist ash



ro-bai
ash for sunken hearth



furo-bai
ash for brazier



Ash Types Used in Chanoyu

photo by Tōyama Takayuki

fuji-bai
wisteria ash



hishi-bai
caltrop ash



The chanoyu calendar is divided into two basic seasons — that known as the *furo* or 'portable brazier' season, constituting the warmer 'half' of the year (May through October), when a brazier is used to heat and hold the kettle in the tearoom; and that known as the *ro* or 'sunken hearth' season, covering the colder 'half' of the year (November through April), when a sunken hearth is used. For the brazier, the kind of ash employed has a smooth, silky quality, and this is reflected in its name, *fukusa-bai*, which comes from the silk cloth (*fukusa*) used in chanoyu for such purposes as purifying utensils. Sometimes, however, this 'silky ash' is also referred to as 'fine-dust ash' (*mijin-bai*). For the sunken hearth, a coarser, slightly moist ash is used. This is literally known as 'moist ash' (*shimeshi-bai*).

These two basic ash types are both prepared from the same kind of initial raw ash (*kibai*) — the best raw ash being that derived from such varieties of oak as *kunugi* (*Quercus acutissima*) or *nara* (*Quercus serrata*). Raw ash derived from pine or almost any other variety of wood, however, is satisfactory. Formerly, when open hearths and hibachi were used for daily cooking and heating, the ash which accumulated in these was a convenient source of raw ash. Nowadays, particularly in metropolitan areas, plain raw ash — especially that from good quality wood — is hard to come by. For the convenience of modern-day tea practitioners, shops dealing in chanoyu equipment sell various kinds of prepared ash.

In addition to the basic brazier ash and sunken hearth ash mentioned above, there are such types as 'wisteria ash' (*fuji-bai*), 'straw ash' (*wara-bai*), and 'caltrop ash' (*hishi-bai*), which have special uses.

'Silky Ash'

'Silky ash' (*fukusa-bai*) refers to the highest quality dry ash; that is, ash which has been washed, thoroughly stripped of impurities, and sifted so that it has a fine, smooth texture. The initial raw ash is prepared as follows: First, it is passed through a fine sieve and placed in tubs, which are then filled with water. The ash and water are thoroughly churned, causing any bits of cinder or other buoyant material to float to the top. This debris is skimmed off, more water is added, and the ash-water mixture is again thoroughly churned. The ash-water mixture is gently poured into another tub, leaving behind the sand and other heavy particles which have settled to the bottom. This ash-water mixture is then passed through a sieve, the ash itself is allowed to settle, and the water is scooped off. The ash is then spread out in the sun to dry. This process

must be repeated several times before the ash is considered ready. Finally, in order to make 'silky ash,' it is passed through a fine sieve. The volume of fine-quality ash that results amounts to about 60% of the initial raw ash. Each year, when the brazier season ends, the 'silky ash' which was used in the brazier is again passed through a fine sieve, to remove any bits of debris which may have collected in it during use. It is then placed in an air-tight container and stored in a cool, dark place. After a number of years of regular use, the ash acquires a greenish-yellow tinge which gives it a mellow appearance much appreciated by chano-yu practitioners.

'Moist Ash'

To make 'moist ash' (*shimeshibai*), raw ash is first prepared as described in the above explanation for making 'silky ash,' and is passed through a coarse sieve while it is still moist. Thereafter, each year, at the end of the season for using the sunken hearth, the ash is removed from the hearth and saved in pottery jars or similar containers. During the hottest period of summer, it is then specially treated to enhance its quality and color.

In this treatment, it is first put through a process referred to as the "removal of impurities" (*aku-nuki*). The used ash is placed in a tub (photo 1) which is then filled with water; the ash and water are churned well, causing impurities such as phosphorous to rise to the surface (2); these impurities are either scooped or poured off (3); and the re-





maining water is allowed to evaporate. When the ash is fairly dry, it is passed through a coarse sieve and spread out on a straw mat (4). Meanwhile, coarse leaf-tea (*bancha*) or clove (*chōji*) is placed in a cloth sack and boiled, to make a dark solution (5). This solution is sprinkled over the ash (6), and the ash is rubbed by hand so that it is evenly moistened (7). This is spread out and allowed to sun dry (8). The process of mixing the ash with the tea or clove solution and then sun drying it is repeated several times over several days, until the ash achieves a pleasant coloration and smooth flow. The finished ash, still suitably moist, is again passed through a sieve (9), and then placed in pottery jars. These are sealed and stored in a cool, dark place.

In preparing the sunken hearth, the base ash that is used is dry ash mixed with moist ash. Once the trivet has been set in the proper position and to the right height, the base ash is shaped using metal chopsticks, and then a layer of moist ash is sprinkled evenly over the entire surface. After the laying of the charcoal at a tea gathering, moist ash is again sprinkled over the ash already in the sunken hearth. This is not only to enhance the appearance of the ash, which has become dry, but also to help the charcoal burn well and keep the dry ash from flying up.

‘Wisteria Ash’

Though this ash type is called ‘wisteria ash,’ it is made by either burning wisteria bean pods or dried cedar needles — the latter being the same material which is used in Japan for making common stick incense (*senkō*). The former, of course, would be true wisteria ash, while the specific name for the latter would be ‘stick-incense ash’ (*senkō-bai*). In either case, this ash type has a brilliant white color that is so pure as to lack character. Therefore, it is usually mixed with a bit of raw ash. ‘Wisteria ash’ is best known for its use as ‘sprinkled ash’ (*maki-bai*) in braziers (mostly earthenware ones), to add an interesting touch and a sense of freshness to the sculpted ash form. For this reason, the terms ‘wisteria ash’ and ‘sprinkled ash’ are often used interchangeably. ‘Wisteria ash’ is also sometimes used in incense burners.

‘Straw Ash’

The use of ‘straw ash’ (*wara-bai*) on top of the regular ash in a brazier, a hand warmer (*te-aburi*), or a hibachi contributes a special rustic atmosphere to the chanoyu setting, and a visual sense of extra warmth. The



'Straw ash' (*wara-bai*) arranged on top of the regular ash in a 'haggard brazier' (*yatsure-buro*). Each piece has been cut to fit a specific location on the ash form.

use of 'straw ash' in a brazier is only considered truly appropriate when the brazier season is nearly at its end in October, and the weather has become chilly — the time of year known as the 'parting from the brazier' season (*furo no nagori*). This is when 'haggard' braziers (*yatsure-buro*) — that is, roughly textured and shaped braziers cast of iron — are used. Of course, the use of hand warmers and hibachi is limited to the mid-winter months, during the sunken hearth season.

'Straw ash' is not commercially available, and to make it involves a somewhat complex process. Of the various types of straw to choose from, wheat straw is considered best in terms of its strength and fin-

ished appearance, although rice straw is commonly used. Straight pieces which have a firm core and nicely rounded shaft, and which are of uniform thickness, are selected. The husk is removed, and, avoiding the places having nodes, the pieces are cut to lengths slightly longer than the length of the ash surface on which they will be placed. These are soaked for about an hour in salt-water having a salinity approximately twice that of sea water, to prevent them from bending while they are being roasted. The pieces are drained and dried, and neatly aligned in a shallow bisque-ware roaster (*hōraku*). The lid of the roaster, having a small 'smoke-escape' hole in it, is closed and sealed with mud or clay. This is placed on a charcoal fire, and the straw is allowed to roast until smoke no longer rises from the escape hole. The roaster is opened once it has cooled down to room temperature. The straw inside should be nearly black. Each piece of 'straw ash' is cut to fit a specific location on the ash form, and is laid on the ash form with tweezers. For hibachi and hand warmers, 'straw ash' is often used in a broken or powdered form.

'Caltrop Ash'

'Caltrop ash' refers to the reddish-brown ash produced by burning the shells of water caltrops (*hishi*). Though this kind of ash is mainly used in incense burners or in pipe-lighter containers included in smoking sets (*tabako-bon*), it is also sometimes mixed with the ash for use in braziers, in order to give a mellow tinge to the brazier ash. Ideally, however, brazier ash should naturally possess this desirable mellow coloration, acquired through many years of use. 

灰の書
— Hai No Sho —
Writings About Ash

Collection of the Hikone Castle Museum

The Author

Ii Naosuke (1815–60) was daimyō of the Hikone domain, in present-day Shiga Prefecture, and became 'great elder' of the Tokugawa shogunate. In this capacity, during the last two years of his life he effectively acted as dictator of the nation. Ii first took up chanoyu as a young samurai, and later studied under Katagiri Sōen, a chanoyu master of the Sekishū lineage. Among Ii's writings on chanoyu, his most well-known work is the Chanoyu Ichie Shū, in which he introduces the notions of "one occasion, one coming together of things" (ichigo-ichie) and "solitary contemplation" (dokuza kannen).

— E

[text translation and reproduction of sketches]

Item: In Tea families, there have long been many sayings passed down about the ash to be used braziers, yet no specifics exist except that old ash (*ko-bai*) is by far the best. It is therefore difficult for modern-day tea men to obtain this ash, so, no matter how little there is of it, old ash must be well taken care of.

Item: If one should have the fortune to use old ash, first sift it and break up any lumps, then dampen it, and sift it again. Ash without any harsh qualities, and that is smooth and light, is known as high-class 'silky ash' (*fukusa-bai*).

Item: Damp ash such as this should be sifted with three or four small pebbles placed in the sifter to prevent it from clumping together.

Item: The ash referred to as 'tea-leaf-dryer ash' (*hoiro-bai*) is the prized ash that is procured from the tea drying hearths at Uji. This ash is not a must; as long as the ash one uses is old ash, it is fine.

Item: The 'far-side straight ridge,' 'grasshopper's head with a spreading base' (*inago-atama oroshi-kaeshi*), and 'avalanching starting point and terminus' (*nadare motosue*) features of the brazier ash forms are ancient shape types passed down from Rikyū. Both the semi-formal (*gyō*) and informal (*sō*) ash forms used by our lineage are variations based on these. In the brazier, it is not good to see shapes of

mountains and valleys with sharp edges and steep precipices. Once, from the Amidabō in Arima, Rikyū viewed the nearby mountain range with interest and said, "Wouldn't it be nice if this could be cleverly incorporated into the brazier." It is said that this mountain range has few valleys, and has a subtle, undulating form. The teaching of difficult formations and such for use in the brazier is from later generations. One should make gentle ash forms whenever possible.

Item: Ash used for sunken hearths should be the same 'silky ash' [that is used for braziers]; what is called 'hailstone ash' (*arare-bai*) is not used in our lineage. It is said that Rikyū, too, thought that the practice of owning no 'hailstone ash' and always using 'silky ash' was admirable. Sekishū also probably used 'silky ash.' We should remember these examples from the past.

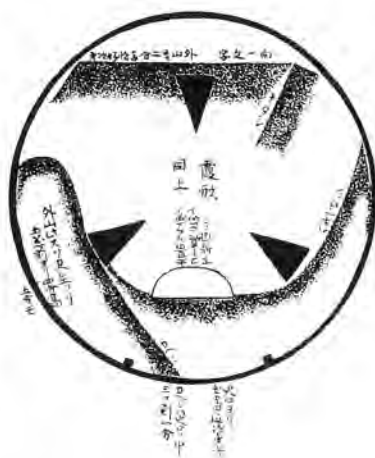
風炉灰形 — Brazier Ash Forms

Formal style for large braziers

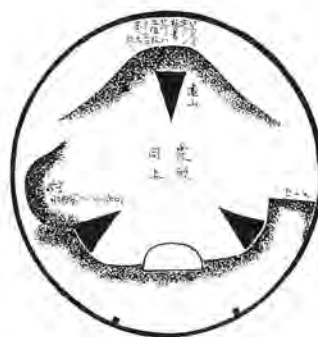
Press the place for the starter fire lightly to make the [appropriate] shape; then, from above, sprinkle the best quality 'silky ash' to finish up the surface, so the surface is light, as if covered with frost, being sure to do it as nonchalantly as possible. It is not good to create vertical or horizontal lines. Regular ash scoops and spoons, metal chopsticks, and so forth are used to do the ash. Again, brushing [the ash] with the closed tines of a tea whisk has been a practice since ancient times. There are no tools other than these; it is all a matter of a person's ingenuity.

[In the diagram] above is recorded approximate measurements of things in the brazier. For wider or narrower braziers, adjustments should be made. This is true for all the following.

Semi-formal style for large braziers



Informal style for large braziers

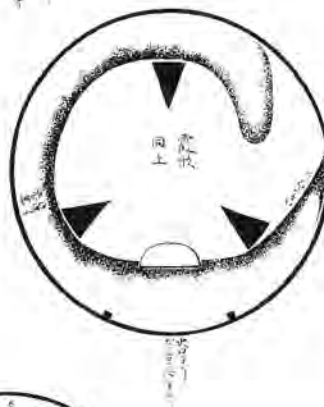


When appropriate, this informal style should be used in end-of-brazier-season (*nagori*) braziers. This is true for small braziers as well.

Formal style for small braziers



Semi-formal style for small braziers



Informal style for small braziers

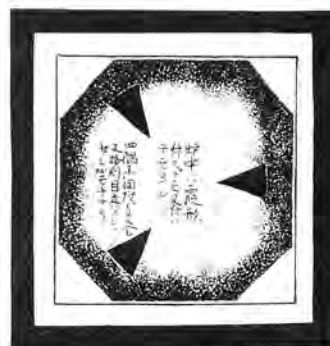


囲炉裏灰形 — Sunken Hearth Ash Forms

'silky ash'; depth within the sunken hearth is about 7 *sun* (21.21 cm)

In the past, 'hailstone ash' was used; it was said that 'hailstone ash' should prevail in the winter, while 'fine-dust ash' (*mijin-bai*) should dominate in the spring. The proportions of 'hailstone ash' and 'fine-dust ash' were even recorded. But, in our lineage 'hailstone ash' is not used; only 'silky ash.' Our past preceptor Rikyū, too, praised those who had no 'hailstone ash' and always used 'silky ash.' Sekishū also used 'silky ash' exclusively.

The way the trivet is set in this drawing is for a [sunken hearth in a] four-and-a-half-mat room or a room with a three-quarter sized tatami (*daime*). For a sunken hearth situated in the upper right corner of the host's mat (*mukō-giri*) or the upper left corner of that mat (*sumi-ro*), one of the prongs must be on the far side, the same way that it is set in a brazier. There are various theories about the placement of the trivet. One must not be perplexed about this.



Among the popular explanations regarding the placement of the trivet in a sunken hearth, one hears a version that says that the parts of the bottom ring where the two prongs are attached should touch the clay walls (*dodan*) of the sunken hearth, and where the one prong is attached, the bottom ring should be away from the clay wall. However, as it is essential to have space around the kettle, it is difficult to trust this explanation.

釣釜炉中灰形 —

Sunken Hearth Ash Form for Suspended Kettle

'silky ash'; depth within the sunken hearth is about 9 *sun* (27.27 cm)



These are the hearth (*irori*) ash forms [in cross-section] for morning, noon, and evening. Among the points found in texts passed down from former times, it is most important to get a sense for this. In the morning, when the ash has been re-made, the raked up places are high. At noon, the ash will have naturally begun to slide down the sides and the central basin will have become shallower; by evening, the mounds will be even lower and the center most shallow. As a natural course, this is the form the ash takes, and when putting the ash into shape in the sunken hearth, one should keep this in mind as a guide.



How Far the Trivet Protrudes from the Ash in the Sunken Hearth

Large kettle: 3 to 3.5 *sun* (approx. 9.09 – 10.6 cm)

Medium kettle: 2 to 2.7 *sun* (approx. 6.06 – 8.2 cm)

Small kettle: 1.7 *sun* to 2 *bu* (approx. 5.15 cm – 6.06 mm)

In winter, the ends of the trivet prongs should be close to the ash surface; in spring, they should be farther from the ash surface.

Ash [Form] Sizes in the Sunken Hearth

For large kettles, make the corners small

For medium kettles, make the corners medium

For small kettles, make the corners large

The information above is ancient tradition. It is difficult, however, to establish it as an unconditional rule. One must take into consideration the shape of the kettle as well as the style of the trivet.

丸炉灰形 — Ash Form for Round Hearth

use 'silky ash'

The 'swirl' ash form (*tomoe-bai*)

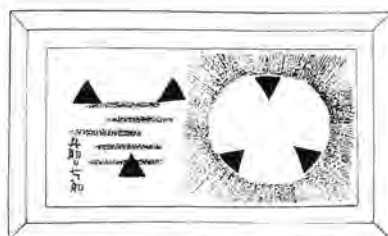
The [ash] depth within the sunken hearth is the same as that mentioned previously. The ash form does not differ even if a trivet is used.

Attach the base of one swirl [to the crest of the other one]; keep the base of the other one detached [from the crest of the first one]. The left and right should be asymmetrical.



長炉灰形 — Ash Form for Long Sunken Hearth

highest quality 'silky ash'



The [two] trivets are placed so that they face opposite directions, one facing the front, the other facing the rear. The [ash] depth within the sunken hearth is the same as previously stated.

The long hearth was originally for domestic use, and is found in preparation rooms (*mizuya*) and such places. One side is for a replacement kettle, and the other can be used for pans. On the side used for the kettle, a raked up (*kakiage*) ash form is made; on the other side, the ash is smoothed and a mist pattern is made on it. Again, if both sides are to be used for kettles, the 'raked up' ash form is used for both. For use with suspended kettles, this is the same.

底取大炮烙 —

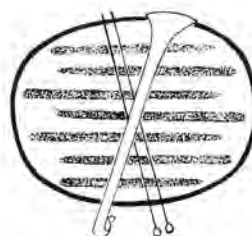
The Large Bowl for Ash (*Hōraku*) Used with an Ash Scoop
[the ash container referred to today as a *handa*]

Damp ash in the 'whirlpool' (*uzu*) pattern



It is not good to have the ash exceed the six-tenths [level].

Damp ash in the 'mist' (*kasumi*) pattern



Arrangement of the ash scoop (*sokotori*) and long metal chopsticks (*naga-hibashi*). The same arrangement applies for the whirlpool-pattern ash.

灰炮烙 — Ash in the Ash Bowl

Damp ash, "half mound" (*katayama*) shape

This depicts the ash spoon (*haisaji*) inserted in the ash bowl at the time of the first laying of the charcoal.



Same

This depicts the ash spoon set facing up, with incense container (*kōgō*) placed on it, at the time of the repairing of the charcoal.



If there is ash left from the first laying of the charcoal, it is not good to have more ash than that for the repairing of the charcoal.

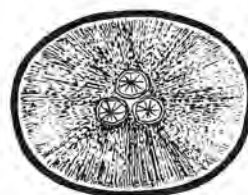
Sunken hearth and brazier use are not differentiated, though of course, since a large ash bowl is used for a sunken hearth and a small one is used for a brazier, the amount of ash should be adjusted accordingly. Although in other schools there is the practice of using a double mound in the brazier season, this is not used in our school.

火鉢火入灰形 —

Hibachi and Pipe-Lighter-Container Ash Forms

The 'raked up' style for hibachi used in the waiting area

Note that the number of pieces of charcoal is not fixed, and depends upon the hibachi size.



The 'raked up' style for the pipe-lighter container

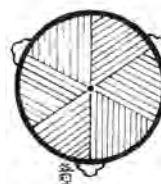
This is called the 'straw hut' (*waraya*) shape.



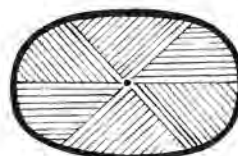
Hand warmers (*te-aburi*) having covers (*hoya*) might also be done using buried charcoals.

香炉灰形 — Incense Burner Ash Forms

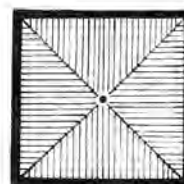
For *hoya*, *tasuki*, *suberi*, and *mukō-jishi* type [i.e., round] incense burners, six-faceted pressed ash.



For all *meshibitsu*, *yoko-jishi*, and *kamo* type [i.e., oval] incense burners, six-faceted pressed ash.

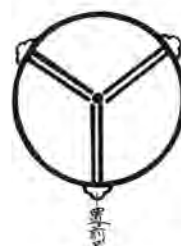


For square incense burners, four-faceted pressed ash; for hexagonal, six-faceted; and for octagonal, eight-faceted.

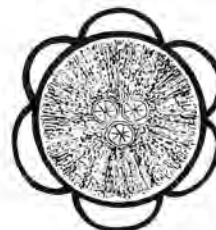


Begin pressing the design at the [point in the ash above the incense burner's] front foot. However, if the incense burner has a circular foot, determine the front according to the 'landscape' on the incense burner, and begin there. With incense burners featuring designs of the eight trigrams (*hakke*) [of the *I-jing*], consider the foot having the 'heaven' trigram as the front foot; if it has a circular foot, make the front the part having the trigram which matches the season.

The three-faceted, abbreviated pressed form



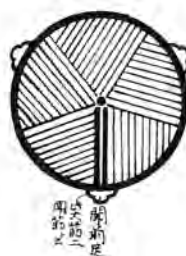
The 'raked up' form for the "fire-taking incense burner" (*hi-tori kōro*) [used in the art of incense appreciation]



Point: For ash in suspended incense burners, one should follow the previously explained styles for round, oval, and angular forms.

聞香炉 — Incense Burner for Incense Appreciation

Proper style five-faceted pressed ash



Abbreviated style pressed ash [cone] with only a line (*kikisuji*) [indicating the front]



香炉銀葉 —

The 'Silver Leaf' (*Gin'yō*) for the Incense Burner

For square, hexagonal, and octagonal incense burners



This orientation is described as horizontal (*ichimonji*).

For round and oval incense burners



This orientation is described as diagonal (*sumikake*).

The 'silver leaf' [flat piece of silver upon which the incense is placed and then set on the lit charcoal in the incense burner] measures 9 *bu* (approx. 2.73 cm) square with 2 *bu* (approx. 6.1 mm) [corner] facets. Smaller ones are 7 *bu* (approx. 2.12 cm) with 1 *bu* (3.03 mm) facets. Depending upon the incense burner, larger ones should be tailor-made.

As the topic of incense burners is within the purview of incense specialists, only a brief explanation is given here.



Gengensai-period Ash Form Models

Photos by Ōki Akira

The set of eight ceramic ash form models shown here were produced by disciples of the eleventh-generation head of the Urasenke chanoyu lineage, Gengensai (1810–77), as directed by Shingensai Fukatsu Sōmi, who was among Gengensai's highest-ranking disciples. On the back of each brazier, Gengensai has indicated his approval and written his cipher in red. On the top of the lid of the wooden storage box for each, Sōmi has written the name of the respective model, and provided a few comments regarding that ash form. On the underside of the lid, he gives the name of the disciple who produced the respective model.



1

Hongatte Doburo Standard Orientation Earthenware Brazier

This ash form is for a standard room situation (*hongatte*), wherein the guests are on the host's right-hand side. Sōmi's inscription on the box lid states that it usually features a single mountain, but that, during the hottest period of summer, two mountains are made [as represented in this model]. Also, it mentions that two clay fire-guards may be incorporated, and "Sometimes, wisteria ash (*fui-bai*) is put on the fire-guards." This model represents the *tōyama futatsu-yama* or 'double distant mountain' ash form.



2

Hidarigatte Doburo
Left-side Orientation Earthenware Brazier

This model represents the *tōyama hitotsu-yama* or 'single distant mountain' ash form for 'reversed' room orientations (*hidarigatte*; *gyakugatte*), wherein the guests are on the host's left-hand side. It has the same features as the standard-orientation 'single distant mountain' ash form, but reversed.



3

Nakaoki Doburo
Central-placement Earthenware Brazier

This model represents the *mukō-yama* or 'far-side mountain' ash form, for use when the brazier is centered right-left on the tatami or is placed alone on a long board (*naga-ita*). As with the other examples, two clay fire-guards may be used during the hottest period of summer, and may even be used upside-down [as seen in this model].



4

Benibachi Ko-doburo
'Rouge-pot' Style of Small Earthenware Brazier

This model shows the standard-orientation (*hongatte*) 'single distant mountain' ash form in a 'rouge-pot' type brazier, and with two clay fire-guards being used. According to Sōmi's explanation, the elements should be in reverse for a 'reversed' room situation (*hidarigatte*).



5

Mukō-ichimonji
Far-side Straight Ridge

Sōmi simply comments that this ash form is used when a small kettle is to be placed in a large brazier. This model represents what is normally referred to today as the *mukō-ichimonji mae-tani* or 'far-side straight ridge, front valley' ash form.



6

Nimonji
Two Straight Ridges

The instructions state that when this ash form is used with earthenware braziers such as the kind having a cross-piece over the front opening (*mayu-buro*), a 'wood spacer brazier' (*sukigi-buro*), or a 'phoenix brazier' (*hōō-buro*), the 'smoothed and carved' (*oshikiri*) technique is used, and wisteria ash is sprinkled over the finished surface. For use with bronze braziers, however, the ash is 'smoothed and carved' only.



7

Maru-bai, Kakiage
Circular Ridge Ash Form with Etched Lines

This is used in braziers which can be placed on formal display stands (*daisu*), such as braziers having fitted kettles (*kirikake*), and is also used with various iron braziers.



8

Maru-bai, Oshikiri

Circular Ridge Ash Form, Smoothed and Carved

This is used with 'beveled' (*mentori*) and 'wide-bottomed' (*shiribari*) braziers. In addition, Sōmi's explanation states that when it is used in a large earthenware brazier for the everyday heating of a kettle, wisteria ash is sprinkled on the surface; when it is used with a 'wood spacer' or 'phoenix' type brazier, it is done using the 'smoothed and carved' technique, with wisteria ash sprinkled on the finished surface; and when it is used with a bronze brazier, the ash is 'smoothed and carved' only.

Temae — Tea Procedure

Tsutsu-jawan Shibori-jakin

During the coldest season of the year, we see the use of tall, narrow teabowls referred to as *tsutsu-jawan*, or literally, “cylindrical teabowls.” Such a teabowl, especially of Raku ware, which is appreciated for its mellow tactile and visual qualities, and for the fact that it retains heat well, gives a feeling of warmth and coziness to a tea gathering held during the cold winter months.

There are cylindrical teabowls that are relatively stout and broad, and which therefore fall into the category of *han-tsutsu-jawan*, or “half-cylinder teabowls.” Generally, these can easily be handled as one would handle a ‘normal’ teabowl. The type of teabowl featured in the *temae* here, however, is a ‘full’ cylindrical teabowl; that is, one whose height and narrow width are so extreme that the teabowl requires a different handling technique. This particular *temae* is also characterized by the unusual steps involved in the handling of the *chakin* — that is, the linen wiping cloth. The words “*shibori-jakin*” in the *temae* name mean “wrung wiping cloth [for chanoyu].” To prepare for the *temae*, the host places a wrung but not yet folded wiping cloth in the teabowl, and the folding of the wiping cloth is conducted during the *temae* itself, at the point when the initial inspection of the tea whisk (*chasen-tōshi*) is conducted prior to the making of the tea, when the teabowl has hot water in it. This allows time for the teabowl to become thoroughly warmed. The combination of these two distinctive qualities of this *temae* — its use of a *tsutsu-jawan* and *shibori-jakin* — make it suitable for use only during the coldest part of the year. These two items also make it unsuitable for a procedure to make thick tea, *koicha*.

Basically, the *temae* is a variation of the standard *usucha* or “thin tea” procedure as conducted in the *ro* season (see *Urasenke Chanoyu Handbook Two*, pp. 93-138). It can also be presented using a utensil stand (*tana*) (see *Chanoyu Quarterly* nos. 51 and 52 for information on *tana*, and no. 53 for a step-by-step guide to a *ro tana usucha* procedure). In the following, we will focus on the elements which set this *temae* apart from the standard procedure, beginning with the manner in which the teabowl and wiping cloth are readied in the preparation room.

Photos courtesy of Tankōsha Publishing Co., Kyoto.

Prior to the start of the temae, warm the teabowl with hot water, and, just before the temae begins, take a linen wiping cloth that has been soaking in piping hot water and wring out all the excess water as usual. Place the wrung wiping cloth in the teabowl so that the “ears” — that is, the two protruding corners — are up and to the left side of the teabowl. Because of the extreme height of the teabowl, a tea whisk with handle portion that is longer than usual is necessary. Tea whisks for use with ‘full’ cylindrical teabowls are generally about 1.5 cm longer than standard tea whisks. Place the tea whisk in the teabowl and then the tea-scoop across the right side of the teabowl in the ‘normal’ way.



(1)

As for a standard temae, sit at the closed sadōguchi, place the water jar on the side farthest from the guests, open the sliding door, and bow (1).



(2)

Hold the water jar, proceed to the temae tatami, and place the water jar in the center of the utensil mat (2). Return to the preparation room.



(3)

Bring the tea container and teabowl to the temae tatami, holding the tea container in the standard manner, and holding the teabowl from the side (3).



(4)

Place the two items in front of the water jar (4). Again return to the preparation room.



(5)

In the standard manner, bring in the waste-water receptacle, close the sadōguchi door, move to the proper temae position at the temae tatami, and put the waste-water receptacle down to your side (5).



(6)

As usual, hold the ladle, place the lid rest in the corner of the ro tatami, rest the ladle on the lid rest, and then move the waste-water receptacle farther up (6).



(7)

After pausing for concentration, pick up the teabowl by grasping it from the side with your left hand (hereafter, L) (7).



(8)

Transfer the teabowl to your right hand (hereafter, R) (8).



(9)

Place the teabowl in front of your knees, leaving enough space to place the tea container (9).



(10)

Pick up the tea container and set it in front of you (10). In the standard manner, fold your fukusa and use it to purify the tea container and then the teascoop, placing these items in their usual, designated positions. Take the tea whisk from the teabowl and stand it to right of the tea container.



(11)

Picking up the teabowl from the side with R, move it closer to your knees. Pick up the ladle, hold it in the "mirror" pose, remove the kettle lid and set it on the lid rest, and remove the wiping cloth from the teabowl with R. Place the wiping cloth on the kettle lid (11). (Note that the "ears" point to your left.)



(12)

Pour a ladleful of hot water into the teabowl (12).



(13)

Take the tea whisk with R, and, with L supporting the teabowl from the side, put the tea whisk into the teabowl and rest it against the right-hand side (13).



(14)

Pick up the wiping cloth with R (14).



(15)

Bring the wiping cloth in front of you, hold one "ear" with L and then the other with R, and pull the wiping cloth out to its full length (15).



(16)

Fold the wiping cloth in the standard manner (16-19).



(17)



(18)



(19)



(20)

Place the folded wiping cloth on the kettle lid with R (20).



(21)

With R, hold the handle of the tea whisk which rests in the teabowl. Hold the teabowl from the side with L, and tilt it on edge so that the mouth slightly faces right. Conduct *chasen-toshi* as usual, lifting (21) and rotating the tea whisk twice and then swishing it in the teabowl water.



(22)

Before making the circular movement of the tea whisk at the end of the *chasen-toshi* procedure, put the teabowl back down flat on the tatami with L. Then, in the same way that you would with a 'normal' teabowl, draw the tea whisk out of the teabowl (22).



(23)

Return the tea whisk to its place on the tatami (23).



(24)

Pick up the teabowl from the side with R (24).



(25)

Hold the teabowl from the bottom with L (25).



(26)

Discard the water into the waste-water receptacle (26).



(27)

Pick up the wiping cloth with R, and bring it above the teabowl (27).



(28)

As you begin to place the wiping cloth into the teabowl, rehold it so the index and third fingers of R clasp it from the top. Extend this into the teabowl (28), and wipe the teabowl bottom using the same strokes as usual. Briefly rest the wiping cloth in the bottom of the teabowl, and clasp the front, looped fold with those same two fingers.



(29)

Draw the wiping cloth up (29), and, reholding it with the thumb and forefinger, drape it over the lip of teabowl.



(30)

Continuing to handle the teabowl from the bottom with L, wipe the sides as usual (30).



(31)

With R still clasping the teabowl with the wiping cloth, return the teabowl to the tatami (31).



(32)

Remove the wiping cloth from the teabowl (32).



(33)

Place the wiping cloth on the palm of L and, in the same way that you would normally do so in the bottom of a teabowl, return it to its fully folded state (33).



(34)

As usual, place the wiping cloth on the kettle lid (34).

From this point, conduct the temae according to the standard procedure, but employing the techniques described above for facilitating the use of the tall and narrow teabowl. Remember, for instance, that, when whisking the tea, you should hold the teabowl from the side with L and tilt it slightly. Guests also handle the teabowl from the side. ☞

Book Review

Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader. Edited by Nancy G. Hume. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995. xx + 378 pp., including glossary, annotated bibliography, and index. US\$19.95, paperback.

This anthology brings back into print many "old chestnuts" — articles written in English about Japanese arts and literature by American and Japanese scholars. Some essays, like those by Wm. Theodore de Bary originally published in *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, date from the 1950s but have withstood the test of time. Others, like Roger T. Ames' "*Bushidō: Mode or Ethic*" initially printed in *Traditions* 10, 1980 (vol. III, no. 2), are from less easily obtainable sources and deserve wider audiences. The editor, who teaches English at Essex Community College in Baltimore, has assembled a collection of essays which introduce basic concepts about Japanese culture and explore particular issues in Japanese aesthetics. Her intent is to help Western readers better understand Japanese literature and literary traditions. She designed the book as a college-level text to supplement English translations of Japanese texts; fortunately, the essays are also quite accessible to the general reader. The book is worth owning because it brings together in one volume important considerations of Japanese aesthetics by a variety of authors, sometimes commenting on the same texts from different viewpoints.

The essays generally cover four areas: basic overall characteristics of Japanese literature (J. Thomas Rimer, Donald Keene, Wm. Theodore de Bary, and Graham Parkes); *haiku* and poetic principles (Kenneth Yasuda and Makoto Ueda); *nō* and *kabuki* traditions (Makoto Ueda and Donald H. Shively); and twentieth century cultural issues (H. Paul Varley). Also included are important discussions of "Feminine Sensibility in the Heian Era" (Donald Keene), "The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages" (Haga Kōshirō), and Ames' piece on *bushidō*. The editor has added short introductions to each essay and a longer introduction to the book, as well as a glossary and annotated bibliography. She also includes the addresses of audio-visual resource centers. As a textbook to accompany a survey course on Japanese literature in translation, this should prove quite valuable to students and teachers. A more comprehensive bibliography would have been desirable, especially since the decision was made to not update the essay texts or their references. Thus, important recent books are not noted, such as William LaFleur's *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan* (1983), Michele Marra's *The Aesthetics of Discontent* (1991), and Edward Kamen's useful anthology entitled *Approaches*

to *Teaching Murasaki Shikibu's The Tale of Genji* (1993). Although every book on Japanese literary aesthetics could not be included, the editor might have provided a much fuller listing with just a few more pages in the text.

With her laudable efforts to dig out those "old chestnuts" from various volumes to make the best examples of past scholarship readily available, she also presents a more homogenized view of Japanese literary traditions than current scholarship would suggest. The issues concerning women's literature and language, and even the whole feminist perspective on Japanese culture, seems barely addressed here. Keene's discussion of "Feminine Sensibility" dates from 1971, and makes certain assumptions about the uses of language and the processes of reading that have been challenged recently. Because I teach at a woman's college and regularly offer seminars on *Genji* and Zen-related arts and literature, I am probably more concerned with these issues than most, but even a casual reader of this anthology, I suspect, will detect a rather uniform set of views. While most of the writers have attempted to place their examples of Japanese literature in appropriate historical contexts, the presentations seem too straight-forward and not problematized. Perhaps a clear view of an era and an untroubled progression of aesthetic developments would be easiest for students to understand, but Japanese aesthetics and culture are much harder nuts to crack, especially for American students using English translations, and the difficulties should be noted.

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Japanese Historical Periods

Asuka period, 538–645

Hakuhō period, 645–710

Nara period, 710–794

Heian period, 794–1192

Kamakura period, 1192–1336

Muromachi period, 1336–1568

Momoyama period, 1568–1603

Edo period, 1603–1868

Modern period, 1868–

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Chanoyu, more commonly known as the tea ceremony, 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 Sen Sōshitsu XV, the Urasenke Foundation seeks to encourage the development of these arts and promote a worldwide understanding of the spirit of chanoyu.