

**Codified Tranquility:  
Ritual and *Communitas* in the Japanese Way of Tea**

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<p>This thesis is an ethnographic study of <i>chadō</i>, the Japanese way of Tea, with particular focus on the social and communal aspects present in a formal Tea event, a <i>chaji</i>. Perhaps as a result of the closed nature of the Japanese way of Tea (an invitation from the host is required in order to take part in a <i>chaji</i>) previous studies of the subject in English have confined themselves primarily to the aesthetic or artistic nature of <i>chadō</i>. In contrast, this study emphasizes the ritual and symbolic aspects of a <i>chaji</i>, examining Tea (the term used to describe <i>chadō</i> within the study), as a transition ritual, the ultimate goal of which is enlightenment or tranquillity. Through a comprehensive analysis of Tea and its practice, the findings of this study suggest that a special social-sphere is created during a <i>chaji</i>, a sphere which in turn fosters a sense of shared community between the participants. As a result of the ritual practice and the manifestation of symbolic communication within a <i>chaji</i>, shared values of respect and harmony are affirmed and renewed among the community.</p> <p>The initial fieldwork for this study was conducted over a period of three months in Kyōto Japan, based on participant observation at the Urasenke school of Tea as well as through conducting interviews with some of the school's students. This first-hand observation and research was then filtered through the lens of transition rituals as defined by the classic study <i>Rite de passage</i> of Van Gennep and Victor Turner's conceptualization of society and rituals. In linking the data to these theoretical frameworks, the findings show that in participating in a <i>chaji</i>, Tea practitioners are able to leave the mundane world behind them, moving through a phase of symbolic cleansing, and into the sacred or spiritual realm of Tea. This transition occurs in three distinct phases which Van Gennep defines as separation, transition, and incorporation. The study argues that it is possible to view a sense of shared community among <i>chaji</i> practitioners as taking place not within the realm of structured society, but rather in its margins. As such, the individual participant of a <i>chaji</i> is no longer defined by his or her status or role in society at large; when participating in a <i>chaji</i>, the Tea practitioner is sharing in a "once in a lifetime" experience of shared communal harmony.</p> <p>The findings also suggest that through its focus on traditional Japanese art forms (ceramics, calligraphy, flower arrangement), Tea operates as a mechanism to create a communal experience with a shared value system. Although <i>chadō</i> is defined by its adherents as being quintessentially Japanese, this study makes comparisons to other consumption rituals in which a communal feeling is achieved among the participants.</p>			
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## Preface

Before stepping inside a Japanese-style tearoom for the first time in Finland I noticed a stone with a black rope tied around it. With me was a student of *chadō*. When I asked what the stone was for, the student replied that the stone prevents a guest from taking the incorrect route when walking through a *roji*-garden toward the tearoom. However, when I asked what the stone symbolized, the student was unable to fully articulate the meaning behind the choice of the stone. In my own study of *chadō* I was constantly fascinated by how involved and detailed all of the procedures were, and I found myself wanting to know the meaning that lay behind them; why must a practitioner move inside the tearoom in a particular way, why each motion seemed so rigid, why the tea bowl was held in a specific manner. My interest in the meaning and symbolism behind these actions and the way they were practiced, as well as the larger question of what is actually occurring during an event held inside the tearoom, was the starting point for this study. The stone with the black rope tied around it, known as a detaining stone, does indeed prevent a guest from heading in the wrong direction, but it also expresses the responsibility the host adopts for the spiritual wellbeing of his or her guests. By following the route the host has prepared for them, the guests will safely, and with a spiritually purified mind, enter the tearoom.

I had the opportunity to study *chadō* procedures in Finland before conducting my fieldwork in Japan in the summer of 2010. The reason for this was to help me become familiarized with my subject, but above all to give me the means to enter the community of those who follow the Way of Tea. This problematized the study before I had even properly begun: in order to collect the necessary data to study Tea, I first had to become a Tea “student” myself. This may also be the reason why there are a fairly limited number of thorough anthropological studies of the subject in English. By acquiring a very basic knowledge of Tea procedures (and more importantly by becoming a “member” of a Tea community), I was able to apply to conduct fieldwork at the Urasenke Gakuen Professional College of Chadō (*Urasenke Gakuen Chado Semmon Gakko*) in Kyōto Japan. I would like to express my gratitude to the head of Urasenke, (*o*) *iemoto* Sen Soshitsu XVI for granting me permission to be an observant student at his school of Tea. I also want to thank all of the Urasenke staff members, specifically the teachers of the *Midorikai* group, for helping with my study, answering my many questions and making an exception in allowing me take notes while observing the tea preparation lessons. And above all, I wish to thank the *Midorikai* students during the summer of 2010 for welcoming me to their group and providing the data which forms the basis of my thesis. Lastly, I address my

gratitude to the Finnish Cultural Foundation for granting me a scholarship to conduct my three months of fieldwork in Japan.

# 1. Introduction

While tea is an extremely common beverage in Japan, tea prepared according to *chadō*, the “Way of Tea”<sup>1</sup> is a spiritual act. It is more than the simple consumption of a beverage, existing in a realm separate from the mundane world; here, the drinking of a finely powdered green tea, *matcha*<sup>2</sup>, becomes a way of life. This thesis offers a window into the world of Tea, providing a multi-layered examination of Japanese tea drinking etiquette and an environment where, according to the beliefs of *chadō*, the participants may potentially achieve enlightenment.

The Way of Tea is an institutionalized form of spiritual activity that focuses on the sharing of a bowl of tea among a group of people, each of whom will ideally possess the same cosmic model and world-view. In Tea, a symbolic communication tool is created in an effort to reinforce the doctrine “peace through sharing a bowl of tea.”<sup>3</sup> In Japan, *chadō* has also had an important role in creating and maintaining political relations, as well as fostering a sense of “Japaneseness” through its architecture, arts and etiquette. Today, the Japanese Way of Tea is also taught outside Japan and as such its role as a cultural institution of Japanese traditions has spread around the world. There are nearly as many reasons to practice Tea as there are followers, but in many cases those who have committed to the discipline portray Tea not simply as a hobby but rather as a philosophy for life. The aim of this thesis is to offer a more profound view of the Way of Tea and especially to explain the actuality of what takes place during a formal Tea event, a *chaji*.

Entering the world of Tea is not easy. Tea followers form a somewhat closed community, limiting access to those who are proficient in the discipline, or at least to those with some knowledge of Tea etiquette and practices. However, it is possible for anybody with a desire to learn to become a member of a Tea community simply by finding a teacher or a group where Tea is being practiced. Nonetheless, learning Tea and studying it are different matters. For one thing, the possibility of experiencing and observing a formal Tea event is dependent on an

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<sup>1</sup> The term “Way of Tea” (which, for the purposes of this study will be shortened to Tea) is used in this thesis when referring to the term *chadō*, that is, the philosophical “Way” of Tea and its discipline. When talking about an event where tea is prepared according to *chadō* procedures without specifically identifying it as an informal or formal event, I use the term Tea event.

<sup>2</sup> *Matcha* is green tea ground from shade-grown tea leaves into a fine powder. In *chadō*, *matcha* powder is mixed with hot water to make either thick tea, *koicha*, or thin tea, *usucha*. In Japan today *matcha* is also used as a flavor, for example in ice cream or chocolate.

<sup>3</sup> From *Tea Life, Tea Mind* by Soshitsu Sen XV, 2003 [1979].



invitation, and as a *chaji* is a private formal event, one needs to be invited as a guest before being able to participate. This raises a very real challenge to anyone who wishes to study the topic; without being a follower of Tea oneself, the chances of receiving an invitation are rather limited<sup>4</sup>. This study aims to give an explanation as to why invitations to *chaji* events are given out most frequently within the community, and what happens, and why, during such a formal Tea event. Focusing on aspects of the vast symbolic codex surrounding a *chaji*, this study portrays the formal Tea event as a tool for transition from secular to sacred. As the structure of such an event is highly codified, it is understandable that the material manifestation of Tea practices (such as the utensils used, or the formal kimono worn by participants) is emphasized. Given this, it should come as no surprise that so many studies of Tea have focused on describing this rich aesthetical world. In contrast, this study views the material objects of the world of Tea as the means by which something essentially social and collective is manifested; the nature of Tea lies in the creation of a particularized sphere of space and time in which etiquette and ritual reinforce a feeling of community.

### 1.1. *Chadō* and *chaji*

The most common and well known translation for *chadō* is the Japanese tea ceremony. However, among Tea practitioners this translation was often a cause of frustration and was considered misleading. Since the focus of this study is on the ritual aspects of Tea, and as I employ Victor Turner's definition of ritual as a behavior linked with social transition (as opposed to a ceremony, which he associates with social conformity) (Turner 1967, 95) this study does not refer to *chadō* as a ceremony, but rather as a tool for transition. The Urasenke School of *chadō* describes Tea as concerning "the creation of the proper setting for that moment of enjoyment of a perfect bowl of tea"<sup>5</sup>. On Urasenke's official webpage is the following description of this so-called "perfect bowl of tea" and what is required in its creation:

The perfect tea must [...] capture the 'flavor' of the moment -- the spirit of the season, of the occasion, of the time and the place. The event called *chaji* -- that is, a full tea

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<sup>4</sup> Since Tea still possesses a political role in Japanese society, politicians and diplomats have a greater chance to take part in a more formal Tea event. However, as I will explain later, these events have a different function than that of a *chaji* among Tea followers. At the time of my internship at the Finnish embassy in Tokyo in the beginning of 2011, the ambassador happily explained his experience in participating in such a Tea event with other diplomats from around the world.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/chado/chado1.html> (Read on 2.4.2012).

gathering -- is where this takes place, and where the Way of Tea unfolds as an exquisite, singular moment in time shared by the participants.<sup>6</sup>

The Japanese word *chadō* consists of two separate words which can be directly translated as the Way of Tea. The two Japanese kanji symbols in this term are “cha”, 茶, meaning tea, and “dō/michi”<sup>7</sup>, 道, meaning way or road. Another frequently used term is *chanoyu* (茶の湯<sup>8</sup>) which can be translated as “hot water for tea” or “tea’s hot water.” *Chadō* refers to the practice and philosophy of tea and it’s “Way”, while *chanoyu* is a more general term for the same thing (Anderson 1987, 496). *Chadō* is most often referred to simply as Tea, especially by students of Tea, and it is also the term most commonly used in this thesis. The first book of *chadō* written especially for western readers was written by Kakuzo Okakura in 1906, and in this volume Tea is referred to as “Teaism.” In *The Book of Tea*<sup>9</sup> Okakura explains Tea as a unique distillation of Japanese traditions which have fused into a religion of aesthetics. *Chadō* today continues to have a very strong connotation with something essentially Japanese. A visitor to Japan will most likely come across the chance to “experience a traditional Japanese tea ceremony” in many tourist locations or in a traditional Japanese guesthouse (*ryokan*). These “ceremonies” however differ greatly from a formal *chaji* event, and other than in a purely aesthetic sense, offer scant insight into what actually takes place in Tea. Nevertheless, even these types of tourist attractions are originally based on the tradition of Tea as fostered in schools like Urasenke.

In the various schools of Tea, students learn traditional Japanese practices such as flower arrangement, writing calligraphy, preparing a *kaiseki* meal and dressing on a kimono. On top of this, students learn the actual tea-preparation, for which there are hundred and forty different ways (Torniainen 2000, 136). The goal for the students is to eventually be able to hold a full formal *chaji* event by themselves. This is traditionally done inside a Japanese tearoom, but there are also ways to prepare tea which are especially designed to be performed outside. The person responsible for ensuring that the doctrines of a given school are followed is the head of

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/chado/chado1.html> (Read on 2.4.2012).

<sup>7</sup> “*Michi* or *dō* are respectively the native Japanese (*kun*) term and the Japanese interpretation of the Chinese reading (*on*) of the character for Tao. It also means road or way in Chinese” (Anderson 1987, 496).

<sup>8</sup> The kanji 湯 meaning “hot water”.

<sup>9</sup> As an electronic version of this volume can be found in full at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/tea.htm>, only the year in which it was published (as opposed to the year and page number) will be referenced when referring to it.

the school, the grand master or *iemoto*<sup>10</sup>, and he is the only one with authority to make changes to these traditions. The fact of these rules and doctrines offer a clear distinction between *chadō* and the mundane act of drinking tea in Japan. That said, tea continues to occupy a major role in Japanese culture outside the context of ritual tea drinking. During business meetings, visiting someone's home or simply in restaurants, tea is almost always served to the guests as soon as they sit down. On top of receiving tea in Japanese restaurants for free (something which takes place even in the cheapest *ramen*<sup>11</sup> stands), one can buy bottled tea, hot or cold, from convenience stores and vending machines that can be found on almost every street corner.

The ritual consumption of tea is not only separated from mundane activity but also divided into several categories depending on the season, time of the day and special events on the Tea calendar<sup>12</sup>. In general, Tea events can be divided into two types: a *chaji*, which is the formal Tea event and the focus of this study, and a *chakai*, which is a more informal event. During a *chaji* a small number of people are invited to share a light meal called the *kaiseki* meal, a moist sweet, *omogashi* and two types of tea, *usucha* (thin tea) and *koicha* (thick tea)<sup>13</sup>. The ideal is a maximum of five guests, making the event more intimate. Formal *chaji* events can be divided into seven principal types<sup>14</sup>, mainly depending on the time of the day, the season, or in relation to a specific social situation. A *chakai* is organized around a larger group of people and is less formal, the procedure is less detailed, and it is shorter in length. During these types of events it is common for only *usucha*, thin tea, and dry sweets, *higashi*, to be served.

## 1.2. Fieldwork and methodology

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<sup>10</sup> "Grand master is generally used to refer to the head or (*o*)*iemoto* of a school of the traditional Japanese arts (*iemoto*). The *iemoto* system is an educational system with economic functions the main function being preservation of an art from" (Anderson 1991, xv, 80). Granting the *iemoto* authority over the guidelines and rules of Tea is a means of ensuring that the Tea tradition is continuous.

<sup>11</sup> *Ramen* is a type of Japanese noodle which is often served in a hot bowl of broth with vegetables and slices of pork.

<sup>12</sup> The year can be roughly divided according to a winter season and a summer season. On top of this are special yearly events, such as the New Year's tea preparation.

<sup>13</sup> The difference between *usucha* and *koicha* comes from the leaves that are used to make them. On top of this the structure and methods of preparing *usucha* and *koicha* differ: *usucha* is whipped into a light green frosty drink while *koicha* is thicker in texture and a darker green in color.

<sup>14</sup> The *shōgo chaji* (noon tea), the *yobanashi chaji* (night gathering), the *akatsuki chaji* (dawn tea), the *asa chaji* (morning tea), the *hango chaji* ("after meal"), the *atomi chaji* (a tea event requested by guests) and the *rinji chaji* (a tea event given on impulse or short notice). The most common is the *shōgo chaji* (noon tea gathering). (Anderson 1991, 103).

This thesis is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Kyōto Japan during the summer of 2010. For three months I observed *chadō* in any way possible in the mundane context of Japan and for a little over a month I was an observing student<sup>15</sup> at the Urasenke Gakuen Professional College of *Chadō*, founded in 1962<sup>16</sup>. Since then I have been living in Japan since January 2011. Although I have not been engaged in concrete fieldwork, being a part of Japanese society and observing it from an “outsider’s” point of view is no doubt reflected in my thesis. My data is strongly based on observation of the Tea schooling environment and to the discussions and interviews I conducted with the students of the *Midorikai* group<sup>17</sup> in 2010. I took part in their weekly study schedule, which included lectures in the morning and practical tea procedure lessons in the afternoon. Some days the group would visit tearooms, temples or other relevant Tea locations and I would also participate in these field lessons. All of the *Midorikai* students hold a practice *chaji* before they finish their term. During one of these I helped out in the kitchen, and received an invitation to participate in another near the end of my fieldwork, an opportunity which has proved invaluable for my study. In addition, I was able to observe the lessons of Japanese students as well as their daily routine (this routine included a morning ritual that the *Midorikai* group did not participate in.) My informants were drawn from students of the *Midorikai* group, and in quoting from their interviews, I have given them fictional names in order to protect their anonymity.

The student’s at Urasenke live in school dorms, and much of the daily life of a *Midorikai* student circles around Tea. For almost a year they are immersed in the study of Tea, or at least this is how it appeared to me, watching their concentration and commitment, and based on what they said themselves during interviews. From time to time it was possible to feel the stress and exhaustion of the students, especially among the graduating *senpai* group, most of whom planned to return home at the end of the summer. Many informants spoke about how they received far more than just an education in Tea during their year in Urasenke, referring to

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<sup>15</sup>As an “observing student” I didn’t participate directly in the tea preparation lessons (*keiko* lessons) but was able to observe what was done from outside the tearoom.

<sup>16</sup><http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/uac/gakuen.html> (Read on 2.4.2012).

<sup>17</sup>The *Midorikai* group is the Non-Japanese Students Division of Urasenke. Tea students from around the world come to Kyōto to study Tea in this group for about a year. The Urasenke webpage explains that during the year of the *Midorikai* group the students: “attend classes full-time five days a week--receiving over 280 hours of lectures and spending over 450 hours practicing the thirty-two procedures which make up the basic study.” (<http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/uac/midori/index.html>) (Read on 2.4.2012). The group is divided into two sub-groups depending on when the students started. The *senpai*-group is the more advanced group and the *kōhai*-group consists of students who have been studying for a shorter time (one semester begins in the fall and one in the start of a year). I mostly followed the lessons of the *senpai*-group, the group that had been at the school almost a year already, so their lessons were more advanced.

their studies as a way of life. *Chadō* is attached to a particular discipline and each student of Tea commits to one discipline for life. There are many such different Tea schools in Japan, depending on their historical background and orientations, but for foreigners the easiest Tea school to access to is Urasenke (Anderson 1991, xiii).

After the *Midorikai* students leave Urasenke in Kyōto and go back to their own countries, many feel the urge and obligation to teach to others what they learned during their year at school. Foreign students have been able to study in the *Midorikai* program at Urasenke since 1970<sup>18</sup> and because there are more than one hundred Urasenke affiliates in thirty-four countries<sup>19</sup> around the world, there are many opportunities for people interested in Tea have to learn Urasenke-style *chadō* outside of Japan. For the same reason, I was able to become familiarized with *chadō* in Finland before my actual fieldwork, beginning my research in the fall of 2009 at the Urasenke Tankokai Finland association<sup>20</sup>. The association has its own tearoom in Suomenlinna Helsinki, where they arrange courses in Tea practices and etiquette. The practicalities of teaching and learning is essential to *chadō*, as it is with other Japanese arts, each of which are based on the idea of learning with the body with the final goal of gaining enlightenment (Kondo 1985, 291).

The practicalities of studying Tea precludes it being learned from books: knowledge is transmitted from the teachers to the students. For this reason a student commits to one Tea discipline and sometimes also to a particular teacher, a fact which meant that I had to be physically present at the school in order to see and experience the way Tea was being practiced. My short experience in studying how to prepare tea enabled me to understand its function in a way that I likely would have missed without a subjective experience of learning Tea etiquette; for a beginner, *chadō* is confusing. Small cues and signs shared by initiated students may be lost on an outsider, and the details and polished movements are at first almost impossible to notice. It is essential to do the procedures oneself in order to understand how much attention is put to each bow, hand movement and the way of handling the utensils. In addition, without having been a member of the Urasenke Tankokai Finland association, it would have been much more difficult for me to apply for permission to go to the Urasenke School in Kyōto. In order to receive permission from the current grand master Sen Soshitsu XVI,

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.urasenke-finland.org/urasenke.shtml> (Read on 2.4.2012).

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/uac/midori/index.html> (Read on 2.4.2012).

<sup>20</sup> The Urasenke Tankokai Finland branch was established in 1987 in Turku and it was registered in the year 2000 in Helsinki. The tearoom (*chashitsu*) in Suomenlinna, named Tokuyuan, was the first traditional Japanese tearoom built in Finland. It was opened in 2004. (<http://www.urasenke.fi/yhdistys.shtml>) (Read on 2.4.2012).

I needed a recommendation from the head of the Finnish Urasenke association as well as a hand-written letter in which I applied for entry.

The Urasenke school has a particular etiquette. For example, it was mandatory for all students to wear a kimono every day, and for those kimono to be appropriate to Tea and season. Tea kimonos are often single colored or decorated with only simple patterns. I myself wore regular clothes at the school (except during the *chaji* event) but I also had a dress code, although it was not strictly specified. The most important rule was to always wear clean white socks when entering a tearoom.

Most of the time I observed the tea preparation lessons (*keiko*) from outside the tearoom, but on some occasions I had the chance to participate in the lessons as a guest. Every day the students prepared a bowl of tea for me as they did for the teacher, and served me the *omogashi* (moist sweet) of the day<sup>21</sup>. When possible, I helped the students but often the tight schedule meant that instructing me in how to do something was more time-consuming than any help I might have been able to offer with preparations. Depending on the teacher, the lessons were offered in English and Japanese, but the Tea vocabulary (names of the utensils etc.) were always in Japanese. Each morning the student prepared tea for the day's lecturer and cleaned the class room both before and after its use. Other formalities included bowing as teachers walked by and also bowing when passing by the Urasenke Konnichian teahouse's<sup>22</sup> main gate. At the start, such formalities were hard to pick up on, and throughout my fieldwork I was very conscious of the etiquette. I was also cautious to follow it correctly (as doing so indicates respect for the school and its traditions). However, as my role at Urasenke was somewhat ambiguous, any breaches in etiquette on my part were not so serious.

### 1.3. The scholarship of Tea: theoretical framework

This study connects to the wider anthropological discussion of rituals and ritual symbols. By ritual I mean any type of formal performative behavior that possesses a desired outcome. Often multilayered in meaning, rituals can be viewed as culturally constructed metonyms built

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<sup>21</sup> Every morning, traditional, handmade Japanese moist sweets were brought to the school to be served and eaten during practical lessons.

<sup>22</sup> The Japanese Government designated The Konnichian tearoom and garden as a Historical Site in 1957 and as an Important Cultural Property in 1976. It is not open to the public. ([http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/tearooms/index\\_tea.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/tearooms/index_tea.html)) (Read on 2.4.2012).

around a symbolic codex and reflecting the important elements of a particular community. As such they direct an individual's thoughts to a wider contextual meaning by creating a shared social communication tool that directly or indirectly unites a person to the community. Symbols are, as Victor Turner (1967, 19) notes, the smallest units of ritual, each of which refers to something other than simply the symbol itself. The two-fold theoretical framework of this thesis is intended to offer a more profound analysis of how a *chaji* develops into a collective experience within a tearoom. On the first level I portray a *chaji* as a transition rite from the mundane world to a sacred one, and on the second level I analyze the way in which the experience inside the sacred realm of Tea is a manifestation of collectivism.

This study also connects to a broader scholarship of Tea that, at least in English, has been rather limited. Jennifer L. Anderson is one of the few anthologists to have undertaken a wider study of the Japanese Way of Tea. She is a practitioner of the Urasenke school of Tea herself, a fact reflected in her identification of *chadō* as religious behavior (1987, 475). After studying Tea for over 20 years, Anderson was awarded the rank of assistant professor at Urasenke.<sup>23</sup> While all of this might raise questions about the objectivity of her research, Professor Anderson's study provides an invaluable insight into an otherwise closed world. On top of the difficulties inherent in accessing the closed world of Tea, Morgan Pitelka (2003, 8-10) notes that after the Second World War the scholarship of Tea has primarily been written by a small elite group of Tea practitioners, and since sponsorship for such research often comes from the most influential Tea schools, the objectivity of these studies is also questionable. Similarly, since the Tea practitioner commits to the doctrine of a single school, access to sources of information at one school will inevitably limit access to the databases of other branches of Tea. As such it is important to emphasize the fact that this thesis is limited to the knowledge I obtained at Urasenke and is not meant to apply to other schools of Tea.

Further research was conducted by Dorianne Kondo (another student of Tea), with a focus on *chadō* as a symbolic process with the aim of articulating feelings and thoughts (1985, 287, 302). Her view on *chaji* as an event that functions as a communicative ritual where actors move from the mundane world to a ritually symbolic space (Ibid., 294) is shared in this thesis. Another anthropological perspective on Tea is offered by Herbert Plutschow (1999)<sup>24</sup>. He describes Tea as an aesthetical ritual that serves to unite diverse individuals under shared cultural norms. In this view, Tea operates as a structuring mechanism for ordering humans and

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<sup>23</sup> [www.sjsu.edu/people/jennifer.anderson](http://www.sjsu.edu/people/jennifer.anderson) (read on 2.4.2012)

<sup>24</sup> As Plutschow's article was published online, there are no page numbers. For this reason, when referring to his text in this thesis I give the year when the article was published.

society. Plutschow's article is however a more general discussion on the function of ritual as defined by, for example, René Girard, Victor Turner and Evan M. Zuesse, than an in-depth study of Tea. (Ibid.). The lens employed in this thesis is derived from Victor Turner's (1967, 1974 and 1991 [1969]) view of society as a process in which rituals are experienced and created in liminality. Turner's concept of liminality was borrowed and expanded from Arnold Van Gennep's (1960) theory on rites of passage, introduced in this study in chapter 5. Furthermore, a deeper analysis of what takes place during a *chaji* is achieved in this study by employing Turner's concept of *communitas* (Turner 1974, 1991).

#### 1.4. Outline of chapters

Apart from the introduction, this thesis consists of five chapters. A brief historical introduction of how *chadō* has changed and evolved over time is the focus of chapter 2. There, I also explain the historical background and role of *chadō* as an aspect of Japanese society. By looking at the political role of *chadō* in history as well as today, this chapter offers further insight into the function of a *chaji*. Chapter 3 provides a more comprehensive examination of the world of Tea, both in its physical elements as well as its doctrine. This section also serves as a base for understanding the elements comprising the ritual activity of a *chaji*. Chapter 4 concentrates on a step-by-step description of what happens in a formal *chaji* event. To provide that description, I merge analysis from my own fieldwork with Jennifer L. Anderson's (1991) depiction of an idealized *chaji*. In Chapter 5 I provide a conceptual analysis of a *chaji* as a tool for transition from the secular to the sacred. To do this I make use of Arnold Van Gennep's theory of rites of passage and show that a *chaji* actually consists of two distinct levels of transition. Chapter 6 focuses on elements of community as expressed in Tea. Here, I make use of Victor Turner's theory of *communitas*, as well as providing a comparison between Tea and other consumption rituals such as the kava ceremony in Tonga and coca chewing in Peru.



## 2. A brief history of *chadō*

Before delving further into the subject of *chadō* it is important to look at how it has transformed over time. Tea as it is practiced today in Urasenke and other schools of Tea has undergone many changes in its evolution. *Chadō* has played a significant role in Japanese history, and especially in its politics, and the transformation of tea drinking from a purely religious act among Buddhist monks to its use as a tool of statecraft offers a lens into the way in which Tea is practiced today. This short introduction to the history of Tea will provide a context in which to place current Tea practices and ideology. A timeline of the Japanese eras referred to in this chapter can be found in Appendix 2.

### 2.1. The origin of tea

As with so many other cultural elements, tea was imported to Japan from China. As early as the T'ang dynasty (618-907) texts were being written concerning the nature and practice of tea in China. One such is the *Tea Sutra* (also known as *The Classic of Tea*), written by Lu Yu in the year 760. The *Tea Sutra* consists of the history of tea in China, its manufacture, as well as what kind of utensils should be used and how tea should be drunk. (Kaisen 1991, 98). Tea occupied a special status in the world of medicine and Chinese food, and its role in the religious system was immense. By the middle of the T'ang dynasty tea had been integrated into Buddhist temple rituals and it was celebrated by scholars in essays and poetry. Eventually the etiquette associated with tea drinking became more rigid as Confucian elements began to influence its preparation and consumption. Confucius' concept of *li* (ritual etiquette, or the manifestation of virtue through moral conduct) was soon integrated into the conceptualization of tea preparation. The *Tea Sutra* and the importance Lu Yu placed on the physical and symbolic characteristics of the utensils began to play an important part in tea preparation, the effect of which can still be witnessed in *chadō* to this day. Lu Yu also emphasized cleanliness, form, and close attention to details in tea drinking, as well as a consideration for the guest's comfort. These are all good examples of the significance of the concept of *li* in tea preparation, as is Lu Yu's use of Taoist symbolism in the *Tea Sutra* to highlight the individual's relation to an ordered cosmos. (Anderson 1991, 14- 18).

As the Confucian concept of *li* is still visible in Tea practice today, so too is the effect of Ch’an Buddhism on the Japanese way of the tea. Ch’an ideology emphasizes enlightenment “through a single flash of perception.” (Ibid., 20). In this doctrine, neither meditation nor the study of religious texts was considered efficacious in the pursuit of enlightenment. Instead, one could reach this state at any time or place, even by performing the most mundane tasks. (Ibid., 21). However, while *chadō* in our times is centered on the idea of gaining enlightenment through the mundane act of drinking tea, the act itself has become ritually constructed.

## 2.2. Tea is introduced to Japan

After studying Buddhism in China for more than thirty years, the monk Eichū (743-816) returned to Japan. With him he brought tea, and in 815 he offered it to the ruling emperor, Saga (785-842), a noted Sinophile. This event is widely considered to be the beginning of the Japanese Tea tradition<sup>25</sup>. Soon after, the emperor ordered tea seeds to be planted in Kyōto. (Anderson 1991, 23). This development helped to foster the popularity of tea among the aristocratic class. Casual tea drinking was a leisure activity for the nobility, but the Chinese religious tea ritual was also practiced by Japanese monks. While the aristocrats would eventually lose their interest in tea, the Buddhist monks continued to employ tea drinking as a part of their religious activities. They considered it to have important medicinal properties, and esteemed it for its beneficial effect on meditation. The monk Eison (1201-1290) was the first to introduce tea to the common people, making use of the beverage in an attempt to cure the sick. (Kaisen 1991, 99-100).

A new era in the history of tea in Japan began when the powdered tea, *matcha*, was introduced for the first time by the monk Eisai (1141-1215). Eisai had gone to China in an effort to clarify his conception of Buddhism, and when he returned to Japan he brought with him both the Rinzai Zen sect of Buddhism as well as powdered tea. Eisai was also the author of the first treatise on tea to be written in Japan. Titled *Kissa Yōjōki* (notes on the curative effect of tea), this text enumerated the benefits of tea for both physical and spiritual health. (Anderson 1991, 24). He viewed tea drinking as “the key for the prolongation of life”, emphasizing

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<sup>25</sup> Eichū’s tea preparation for the emperor was also the first documented record of tea drinking in Japan (Murai 1989, 6).

Buddhist and Taoist concepts in his explanation of tea's medicinal powers (Kaisen 1991, 101). He also advised making use of tea as an offering to Buddhas and gods. In introducing the Rinzaï Zen sect of Buddhism, Eisai propagated the notion that anyone could achieve enlightenment through personal commitment and the cultivation of the mind. (Anderson 1991, 25). As the cultivation of tea<sup>26</sup> and tea drinking in Japan became infused with elements from Japanese culture and Zen Buddhism, it began to assume the form that we now call *chadō*. Two major terms integrated into tea drinking in Japan include *sarei*, tea etiquette and *chasuki*, the style of tea (how it is presented and which utensils are used). Much of this etiquette was based on the Chinese monastic code, a fact which impressed the Zen Buddhist monk Dōgen (1200-1253) enough to introduce the ceremonial use of tea in Japanese monasteries. This style of tea drinking became known as the *shoin*-style of Tea and it became especially popular among the warrior (*samurai*) class. (Torniainen 2000, 4).

### 2.3. *Tōcha*; the tea competitions and the “common tea”

As tea drinking grew more cultivated and popular during the Kamakura period, it also became commodified; tea was first produced domestically in Japan in Kyōto, and quickly spread to other areas of society (Murai 1989, 11). Two primary examples of this include tea contests and the practice of *obukucha*<sup>27</sup>.

In contrast to the tea drinking rituals of the monks, the nobles and *samurai* class made use of tea as a means of competing with one another. These tea competitions (*tōcha*, *cha kabuki*, or *cha awase*) were inspired by Buddhist tea rituals and were based on the ability of the participants to recognizing the place where the tea was cultivated. However, the etiquette of the competitions drew on rules of courtly pastime, where the elite tested their knowledge of luxurious commodities (for example fine ceramics and incense). During the competitions

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<sup>26</sup> Eisai himself founded tea fields at the grounds of temples and two of these, the Fushun field at Senkōji Temple on Hirado Island and the field at Tendaijiin in the Seburi Mountains, are still in existence (Murai 1989, 10).

<sup>27</sup> “*Obukucha* refers both to the offering of tea to the Buddha and to the tea itself” (Murai 1989, 9). Tea was also offered to the *kami* (gods) of Shinto, a tradition which gave rise to an event called *ōchamori*, which is still held today in Saidaiji Temple near Nara. Everything used in this ceremony is over-sized, from the tea bowl (around 30cm in diameter) to the tea whisk (35cm-long). Tea is served to everyone by sharing a bowl so large it can be difficult for one person to hold.

powdered tea was served to seated guests arranged in lines. These meetings grew into important social events at which people could dance, drink sake and gamble. (Anderson 1991, 26). Over time, tea lost its significance as a medicine and began to be seen as a leisure item (Torniainen 2000, 4). As the cultivation of tea in Japan increased due to these competitions, so too did the method of drinking it become simpler. Eventually it would lose its status as a luxury item as it became more common and cheaper to produce, the result of which was its widespread use among the common people. (Kaisen 1991, 106). This development was a cause of concern among the monks, who worried that in growing too secular tea drinking was losing its ceremonial and religious value. These monks were attempting to return to an atmosphere of restraint within Japanese life and tea drinking in particular. Regulations for tea drinking were imposed in monasteries, where the practice became increasingly intricate. During the Muromachi period, the style of tea drinking grew more relaxed and the use of Chinese aesthetics was no longer mandatory. *Shoin*-style architecture (formal) became popular and the use of a *tokonoma* (alcove) and *tatami* mats was introduced. The objects in use during tea drinking were classified for the first time into categories of *shin* (formal), *gyō* (semiformal) and *sō* (informal). This tendency to categories utensils and other artifacts in *chadō* remains an important aspect of modern Tea practice. (Anderson 1991, 27-29).

#### 2.4. Reclaiming Tea's sacred role

Murata Shukō, a Buddhist priest, has been called the founder of Tea. He grew interested in tea from a very young age, frequently participating in the tea tournament in Nara. He committed to priesthood early, but eventually ran away from the temple. In time, he became a pupil of the Zen priest Ikkyū (who had studied Zen under many well-known masters) at Daitoku-ji Temple. Shukō reached enlightenment from austerity and learned that the Law of Buddha can be discovered in the simple act of filling a tea bowl with hot water. He emphasized the aspect of involving oneself in the act of drinking tea. Shukō's conception of Tea also included the Confucian ideal of putting one's heart into the preparation of tea rather than concentrating on the formalities. Being humble and the solicitude between the host and the guest in a tea room were essential ethics for Shukō. (Kaisen 1991, 108-109). Shukō is said to be the first to refer to Tea as "a way" (Torniainen 2000, 5). This development stemmed from the idea of experiencing the *dharma* within tea preparation, and from there was expanded by Shukō to include four values that he saw as central to tea practice. These values were: *kin* (reverence), *kei* (respect),

*sei* (purity), and *jaku* (tranquility). *Kin* contains aspects of sincerity and modesty, *kei* incorporates respect with a sincere gratitude and appreciation, *sei* can be described as a spiritual and physical purity, and *jaku* is a Buddhist term meaning inner tranquility. (Kaisen 1991, 109).

Shukō transformed the preparation of tea and the space where tea was prepared in such a way that the practitioner's attention would be drawn away from materialism and directed towards the activity's more spiritual aspects. Murata Shukō invented the *soan cha*, grass-hut tea, a tea-gathering held in a small room with a limited number of guests, and also invented the austere four-and-one-half *tatami* tea room (7m<sup>2</sup>). (Sen 1979, 6). These modifications are seen as laying the foundation for the modern *wabi*-style of Tea<sup>28</sup>. Shukō also introduced the use of native Japanese utensils, combining them with those of Chinese origin. Gambling and the drinking of alcohol began to disappear from the tearooms as spiritual aspects of tea drinking returned to primacy (Anderson 1991, 30-31), although Tea still remained squarely in realm of the elite. *Soan cha* brought Tea's ideology to a more spiritual point, but tea drinking was also used as a tool of power: "grass-hut mode of tea culture was practiced primarily by rich merchants, and these men formed a group which functioned in many ways like an elite club" (Slusser 2003, 45). *Soan cha* was a response by the merchant class to the military's tea practice (the *shoin* style of tea practiced by the *samurai*); in creating a more "withered" way of tea, the merchants were in fact proclaiming that their style of tea was "purer" and "more profound", and thereby asserting their power and wealth over the warriors. (Ibid.). Tea was a tool for displaying the status of elite men wishing to express their wealth, and Tea utensils became symbolic objects synonymous with power.

## 2.5. Tea as a symbol of political power

Gradually, the simpler way of Tea which focused more on its spiritual aspects became popular among both the merchants and *samurai* alike. This change elevated the status of the merchants, who had occupied the lowest stratum of Japanese society. Urban growth and a developing cash economy further raised the merchant class. As well, the Ōnin Civil War (1467-1477) helped to strengthen their position, as the feudal lords (*daimyō*) were forced to rely on them for capital and military supplies. This was especially true in the port city of Sakai, where

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<sup>28</sup> The *wabi*-style of Tea expresses the beauty of simplicity and naturalness.

the merchant class began developing their own elite culture, a development in which Tea played a significant role. One famous merchant named Takeno Jōō (1502-1555) was particularly fond of tea, having been exposed to the Zen approach to Tea in the capital city of Kyōto. Jōō entered the priesthood and committed to Shukō's *wabi* tea. He preferred the use of *wabi*-style utensils and was the first to use a plain well bucket to hold water in the tea room. In time Takeno Jōō's tea style became known as the "Sakai school" of tea. (Anderson 1991, 33-34). Even though Jōō followed the rustic and simple style of Tea (*wabi* Tea), it is clear that among the merchants tea drinking was a tool of power and an indication of wealth<sup>29</sup>. Like other merchants, Jōō also held large, lavish tea gatherings where he could show off his collection of expensive tea utensils and art objects. (Sen1979, 6).

One of Jōō's disciples, Sen Rikyū (1522-1591), was to become the most well-known tea master in Japanese history. His influence on the development of *chadō* as we know it today was immense and, according to Jennifer L. Anderson (1991, 34) he is "the most important tea master who ever lived." Rikyū studied the Zen way of Tea with Jōō for nearly fifteen years until being summoned in 1578 to Osaka by the feudal lord Oda Nobunaga (1534-1582). (Kaisen 1991, 111). Nobunaga was an ambitious warlord, and being conscious of the advantages of dealing with the merchant class, he began to collect famous and valuable tea utensils as a means of allowing "him to display his powers without force of arms" (Anderson 1991, 36). For Nobunaga the presence of a tea master was essential, as it allowed him to control the use of tea by forbidding "public practice of Tea among *samurai* not personally authorized by him" (Ibid.). After the death of Nobunaga, power was assumed by Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598), who immediately appointed Rikyū to his entourage (Sen 1979, 6) and made use of tea as means for social control and as a tool for ruling without unnecessary use of force.

Hideyoshi had a portable teahouse that could be set up on a battlefield and in which he could relax while also engaging in "quiet strategy meetings with his vassals" (Anderson 1991, 37). Kaisen (1991, 111) notes that Hideyoshi "intended to try to use the way of tea in the reconciliation of warriors and townspeople." It is clear that by this time tea drinking had developed into a system that was not only about enjoying fine ceramics, spirituality or health; Tea had always been a part of an elitist culture, but through Hideyoshi it became a powerful tool for control on a national level. A representation of this was Hideoyshi's offer to prepare

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<sup>29</sup> An example of this expression of wealth was summer bath parties. At the time of the Ōnin war, tea gatherings called *rinkan* (summer bath) parties were held by the warrior family (Furuichi). In these gatherings people would compose *waka* and *renga* poetry, drink sake and eat food while bathing, and drink tea (Murai 1989, 20).

tea for the emperor in 1584. Hideyoshi built a “golden tearoom”<sup>30</sup> for this event, and even covered some of the utensils in gold. Because Hideyoshi needed help serving the tea, the emperor “invested Rikyū with a *kojigo* (“enlightened layman’s title”) for the occasion.” (Anderson 1991, 38). Hideyoshi’s attempt to “symbolically confirm his legitimacy as the imperial guardian” was clear (Ibid.). Rikyū’s role was doubly valuable for Hideyoshi, as Rikyū was not a warrior, but had connections with many of the elite personages of the time. The relationship was propitious for Rikyū as well. Not only was his social status elevated, but he became a very famous master of Tea. However, in the end this complex relationship sealed Rikyū’s fate, as Hideyoshi ordered him to take his own life in a tearoom. (Ibid., 39-40).

### 2.5.1. Rikyū’s commanded suicide

Anderson (1991, 41-47) considers a few options as to the reason why Hideyoshi ordered Rikyū to commit *seppuku*<sup>31</sup>. Rikyū’s strong sense of responsibility and loyalty to both the Buddha and Hideyoshi caused a friction between the feudal lord and the Tea master. Chie Nakane (1970, 59) states that the golden rule of Japanese social ethics is “no man can serve two masters”. This meant that Hideyoshi could not fully dominate Rikyū, a fact which might have intimidated him. Another hypothesis is that Rikyū’s merchant class background may have irritated Hideyoshi. Kaisen (1991, 112) concludes that the friction between Hideyoshi and Rikyū stemmed from the differences in how these two men portrayed the way of tea: for Hideyoshi it became a powerful tool of social control and a means of showing others his wealth and status, while Rikyū moved ever closer to the simple, *wabi*-ideology of Tea.

Rikyū’s death is one of the central events of *chadō*’s history but it remains somewhat of a mystery. In all likelihood no single cause led to the ordered suicide. Kumamura (1989, 43)

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<sup>30</sup> The golden tearoom was used during the tea gathering held for the emperor in 1584 became a “physical testimony” of Hideyoshi’s relationship to the emperor. Afterwards Hideyoshi would often display the golden tea room to guests in his Osaka castle. (Slusser 2003, 52).

<sup>31</sup> *Seppuku*: the Japanese ritual suicide by disembowelment is based on the idea that the source of life resides in the stomach. There are expressions of this in the Japanese language, for example: “*hara ga dekita hito* (literally, people who have acquired stomachs) – broad-minded people” and “*haraguroi hito* (literally, black-stomached people) – evil people”. Also, the expression of opening one’s heart in Japanese is “*hara o watte hanasu*” which means to “open one’s stomach and speak.” (Kumamura 1989, 47). Hence, *Seppuku* is a way to commit suicide by striking the core of the body’s life force and destroying it. Popular among the warrior class, it also implies a rigid self-control, even in the time of death.

states that the “immediate reason for Rikyū’s suicide was the wooden statue of him in straw sandals that was placed atop the gate of Daitokuji Temple.” At the time Rikyū was “at the height of his prosperity as Hideyoshi’s Tea master” he decided to undertake construction on the Daitokuji-gate. The completion of the gate was to be ready for the fiftieth anniversary of Rikyū’s father’s death, but it could not be completed in time and “Rikyū became impatient”, asking for twenty laborers to complete the job. Even this was not enough to complete the construction, and as a result “Rikyū boldly – and in an act that overstepped his authority – sought to requisition labor from a daimyo.” (Ibid., 45). It is not certain whether it was Rikyū himself or people from Daitokuji who wished for the statue to be set upon the gate. Whatever the reason, Hideyoshi was infuriated and commanded Rikyū to commit suicide by disembowelment in 1591. After his death his wooden statue was crucified and his family was disbanded. (Ibid., 46-49). After Rikyū’s death, Hideyoshi continued to practice Tea. He assigned one of Rikyū’s students, Furuta Oribe, as his new Tea master but ordered him to prepare tea in a way that did not reflect Rikyū’s *wabi*-style (Anderson 1991, 62).

Rikyū altered *chadō* significantly and his legacy is by far the most famous among Tea masters. Despite Hideyoshi’s disapproval, Rikyū’s *wabi* philosophy can be seen in every aspect of *chadō*, from the tea utensils to the inner spirit of the person involved in tea preparation. Rikyū made many modifications as to what type of utensils should be used in a tearoom, for example in his employment of everyday things conforming to his sense of *wabi* aesthetics. (Kaisen 1991, 114). Earlier “Shukō maintained that ‘the Buddha *Dharma* is also in the way of tea’ (from the *Yamanoue Sōjiki* quoted in Nishibe 1981, 23)” but Rikyū took this notion further, stating that “‘through concentrating on *chanoyu* both the guest and host can obtain salvation’ (Rikyū from the *Nampō Roku* in Tanikawa 1981s, 41)” (Anderson 1991, 53). Rikyū’s teaching transformed *chadō* into a way of life that spread from the tearoom to all aspects of life (Sadler 2008, xix). It can be said that he has become the ancestor of *chadō*, as well as an object of worship among Tea practitioners. A visit to Tai-an tearoom (the last of the tearooms built by Rikyū still in existence) during my fieldwork provided a concrete example of his legacy. As we entered, each of us was asked to show our respect to Rikyū by bowing formally in front of his statue.

“Rikyū significantly influenced tea values by changing a single character in Shukō’s normative mnemonic “Kin Kei Sei Jaku” (reverence, respect, purity, and tranquility).” By substituting *wa* (harmony) for *kin* (reverence), the tea master encouraged a more egalitarian approach to Tea.” (Anderson 1991, 54). He combined the elements of many religions (such as Shinto, Taoism and Zen-Buddhism) and incorporated them in the use of symbols in the tearoom (it is possible that



he might even have incorporated elements of catholic rituals in tea preparation, an example of which is the use of the silk cloth (*fukusa*) for the purification and sharing the bowl of thick tea). (Ibid.). Anderson states (Ibid., 57) that “the environment in which Tea is made was radically altered under his influence” and that Rikyū also redefined the tearoom, transforming it into a special environment where the sincere consideration of others is more highly valued than social status. He created the *nijiriguchi* (crawl-in entrance) in an effort to foster a spirit of humility within the guests, forcing them to adopt the position of equals. Another example of this kind of innovation was the sword rack (*katanakake*) where the *samurai* left their swords before entering the tearoom. (Ibid., 57, 59).

### 2.5.2. Rikyū’s legacy

After Sen Rikyū’s death his great grandson Sen Sōtan divided his legacy of *chadō* between his three sons. In this way, the “three *Senke* schools” were created: *Mushanokōjisenke*, *Omotesenke* and *Urasenke*. These three schools are still in existence today, each of them headquartered on the same street in Kyōto. (Torniainen 2000, 114). These three schools of tea are all actively engaged in propagating Rikyū’s style of tea (Anderson 1991, 66).

Over time, other Tea schools were created, especially at the end of Edo period, when the feudal system was established by the Tokugawa military government. A class-based society flourished in which “tea men” constituted a distinct class of their own. Tea became popular among townspeople (also the military government and feudal lords) and merchants used tea gatherings at negotiation occasions. (Kaisen 1991, 116-117). The ideology of Confucianism and its ideal of respect for social hierarchy stood in stark contrast to Rikyū’s ideas of egalitarianism (Anderson 1991, 67). As a response to this, and in an effort to ensure Rikyū’s legacy, the *iemoto* system was instituted: “the *iemoto* system is based on the idea that a single lineage may claim to be the only true authority on the artistic technique and related philosophy of a focal ancestor or famous teacher” (Ibid., 69).

In the Meiji period, Japan experienced an “age of the liberalization of culture” at the end of military rule, and as a result many common people lost interest to *chadō*. During this reformation, Tea, with its stereotyped formal etiquette, was seen as something outdated. (Kaisen 1991, 118). The head of Urasenke at this time, Gengensai Sen, attempted to adjust the Tea tradition to more modern times by creating the *ryūeidemae*, or “standing bow” procedure

in which the guests were able to sit at tables and wear western clothes. He also wrote to the Japanese government to defend the Tea tradition and emphasized *chadō* as a Way of life. This action eventually allowed *chadō* to be seen as a part of traditional Japanese culture that should be preserved. (Anderson 1991, 70). At the end of the Meiji period *chadō* was transformed in such a way as to suit the needs of ordinary people, not just the elite. This democratization in *chadō* allowed women to become tea teachers, and its popularity among women flourished accordingly. However, it was also a cause for criticism, as some viewed it as reducing the practice into something too businesslike. (Kaisen 1991, 118). By the nineteenth century, the foundation of Tea had changed. The association for the way of Tea, *Daishi-kai*, was created, and the Senke schools flourished as a result. After the publishing of *The Book of Tea* (1906) by Okakura Kakuzo, *chadō* was also introduced to western countries. In his book Okakura explains “the metaphysical aspects of tea to his Western audience”, but it was only after World War II that *chadō* began growing roots outside Japan. (Sen 1979, 8). Today, Tea is widely practiced in dozens of countries, and students from around the world travel to Kyōto in order to take part in the *Midorikai* group training program. As the practice of Tea has evolved, so too has its doctrine and mentality, two subjects I explain further in the following chapter.

### 3. The World of Tea

“The simple act of serving tea and receiving it with gratitude is the basis for a way of life called *Chado*, the Way of Tea” (Sen 2003, 9).

Throughout its history, the world of Tea has been constructed around a doctrine and mentality that have developed into a way of life. To the uninitiated this world can at first appear incomprehensible. The reason and meaning for a particular procedure can be unclear even for those with a long experience in Tea. However, as I heard during my fieldwork many times, in Tea every act, procedure and detail has a function, and these functions may often be multilayered. Symbolic communication in the world of Tea is manifested through material objects and activities relating to that material. In a sense, communication flows *through* the material objects and surroundings of a *chaji*. Physical elements comprise a setting for this symbolic communication, and a sphere in which Tea participants can express Tea mentality. As such, Tea doctrine and mentality is renewed and made visible in each Tea event, including those teaching situations where students are initiated into the world of Tea.

This chapter provides an overview of the “world of Tea” and will serve to clarify what Tea aims to teach to its followers. An introduction to the material manifestation of Tea is also given by focusing on elements relevant to this study. In presenting a general introduction to Tea doctrine, its mentality as well as its physical elements, this chapter will demonstrate the structure and codification that exists at the heart of Tea.

#### 3.1. Tea Doctrine; Tea etiquette and rules

“Once you have learned how to sit and how to serve tea according to the rules of the discipline of Tea, you are free to use your mind and body at will” (Sen 2003, 50).

Tea is highly structured, from the basic act of how to hold the bowl and drink it, to the predefined dialogue between the host and the first guest during a *chaji*. Every Tea practitioner begins by learning the etiquette and rules that are necessary for the proper behavior code.

This is done primarily by means of memorization (taking notes in class is usually forbidden) and can be seen as a process of “watch and learn.”<sup>32</sup>

The idea behind this highly constructed form of etiquette lies in freeing the mind from the body in order to achieve enlightenment. This is done by means of releasing the mind from any concerns as to how the body should act: every motion is predetermined, practiced many times over, and refined into something esthetically smooth. The ideology of “the body learns through repetition” is emphasized in Tea, and as such the training of correct etiquette begins with the details of body movement. Each motion is honed to perfection, while at the same time the student will be aware that no movement is ever perfect, as a large part of Tea’s ideology rests in the belief that one will never achieve perfection, one is always a student. Each movement is practiced individually (e.g. wiping the thick tea container), and over time these separate acts are joined together to create a whole. The procedure’s focus is on phasing, making the movements as elegant as possible and creating a rhythm, all of which is comparable to yoga, where the movements follow the rhythm of the breath.

The rituals of Tea are highly constructed, something which is not only expressed during Tea events, but even in the lesson context and individual practice. Every Tea student starts by learning the specific Tea procedures (*temae*)<sup>33</sup>. There are countless different tea preparation forms, which differ in small details and in the use of different types of utensils. The *iemoto*, or head of the school, specifies these *temaes*. The goal of learning a *temae* piece by piece is to eventually be able to perform a full *chaji* in different seasons and situations. The knowledge of these procedures stems from the head of the school, moving downwards from there to the *sensei* (teachers with certified *chadō* training) and eventually to the students. Practitioners also learn by observing others, and eventually each student will develop their own individual interpretation of how to express Tea. My informants told me that since everyone reflects their own persona in Tea, it is possible to sense an individual’s “Way of Tea” in their *chaji*. The doctrine of Tea is same for everyone, but each individual is responsible for their own “interpretation” of Tea. Such interpretations are based on the learning components expounded on in the next section.

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<sup>32</sup> The “watch and learn” method was especially emphasized at the schooling environment where multiple etiquette rules took place. As one of my informants told me, these rules are not taught separately to the students. Instead, they have to pick up them by observation.

<sup>33</sup> A *temae* is the basic building block of learning in Tea. They are specific procedures that include techniques for making thick and thin tea, arranging the charcoal, hanging the scrolls in the *tokonoma* and arranging the flowers. Skills for both host and a guest are required (Anderson 1991, 100). One movement, such as folding the silk cloth (*fukusa*) can be repeated over and over again until the final result is satisfactory.

### 3.1.1. *Dō, Gaku* and *Jitsu*; three learning components

There are three components in the way of Tea: *dō* (the philosophy), *gaku* (academic content) and *jitsu* (practice) (Anderson 1991, 1). Students usually begin with the practical side (*jitsu*), learning the basic procedures of making tea (*temae*) and other things such as arranging flowers (*chabana*) or charcoal (*sumidema*). There is a code for the holding and handling of each individual utensil; from the start students learn to “treat” each utensil in the correct manner. For example, when picking up the thin tea container, *natsume*, one should form a “half moon” with their fingers. Other examples include learning to open doors with three different hand movements, and shutting them so as to create a sound that is neither too quiet nor too loud. In order to work in the Tea environment, every movement is polished, a fact that is emphasized by the necessity of the participant wearing a kimono (the sleeves of which are long, and the proper movements have been contrived with this factor in mind).

*Gaku* includes the study of Tea, its history, symbolism, architecture, poetry, philosophy and so forth. Possessing a thorough knowledge of Tea’s history is essential, as so many of the elements and symbols practiced in Tea events reflect, or are born of this history. For the same reason, a general knowledge of Japanese culture is also pertinent, as Tea draws so many of its central symbols from the larger social context. For example, the act of purifying one’s hands and mouth with water before entering the tearoom is derived from the same practice in Shinto shrines. These shrines always include a place for visitors to purify themselves with water before entering the shrine to pray. By acquiring this knowledge, the student of Tea is able to more profoundly understand its constitutional elements, as well as their historical context.

The third component, *dō*, refers to the life-long Way the Tea practitioners are expected to follow. At the core of this Way is self-examination, learning to cultivate the Tea philosophy outside of the Tea world in order to move towards the final goal of possible enlightenment. This component of Tea is comprehensive, as it constitutes a Way of life for the practitioner, as well as a way of seeing the world and living in it. Just like a religion, this way of life provides guidelines of personal conduct, both within the Tea environment and the in surrounding world. In a mode similar to Zen Buddhism, a Tea practitioner can find peace and enlightenment through meditation and self-realization. During my fieldwork the *Midorikai* group visited Zuihō-in, a sub-temple of the Daitokuji Temple in Kyōto. There, we engaged in a brief Zen

meditation practice under the guidance of a Zen priest. Furthermore, each morning every member of the Urasenke School (excluding the *Midorikai* group) participates in a ritual in the large *tatami*-room of the main school building. This morning ritual includes meditation in *seiza* position with the recitation of a mantra, along with a recitation of the “Urasenke Followers’ Statement of Goals” by heart (see Appendix 1).

### 3.1.2. Four Tea principles; *Wa* (harmony), *Kei* (respect), *Sei* (purity) and *Jaku* (tranquility)

Sen (2003, 13) states that “these four principles underline all the practical rules of Tea and represent at the same time its highest ideals.” “Harmony” derives from the interaction between the host and the guests, and can be witnessed in the attitude of humility with which the host prepares the Tea event for his or her guests. “Respect” means sincerity of the heart, giving structure to the tea event through the standardized etiquette. “Purity” refers to the simple act of cleaning, both of the physical setting as well as a cleansing of the mind. Lastly, “Tranquility”, a concept claimed as unique to Tea, is achieved by following the first three principles in constant practice. (Ibid., 13-14). It is believed that following these four principles of Tea can lead to “inner peace” (Ibid., 77).

All of the preceding four principles should be present at the time of a Tea event in order to create the perfect setting for drinking tea. Another important concept that should be kept in mind in the practice of Tea is “*ichigo, ichie*”<sup>34</sup>, a saying that I heard many times during my fieldwork. This idiom is also well-known outside the world of *chadō* in Japan. It can be translated as “one time, one meeting” or “one moment, one change.” According to Tea followers, each Tea event is a once in a lifetime event, and for this reason it should be appreciated to the fullest. “Neither the host nor the guest acts merely as he pleases, but both act with mutual consideration; both take pleasure in their shared moment in the tearoom” (Sen 2003, 40). The pleasure derived from sharing the moment is derived from following the Tea rules: “one must give great attention to making it harmonious” (Ibid.). Paradoxically, in Tea there exists a belief that the guest can never be wrong or make a mistake during a Tea event. This was also something that I often heard during my fieldwork, especially when I was

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<sup>34</sup> “*ichigo ichie* — Best translated “once chance in a lifetime,” a phrase coined by Ii Naosuke (1815-1860) and frequently used in Tea. It has the sense that there is but one chance and one time for each tea gathering. The opportunity should be used to the fullest since it cannot be repeated.” (Anderson 1991, 277).

concerned about being my role as a guest in an upcoming *chaji*<sup>35</sup>. However, I was told that the essential thing was to savor the moment, to enjoy Tea.

### 3.1.3. Rikyū's seven rules

Sen (2003, 31-40) states that the "seven rules of Rikyū" are the "most important guides for one's proper attitude in the Way of Tea." These rules are considered fundamental for the teaching of Tea, as well as for an understanding of its strong ethical and moral character. The first rule is: "*Make a delicious bowl of tea.*" The concept behind this rule is to prepare each bowl of tea with sincerity and a pure heart. There is also a rule concerning the flower arrangement: "*Arrange the flowers as they are in the field.*" The essence of this rule is to focus on the beauty of a single flower, "the individual beauty that all flowers possess naturally." These two rules (as with the remaining four<sup>36</sup>) function as a guideline for realizing the philosophical ideals of Tea and how they are experienced and expressed in practice. The seventh rule, "*Give those with whom you find yourself every consideration,*" is explained by Sen as the guideline for social interaction inside the tearoom where the relationship between the host and guest "is of singular importance." He states that a Tea event is about "true interaction of human beings" where, "through sympathetic coordination, host and guest become one." Although these rules are a guideline for performing a successful *chaji* those following the Way of Tea are also expected to uphold them as a general guideline for life. A good example is the rule "*prepare for rain.*" This does of course refer to the host being ready for a chance of rain during a *chaji* but it is also advice for the broader context of life: "we should be negligent in our preparations and should be able to calmly adapt to circumstances" (Ibid., 38).

## 3.2. Tea mentality

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<sup>35</sup> During my interviews I asked about the worst mistake one can make in a tearoom, and was told "the guest can't make mistakes." However, I soon found this answer to be contradictory. During the *chaji* I participated in I was corrected right away for not sitting in the right spot: there were only 14 *tatami* lines in front of my knees (when there should be 16 lines in the orthodox manner.)

<sup>36</sup> "*Lay the charcoals so that it heats the water*", "*In the summer suggest coolness; in winter, warmth*", "*Do everything ahead of time*" and "*prepare for rain*" (Sen 2003, 31-39).

“With a bowl of tea, peace can truly spread. The peacefulness from a bowl of tea may be shared and become the foundation of a way of life” (Sen 2003, 9).

While it is clear that the spiritual realm is at the heart of *chadō*, the question of whether or not it constitutes a religion has preoccupied me from the time I was first introduced to the world of Tea. From the beginning I made a point of putting this question to the Tea practitioners I met, but in most cases the answers I received were unclear. The interpretation of my informants would no doubt be different if a majority of them were Japanese, but most were Tea followers from outside Japan. For this reason I have chosen not to wade into this debate in this study. Okakura Kakuzo (1906) concludes that “Tea with us [the Japanese] became more than an idealization of the form of drinking; it is a religion of the art of life,” and Jennifer L. Anderson (1991, 4) states that “the words selected by Japanese to describe Tea in English clearly propose a direct correlation between *chadō* and religion.” She goes on to reference the grand master of Urasenke, Sen Soshitsu: “Tea is the practice or realization of religious faith, no matter what you believe in.” While it is clear that Tea takes many elements from Zen Buddhism, Shinto and Taoism, and therefore has obvious religious connotations, in the next section I will offer an introduction to the “Tea mentality” in order to better define my view of Tea’s spiritual nature.

### 3.2.1. Hierarchy in Tea

“Artistic behavior is what defined Tea. Through such highly ordered artistic forms of behavior, Tea seeks to order humans and society” (Plutschow 1999).

Although students are able to reflect their own character in Tea, the procedures themselves are both predetermined and highly structured; “in the pursuit of any given Way, the learner has to start by holding strictly to tradition [...], the personal freedom of spontaneous activity is actually denied” (Hammitzsch 1980, 8). This lack of freedom in the physical realm constructs a space for the mind to be free. However, in my opinion, there is more to it than this. Highly constructed etiquette and lack of personal freedom promotes a more acute sense of social conformity wherein the group is emphasized over individuals, an effect which is not limited to



the world of *chadō* but is also highly prevalent in the broader context of Japanese society<sup>37</sup>. As Norbeck states: “etiquette is a powerful factor in maintaining social order in general in reinforcing lines of authority” (1977, 74).

In Tea, there is “a strict emphasis on hierarchy at all levels” (Anderson 1991, 98), both in the aspect of social interaction and in the material world. From the layout of the tearoom to the use of tea utensils, there exists a hierarchical value system. The spot where the first guest (*shōkyaku*) sits in the tearoom is next to the *tokonoma* (the alcove), which is the highest position in the tearoom. The thick tea is more dignified than the thin tea and the container of thick tea, *chaire*, is the most valuable utensil: “the most important pottery of Cha-no-yu is first the Cha-ire and then the Cha-wan” (Sadler 2008, 73). In contrast, the waste water container, or *kensui*, is the lowest valued item because it is considered “dirty” (when the tea preparation utensils are purified with water, the dirty water is poured in the *kensui*.) The *kensui* is never in the tearoom by itself, and in removing it from the room the host makes sure to hold it on the opposite side of his body, keeping it out of view of the guests.

Hierarchy is evident in the Tea schooling system, with the *iemoto* occupying the highest position. Tea’s hierarchy is constructed around knowledge and skills of Tea; one who knows more is considered as having a “higher ranking”. However, access to knowledge is not necessarily democratic: the most “secret” *temaes* are only taught to the very highest ranking practitioners. Some are practiced exclusively by the *iemoto* or his heirs (Anderson 1991, 102). As a result, there is also a gender-based hierarchy at work, as the *iemoto* cannot be a woman. Plutschow (1999) states that starting from the eighteenth century, the grand masters became “Tea promoters and guardian-leaders” invested with the authority to define Tea as well as the rules relating to it. In order to “regulate the ritual arts so that no unskilled person could breach the procedures and disrupt the harmony” (Ibid.) the knowledge of Tea could only be entrusted to professionals.

The head of the Urasenke family is the one who grants access to the school’s knowledge and therefore also determines access to power (that authority stemming from the ability to define the practice of Tea.) By keeping the knowledge “safe”, the lineage of the Urasenke family is secured from “unprofessionals”, which in turn promotes further hierarchy in Tea: “etiquette serves as a powerful force in the preservation of authority of any kind – political, social, or economic” (Norbeck 1977, 74).

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<sup>37</sup> Most foreign guests to Japan will at some point in their visit experience a sense of “otherness.” Since their behavior falls outside of proscribed norms, it can make interaction difficult.

Christian Toren (1990) discusses hierarchy in Fijian culture, giving as an example the *yagona*-drinking ceremony, a central ritual in Fijian social life. As in a Japanese *chaji*, the *yagona*-ritual is of a spiritual manner, and proper attire is required. There is an etiquette<sup>38</sup> for these events and from Toren's (Ibid., 117) perspective "*yagona* provides an image of social relations as properly hierarchical." The ceremony is hierarchically constructed based on kin relations, as the "chiefs access the ancestral *mana* from which they partly derive their authority" (Ibid.). Similarly, there is a strong social hierarchy within *chadō* where access to "secret tea procedures" derives the Urasenke family's authority within the Tea community. In theory, one's social status is left outside the tearoom, and for the same reason the *samurai* were required to leave their swords (which functioned as symbols of class and power) outside the tearoom. One entering a tearoom must be humble, but while everyone is said to be equal once inside, each guest is always assigned a role prior to entering. The roles that have more specific functions are the role of the last guest and especially the first guest who is a "spokesman" for the whole group in a *chaji*.

### 3.2.2. *Zen and Wabi*

"Everything applicable to the Way of Zen is applicable to a tea gathering" (Sen 2003, 61).

The goal of Zen is to gain enlightenment (*satori*) through means of mediation, and the same is true of Tea. Enlightenment in Zen is *mu*, emptiness or nothingness, a state reached by "action and intuition". Likewise, in Tea there is the concept of *kotan*, or "seasoned simplicity, when everything unnecessary (e.g., worldly thoughts and cares) has fallen away, leaving only the essential core." To attain this state "requires years of practice, discipline, even mental and physical suffering." (Kondo 1985, 291-292). These concepts are clearly visible in the physical realm of Tea, where the tearoom is stripped of everything that would draw attention from the

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<sup>38</sup> For comparison to a *chaji* or *chakai* event, Toren talks about proper behavioral models existing when drinking *yagona*: "one must 'sit properly', with legs crossed, when actually drinking, clap before accepting the proffered bowl of *yagona*, drain the bowl without pause and clap again politely after handing the bowl back to the server" (109). In drinking the thin tea at a Tea event, one must sit also properly in *seiza* position, put down the bowl of tea in three spots on the *tatami*, bow, say proper lines for the guests and host, drink the tea in specific manner, wipe the bowl's rim, examine the bowl and after that return the bowl to the host in a specific manner.

essential. By the same token, the sitting position, *seiza*, can be extremely painful for the legs, causing physical suffering.

Zen doctrine has also strongly affected the aesthetics of Tea, mainly by emphasizing the mundane and simple (Ibid., 292). This idea is at the core of *wabi*<sup>39</sup> aesthetics which consider imperfection and simplicity to be both ideal and beautiful. *Wabi* is not just an aesthetical sense of the rustic and imperfect, it has become “a state of mind” (Murai 1989, 28), something that represents “frugality, simplicity, and humility” (Sen 2003, 72). From Anderson’s point of view *wabi* is “an elusive quality with both spiritual and aesthetic aspects. It has implications of material insufficiency, muted beauty, a tingle of loneliness, and a suggestion of spiritual aloofness” (Anderson 1991, 31).

The aesthetic of poverty defines Tea in our time; *wabi*-style utensils are often unglazed, misshapen and even cracked. Nature is symbolically present in *wabi*, promoting harmony between the natural and men. One learns to appreciate and find beauty in simple and prosaic things. This is well expressed in *chabana* (Tea flower arrangement), where it is possible to represent the full beauty of nature in a single flower. Natural elements and mundane objects are commonly utilized in *wabi* aesthetics. An example of this is the wooden well bucket used as a water container in the tearoom. When *wabi* was introduced to Tea by Sen Rikyū it was also a statement against the nobility’s use of Tea to demonstrate their wealth and show off their expensive treasures. Everyday items became commonly used in the tearoom and at that time they would certainly have been cheap. However, while today *wabi* utensils still have a rustic and imperfect quality, they are very expensive. However, Haga Kōshirō (1989, 226-227) states that “The man of Zen [...] feels bitterness and shame at poverty in his spiritual practice (the Way) but does not feel the slightest concern for material poverty. [...] There is certainly no harm in being wealthy, perfectly satisfied, and having things go as one pleases.” He goes on to say that in Zen the ideal way is “finding a higher value in poverty”, but this does not necessarily mean that one need be poor (Ibid.). Perhaps this explains the seemingly paradoxical fact of *wabi*-utensils being expensive items.

### 3.2.3. Tea calendar; Seasonal variations

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<sup>39</sup> The word *wabi* comes from the verb *wabu*, which means “to be wretched” or adjective *wabishii*, wretched (Murai 1989, 28).

“So we talk about sakura before sakura, in the time of sakura we talk about the sakura disappearing” (Stefan, age 39).

The seasons determine the framework for the theme of each Tea event. In the preceding quote one of my informants is referring to the fact that in Tea the upcoming season is the one which is typically emphasized. For example, the coming spring is represented in Tea events when there is still frost on the ground, and before the cherry blossoms (*sakura*) bloom. However, the general seasonal symbols (like *sakura*, the symbol of spring in Japan) are not the only aspects of seasonal variations that are represented in Tea events. In Japanese culture there are a variety of symbols attached to seasons that a Tea practitioner should be aware of: “the accomplished practitioner is expected to enhance the spiritual and artistic potential of each event with carefully orchestrated imagery drawn in large part from Japan’s massive repertoire of seasonal symbolism” (Anderson 1991, 108).

The symbolism of the seasons is created in each Tea event’s *toriawase* (the combination of the selected utensils). For example, during my fieldwork at the end of June there was a *Nagoshi no harai* ritual performed in several shrines in Kyōto. This is a Shinto purification ritual for ensuring good health by praying and walking through a large wreath called a *Chinowa*, which is made from rush leaf. Before the actual purification ritual took place, one of the students of the *Midorikai* group held his own *chaji*, while I helped with preparations in the kitchen. His theme for the *chaji* related to the current season, and this purification ritual in particular. One example of how he symbolically utilized the season in his *chaji* was the *higashi* (dry sweets) he served for the guests, each of which had a drawing of the *chinowa* on them. As previously noted, the theme of a Tea event and the symbolism used can be very subtle and multilayered, and for this reason the ideal guest must have a detailed knowledge not only of Tea’s history but also a general knowledge of the cultural history of Japan.

For a Tea practitioner the year is divided into two seasons: *ro* and *furo*. *Ro* refers to the sunken hearth, a small fire pit cut into the *tatami* where the fire is heated during tea preparation from November through April, while *furo* indicates the portable brazier placed on top of the *tatami*, and in which the fire is prepared from May through October (Sen 1979, 22). The preparation of tea during these two seasons differs slightly. One of the clearest differences during the *ro* season is the angle the host is seated at while preparing the tea. Here, he or she faces more in the direction of the guest, which gives the feeling of warmth. The students must learn to prepare tea in both seasons, as the handling of the braziers depends on the time of year. As

well, the transition from one season to another is always marked by a specific ritual. *Ro* and *furo* include all four seasons, and the given season should be emphasized in the scroll hung on the wall. Sen (2003, 46) states that the scroll is the most direct means to appreciate the season: “it has been said, ‘spring has flowers, summer has cool breezes, fall has the full moon, winter has snow.’” In choosing a scroll, the Tea practitioner is therefore careful not to contrast with the season.

### 3.3. Physical elements of Tea

The physical elements are the medium through which the Tea event is enacted. The tearoom and utensils used inside it create the possibility of a unique event, and the behavioral etiquette is dependent upon these; through the use of specific utensils, the host creates a theme and a symbolic codex for the event, at the same time reflecting his or her personality through the combination of physical elements. In the following sections I will concentrate on the physical realm of Tea, paying particular attention to the tearoom and the essential Tea utensils, each of which may possess a multilayered symbolism.

#### 3.3.1. Tearoom; the ritual setting

The tearoom (*chashitsu*) is like an empty stage, and if one were to enter it without the accompanying decorations it would seem very plain, or even incomplete. “Teaism [...] dislikes the complete and prefers the imperfect” (Sadler 2008, 8), and as such, the tearoom is supposed to be as natural and simple as possible. When it is used to hold a *chaji* or *chakai* event however, the essential Tea elements are highlighted. Nothing inside the room should serve to distract the guest’s attention. For this reason the appropriate kimono are discreet, free from any elaborate designs or colors, and no perfumes or heavy makeup are allowed. The physical appearance of the guests must correspond to Tea’s aesthetical codes.

The architecture of a tearoom is very rustic and simple. Everything is constructed by hand from natural materials, with a careful attention to detail. As a result, tearooms are extremely expensive to construct. Tearooms are classified according to the number of *tatami* mats and according to the position of the hearth (fire pit). There are many variations in the size, but the

“ordinary or original style” is a four-and-a-half *tatami* room (*yojōhan*) (Sadler 2008, 11). One of the most striking features of the tearoom for the first time visitor is the smallness of the space<sup>40</sup>. However, the small confines are meant to foster a more intimate atmosphere and to allow the guest to focus on the essential matter at hand. This is also the reason for the room’s rustic architecture, as a more elaborate setting might constitute a distraction for the guest. Even the lines of the walls and the locations of the windows are planned in order for the guest’s eyes to naturally gravitate to the substantive elements of the room.

Furthermore, the meagerness of the tearoom can be seen as deriving from Buddhism and the historical uses of such rooms. The small tearoom represents “a humble statement of human equality before the Buddhas” and symbolizes “the non-existence of space for the enlightened” (Plutschow 1999). Therefore the tearoom is a setting for a spiritual experience, a space where one can “cleanse his thoughts of the mundane and unimportant” (Sen 1979, 10). Essentially, the tearoom was modeled for Buddhist meditation, and for this reason any overtly luxurious elements are avoided (Sadler 2008, 9). Sadler (*Ibid.*, 9-10) notes that the show of wealth in building a tearoom must be excluded, and that the “costly affection of simplicity is as bad as obvious display of wealth.” One shouldn’t attempt to make modifications based on their own individual opinions about how to make a tearoom “look better.” Paradoxically, the rustic and simple architecture that was intended to stand in opposition to a display of wealth has become extremely expensive in modern times.

The Japanese tearoom is structured around the forces of yin and yang, and Taoism’s Five Elements.<sup>41</sup> “Wood” is represented in the charcoal that builds the “fire” which in turn boils the “water” in an iron (“metal”) kettle, which is then used to make the tea in a bowl (“earth”) (Plutschow 1999). The Five elements are represented in other aspects of Tea as well, for example the symbol of water is drawn on the ash<sup>42</sup> in the fire pit to serve as a means of protection against fire. *Chadō* also draws elements from Zen-Buddhism, where it is believed that every individual must find their own path to enlightenment, a path that is itself based on self-discipline. Tea seeks the same, not only within its aesthetic elements but also from the act of personal discovery, and being in harmony with others and the environment (*Ibid.*).

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<sup>40</sup> While larger tearooms do exist, the smaller room is preferred as it helps to create a more communal atmosphere.

<sup>41</sup> The Chinese established a system of classification and cosmology by dividing the universe into Five Elements; wood, fire, water, metal and earth.

<sup>42</sup> See appendix 3, figure 9.

It is clear that a tearoom, the location where the ritual elements of Tea are conducted, is a sacred space. Accordingly, one's behavior changes upon entering the room: students almost exclusively enter the tearoom on their knees, even if they are merely preparing and cleaning the room for an upcoming *keiko*-lesson (a practical lesson where different *temaes* are learned). As well, people were usually quieter inside the tearoom, nor was any offensive language permitted.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.3.2. *Roji*: a path of purification

A tearoom can be built inside a house or it can be located in its own teahouse. The transition from the mundane world to the world of Tea is an important aspect of *chadō*, and so a garden that acts as a transition space between the secular and sacred is usually attached to the tearoom. The idea of the garden is to be natural and simple, a place where the mind is able to be at peace. The term for a tearoom's garden is *roji*, which means "dewy path" or "dewy ground". It differs from an ordinary garden in the sense of it existing only as a passage, and is not meant to be an end in itself, or a location to admire the flowers or trees. *Roji* are made as simple and natural as possible, but should also inspire a sense of "depth and remoteness", and originally were located in particular areas in Buddhist temples (Sadler 2008, 21). The garden is commonly divided into an outer *roji* and inner *roji*, separated by the middle gate (*nakakuguri/chū mon*) which also serves as a demarcation line between the mundane to a sacred space. As well, the texture of the inner and outer *roji* is different, with the outer generally sanded and the inner mossy. Stepping stones are used to mark the way to the tearoom. In the outer *roji* this path is usually straighter, while the inner *roji*'s path is angled "both to indicate that the path to enlightenment is not straight and to make it difficult for demons to follow." (Anderson 1991, 156).

The feeling of the inner *roji* path should be that of "a simple mountain path" (Sadler 2008, 22) that leads the guest to the entrance of the tearoom. It is necessary for one walking inside a *roji* to be careful only to step on the stones, following the correct route, as any kind of tracks left on the ground are prohibited. The garden is always cleaned before the guests arrive, but in a "natural" manner. This means that it should not appear artificially clean, but rather as if it had been returned to its natural state. So for example, in an effort to enhance the feeling of

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<sup>43</sup> Although I was most of the time outside the tearoom while observing the lessons, the reaction to an accidental swearing caused a fairly strong response of shushing and disapproving glances.

naturalness, some fallen tree leaves may be allowed to remain on the ground. Similarly, the inner *roji* is always sprinkled with water to give an impression of freshness. Although the ideal garden is often small, there should be sufficient trees and shrubs “to give an impression of depth”, keeping in mind that specimens that bloom with bright flowers should not be planted (Ibid., 30). Blooming flowers in the garden might catch the eye of the guest before entering the tea room and this might detract from the guest’s enjoyment of the flower arrangement within the tearoom.

There is always a stone water basin (*tsukubai*) in the inner *roji* where the guests are able to purify themselves before entering the tearoom. The water basin is a symbol for purity “both in the physical and also the spiritual sphere” and the location where “all the ‘dust in the world’ is finally washed away” (Sadler 2008, 32). The basin is set low in order to force the guests to squat while washing their hands and mouth as an act of humility<sup>44</sup>. The stepping stones can form multiple routes and to mark the correct route black strings are tied to certain stones, known as “detaining stones” (*sekimori ishi*), which block the path. In the inner *roji* a “dust pit” (*chiriana*) can also be found. In this small pit are left a pair of green bamboo chopsticks and few dry leaves and broken twigs. While cleaning the garden, the host usually places these inside the pit to remind the guest of “the dust of temporal existence” (Anderson 1991, 156).

A special element found only in Tea architecture is the crawling entrance, or *nijiriguchi*. This entrance is specifically designed to symbolize humility; the *nijiriguchi* is positioned so that entering the teahouse is awkward enough that the guest will leave their pride outside the tearoom. One has to literally crawl inside, first lowering the head and placing the *sensu* (fan) on the inner *tatami*. Then, after sliding inside a few inches on their knees, they finally turn to place the sandals (*zori*) against the outside wall of the teahouse. (Anderson 1991, 157). Given this, it is clear that in entering a tearoom, one is supposed to leave the secular world as well as their status behind them.

### 3.3.3. *Mizuya and Tokonoma*

Depending on the construction of the tearoom the layout may differ, with things such as the doors and fire pit located in different positions. Because the tearoom is a space exclusive for

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<sup>44</sup> “The act of crouching is called “*tsukubau*”. It gives the area of the basin and its surrounding its name, “*tsukubai*”.” (Anderson 1991, 154).



the guest's enjoyment of a Tea event, the actual preparations take place in a separate area called a *mizuya*. In this area (which can simply be a corner with a small shelf), the utensils are kept, made ready for the Tea event, and washed. It is an essential part of a Tea event as it is the space where all the preparations take place "behind the scenes." The *mizuya* is separated from the tearoom in order to emphasize its sacredness, and the guests are never able to see what happens there (although there might be certain special occasions, such as when a guest helps the host, when they might be required to go to the *mizuya*).

While the layout can differ depending on the tearoom, there are some basic elements that are always present. For example, there is always an alcove, or *tokonoma*, where a scroll is hung and flowers are arranged. The *tokonoma's* size varies but it is usually raised from the floor. The *tokonoma* is the tearoom's "highest ranking part" and for this reason the first guest sits closest to it (Anderson 1991, 158). The wood pillar dividing the *tokonoma* from the wall (or the rest of the room) is said to be the most expensive part of a tearoom<sup>45</sup>. Walking toward a *tokonoma* should begin with the right foot, and stepping inside the *tokonoma* should be avoided. The scroll, or *kakemono*, which is hung on the wall of the *tokonoma* is the highest ranking object inside the tearoom (Ibid., 159), and comprises an important symbolic element when creating the "theme" for the Tea event. The scroll sets the atmosphere for the occasion and for this reason must be carefully chosen by the host. The hanging scrolls are usually calligraphies written by Zen monks, but they might also be paintings. The guests always pay their respect to the scroll by bowing on their knees in front of the *tokonoma*. The symbolism of the scrolls is multilayered, and as Anderson (Ibid.) states the scroll "symbolizes the presence of the author, his values, teachings, and often, his contribution to *chadō*." This is the reason for the guests' bow, after which they should examine the scroll for a moment, letting the message sink in. The scrolls can be ranked in three groups: *shin* (formal), *gyō* (semiformal) and *sō* (informal).

As well as the scroll, a flower arrangement is also usually to be found inside the *tokonoma*. The flower arrangement in Tea (*chabana*) is something the students do for each *keiko*, or tea preparation lesson at Urasenke, taking turns between days. The arrangement should be simple and wild flowers are preferred. The idea is to arrange the flowers "as if they were still in the field" (Sen 1979, 38). The number of flowers in a vase should be odd and should all be seasonally appropriate (Anderson 1991, 182). As with the hanging scrolls, the flowers and the flower containers are grouped using the *shin*, *gyō* and *sō* ranking. Placing the flower

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<sup>45</sup> As the first guest is seated in the highest ranking spot of the tearoom, a hierarchical arrangement can be seen to exist among the guests, something which stands in contrast to the supposed maxim of equality within the Tea environment.

arrangement inside the highest location in the tearoom reflects Shintō beliefs that all living things contain a divine spirit (Ibid., 181). Preferred flowers are never exotic or vibrantly colored, nor should they give off a strong scent, as this would disturb the subtle scents of the tearoom<sup>46</sup>. The flower containers can vary from a cut piece of bamboo to Chinese copper vases, with different characters that must be carefully selected for each Tea event, as with every other element in creating the event's atmosphere. "Bamboo vases, gourds, and unglazed ceramics are always sprinkled or soaked in water to convey a feeling of coolness and purity" (Ibid., 183).

#### 3.3.4. Tea utensils; tools of symbolic communication

There are multiple utensils in Tea, each of them working as symbols to evoke "something that cannot be fully expressed in words" (Anderson 1991, 132). In a Tea event the individual utensils and their specific combinations create a symbolic codex that can be interpreted by the guests; the sum of the host's choices is called the "*toriwase*." Each item used in the tearoom contains a story, a multilayered meaning and an own history, and for this reason Anderson has described the *toriwase* as an art form (Ibid.). The host composes a theme with the given utensils, each of them chosen with the guests in mind, and more specifically according to the tastes of the first guest.

The *toriwase* works as a means of communicating a shared culture and philosophy. The countless utensils of Tea, which are learned by study and imitation function like symbolic pieces to create a puzzle unique to a given Tea event. A story is created around this symbolism that can be difficult to interpret even for advanced students. For this reason the students at Urasenke spend a lot of time learning the history of utensils, their shape, names and symbolism. James-Henry Holland (2003, 184) describes how "tea culture as practiced by elites is in part an intellectual, symbolic, and aesthetic 'game'", a game which is based on the story built around the utensils. The symbols might be simple, such as water symbolizing freshness and purity, but the more advanced the Tea practitioners become, the more elaborate the symbolism. Holland describes the way in which elite tea practitioners gain social respect as

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<sup>46</sup> Even some flowers are ranked with the *shin*, *gyō* and *sō* categories. The chrysanthemum (Japanese emperor's symbol) and lotus (Buddha's flower) for example, are high-class flowers when used in *chabana* arrangements, and are most probably displayed in *shin*, or formal vases. In the same way some flowers are avoided; cherry blossoms, the symbol of spring in Japan, are not used because they lack subtlety and are everywhere during the time when they bloom. Some flower's names are "words" that are not appropriate for a tearoom, for example the flower called "*kōbone*" has the word "bone" in it. (Anderson 1991, 183-184).

they increase their knowledge: “the more practice she gets at this art [creating allusions with tea utensils], the more likely she is to achieve higher status among her peers” (Ibid.).

A practitioner can be creative with the use of items but, as with all other aspects of Tea, there are rules. One principle is non-duplication: “in the tea-room the fear of repetition is a constant presence” (Okakura 1906). So for example, if a host includes cloud-shaped dry sweets they must not make use of a *kakemono* (scroll) with pictures of clouds on it, or one that even alludes to clouds. Similarly, asymmetry is preferred over to symmetry. Emptiness is employed instead of clutter, as fewer elements enable the guest to concentrate on the essential. Colors are used with care and textures should contrast each other in a subtle manner<sup>47</sup>. The scale of the utensils should also be kept in mind depending on the tearoom where the event is being held. The rules also include the background of the items: “advanced tea students also learn to coordinate characteristic products of specific generations of well-known, utensil-making families.” As well, customarily foreign items are not employed if a foreign guest’s origin is not wished to be emphasized. Chinese origin utensils are an exception because they have always been used in Tea, and nowadays are used as more formal utensils. Finally the Tea practitioners are required to have a general knowledge of historical elements and symbols, as well as what they stand for, since some utensils recall specific Japanese historical events or personalities. (Anderson 1991, 133-134).

Specifically, the *chawan* (tea bowl), *chaire* (thick tea container), *chashaku* (tea scoop) and, *chasen* (tea whisk) are essential symbols of Tea, as these items are closely related to the tea itself: thick tea is scooped from the *chaire* by the *chashaku* that is laid on the bottom of the *chawan* where it is whipped into hot water with the *chasen*. The *Chaire* is usually a container made from ceramic with an ivory lid, the underside of which is covered with golden foil. According to Sen (1979, 30) tradition maintains that the golden foil was added because the gold would change color if the tea was poisoned (something that many of Japan’s historical figures feared). The *chaire* is the most important item in Tea and for this reason it is wrapped with a silk bag (*shifuku*) when not in use. Before the preparation of thick tea, the purifying of the *chaire* has a special part when the silk cloth (*fukusa*) is “checked”. This happens only before purifying the *chaire*. The careful examination of each of the four sides of the *fukusa* is a moment when the host prepares his or herself for the most sacred point of the ritual, the making of the *koicha*. The act of checking the *fukusa* is not only a way to purify the mind but

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<sup>47</sup> Bright and ostentatious colors should be avoided, as they don’t express *wabi* aesthetics. An exception to this rule is the special *chaji* used around New Year. At this time silver and golden decorations are frequently made use of as they reflect the occasion’s festive nature (Anderson 1991, 134).

also a means of “realizing humbly our relationship with all that is around us, with the universe” (Sen 2003, 52).

There are many types of tea bowls but the one commonly used for *koicha* (thick tea) is a *raku* bowl. *Raku*-style tea bowls are usually heavier and irregular of shape. “A *raku* tea bowl of thick green tea is considered the preeminent symbol of *chanoyu*” (Anderson 1991, 187) and these tea bowls are usually very valuable. The bamboo tea whisk, *chasen*, makes the tea frothy when mixed with hot water. Each whisk is made from a single piece of bamboo that is split into tines and tied with a black thread from the base (Sen 1979, 27). Traditionally, for each *chaji*, the *chasen* should be new and never before used. The tea scoop, *chashaku*, is a highly ranked item that can have a strong historical symbolism. They are usually made from bamboo and they usually have their own poetic name, such as “Demon’s Arm” (Ibid., 26). The makers of the tea scoops are commonly Tea practitioners and as a result the tea scoops “are considered symbols of the virtues of their creators as well as inspiration to those that follow in their traditions” (Anderson 1991, 189). The tea scoops are stored in their own containers and like tea bowls and the *chaire*, they are also highly valuable.

The utensils form a part of Tea’s aesthetic experience while also working as tools of symbolic communication. Through them, the host builds up the theme and story he or she wishes to convey to the guests. As I noted before, the symbolism of the story told in the Tea event can be extremely multidimensional, a game, Hollad (2003) states, of interpreting allusions. Some of these allusions might emerge from personal relations, for example by relating an experience the host and first guest have shared in the past. However, when a *chaji* is performed between people who are not close acquaintances, the theme is primarily connected to seasonal changes. Plutschow’s (1999) opinion of Tea clearly summarizes their function: “tea utensils are works of art that owe their ‘beauty’ to the fact they mediate between man and the sacred.” The corollary of this view is that the utensils in themselves are not sacred; only insofar as they are used in the context of ritual tea drinking are they bestowed with the means of reflecting and communicating sacredness. Informal and formal Tea events provide the sphere where such a transformation takes place, and in the next chapter I will offer a full description of a formal Tea event, a *chaji*, in an effort to provide a more detailed explanation of the ritual context of Tea.

#### 4. Description of a *chaji*; Tea in practice

“The *chaji* is a form of ritual which developed out of the concern for Tea as a vehicle for enlightenment” (Anderson 1987, 482).

The purpose of everything the students at Urasenke learn is finally to be able to hold a full Tea event, a *chaji*. Typically, a *chaji* event can last for four to five hours, which was the case with the one I participated in during my fieldwork. As it was a *Midorikai* student’s practice *chaji*, it was not a complete ritual (for example the *kaiseki* meal was excluded.) Nevertheless, the minutiae of this four hour event are vast, and for this reason it is almost impossible to describe them all in perfect detail.

As such, in this chapter I make use of Jennifer L. Anderson’s (1991) description of an idealized *chaji* in order to provide supporting details for those aspects of the event I was unable to observe personally more than once. The procedures of a *chaji* are almost identical for each event (small variances exist in the time of day the event is held, or the season, etc.) However, it is still very difficult to remember each minute detail and the order of every procedure while participating in a *chaji* for the first time. Anderson’s book serves as a support for what I have seen and observed, enabling me to describe any details I may have missed or have simply forgotten. Although I observed certain aspects of a *chaji* on multiple occasions, it is a very different thing to experience an entire event in one sitting, especially as taking notes is not possible. During their training, Tea students learn a *chaji* piece by piece, and as my informants told me, experiencing the event in full is an entirely different experience. I had only one opportunity to observe the *kaiseki* meal portion of the event, at the time when the *Midorikai* students were practicing it (and this was done without actual food or sake). Despite this, I do not wish to exclude a description of the *kaiseki* meal, as it incorporates many elements that seem to me relevant for a dissemination of my viewpoint on Tea.

In a *chaji*, the guest moves from the mundane world into the world of ritual. The day of the practice *chaji* I participated in was typically hot and humid, falling in the middle of July and therefore in the *furo*-season of Tea. It was a *senpai* student’s final formal Tea event before the whole *senpai* group graduated from Urasenke. The morning was busy with last moment preparations, and all of the students were helping with preparations. Each *Midorikai* student’s

practice *chaji* can be seen as a teaching and learning situation, and a teacher is usual present for them. Nevertheless, the difference in the atmosphere and mood when compared to a casual lesson was immense. I could feel the excitement and anticipation as soon as I stepped inside the *yoritsuki* room. There were 12 guests in total, which is uncommon for a formal Tea event. The tearoom was indeed a bit crowded but no one seemed bothered by this, even though the temperature continued to rise throughout the event. Drawing on this experience as well as Anderson's description of a typical *chaji*, I will continue in this chapter to provide a more complete analysis and explanation of the event.

#### 4.1. *Zenrei* - Pre-preparations

Before the actual *chaji* event, the host makes a number of preparations. Planning for the event might start as early as several months before the actual date. The host must decide on the first guest (*shōkyaku*), the individual who will be the guest of honor and who typically knows a great deal about Tea. "By selecting guests who understand their roles and will interact smoothly, the host takes the first step towards developing within the tearoom at least the illusion of an ideal social environment" (Anderson 1987, 482). After the date and first guest has been decided, the host sends formal invitations<sup>48</sup> to the guests. Once the guests respond to the invitations, the host can begin planning the *chaji* in greater detail. A theme for the event must be chosen and with that decision a symbolic codex built around the given theme. The season determines the preliminary symbolic framework and the first guest's preferences usually play a large role in its construction. The symbolic codex is created through the *toriawase*: the atmosphere of the selected theme along with its message, expressed in every aesthetical detail of the event, from the tea utensils and type of incense, to the flowers used in the *chabana* arrangement.

About a day before the event, the guests pay a call to the host (*zenrei*), either by phone or arriving in person at the host's home. However, as the guests for the *chaji* I participated in were all students of the school this formality was unnecessary. Around the same time the host is occupied in preparing many practical tasks that also have a symbolic significance for his or

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<sup>48</sup> The invitation itself can be very creative and often gives a hint for the upcoming event's theme. For example, the invitation I received had a scent with a suggestion of the origins of the host.

her spiritual preparation for the upcoming event. This preparation includes cleaning, gardening, shopping, unpacking the utensils (they are usually stored away in boxes) and many other things (for example the *haigata*, ash arrangement, and initial food preparations). Most of these tasks are related to purification, and also work as a way for the host to clear their mind. On the morning of the event, the host takes care of the last minute preparations such as fetching the water to be used when preparing the tea. The *kaiseki* meal is also cooked and final purifications are performed. Just before the guest arrives (about 15 minutes before the actual *chaji* is supposed to start) the host once more sweeps the path leading to the main gate and sprinkles it with water as a sign of welcome (*uchimizu*<sup>49</sup>) (Anderson 1990, 138). The sprinkled pavement and the gate left ajar signal to the guests that everything is ready and they are welcome to let themselves inside. These two small details, the sprinkling of water on the ground and an open gate, are the first signs for the guests that they are leaving the secular world behind them and entering a more spiritual realm. As I stepped onto the path, the first thing I noticed was the silence: the change between the realm of the mundane and the sacred was present from the very beginning.

#### 4.2. Arrival - Leaving the mundane outside

The symbolic communication of the *chaji* begins as soon as guests enter through the gate. There is no separate greeting from the host at this point. In my case, we proceeded to a room (*yoritsuki*) where we could leave our coats and any excess baggage we had with us. In this room any “outer worldly” elements are stripped away, and fresh *tabi* (traditional Japanese white split-toe socks) are put on. This can be surprisingly problematic, as the wide *obi* belt of the kimono can make bending down difficult. The guests straighten their kimonos and add necessary articles to be used in the tearoom to the sleeves and breast of their kimonos. The most important article for the guest to bring with them is the *sensu*<sup>50</sup>, a small fan which is

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<sup>49</sup> The sprinkling of water on the path is originally a Shinto purification rite. It is still practiced in Shinto shrines and also in some Japanese stores the sidewalk in front of the store is sprinkled with water, to signal the guest a welcome. (Anderson 1990, 254). Sweeping, on the other hand, is a Buddhist idea of dusting off the impurities of earthly life and so acts as a transformatory symbolic act (Anderson 1990, 138).

<sup>50</sup> The *sensu* can also be seen as a “*kekai* or ritual divider or space” (Anderson 1990, 146). It determines each guests seating area within the tearoom and it is always placed in front of the hands when making a formal bow from the knees. One always first places the *sensu* inside the tearoom before sliding in on their knees, but holds it in their hands when making the formal greetings, *aisatsu*. I also heard during my

strictly symbolic; despite the heat and my heavy kimono, even opening the fan would have been considered rude. Another article the guests bring with them inside the tearoom is a folded *fukusa*, a silk cloth that is used for purifying some of the utensils during tea preparations. Despite this, the guests do not use the *fukusa* during the event, rather it acts as a symbol of their “willingness to make tea at any time.” The guest might also leave an envelope with a small monetary contribution (*mizuya mimai*<sup>51</sup>) to the *yoritsuki*, in order to offset the cost of the kitchen expenses. (Anderson 1991, 141, 146).

After we were ready, we proceeded to the next room, the *machiai*, where some of the guests were already seated on the floor. This room had blue carpets on top of the *tatami* mats, giving it a restful atmosphere, and it was only dimly lit with the natural light pouring in from the window. From Anderson’s perspective (1987, 483) the *machiai* has a “transitional function”. It is a space that mediates between the everyday life and ritual world. The guests enter the room on their knees with their *sensu* in front of them and proceed to the *tokonoma*, where a scroll chosen with reference to the theme of the *chaji* is hung (during the *chaji* in which I participated, the scroll depicted stylized crabs, as well as some written calligraphy<sup>52</sup>). Each guest bows in front of the scroll and then proceeds to their seat. The guests usually know the seating plan in advance, but if it hasn’t been assigned beforehand the order is decided in the *machiai* (Ibid. 1991, 148). When all the guests have taken their seats everyone bows in silence to one another. The atmosphere is calm and anticipatory. A traditional Japanese ashtray (*tabako bon*) is provided in the *machiai*, but as with the guests’ *sensu* and *fukusa* it is rarely made used in practice. Instead, the *tabako bon* symbolizes relaxation and signals to the guests that this is a less formal time, enabling them to engage in freer discussion.

The first guest plays a special role, as he or she is in charge of the symbolic dialogue that takes place during the *chaji*. As such, the first guest acts as a “spokesman” for the others and is considered to occupy an honorary role within the group. Anderson (Ibid., 149) states that when choosing the first guest “sex (men are typically seated first at tea gatherings) and age are

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fieldwork that if money is exchanged in Tea from person to person the envelope is placed on the opened *sensu* rather than having the envelope moving from hand to hand.

<sup>51</sup> Among the *Midorikai* students the *mizuya mimai* was not money. Instead, it was more of a symbolic thank you, a meal or a small present. For example when I was helping for *kaiseki* preparations for a *chaji* in the kitchen, the guests brought us a handmade meal as a symbol of gratitude for our work.

<sup>52</sup> The main theme for this *chaji* was water, chosen to suggest coolness in the heat of the summer. On a deeper level, the choice also symbolized the “going away” of the *senpai* students who would shortly be crossing over great waters when returning to their home countries. In essence, it was a *chaji* of farewells.



primary criteria.” Conversely, the last guest also has a particular function, as he or she has special responsibilities, helping the host during the course of the event as needed. For this reason the last guest is usually someone close to the host or someone familiar with Tea etiquette (Ibid., 148). During the event in question the first guest was one of the male *senpai* students. While we were sitting in the *machiai*, hot water, (*o*)*sayu* (or flavored water) was brought in on a tray by the *hantō*<sup>53</sup>. The same water was used for preparing the tea in the *chaji*. The last guest served the hot water to the rest of us, and after consuming it and examining the cups we proceeded to the *koshikake machiai* (waiting bench in the garden) one at a time. Before leaving the room we first examined and bowed once more on our knees at the scroll in the *tokonoma*.

The guests walk through the outer *roji* (bamboo sandals, or *roji zori*, are provided for this purpose) by stepping on the sprinkled stones along their way to the bench. A privy is usually located near the waiting bench as well as another *tabako bon*. Round straw cushions (*enza*) are supplied for the guests’ comfort. A fresh palm leaf broom, another symbol of purity, is often hung on the side of the arbor where the bench is situated. The first guest lays out the cushions for the others as an act of humility. The seat of the first guest is often higher and of finer material, and the stone on which he or she rests their feet can also be slightly elevated. After all of the guests have taken their seats they begin a mental preparation for the journey through the inner *roji* to the tearoom. (Anderson 1991, 150-151). At this point the guests exist in a liminal state between the outer and the inner realm; while we were sitting on the bench and waiting for the host, it began to rain, offering a momentary relief from the pressing heat.

#### 4.3. *Seki-iri* - Entering the tearoom

When the host hears that all of the guests have taken their seats on the waiting bench he or she makes the first appearance. Crawling outside through the *nijiriguchi*, the host enters the inner *roji* and carries a wooden bucket filled with fresh water to the water basin, or *tsukubai*.

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<sup>53</sup> The *hantō* is the host’s assistant for the *chaji*. They make an appearance only when bringing the guests the tray of hot water. However, “behind the scenes”, the *hantō* has an important role, taking care of many of the preparations in the *mizuya*, and as such there needs to be a great deal of trust between the host and *hantō*.

Anderson (Ibid., 153) states that the fact that the host appears for the first time in the inner *roji* is a sign of his or her special role as “an intermediary between the transcendent and mundane” and that this role “is confirmed through the act of providing a medium of purification to the other ritual participants.” The host crouches at the *tsukubai*, sprinkles some water around the area and rinses his or her mouth and hands, an act of symbolic purification of the mind. After this the host empties the bucket of water into the basin in such a manner that the water overflows, wetting the outside of the stone basin. The splashing of the water gives a sense of purity to the guests and also signals them to get ready to greet their host. The host then moves to the middle gate (*chu mon*) that separates the outer and inner *roji* and opens it. Next, the guests stand up and formal bows are exchanged in silence between host and guests. By opening the gate, the host “symbolically clears the way to spiritual communion and potential enlightenment” (Ibid., 154). At this point the guests are welcomed to join the host for the upcoming spiritual interaction.

After the formal bows, the host returns to the tearoom and the guests go back to their seats. The first guest apologizes to the next guest for being the first to enter, stands up, places the cushion against the bench, and enters through the middle gate in the inner *roji*. Quietly, the remaining guests move in turn through the inner *roji*, which is dampened and calm. One by one they crouch by the water basin, purifying both their hands and their mouth<sup>54</sup>, and afterwards proceed along the marked route (*sekimori ishi* stones are used as markers for the routes not to be taken). The guests pass the *chiriana* (dust pit) and reach the *nijiriguchi* entrance, where they enter the tearoom by crouching. The walk to this entrance is the final stage before entering the spiritual realm of Tea and it acts as a transitional phase whereby the guests are able to conclusively exit the secular realm, and prepare their thoughts for the spiritual experience.

Crouching in, each guest places their *sensu* on the inner *tatami*, removes their sandals, places them against the outer wall and slides into the tearoom. Inside, the guests pick up their fans and stand up. During my *chaji*, the tearoom was dimly lit, and the air was filled with the scent

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<sup>54</sup> This purification, as with everything else, is done in a particular manner. I had never done this act of purification before, and the guest next to me gave me a small hand towel to put inside my kimono sleeve. She advised me to put in on my knee before the purification to have something with which dry my hands.

of incense. We moved in turn toward the *tokonoma*, kneeled in front of it and bowed, paused to examine the scroll, and then bowed again. After examining the scroll I moved diagonally across the tearoom to examine the tea preparation area. Here the guests examine the brazier, ash formation inside it, and kettle. The ash might be shaped in many ways inside the *furo*, for example by creating two “mountains” and the impression of a river running between them. Some white ash could be laid on top of the “mountains” to represent snow, and the symbol of water<sup>55</sup> drawn in the “river” as a protection against fire. The guests examine these in a semiformal, bowing position and afterwards proceed to their designated seating spots. The last guest shuts the *nijiriguchi* door with a loud click, signaling to the host that everyone is inside the room. After the shuffling sound of the feet have faded away, the host knows to enter the room for the first time.

In the *chaji* I participated in, the host slid open the door dividing the tearoom and the preparation area, or *mizuya*, and entered the room on her knees. Everyone made a formal bow in silence, and the host thanked us for participating. Starting from the first guest, each of us expressed our gratitude at being invited by moving slightly out of our seating position with the *sensu* in front of us and making a semiformal bow. After these greetings, the first guest will typically ask about the scroll and other utensils. The host answers the questions and afterwards informs the guests that a light meal will be served. In our *chaji*'s case there was no *kaiseki* meal and so our host informed us that she would next arrange the charcoal and afterwards serve us the moist sweet.

#### 4.4. *Kaiseki*-meal

The light meal served in a *chaji* is called a *kaiseki*<sup>56</sup>. The foundation of *kaiseki* cooking can be found in Buddhist temples where the “preparation of the simple meal [...] was considered an ideal opportunity to learn self-discipline, thoroughness, and humility.” The *kaiseki* meal is very straightforward. The food is presented aesthetically, all the ingredients being fresh, of good

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<sup>55</sup> The symbol of water is the trigram for water from the *I Ching* (Anderson 1991, 160).

<sup>56</sup> The term *kaiseki* can be translated as “breast stones.” “The term was adopted for use with the tea ceremony meals by Zen tea masters who had noted the common temple practice of placing hot stones next to the belly to warm the stomach and fend off hunger during long hours of mediation” (Anderson 1987, 487). The idea is that the meal isn’t too heavy but big enough to take away hunger.

quality and appropriate for the season. As with the other aspects of the *chaji*, the first guest's preferences are kept in mind when selecting the meal. Other considerations include choosing food to suit the dishes it is served on. Etiquette demands that the guests wipe their empty dishes clean, and as such the guest must take it home in the sleeves of their *kimono* if there is excess food left over.<sup>57</sup> (Anderson 1991, 165-166). Each guest is given a tray containing small portions of food in individual dishes. Typically there will be a dish from the mountains and a dish from the sea. Rice and *miso* soup is also served. The host doesn't partake in eating, but when sake is served the host joins in by sharing it with the guests. (Kondo 1985, 290).

The chopsticks used for *kaiseki* meals are always dampened to symbolize purity. The guests begin by eating the rice, as it is the most valuable food. *Miso* soup is also eaten at this time, but the raw fish is left untouched. Next, the host comes back to the room to serve the guests warm sake. The red sake saucers (*hikihai*) are designed so that one must hold them with two hands, lending the object a more sacred feeling. Once the guests have tasted the sake, the fish can be eaten. The host leaves the room between servings, but always returns to bring new dishes for the guests. (Anderson 1991, 168). One aspect of the *kaiseki* meal described by Anderson (Ibid., 170) as being highly symbolic and a reflection of Shinto beliefs is the "*hassun*", a term that stems from the tray of fresh cedar (which is always moistened and used only once) on which the food is served. These trays are used for making offerings to the Shinto gods, or *kami*. On this tray food from the mountains and the sea are arranged in very specific ways: "the precise methods by which they are cut and piled are classified *shin*, *gyo*, and *so* (formal, semiformal, and informal)" (Ibid.). The shape, color and texture of the pieces are carefully considered, and are always consumed with sake.

From my perspective, the most interesting aspect of the *kaiseki* meal is when the host shares the sake with his or her guests. This is the only moment when the host and guests consume

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<sup>57</sup> This act of taking the excess food home inside the kimono sleeves apparently was a custom at the Japanese emperor's dinner parties. The first ambassador of Finland to Japan, G.J. Ramstedt (1950, 120-121) refers to this in his memoirs, explaining how at a dinner at the emperor's court, guests would take their leftover food with them in bundles inside their sleeves, and were also allowed to keep the sake saucers used during the dinner as a souvenir, just as one can take the chopsticks used in a *chaji* as a souvenir of the event.

something together inside the tearoom; after the *hassun* course the host returns to the room in order to serve more sake. However, rather than the host pouring for the first guest, the first guest offers to serve sake for the host. The host declines, saying that he does not have a saucer. The first guest then offers his saucer to the host, who accepts it. The saucer is wiped and the second guest pours the sake for the host. The first guest piles some of the *hassun* dishes on top of *kaishi* paper and places them in front of the host. However, this food is rarely if ever eaten. That it is served to the host at all stems from the belief that “this food must always accompany sake.” After the host drinks the sake the second guest asks to share the same saucer. The host then asks the first guest if he can borrow the saucer for a while, and serves sake to each guest. After this, the host returns the saucer to the first guest, who wipes it and once more pours sake for the host. A final dish is served and when the guests are finished eating they drop their chopsticks loudly and simultaneously on their trays to show the host that they have finished eating. (Anderson 1991, 170-71).

#### 4.5. *Shozumi* – First charcoal arrangement

After the *kaiseki* meal is served the first charcoal arrangement is performed. Facing the guests at the entrance, the host announces that he or she will make the fire, and subsequently bows. The guests return the bow thus marking the beginning of the first charcoal arrangement. The host enters the room carrying a charcoal container (*sumitori*) that contains eight pieces of charcoal (each of which is washed beforehand) and three pieces of white stick charcoal (*edazumi*). All eight pieces have their own specific name and shape, and they are arranged in a specific way and in a particular order in the fire pit. The *sumitori* also contains a few other items for the use in arranging the charcoal, for example metal chopsticks (*hibashi*) that are used to place the charcoal on top of the ash. The host also brings an ash dish (*haiki*) that contains white wisteria ash (*fujibai*). (Anderson 1991, 172-173).

Inside the brazier there are already three pieces of burning charcoal so the host will not have to start the fire from scratch. Instead, the host simply builds up the fire to the necessary degree for the upcoming tea preparation. The arrangement of the charcoal is structured to the smallest degree, with acts of purification comprising a central aspect of this. When the fire has been built, the host adds incense in the brazier: “the incense is considered a gift to the guests.

The smell itself is believed to purify the room, a custom that probably came to Japan with Buddhism” (Ibid., 174). The guests are able at this point to examine the incense container, or *kogo*, and the first guest may ask questions about it, or for example of the type of incense used. After this the main sweet, *omogashi*, is served to the guests.

The main sweets in a *chaji* are usually handmade and very artistic, styled into various shapes (see Appendix 3, figure 7 and 8). They carry seasonal elements and can have a profound symbolic meaning<sup>58</sup>. Furthermore, they each have specific poetic names, something the first guest might inquire about during a *chaji* (Anderson 1991, 176). Usually the *omogashi* are served in black lacquered boxes (*fuchidaka*) that are piled on top of each other, the topmost being sprinkled with water to add a sense of coolness. In my case, the host brought the pile of boxes to the first guest and left the room, telling us to enjoy the sweets and afterwards to stretch our legs (by this point, sitting for so long in the *seiza* position has made my legs numb). The first guest took one box and moved the pile onto the next guest, and in this way all of the sweets were distributed among us. Wooden sweet picks (*kuromoji*) are also provided, and once we had placed the sweets on top of *kaishi* paper, we began eating them simultaneously. The sweet picks are always new, and are only ever used once. Traditionally, the guests keep the picks as souvenirs and afterwards write the date of the *chaji* when they received it on the pick itself. After we had finished, we examined the *tokonoma*, the brazier and one at a time left the room through the *nijiriguchi*. The last guest always returns the sweet box pile to the host's door (which is always shut while the host is not inside the room) and exits, finally closing the *nijiriguchi* door loudly enough for the host to know that the guests have departed.

#### 4.6. *Nakadachi* - Middle break

During the middle break the guests walk through the inner *roji* and take their seats at the waiting bench. They can use the lavatory and smoke during this break as the host prepares the tearoom for the next part of the *chaji*. The host sweeps the room, removes the scroll from the

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<sup>58</sup> An example of this is a “*minazuki*” rice cake, representing ice. It is a commonly eaten sweet in Japan, especially on June 30<sup>th</sup>, the same day the *nagoshi no harai* purification ritual takes place. In the past, ice was considered being a luxury and a way to protect against the mid-summer heat. However, because the common people couldn’t afford ice, *minazuki* sweets were eaten instead. The triangle shape and transparent color of the sweet symbolizes ice and the beans on top have proteins to give strength.

*tokonoma* and arranges flowers in it. When the preparations are done the host strikes a gong (*dora*), signaling the guests to squat with their hands at their sides and their heads slightly lowered, an act which for Anderson (Ibid., 181) demonstrates respect. The act of kneeling down during the striking of the gong was an unexpected surprise for me, which is a good example of how important it is to know the Tea etiquette before a *chaji* event. Once the gong strikes have ended, the guests slowly stand up and one by one proceed through the garden, again purifying themselves at the stone water basin. Inside the tearoom the guests again walk to the *tokonoma* where the flower arrangement is this time on display and after this they examine the tea preparation area once again. A cold water container (*mizusashi*) and a thick tea container (*chaire*) housed inside of a silk bag (*shifuku*) are set next to the brazier. These items signal that the next part of the *chaji* is the thick tea (*koicha*) preparation.

#### 4.7. *Koicha* - The moment of spiritual climax

The next part, the preparing and drinking of *koicha* (thick tea), is the most important moment of a *chaji*. The host slides the door open, bows to the guests who offer reciprocal bows, and enters carrying a tea bowl containing a tea whisk (*chasen*), tea scoop (*chashaku*) and small damp linen cloth (*chakin*<sup>59</sup>) used for wiping the bowl. The host sets the bowl down in the correct spot and returns to the preparation area to get the waste water container (*kenzui*) inside of which is a bamboo water scoop (*hishaku*) and a lid rest (*futaoki*). Subsequently, the host turns and shuts the door to the preparation area (the door is always closed during *koicha* preparation, a gesture that “symbolically defines the perimeters of the ritual environment” (Anderson 1991, 191)).

The host then sits down in front of the brazier and places the waste water container on the left side so that the guest cannot see it. In my case, I was aware of a change in the atmosphere: everyone seemed to grow serious as they silently concentrated on the motions of the host. The host picked up the *hishaku* and “mirrored it to the heart”. This gesture, in which the “ladle is held as if it were a mirror into which the host could reflect his thoughts”, allows the host to pause, calm down, and mentally prepare for the next step (Ibid.). According to Anderson, this

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<sup>59</sup> The *chakin* “manifests characteristics important to *Shintō* symbolism in that they are white and used only once” (Anderson 1991, 190).

act reflects an ancient *Shintō* belief that magical mirrors “faithfully reflect the nature of all things” (Ibid.). After this, still holding the *hishaku*, the host takes out the *futaoki* from the *kensui* and places it on the *tatami* in the correct spot. The ladle is knocked on the *futaoki* to create a sound, and the host lets go of the shaft. This shared sign signaled everyone to perform a full formal bow, marking the beginning of the thick tea preparation segment of the *chaji*.

The host began by placing each article in their proper positions and by removing the silk bag from the *chaire* with specific gestures. After this she removed the *fukusa* from the belt of her kimono and examined it in a particular manner known as “*yoho sabaki*”<sup>60</sup>. She checked the four sides of the *fukusa* in silence, an act which ritually purifies the mind for the tea preparation. After this, our host folded the *fukusa* and began the “dry purifications” of the *chaire* and the tea scoop in a specific manner (in between purifying these items, the host always opens and holds the *fukusa* again.) Next, our host removed the lid from the kettle and put hot water inside the tea bowl to purify the tea whisk. This act of purifying and inspecting the tea whisk is called “*chasentoshi*” and the function of it is to make sure that the whisk is intact (Anderson 1991, 193). After the inspection the whisk was swished in the water to make it clean and moist, an act which ended with “drawing” the *hiragana* syllable “*no*”<sup>61</sup> in the water. After this the “dirty” water was poured into the waste water container and the bowl is wiped with the *chakin* (moist linen cloth) in a specific manner. Next, the host extracted the tea from the *chaire* (thick tea container) with the tea scoop in three portions. The remaining tea was then poured from the *chaire* into the tea bowl by rotating it over the bowl. The host removed the lid from the cold water container and takes a full dip of cold water into the *hishaku*, pouring it inside the kettle, the point of which is to lower the water’s temperature thus “[protecting] the delicate flavor of the tea” (Ibid., 194). The amount of water typically added to the tea bowl is not large, as the *koicha* is supposed to be thick and viscous, more akin to a syrup than a liquid. The tea powder and the hot water are mixed using the tea whisk, all of which is done in respectful silence with only the sound of the kettle in the background.

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<sup>60</sup> *Yohō sabaki*, “four-direction examining” also carries Confucian ideals according to Anderson (1991, 192). It can be explained as “a gesture of respect to ‘the nation, one’s parents, one’s teachers, and one’s friends.’” (Ibid.).

<sup>61</sup> Anderson (1991, 193) states that the *hiragana no* syllable “is said to signify ‘continuance’.”



The host added more water in order to make the texture correct, and ended the kneading by writing another invisible “*no*” syllable with the whisk. The bowl was picked up and the host rotated it on her palm until the front of the bowl was facing in our direction. After this, the bowl was set down on the correct spot on the *tatami*, and the first guest slid forward to retrieve the bowl (or, if the room was larger, they would have walked). He picked up the bowl and slid back to his seat, placing the bowl to his left, whereupon we all bowed as a sign of our acceptance to share the tea. The first guest held the bowl in both hands, turned it clockwise twice so not to drink from the front, and raised it while simultaneously bowing<sup>62</sup> his head slightly as a sign of respect. He then took the first sip, a moment which is considered to be the climax of the entire *chaji*. Anderson (1991, 194) feels that if the *chaji* has been successful, both the “host and main guest will share a sense of profound satisfaction and intense tranquility at this point.” Ideally, the first guest will feel a deep gratitude toward the host and everything he has done to create this moment (Anderson 1987, 488). However, as I watched this event unfold, I could not help but wonder if this profound sense of tranquility was meant only for those two, and whether the rest of us were excluded.

In a typical *chaji*, after the initial sip the host inquires as to the texture of the tea, and the first guest responds that it is good (the answer is never anything else). He takes another sip and at this moment the second guest makes their excuses to the third guest for drinking the tea ahead of them. The first guest takes one-and-a-half sip more of the tea, wipes the lip of the bowl with a moist *chakin* (an item which every guest has brought with them) and carefully passes the bowl into the hand of the next guest. The second guest moves through the same procedure and passes the bowl forward after drinking from it. While the second guest is drinking the first guest compliments the tea and inquires about it from the host. In my case, after we had finished drinking the tea, the host added a scoop of cold water to the kettle in a signal that the tea preparation was over (cold water in general symbolizes closure in Tea.) After this, the guests are permitted to examine the tea bowl and the texture of the remaining tea in the bottom of the bowl (this is only done with the *koicha* bowl; usually all the utensils that the guests examine are purified beforehand by the host). After all the guests had

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<sup>62</sup> The bow is an act of humility, not only bowing to the bowl but “also out of respect and thankfulness for one’s relatedness to all that went into the making of the bowl and tea within: the earth, the clay, the potter’s talents, the sun, the tea plants” (Sen 2003, 51).

examined the bowl<sup>63</sup>, the last guest returned the bowl to the first guest who in turn took the bowl back to the host. The host picked up the bowl from the spot in which the first guest set it down and placed it in front of her knees. This is a sign for everyone to make a formal bow “indicating their appreciation for the shared moment” (Ibid., 195).

After the bow, the host will then take hot water from the kettle, pour it into the tea bowl to rinse it, and discard the water in the *kensui*. The first guest inquires about the tea bowl. The host answers the questions and informs everyone that he or she will now finish the tea procedure. The host cleans the tea bowl and tea whisk with cold water, and purifies the tea scoop with the *fukusa* (silk cloth). Excess tea from the *fukusa* is dusted to the *kensui* and one more scoop of cold water is added to the kettle (again signaling closure). After this the first guest asks to examine the tea container, the silk bag and the tea scoop. The host purifies the container and the scoop with the *fukusa* and places them down on the *tatami* for the first guest to pick them up. After this the host shields the *kensui* with their body by turning their back to the guests (as it is thought to be impure or impolite, this is the only time the host will show their back to the guests). The host then lifts the *kensui* up with the ladle and lid rest in the other hand and exits the room. Later he or she returns to retrieve the tea bowl and lastly the cold water container. Sitting, they face the guests and close the door. Only after this are the guests able to examine the utensils. After all the guests have examined them, the objects are returned to the spot where the host set them down and the host returns to the room. The first guest inquires about the utensils and compliments the host’s choices and once this set dialogue is complete the first guest thanks the host on behalf of everyone present, and all bow. (Anderson 1991, 196-198). After the host takes the utensils away from the room, at the doorway he or she declares that next they will prepare thin tea. The first guest accedes, everyone bows again, and the host shuts the door, thus ending the *koicha* segment of the *chaji*.

#### 4.8. *Usucha* - Thin tea

Before the host begins the thin tea preparations they perform the second charcoal arrangement (*gozumi*), an act necessitated by the fact that the fire may have burned down by this point (Anderson (1991, 200) notes that the procedure might not be required in every

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<sup>63</sup> We shared two separate bowls of tea for our group was too big for sharing only one bowl.

instance.) The second charcoal arrangement is slightly different from the first one, and once it is completed the final part of the *chaji* is ready to begin. After sharing the *koicha*, the mood during the *usucha* has changed. I myself could feel a loosening of tension, as the atmosphere became more relaxed and informal. Shibayama (1970, 136) states that in Zen training, those who have attained enlightenment must return “to their ‘original’ humbleness, something which helps them live an ordinary life without displaying undesirable spiritual pretentiousness” by “Downward Training”, a concept which is symbolized in the *usucha* portion of a *chaji*; after the second charcoal arrangement was done the host brought us a small gift as a sign of her appreciation and concern for our relaxation. She had also handmade individual fans for all of us, again as a way to promote a sense of coolness in the summer heat.

The host begins this segment of the *chaji* by brining a *tabako bon* inside the tearoom. Again, this object is not actually used, but rather functions as a symbol of relaxation, helping to make the mood less formal. After this the host returns to the *mizuya* and brings a tray of dry sweets (*higashi*) inside, placing it in front of the first guest. These sweets are small and come in many shapes and colors (see Appendix 3, figure 6). Usually two different kinds of *higashi* are served for the guests in two separate piles<sup>64</sup>. Most commonly, the dry sweets represent seasonal elements, such as flowers and butterflies during summer time. The host returns to the preparation room, seats his or herself in the doorway with a cold water container, bows and tells the guests that they will prepare the *usucha*. After the *mizusashi* (cold water container) is placed down, the host returns to get the tea bowl and the *natsume* (thin tea container). Depending on the *chaji*, a host can serve the thin tea from a single tea bowl or make use of multiple (multiple bowls were used in our case because of the size of the group.) Lastly, the host returns to the preparation room to retrieve the waste water container with the lid rest and ladle inside. They do not stop at the door to close it as with *koicha*, but instead leave the door open throughout the whole *usucha* portion of the *chaji*. As this part of the *chaji* is not so spiritually intensified, the ritual environment does not need to be so clearly defined or closed off.

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<sup>64</sup> The *higashi* sweets are also classified with the *shin*, *gyō*, and *sō* ranking. The formal (*gyō*) sweets are stacked in the upper right corner of the tray and the less formal sweets are stacked in the lower left. The amount of sweets must always be of uneven number (Anderson 1991, 201), and the number four should never be represented inside the tearoom, because the number four in Japanese, *shi*, also means death.

The host sits down to get ready for the tea preparation, and again by knocking the ladle on the lid rest signals that they have begun the tea preparation. This time however, there is no bowing. The *natsume* and *chashaku* are ritually purified with the *fukusa*, following the moist purification of the tea bowl and the tea whisk (as was done during the *koicha* segment). When the host picks up the *chashaku*, a bow between the host and first guest was exchanged, signaling the first guest to enjoy the dry sweets. The first guest makes their excuses for going first, lifts up the tray as a sign of appreciation, places some sweets on their *kaishi* paper and moves the tray forward for the next guest. The first guest enjoys their sweets while the other guests wait for the host to prepare them the individual bowls of tea. The host scoops tea from the *natsume* where the light green *usucha* powder is piled in a representation of a mountain, and then places the spoonfuls in the tea bowl, ending with a light tap of the spoon on the bowl's edge. The host then adds hot water in the bowl and whips the green tea in the water to create a light green froth at the surface. When the host is content with the outcome, he or she lifts the bowl on their palm and turns it twice before placing it down on the *tatami*. After this the first guest moves forward to pick up the bowl, returns to their seat, places the bowl on their left, makes their excuses, then places the bowl in front of his or herself to bow and thank the host for preparing the tea. Only after this will they lift up the bowl in appreciation, turn it twice, and drink the tea. When the first guest is finished they wipe the rim where they drank from with their fingers, place the bowl down, examine it, and return it to the host, finally turning the bowl twice before placing it down on the spot where they originally picked it up. The first guest may inquire about the tea and the bowl while the host prepares the tea for the next guest. After everyone has enjoyed their individual bowls of tea the first guest asks the host to finish.

Purification procedures are done and again cold water is added from the *mizusashi* to the hot water kettle to symbolize closure. Also, all the utensils are "collected" back to the spots where they were at the beginning of the *temae* (tea preparation). While the host performs the purification, the first guest asks about interesting utensils in a casual manner. The first guest might also ask to see the *natsume* (that is purified for the examination) and *chashaku* (which has been purified once before). The guests examine the utensils as well as the tea inside the *natsume* and take special notice of how skillfully the "tea mountain" is piled. During my *chaji*, after we had examined the container and the spoon, the first guest asked the host about them ending the "conversation" with a shared bow. The host then typically returns to the *mizuya*

with those remaining items, stopping at the doorway to “apologize for any offense he might have given” as a “customary demonstration of humility” (Anderson 1991, 206). Finally the host reenters the room for the final expressions of thanks; as we did in the beginning of the *chaji*, each guest individually thanked the host from the position of a bow, sliding slightly out of our spots with our *sensu* in front of us. This moment of the event was highly emotional and many guests broke into tears. The host returned our thanks and left the room by closing the door to the preparation area. Typically, the guests then inspect the *tokonoma* and preparation area one last time, and proceed out from the *nijiriguchi* with the first guest leading the way. The last guest returns the *tabako bon* and dry sweets tray to the door of the *mizuya* and closes the *nijiriguchi* door with a slight noise. The host is now aware that everyone has left, and he or she returns to the *nijiriguchi*, opening the door to be able to exchange the last silent formal bowl (*aisatsu*) before the guests turn to leave. Our host remained bowing at the doorway watching us until she could no longer see us, thus ending the *chaji*.

## 5. *Chaji* as a transition rite; from secular to sacred

Most of my informants emphasized the fact that participating in a *chaji* felt like stepping into another world. The change is clear from the moment a guest enters through the gate, and from the tea gardens to the tearoom, everything is designed to foster a feeling of leaving one world and entering another. However, the full transition from the mundane to the sacred requires certain ritual action and behavior elements. It is my position that such action and behavior work in tandem to form the liminal sphere in which this transition takes place. The primary reason behind describing the physical elements of a *chaji* in so much detail in the preceding chapter was because the sphere of liminality is created *through* the actions and ritual behavior of the guests; each motion, each step in the chain, each piece of dialogue has its place in constructing the symbolic codex in which the transition from mundane to sacred takes place. The famous Tea master Rikyū “envisioned Tea as a transformatory ritual” (Anderson 1991, 59) and for that reason every step of a *chaji* is directed towards the ultimate goal of achieving enlightenment through the so-called “simple” act of drinking a bowl of tea. In this chapter I will offer a theoretical framework with which to view the symbolic transition occurring in a *chaji*. This transition occurs through three separate phases, each of them working together to produce the sphere of liminality in which Tea is enacted.

### 5.1. Three phases of transition in a *chaji*

As the participants step inside the world of Tea during a *chaji*, they are momentarily detached from the mundane world. During my fieldwork we visited many Tea houses, most of which had multiple tearooms. These Tea environments were always in some way hidden, and often the outermost wall concealed the buildings and gardens from the outside world. Stepping through the first gate, a person is entering a world clearly separated from the commonplace; many such physical elements mark the separation of the Tea world from the mundane, but this alone does not create the experience of transition which takes place during a *chaji*. In order to explain how activities performed in the Tea environment can produce the liminal sphere necessary for transition, in the next section I will introduce Arnold Van Gennep’s (1960) definition of the three phases of a transition ritual, demonstrating how, within the confines of a *chaji*, each of these phases is actually taking place twice.

### 5.1.1. *Rite de passage*

In *Rite de Passage* (1960 [1908]) Arnold Van Gennep argued that rites of passage which function as a means of transition (especially from one status to another), focus primarily on birth, marriage and death. Each of these events necessitates a ritual to help the actors move from one state to another or from a world to the next. These rites of passage also help the whole community to cope with the change in the state of the individual in question. These transitions often take place in life-crisis situations (for example, the death of a member of the community) and can be divided into three distinct phases. However, as Victor Turner (1967, 95) states “*rite de passage* are not confined to culturally defined life-crises but may accompany any change from one state to another.” In a *chaji* this change is visible from the very beginning, as the guests pass from the furthest gate to the outer *roji*. During my fieldwork I could sense the change not only in the actual *chaji* ritual, but in the wider context of the school as well; each morning as they wrapped the layers of their kimono around them before they entered the school, in a sense the students were passing from their regular self to their “Tea-self.” From that point on, they took pains to observe the proper etiquette, for example by bowing at the teacher’s room when they passed it, and by showing appreciation to a small altar at lunch before receiving food. This type of etiquette was visible throughout the day, right up until the moment when the students were able to take off their kimono and change into regular clothes. The female students in particular struggled with the discomfort of their kimono during the hot summer months in Kyōto. However, even on the hottest days, the kimono had to be worn to school.

Physical elements like the wearing of kimono separate the world of Tea from everyday life. The ritualistic behavior in this realm is also an example of the change between two worlds. Van Gennep (1960) describes rites as tools that operate between the world of the profane and the sacred. For him, the difference between these two realms is so large that “a man cannot pass from one to the other without going through an intermediate stage” (Ibid., 1). As such, the function of a transition rite is to act as a mediator between the profane and the sacred. These rites also help to ensure a safe transition, not only for the individual, but for society as a whole. Van Gennep (Ibid., 10-11) focused on rituals “which accompany a passage from one situation to another or from one cosmic or social world to another”, dividing these types of rituals into three phases: separation, transition and incorporation. Separation refers to the break from one’s previous status or the mundane world, transition to the phase between the old status

and the new, and incorporation to that moment when the individual or group achieves their new status or becomes a part of another world (Ibid.). These three phases are all strongly evident during a *chaji*.

#### 5.1.2. Two levels of transition

As stated above, Van Gennep divides a rite of passage into three distinct parts, and during a *chaji* each of these occurs twice: in essence, two layers of transition occur during the course of the event. The first takes place between the everyday world and the world of Tea; arriving at a *chaji* event and finding the outer gate left slightly ajar, the guests are signaled that it is time for them to enter. Once they step through, they separate themselves from the world of the everyday. Closing the gate behind them serves to make the division between the regular world and the world of Tea more comprehensible.

It is here that Van Gennep's first phase of separation occurs. At this point a person "separates from a previous world" and this is also often the time when acts of purification are performed (Van Gennep 1960, 20-21) (an example of this is the need for the guests to change into a pair of fresh white *tabi*-socks.) The second phase of transition takes place before the guests move inside the *machiai* room: prior to this the guests have separated themselves from the outside world, but they are not yet a part of the world of Tea. The last phase, incorporation, takes place inside the *machiai* when the guests share a bowl of hot water (the same water that is going to be used in the upcoming tea preparations) served to them by the *hantō* (the host's helper). This moment initiates the guests into the realm of Tea and reinforces the mutual experience of entering the spiritual realm. It is also a good example of the sharing of beverages and meals that can be witnessed during Van Gennep's phase of incorporation (Ibid., 24). All of this occurs at the outer-*roji*, which is separated from the inner-*roji* where the actual ritual of tea drinking takes place. The "middle gate" (*chū mon*) demarcates the border of these two gardens, reinforcing the guests' impression that the inner-*roji* is a sacred realm. As Kondo (1985, 293) puts it:

Everything in the inner garden reflects an induction into the ritual domain. Guests may no longer speak loudly, nor may they touch upon frivolous topics of conversation, for presumably they have left their earthly concerns behind.



After leaving the *machiai* room the guests are again occupying a sort of transitional phase. They sit at the arbor's bench and watch as the host appears for the first time. The middle gate that separates the two gardens is closed until the point when the first silent greetings between the host and the guests are exchanged. After this the host opens the middle gate for the guests as a sign of welcome. While waiting, the guests have prepared themselves to move through the inner-*roji*. It is at this point during the *chaji* that the second layer of Van Gennep's three phases is witnessed: one at a time, the guests move through the middle gate to the garden, stopping to purify themselves at the *tsukubai* or stone water basin. Here the phase of separation occurs again; while they have already left the mundane world behind them, the purification at the *tsukubai* acts as a second level of separation – the gateway to a second layer within the world of Tea – as the ritual and spiritual experience of the *chaji* is intensified.

A further transitional phase takes place as the guests move through the inner-*roji*, following the correct route the host has prepared for them (the stepping stones in a garden are arranged in such a way so that the path is not straight, and there can be multiple cross-roads separating each route.) *Sekimori-ishi*, or detaining stones, are set in the forks of these paths. These stones are symbols of the host's consideration for his or her guests, and are placed in order to ensure that the guests do not deviate from the correct spiritual path. Van Gennep (1960, 16-17) remarks on these types of boundaries, often pieces of wood or other such natural objects placed on paths meant for travelers, as being "intrinsically magico-religious." The guests follow the route formed by the stepping stones to the crawling-in entrance, or *nijiriguchi*. Here, crawling through the small entrance and entering the tearoom on their knees, the third phase of incorporation begins. For Anderson (1987, 485), "the discomfort experienced entering the tearoom also symbolises rebirth", a view that coincides with Van Gennep's concept of the post-liminal phase, or incorporation, when a person fully becomes a part of the new world. Each guest is individually "reborn" by entering the tearoom through an entrance that is specially designed to elicit a sense of humility in the person going through. After crossing this threshold the participants are united in a new world: the atmosphere inside the tearoom is spiritually intensified, and the guests are presumably ready to take part in a "once in a lifetime" experience by sharing a light meal and a bowl of tea. According to Van Gennep (1960, 29) "the rite of eating and drinking together [...] is clearly a rite of incorporation, of physical union."

Van Gennep defines a rite of territorial passage as the crossing of frontiers, using as an example the passage from one country to another. In this type of crossing, various formalities come into play. The boundary line itself is usually marked by the necessity of specific actions as

well as a physical object. (Ibid., 15). During a *chaji* the boundaries and their crossings are clearly marked. The first boundary is the outermost wall surrounding the tea garden (demarcating the world of Tea from the mundane world surrounding it), along with its gate. The fact that the gate has been left ajar and water sprinkled over the pavement before it are the first signs of welcome for the guests. Once they have passed through the gate, it is shut behind them. Upon entering from the first gate, the guests proceed to the *yoritsuki* room. Here they change into *tabi*-socks, an act with obvious spiritual connotations relating to purity; during my fieldwork at Urasenke, it was necessary for me to carry fresh white socks every day<sup>65</sup>, while at the tearoom in Suomenlinna Helsinki for example, white socks are provided for those visitors who might not be aware of the custom; clearly, the change from outer to inner garments has a deeper cultural connotation for Japanese Tea practitioners.

## 5.2. Elements of Separation: *soto* and *uchi*

The idea of separating the *chaji* environment from the outside world connects to a more profound distinction of an 'outside' and 'inside' in Japanese culture. As I stated above, while entering the Tea world the guests close off the mundane world from the Tea world and mark this separation by putting on fresh socks. In *Purity and Danger*, Mary Douglas (2003) explains the way in which concepts of purity and pollution are culturally constructed. The idea of what constitutes pollution exists inside a deeper cultural codex and does not automatically relate to concepts of physical hygiene the way it does in the West; in Japan, notions of purity and pollution are intrinsically linked to the twin concepts of *soto* and *uchi*. Ohnuki-Tierney (1984, 21-27) views the Japanese worldview and its conceptualization of purity and pollution as something divided into a pair of dualistic and complimentary oppositions: *soto*, referring to the dirty "outside" is opposed by *uchi*, the pure "inside." *Uchi* can include a person's home and closest family members, while *soto* is principally defined by those people and areas existing outside the home. The transition from outside (*soto*) to inside (*uchi*) always requires an act of purification to avoid tracking outside pollution to the clean, inner sphere. The clearest example of this is the Japanese *genkan*, the space where the shoes are left before entering a house. This spot exists between the *soto* and *uchi*, and is the only place where outside dirt is allowed

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<sup>65</sup> The white socks can be very affecting as a symbol of purity; during my fieldwork I once forgot my clean socks on a day when we visited a tearoom at a Buddhist temple, and I was surprised by how strongly the feeling of being unclean affected me.

in the home. Separate inside shoes or slippers are often required for guests in Japanese homes, and dormitories or shared residences might enforce a policy of changing into house slippers upon entering at the *genkan*. It is also common for inside slippers to be exchanged for separate toilet slippers when entering a washroom. Another example occurs when visiting Japanese temples or shrines. One must always leave their shoes outside in shoe stands or boxes, or else carry them in a plastic bag before stepping inside the sacred realm.

The same emphasis of *soto* and *uchi* can be seen in the context of a *chaji*; a participant's outside garments must be left in the *yoritsuki* and their socks exchanged for clean white *tabi*, thus preventing any outside dirt from reaching the tea environment. This also serves to mark the second boundary line for the guests. After putting on the *tabi*, the guests proceed to the first part of the *chaji* in which ritual elements are on display, the *machiai*. Here the guests receive their first glimpse of the *chaji's* theme as well as a drink of the water to be used in the tea preparation. When the guests proceed to the waiting bench, separate *zori*-sandals are provided for their walk through the outer-*roji*. These sandals also mark a transition from the outside world to the world of Tea, as they are used exclusively within a tea garden. In providing pure footwear for his or her guests, the host is welcoming them to pass from the *soto* of the outside world to the *uchi* of the realm of Tea, while at the same time preventing any outside pollution from accompanying them within. Here, culturally constructed ideas of purity and pollution are clearly evident: the *zori*-sandals are made from bamboo and are not firm, and as such the white *tabi* socks can easily become stained. However, these stains are not viewed as "dirty" because they arise from the "inside" and therefore do not pose a danger from pollution.

Although Van Gennep focuses on the more concrete transition from one territory to another, his position that "a direct rite of passage" is the means "by [...] which a person leaves one world behind him and enters a new one" (1960, 19) is perfectly suited to the practice of Tea. In taking part in a *chaji* ritual, the practitioner is in essence entering a new world. Every aspect of a *chaji* is aimed at fostering this feeling, which, as one of informants expressed, can be likened to entering a dream: "you just come into a kind of dream, and everything around you is making you feel harmony with the world" (Alise, age 27). Van Gennep notes that the threshold between one state and another is often "sprinkled with blood or with purifying water" and "the door is the boundary between the foreign and domestic worlds in the case of an ordinary dwelling, between the profane and sacred worlds in the case of a temple" (Ibid., 20). In the example of a *chaji*, the outer gate is the boundary between the secular and sacred. This is the

first boundary; between the outer- and inner-*roji* there exists a second boundary, the gate separating the two gardens. A further boundary exists at the *nijiriguchi* or crawl-in-entrance where the guests finally enter the ritual space.

While the guests have proceeded to the waiting bench or *machiai*, they have a moment to spiritually prepare themselves for the passage to the inner-*roji*. This is also the time when the guests and host exchange their first greetings. The middle gate that divides the two gardens remains closed until the instant the host opens it for the guests. Prior to this he or she will have prepared the inner-*roji* for the guest's purification by bringing fresh water to the *tsukubai* (stone water basin). Although by this point the guests have already left the outside world behind, it is not until they move through the middle gate within the inner-*roji* that they have truly entered the world of Tea. That this is a sacred realm is manifested in the act of purification at the *tsukubai* where each guest is required to purify their hands and mouth, a procedure which in Japan is often conducted before entering Buddhist temples or Shinto shrines. According to Ohnuki-Tierney (1984, 28) the feet are considered especially dirty in Japanese culture (hence the procedures of changing shoes and socks), but the hands and sometimes even the throat are also viewed as unclean, as these parts of the body are in frequent contact with the outside (*soto*); ones hands are used to touch "outside" objects, the feet make contact with the ground and the outside air flows into the body through the mouth. At the *tsukubai* the guests avoid the danger of outside pollution by purifying themselves spiritually. Only after this are they ready to "enter into the sacred ground and participate in the sacred activity of Tea" (Plutschow 1999).

### 5.3. Elements of transitions: Acts of purity

"Clean yourself and your mind of unnecessary thoughts. Change from the everyday world to the world of tea" (Alise).

Purity and acts of purification are important aspects of Tea and are present throughout a *chaji* from the time the event is planned. As I stated above, the most obvious act of purification occurs at the *tsukubai* and it is certainly an important phase in marking the transition from the everyday world to the world of Tea. However, many other purification rituals take place before

the actual event and most of these are performed by the host. Even before the utensils to be used in a *chaji* are brought to the tearoom, they are purified in the preparation area or *mizuya*.

Observing students busy with these preparations at Urasenke, it became clear that the purifications had a more profound function than simply making sure everything was neat and tidy. Rather, these acts of purification serve as a method for Tea participants to clear their minds, spiritually preparing themselves to embrace the ideal of nothingness: “according to Zen doctrine, Enlightenment is mu-emptiness or nothingness. Zen ideals include qualities such as mushin, selflessness or detachment, and munen, muso, freedom from all ideas and thoughts” (Kondo 1985, 292). In Tea, the pre-determined methods of purifying the utensils, the tearoom and the tea garden (etc.) are meant to help practitioners reach this state of emptiness by enabling them to put worldly thoughts aside, in other words to be able to make a spiritual transition in their mind. According to Kondo, (Ibid.) the pathway to this state of nothingness in Tea is taught by action and intuition; the teaching methods are based on observation and imitation. As noted in chapter three, one cannot seek to learn Tea from books or speech, and its practitioners are educated mainly through non-verbal methods. For the same reason taking notes during *keiko*-lessons (tea preparation lessons) is usually forbidden

The host of a *chaji* takes pains to purify the space and utensils beforehand so that the guests can enter a realm in which their worldly concerns are more easily set aside. These acts of cleanliness also help the host to make the transition from the mundane world to the sacred sphere of Tea, a movement which takes place systematically and in the smallest details. For example, as the host sweeps the ground to clean the inner-*roji*, he or she will often leave some fallen leaves in order to heighten the impression of naturalness. The stepping stones are supposed to be fresh and moist, but excess water puddles are absorbed with a cloth used specifically for this function.

From the start to the end of a *chaji* the host acts as a mediator between the mundane world and the world of Tea, guiding the guests and aiding in their transition from one state to the next. The signs of purity are a means for the guests to experience this from the start, noting the sprinkled pavement in front of the outermost gate. Upon entering this gate the guests are taking the first of several symbolic step toward the spiritual realm where, as Kondo (1985, 301) puts it “symbolic qualities intensify.” These steps include the changing of the *tabi*-socks, the broom at the side of the waiting arbor reminding the guests about the “need to brush away worldly concerns” (Anderson 1991, 150) and the moment of spiritual and physical purification at the *tsukubai* or stone water basin. According to Kondo (1985) this process of “shedding the

worldly concerns” is symbolically intensified inside the inner *roji* as the guests pass the *chiriana* (dust hole). This is the last moment for the guests to “brush away the pollutions and contingencies of everyday life” before crouching inside the tearoom (Ibid., 300). All of these actions take place before the ritual, and each of them serves to prepare the guests for the upcoming spiritual experience.

Anderson states (1987, 493) that in *chadō* “acts of purification [...] help define the portion of the cosmic model manipulated in an individual ritual and convincingly link it to the physical reality”. It is in these purification rites that the ideals of Tea are enacted. The transition in the participant’s mind (in this case in those individuals participating in the *chaji*) is constructed symbolically, but it also requires physical acts: “the ritual ablution with water not only washes away the ‘dust of the world’, it also metonymically transfers the qualities of water-freshness and purity to the persons of the guests themselves” (Kondo 1985, 301).

#### 5.4. Elements of incorporation; Behavior codex

“By behaving properly in the tearoom, the host and guest participate fully in a cooperative act of ritual world maintenance” (Anderson 1991, 8).

Just as the method of preparing tea in *chadō* is learned through observation and imitation, the proper behavior and attitude of Tea practitioners is learned in the similar fashion. The etiquette of Tea is not taught independently – one needs to “pick up on it” while being actively involved with the way of Tea, as my informants stated. In general, commitment and obedience are essential values for *chadō*, but this is especially true in the ritual context. Adopting the proper behavior codes is a sign of a willingness to partake in the ritual activity of a *chaji*. Victor Turner (1967, 94) notes that the third phase of Van Gennep’s rites of passage, the phase of incorporation, is determined by behavior codes. The ritual participant “has rights and obligations of a clearly defined and ‘structural’ type, and is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards” (Ibid.). During a *chaji* the guests move through multiple spiritual steps before reaching the core of the ritual, the tearoom. Crossing these symbolic boundaries takes the guest deeper into the spiritual realm of Tea, thereby intensifying the symbolic behavior codex. The proscribed etiquette also grows stricter with each boundary, a process that culminates in the actual ritual within the tearoom where the

seating assigned to the guests will determine their role in the ritual. Excluding expressions of gratitude at the beginning and ending, the ritual dialogue in a *chaji* takes place only between the first guest and the host.

Before stepping inside the tearoom each guest must approach the event with the appropriate spirit of humbleness. In order to achieve this, they are required to crouch through the *nijiriguchi* entrance. The symbolic communication has already begun at the outermost gate, but after the phase of incorporation when all the guests and the host meet in the tearoom, the meaning of the behavior code intensifies. It reaches its climax at the moment when the thick tea is prepared. This portion of the ritual is expressly determined by non-verbal communication and silence. During a *chaji* the guests and the host share many non-verbal communication signals, for example the sound created by dropping the chopsticks on the tray after completing the *kaiseki* meal. Sounds and silence are given great emphasis in Tea. According to Kondo (1985, 297), silence, symbolizing formality, lies in direct opposition to informal parts of a *chaji* when social interaction is freer. The spiritual atmosphere of the event is more noticeable during the *koicha* preparation. As one of my informants told me, it is at this point that everyone seems to “breathe together” (Monica, age 28). The middle break or *nakadachi* takes place just before the *koicha* portion of the event, affording the guests time to prepare and purify themselves once again at the *tsukubai* before returning to the tearoom. Non-verbal communication begins during the middle break when the guests are signaled back by the striking of a gong by the host. After the first strike the guests kneel on one knee with eyes lowered and listen to the remaining gong strikes before proceeding one by one through the inner-*roji* and back inside the tearoom.

Another shared non-verbal sign marks the beginning of the tea preparation. At this point, the host clicks the bamboo water ladle against the ladle stands and lets go of the handle. Here, the behavior code is at its most formal, each movement is slower, and verbal communication is at its lowest. The rhythm of the hosts’ tea preparation is concentrated and intensified, and if any feeling of tranquility is experienced by the guests, it is at this point. However, in order to achieve the desired outcome, it is necessary to observe the proper behavior code and respect of the shared etiquette of the event. Anderson (1987, 493) states that “a fundamental assumption of chado [...] is that the practitioner is a sincere participant who will share the spiritual benefits of the behavior” and “a tea gathering is considered effective only if both host and guests are convinced of the validity of the cosmic model created and their relationship to it.” Therefore, a guest unwilling to fully commit to the idea of the “cosmic model” created

during a *chaji* will not be a sincere participant, and the desired outcome (a feeling of tranquility among the guests) will not be possible.

Following the structured behavior etiquette during a *chaji* is a sign of respect and sincerity. Although one of the central ideals of Tea is the infallibility of the guest, in practice the rite is very different. Correct behavior codes for both the host and guest are essential. One is required to be aware of the proper modes of conduct in order to be a part of the Tea world and to be able to participate in the symbolic communication taking place during a formal Tea gathering. As such, a *chaji* is essentially esoteric, a right solely for the initiated and in no way open to those ignorant of the ideals and practices of Tea. Of course, it is possible for someone without the correct knowledge to participate in a *chaji*, and Urasenke often hosts Tea events for uninitiated people in high positions<sup>66</sup>, but in my view these types of events, mainly seeming to have a political function, do not represent a true transition rite.

My informants emphasized that Tea is not about achieving perfection; during a *chaji* mistakes are inevitably made but the essential thing is the feeling of sincerity cultivated between the participants, and an appreciation of the moment. As one informant told me when talking about the role of the host, the most important thing is to make his or her guests feel comfortable, regardless of what happens. Incidents do happen, and during my fieldwork I heard about several instances when something unexpectedly interrupted the ritual. Before continuing however, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the *chakai* events and a *chaji*: guests are not expected to behave according to the same etiquette during a *chakai*, events that are often meant to serve as an introduction to *chadō*. For a committed Tea practitioner the situation is different, and more emphasis will be placed on demonstrating the proper respect for the school.

Commitment, respect and the expression of these towards one's school of Tea are essential during a *chaji* event. Even if something surprising takes place, guests do not want to cause a fracture in the ritual form, and in my view this is an expression of respect for the event and the people participating in it. During my fieldwork I participated in a *chaji* hosted by a student, helping in the kitchen to prepare the *kaiseki* meal. At this event, staged during the heat of summer, one of the guests fainted as a result of feeling overheated in her kimono. Two people had to carry her from the tearoom and for about half an hour she had trouble breathing.

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<sup>66</sup> Tea still has an important political role in Japan, and an invitation to the annual New Year's Tea event is highly regarded. Tea events are also used as vehicles for international relations and communication and it is not uncommon for ambassadors to Japan to be invited to take part in Tea events hosted at Urasenke.



However, as soon as she felt even slightly better she insisted on rewrapping the kimono to return to the tearoom, allowing the *chaji* to continue as if nothing happened. Another incident occurred when a poisonous variety of centipede dropped on a guest and crawled inside his sleeve. Rather than drawing attention to this and causing a disturbance, the guest crushed the insect and carried on.

It is clear that the correct behavior code is essential to the practice of Tea, but while every detail of a Tea event is structured, it is believed that such rigid formality offers a path to true freedom (Plutschow 1999). Each movement in Tea is defined by and learned through imitation from one's teachers, following the forms determined by the school's *iemoto*. The correct behavior of the participants reflects the school's teachings and philosophy, and respect for these is manifested in the observation of proscribed etiquette. Mistakes can and do happen, but following the ritual form of a *chaji* reflects the participant's commitment towards sharing in a once in a life time event. As my informants told me, a guest can never be wrong; the host's role is to make the guests feel comfortable, even if they have no knowledge of the *chaji's* form. Paradoxically, being disrespectful is the worst "mistake" a guest can make while participating in a *chaji*.

### 5.5. Creation of liminality

As Victor Turner (1974, 94) notes, during the time of incorporation the meaning of the social behavior code is intensified. The form of a *chaji* is defined by these codes and serves to separate it from everyday tea drinking. As Kondo writes of a *chaji* (1985, 302): "by its precise orchestration of sequence and the interrelations among symbols in different sensory modes, the tea ceremony articulates feeling and thought, creating a distilled form of experience set apart from the mundane world." By virtue of its separation from the world in its forms and particularized location, a *chaji* can be viewed as taking place within a liminal sphere. Tea is almost exclusively practiced in liminal areas separated from common human society; typically, these zones serve as meeting places between humans and the divine (Plutschow 1999). In Japan the sacred is often demarcated from the mundane by means of ponds and rivers, as it is by the stepping stones in the inner-*roji* (Ibid.). Victor Turner (1967, 1969) developed Van Gennep's division of the rite of passage by dealing with the liminal phase in particular, that point when a person is momentarily ambiguous, betwixt and between. From Turner's

perspective it is at this phase when the social structure is often simplified or even eliminated, while at the same time those of ritual and myth are enhanced (Ibid. 1967, 167).

The ideology of a *chaji* has it that the participants leave their everyday status outside the tearoom, becoming social equals at least as long as they take part in the ritual. It was for this reason that *samurai* were required to leave the symbol of their social class, the sword, outside the tearoom. Turner regards the phase of liminality as “a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action” and as such as “a period of scrutinization of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs” (Turner 1967, 167). A *chaji* is considered to be a once in a lifetime event, a time and place that occurring outside the normal social sphere. Everything in the Tea environment is defined by symbolic interaction based on the shared values of the participants. Turner himself focused on the initiation ritual among the *Ndembu* tribe in his book *The Forest of Symbols* (1967) but developed his idea of liminality in a broader context in the volume *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (1991, [1969]). He distinguishes “two main types of liminality.” Simply put, these are “rituals of status elevation” and “rituals of status reversal” (Ibid., 167). A ritual of status elevation refers to one in which the subject is raised to a higher status and the ritual of status reversal to a time when those persons of lower status are “are positively enjoined to exercise ritual authority over their superiors” (Ibid.). He concludes that these types of rituals are mostly witnessed in tribal societies, but is careful to point out that the same type of ritual behavior can also be found in the religions of other cultures. (Ibid.).

#### 5.5.1. “Mystical union” in liminality

Turner talks also about “religions of humility” which also tend toward status elevation (Turner 1991, 189). These types of religions “emphasize humility, patience, and the unimportance of distinctions of status, property, age, sex and other natural and cultural differentiae” (Ibid.). Turner explains that in these types of religions the idea of a “mystical union” and feelings of mutual understanding and solidarity are emphasized, the ultimate goal of which is the attainment of heaven or nirvana (Ibid.). As I noted in the beginning of this chapter, the celebrated Tea master Rikyū conceived of Tea as a kind of transformational ritual, and a means of gaining enlightenment. At its core, Tea focuses on humility, patience and the equality of the practitioners within the tearoom. The shared moment created during a Tea event is based on

the ability of a mutual understanding of these values to create a feeling of harmony. This notion of harmonious interaction was a constant theme when talking to my informants: the rules and communal behavior code help to achieve social harmony as individuals come together to share a bowl of tea. As my informants often said, the worst mistake a guest could make would be to break this harmonious atmosphere. Consideration for others, being a part of the whole, being humble and treating everyone equally are values at the core of *chadō*. Sharing these values creates, as Turner puts it, a “mystical union” in which individuality is no longer important. As one informant said: “you do something for them [the guests] and that’s why you don’t pick up the best looking kimono to draw attention to yourself. The attention should be to what’s happening itself, to tea” (Stefan).

Describing religions of humility, Turner (1991, 195) notes that the founder often enjoys a high level of respect and structural status. Common to these religions is the ideology of “stripping off of worldly distinctions” (Ibid.) such as status or property. The spiritual is stressed and followers must remain in a humble “liminal phase” before they will be able to pass to the final stage of nirvana (Ibid.). In Tea, the ideology of *wabi* is a good example of this emphasis on stripping away material concerns; *Wabi* is not only an aesthetic that values the poor and rustic, it is also a state of mind. Torniainen (2000, 42-44) defines the *wabi* mind or heart (in Japanese *wabi kokoro*) as being at the core of Tea’s ideology, differentiating it from *wabi* aesthetics which are primarily concerned with outer appearance and the superficial. If a practitioner is in possession of a *wabi* mind, they will therefore realize that the Tea event “does not have to be perfect and correct in every detail” (Ibid., 44) but instead should possess the correct mind or heart. The central idea is that the worldly symbols of wealth are not stressed. Instead a humble state of mind that does not aim for perfection is primary in Tea.

The leader or leaders of religions of humility are often portrayed as servants (as the Pope as a servant of God in Catholicism) who have a responsibility to take care of the followers. Turner states that as these religions grow more popular, they also become more hierarchical (a development with clear parallels to the legacy of the Tea master Rikyū as outlined in chapter 2) (Turner 1991, 195). Given this, Turner’s definition of religions of humility seems to correspond to those traditional schools of *chadō* that possess grand masters (*iemoto*) who are responsible for transmitting the family’s teachings to subsequent generations of students. Subsequently, any changes or developments in procedures or preparations are only be defined by the *iemoto*. From Plutscow’s (1999) perspective these changes in procedures and protocol only come about as a result of crisis situations or when conditions have changed so drastically

that their adaptation was necessary to continue the legacy of *chadō*. As a result, the schools *iemoto* take on the role of Tea promoters, and also of the guardians of its traditions. They have sole means to regulate what is taught to their followers, and Plutschow states that the authority the *iemoto* possess has in itself become an “outgrowth of ritual” (Ibid.). Here, the ritual art is regulated to a particular person or family so that “no unskilled person could breach the procedures and disrupt the harmony” (Ibid.). This authority is limited to the male members of the Tea family. At Urasenke, the students would refer to the *iemoto* as a father who takes care of them. They also compared the former *iemoto* who now travels the world promoting the word of Tea to a grandfather, and this *iemoto* has in turn referred to his students as his grandchildren.

For Turner, Van Gennep’s concept of liminality was much more than just a single phase of a transition ritual. He has come under criticism for this, especially in referring to the concept of liminality as a ritual itself (Lewis 2008, 49). However, both Van Gennep and Turner’s definitions are well suited to speaking of a *chaji*. The transition from the secular world to the sacred world of Tea occurs in the social realm, between the participants. As Herbert Plutschow (1999) states, in Tea “it is the participants who constitute the sacred.” At its core then, a *chaji* is a time and place for a group of people to express shared meaning, as they partake in a spiritual transition from the world of the everyday into the world of Tea.

## 6. *Chaji* and *communitas*

The unique nature of the Way of Tea, the idea of transience that no gathering can be repeated exactly even though the same host and guests may come together once again, the same utensils be used, the same food and same tea served; every meeting is still unique and it happens only once in a lifetime (Torniainen 2000, 115).

Practically all rituals of any length and complexity [...] may be said to possess “temporal structure” and to be dominated by the notion of time. But in passing from structure to structure many rituals pass through *communitas*. *Communitas* is almost always thought of or portrayed by actors as a timeless condition, an eternal now, as “a moment in and out of time” (Turner 1974, 238).

The “transience” of a *chaji* is perhaps the most emphasized aspect of Tea. As Torniainen states, each tea event is “unique”, something that takes place only once in a lifetime. Alongside this is the broader realization of the momentariness of life. My informants often spoke to this effect, noting that Tea teaches them to appreciate each moment and to embrace each experience’s transient form. In the previous chapter I underscored the way in which a *chaji* operates as a transition rite from the mundane to the sacred. In this chapter I deepen my interpretation of what is actually taking place inside the tearoom between the particular group of individuals participating in the event. Communities which arise alongside or within the margins of larger, mainstream society are described by Victor Turner as *communitas* (1974, 1991); in such a community the individual is in some way free from the constraints their social status would otherwise impose on their behavior. In this chapter I aim to illustrate how a *communitas* of “Tea” is constructed and experienced within a *chaji*. First I describe Turner’s concept of *communitas* as part of society’s larger structure, and illustrate the way in which it is manifested in the realm of Tea. From there, I draw comparisons between a *chaji* and the consumption rituals of other cultures in which the experience of *communitas* is generated, in order to place it in the context of wider human activity.

As demonstrated throughout this study, a *chaji* can be viewed as a constructed experience; far from being a spontaneous event, the ritual action taking place inside a tearoom is scripted. It is a type of learned behavior, something the students are expected to perform in the correct manner depending on their role as host or guest. The untold hours spent learning to prepare tea, handle the utensils, memorize the proscribed dialogue, arrange flowers in the correct manner, and on top of that to learn the poetic names and backgrounds of the utensils is all

done in order to prepare the student for the simple act of sharing a bowl of tea among a group of people. In Tea, the details are everything: the water sprinkled on the tea flowers is only noticeable if you know to look for it, and in learning to recognize such details, the Tea practitioner is more likely to “enjoy” and appreciate the event.

From the perspective of one of my informants, everything in a *chaji* is prepared in such a way as to allow the guest to feel as if they have stepped into a world that has just come into existence. In reality, this "spontaneous world" is the result of hours of preparation on the part of the host. However, none of this effort is relevant if it is not appreciated; in order to fully witness a tea event, the participant must therefore be an initiate. Not only is an invitation required in order to participate<sup>67</sup>, the most important aspect of the event is the ability to share the experience. This is one of the principal reasons for my position that the world of Tea forms a closed community: while my informants emphasized the fact that one's individual performance is not important during a *chaji*, approaching the event with the correct mindfulness is essential. As Torniainen (2000, 115) states, “the spirit of Tea does not rest only upon the utensils used, not in the right state of mind, such as *wabi* mind, nor in the human relationships separately, but in the realization that every occasion occurs only once as it is here and now.” In teaching correct mindfulness to its followers, Urasenke is also ensuring that the school's the “legacy” is passed on.

### 6.1. *Communitas*

“It is not an individual experience, it’s something that we share between all the people who are there, creating something different or special for a group of people at one point in time that will never happen again” (Stefan).

As noted above, for Tea practitioners an acknowledgement of the temporal and fleeting nature of the event is paramount. In referring to Turner (1974, 238) in the beginning of this chapter, I recall the way in which notions of a “temporal structure” and “timeless condition” are commonly attached to those rituals which manifest *communitas*. What is somewhat unique to Tea however is the concept of shared enlightenment; commonly, those wishing to gain

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<sup>67</sup> Depending on your status and role inside the Tea community, it can take a long time before receiving the “first” actual invitation to a *chaji*.

enlightenment practice through solitude and individual meditation, but in Tea tranquility of mind is attained by communal action. The experience of sharing a moment of cohesion with one's fellow men forms the basis of Turner's concept of *communitas*. As I noted in chapter 5, Turner was able to develop Van Gennep's theory of rites of passage by focusing on the concept of liminality. This is the moment in which the ritual participant is detached from the secular world and, from Turner's perspective, it is at this point that the individual is freed from their status or possessions and his or her behavior is expected to be humble or passive (Turner, 1991, 95).

The phase of liminality also has the potential to foster the creation of a sphere in which *communitas* can emerge outside of what Turner calls structure. Turner describes *communitas* as "an unstructured or rudimentarily structured and undifferentiated communion or community of equal individuals" (Turner, 1974, 104) and the experience of such can be highly charged emotionally. Turner further defines structure as those patterns of recognized roles and status regulated by a given society (Ibid.). That this structure is limiting or restraining for individuals is due to the way in which it segments them into defined "roles", serving to separate them from each other and emphasize their differences (Ibid., 47, 50, 234). For the reason of these roles being disjunctive for individuals, a need for communal experience emerges, a need which is fulfilled in the margins of society and in the sphere of liminality. *Communitas* has a temporal nature that can be maintained only for a short period of time, often in the form of a ritual which takes place in "a moment in and out of time" (Ibid., 238) (in the context of this study, *communitas* in Tea is reflective of Japanese society.) In the next section, I will further explain Turner's view of society as a dualistic system between social structure and *communitas*.

#### 6.1.1. Conceptualizing the society

Turner sees society as "a process rather than an abstraction system" in which the individuals "alternated between fixed and [...] 'floating worlds'" (Turner 1991, vii). These "floating worlds" reside outside the structured society as "liminal areas of time and space", but far from being mutually exclusive, they exist side by side. In the so-called "fixed world", people impose classification boundaries and constraints on themselves in order to maintain social cohesion.

By the same token, there arises a need to create alternative spaces and events. These are the "floating worlds", and the challenge of an individual is to balance this dialectical process, to find balance between structure and *communitas*, and the fixed and floating worlds. (Ibid.).

Society is often structured hierarchically, but in the emergence of *communitas*, hierarchy may be only rudimentary, or even non-existent. However, the individuals involved in the nascent *communitas* will still consistently submit to a general authority, akin to a ritual elder. (Ibid., 96). In *chadō* the ultimate authority belongs to the head of the school, the *iemoto*, who determines the discipline. During a *chaji* the host and especially the first guest will guide the rest of the group through the course of the ritual. Turner states that "each individual's life experience contains alternating exposure to structure and *communitas*, and to states and transitions" (Ibid., 97). In other words, the structure is determined by those states which categorize individuals, while "communitas emerges where social structure is not" (Ibid., 126). Outside the social structure, *communitas* liberates individuals from conformity and the norms predicated by that structure (Ibid., 1974, 274). This does not mean that *communitas* does not in time become constructed around its own normativity, something which I will emphasize later in the chapter.

For Turner society as a process includes the opposition of social structure and anti-structure. He defines social structure as being:

Not a system of unconscious categories, but quite simply, in from Robert Mertonian terms, 'the patterned arrangements of role-sets, status-sets, and status-sequences' *consciously* recognized and regularly operative in a given society. These are closely bound up with legal and political norms and sanctions. By 'role sets' Robert Merton designates 'the actions and relationships that flow from a social status'; 'status-sets' refers to the probable congruence of various positions occupied by an individual; and 'status-sequences' means the probable succession of positions occupied by an individual through time (1974, 237).

In order for society to function, it is necessary for these roles to differentiate and divide individuals: "structure is all that holds people apart, defines their differences, and constrains their actions" (Ibid., 47). For the reason that these dividing structures alienate individuals from each other there rises a need for a collective experience, something which Turner states is also relevant for a functioning society: "the experience of *communitas* is also necessary for the proper function of social structure" (Ibid., 109). The experience of such often occurs in a ritual, and emerges in the sphere of anti-structure (Ibid.). Turner emphasized the fact that in talking about anti-structure he is not implying a radical negative, but rather something "positive, a



generative center” defined by his concepts of *communitas* and liminality (Ibid., 273). In anti-structure a sense of “freedom” can be spontaneously experienced without the obligations defined by the social structure (Ibid., 49). This freedom is shared between equal members in the margins of society, taking place in “liminality, the optimal setting of *communitas* relations, and *communitas*, a spontaneously generated relationship between leveled and equal total and individuated human beings, stripped of structural attributes” and these “together constitute what one might call anti-structure” (Ibid., 1991, 202). As an individual balances between these two poles to create a society they are “both a structural and an anti-structural entity, who *grows* through anti-structure and *conserves* through structure” (ibid., 1974, 298).

Turner (1974, 127) notes that “*communitas* has an existential quality” where the “whole man in his relation to other whole men” is essential. In contrast, structure has “a cognitive quality” in which sets of classifications are emphasized. *Communitas* becomes visible in liminality; “at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath the structure, in inferiority” and is in most places considered sacred or holy. *Communitas* creates ideal conditions for the generation of rituals, symbols, philosophical systems and art. (Ibid., 127-128). For the reason that *communitas* exists outside the normal social sphere of life, its existence is temporary, its nature transgressive, and it is primarily experienced collectively and emotionally (Olaveson 2001, 107). In Tea, the conjunctive nature of *communitas* is experienced in the arousal of strong emotions during a *chaji*. In the practice *chaji* I took part in, I witnessed mixed emotions between the participants, happiness and sorrow in equal measure, especially during the final greetings (manifesting at that time in shared tears and laughter between the host and the guests.) Turner (1974, 237-238) states that in all societies, even in complex levels, a contrast is implied between the notion of society being a segmented system of structures and society being a homogenous “undifferentiated *whole*.” This contrast is defined as the dualistic division of social structure and *communitas*. The relationship between these is not static, varying “within and between societies and in the course of social change” (Ibid.).

#### 6.1.2. Binary opposition of social structure and *communitas*; manifestation in Tea

In defining society as a dualistic system of social structure and *communitas*, Turner creates a binary opposition between the two (Turner 1991, 106). The expression of the concept of *communitas* in Turner’s binary opposition can be witnessed in the ritual activity during a *chaji*. Here I emphasize some of these dualistic concepts and the way they are manifested in Tea

(each concept pair is first listed with the one referring to *communitas*, and secondly with the pair defining social structure.) This is done in order to further illustrate the way in which Turner's theory of *communitas* is relatable to Tea. The pairs are:

Equality/inequality

Absence of property/property

Absence of status/status

Absence of rank/distinction of rank

Nakedness or uniform clothing/distinctions of clothing

Humility/just pride of position

Unselfishness/selfishness

Sacredness/secularity

Silence/speech

Acceptance of pain and suffering/avoidance of pain and suffering

(Turner 1991, 106).

As I have commented before, Tea is performed "outside" the normal social sphere. Over time it has formed its own community of followers that have, at least in the case of Urasenke, spread around the globe. The concepts within Turner's binary oppositions are applicable to any country where Tea is practiced, since no matter where it is performed, Tea is always taking place in the liminal realm. During a *chaji* the concept of equality is emphasized among the participants and signs of difference are to be avoided. An individual participant's gender, background, nationality, profession or any other "differentiating" categorical factor is no longer relevant inside a tearoom.

In the wider sphere of social structure, and in Japanese culture in general, the use of kimono is connected to special occasions and is mostly distinct from everyday clothing. The appearance of a kimono can differ greatly depending on the event and the age and gender of the participant, but often women's kimono are very glamorous and ornamental in design. However in Tea, one's kimono is not supposed to draw too much attention and strong colors

and patterns are to be avoided. As well, the *obi* belt used in a woman's kimono is always tied in the common drum bow style; the equality of the guests is therefore reflected in their dress, and as a result this style has become a kind of uniform. The absence of status is also connected to the dress code, where only small individual differences are shown in each participant's kimono. The daily use of the kimono for men and women at Urasenke is a good example of the way in which clothing reflects uniformity and underlies the absence of status and rank. Their kimono distinguished the Urasenke students from common people, and every time the *Midorikai* group would go outside the Urasenke compound, their distinctive style of dress drew particular attention<sup>68</sup>.

During a *chaji* the concepts of humility and unselfishness are clearly evident; every guest is expected to demonstrate their humbleness when entering the tearoom through the *nijiriguchi* or crawl-in-entrance, and unselfishness is portrayed throughout the ritual, especially from the host's point of view. At the core of Tea is the concept of sincerity and the way in which it connects to both humbleness and unselfishness. The host prepares everything for his or her guests without the expectation of receiving anything in return; their reward is garnered from the shared spiritual experience within the *chaji*. However, while the host is not "expecting" anything from the guests in return for their work, reciprocity exists in Tea just as it does in any other "gift giving" context. In his classic theory of gift exchange, Marcel Mauss (1990, [1950]) concludes that a truly altruistic gift is an impossibility: there is always some form of reciprocity at work. The same applies to a *chaji*: "you never come [to a *chaji*] with empty hands, if you have empty hands, don't come" (Alise). In chapter four I noted that the guests bring money or some other symbolic gift in appreciation of the host's hard work, and according to my informants, depending on the event, the amount in question may be "a lot"<sup>69</sup>.

Turner's conception of sacredness and secularity offers another excellent window into Tea. Nothing in *chadō* is secular; the simple act of preparing and drinking tea has been shaped into an art form and philosophy which exists independently from the world of the mundane. At the center of *chadō* is *koicha* (thick tea): every other element of a *chaji* is constructed around the moment of sharing the bowl of *koicha*. This is the climax of the event. Here, the focus is on the beverage itself, or in other words, a material object. The participants are only relevant

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<sup>68</sup> Although a uniform is typical in any Japanese school (except universities) the use of kimono as a uniform is uncommon. Coupled with the fact that the *Midorikai* group is comprised of non-Japanese students, their use of kimono drew the attention of the public.

<sup>69</sup> The discussion about money in the context of Tea was always in some way avoided, and I am unable to give any exact numbers as to how much a guest would pay for a *chaji* held for example by the Urasenke *iemoto* during the change of the year. As well, the act of giving money was not relevant for the *Midorikai*-students. Their gifts for a *chaji* was more symbolic, often a souvenir from their own country.

insofar as they exist as agents for the ingestion of this material and more importantly, the shared experience centered around that ingestion; the participants' actions during a *chaji* serve to foster an experience of the sacred, but what is “celebrated” or emphasized during the ritual are the material objects.

A Tea practitioner is required to act according to a strictly predetermined behavior pattern forming a step by step guide for their role in the ritual. As long as each step is taken correctly, one can concentrate on the essential aspect of a *chaji* (the once in a lifetime experience of a shared a bowl of tea among a group of people) without fear of distractions. Inside a tearoom, one speaks only about Tea and the material related to it. The predetermined dialogue concentrates on the utensils, their shape, name and origins<sup>70</sup>. The presence of an individual is in this sense superfluous. Conversely, the material objects of a *chaji* construct a symbolic playfield where the individual engages in a dialogue between the utensils and everyone else present. In similar fashion, the communication between the host and their guests flows through the medium of these physical objects. The spiritual dialogue surrounding the utensils and the tea itself seems to reflect and reinforce Tea’s symbolic codex as generated in *communitas*: “it is only through the unique environment of a *chaji* that tea practitioners can truly express themselves as ritualists” (Anderson 1991, 135).

The opposition of silence and speech is also connected to the concept of sacredness when talking about Tea. Silence is at its most intense during the *koicha* portion of the event, which only truly begins once the most sacred moment is already over, that instant when the first guest has taken the first sip of the thick tea. In comparison, during the *usucha* portion the guests' speech is more relaxed and informal. For the reason that the dialogue during a *chaji* is predetermined and explicitly connected to the utensils being employed from moment to moment, “speech” as it occurs in the secular realm of social interactions does not take place during a *chaji*.

Another example of Turner's binary oppositions can be witnessed in the acceptance or avoidance of pain: depending on the person and physics, practicing Tea can be fairly painful.

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<sup>70</sup> For example, during the *koicha* portion of the event, the dialogue begins after the first guest has taken the initial sip of tea. After this the host inquires about the taste and the first guest compliments it. As the other guests share rest of the tea the first guests asks about the tea’s name and where it was grown and also inquires about the moist sweet they had before the tea was served. Questions are also asked about the flowers and the flower container, tea bowl (what its shape is, who made it, its poetic name etc.), thick tea container (shape, maker, poetic name), tea spoon (maker, poetic name) and of the thick tea container's silk pouch (namely what the print is). For a more detailed dialogue check: <http://wiki.chado.no/Koicha%20Dialog> (Read on 2.4.2012).

This is due to the necessity to sit in *seiza*<sup>71</sup>, the formal sitting position expected of both the guests and host. This position often causes loss of circulation to the legs, as well as pain and numbness. Usually one gets used to sitting in *seiza*-style but for some the legs will never properly adjust, in which case the pain is present throughout the entire four hour duration of a *chaji* (with the exception of the middle break.) As one's movements are supposed to be elegant during the ritual, numbness in the legs can cause certain difficulties.

From Turner's perspective these binary oppositions are principally visible in tribal cultures, but over time they have come to characterize larger religious movements as well. He refers to Benedictine monks who "devote themselves entirely to God by self-discipline, prayer and work" and so create a community based on absence of property. (Turner 1991, 107). The community created by these monks is necessarily distinct from that of society as a whole, and while I do not wish to refer to Urasenke being a kind of monastery, there are elements of this same phenomenon at work. Japanese students at Urasenke live inside the "Tea world" for three years, wearing a kimono to school nearly every day, often rising early to prepare the ash formations for the brazier in the *mizuya* or making other preparations. Each morning they also participate in an opening ritual (something which is not a part of the *Midorikai* students' daily routine), where almost the entire staff of Urasenke is present. This morning ritual includes meditation and the repetition of the Urasenke statement of goals, which I refer to in chapter three. During their training the students devote themselves to the way of Tea and upon their graduation they are given their own Tea name<sup>72</sup>. For Turner, it is common for artistic or philosophical systems to be generated from marginality or liminality rituals (Ibid., 128) and from my point of view the same things are at work in Tea; *chadō* is considered to be an art form as well as a philosophical system. Focus on the traditional aspects of Japanese art is highly essential, and one could say that the actual ritual, a *chaji*, is constructed around this focus. A Tea student commits to a three year program and during this time they are in many ways removed from the normal social structure, existing within the margin of the society. For Turner, cultural forms (art, rituals etc.) that take place in the marginal realm can provide "periodical reclassification of reality and man's relationship to society, nature and culture" (Ibid.), all of which is relevant to the world of Tea, itself more a Way of life than merely an art form.

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<sup>71</sup> *Seiza*, literally meaning "proper sitting".

<sup>72</sup> Tea name (*chamei*) is a "title that attests to the student's status as a nature tea practitioner" (Anderson 1991, 95) and it is given by the *iemoto*.

Although the margins provide the time and place for *communitas* to emerge as a counterbalance to an alienating society, Turner states (1991, 129) that structure will eventually emerge in this liminal world as well: “*communitas* cannot stand alone if the material and organizational needs of humans beings are to be adequately met.” A corollary of this is that as *communitas* grows, those living in it will come to need a leader to act as a guide. Urasenke is a good example of this, although the origin of the “Tea *communitas*” resides so far back in history that one could say the structure and hierarchy of Tea has always existed. However, I see a difference between the administrators of Tea doctrine and the students who actually form the *communitas* in Turner’s definition of the term; as *communitas* progresses, it takes on a structure which in turn provokes a need for “renewed *communitas*” (Ibid.) and this may be one reason why the way of Tea has produced so many different schools and disciplines. When a student of Tea commits to one discipline, they are at once committing to a single community. As Turner puts it: “in ‘solidarity’, unity depends on ‘in-group, out-group’ oppositions, on the we-they contrast” (Turner 1974, 202). As a result, the fate of a *communitas* seems to be the movement from openness to closure, a “solidarity given by bounded structure” with obligations (Ibid.).

## 6.2. Tea; a normative *communitas*

“We share the tea and it connects us, it connects people. It’s amazing!” (Alise)

The function of sharing a bowl of tea in *chadō* is “to realize tranquility of mind in communion with one’s fellow men within our world” (Sen 2003, 9) and, as the above quote illustrates, it serves to connect individuals within a bounded *communitas*. The need for a shared communal feeling stems from the alienating character of society and is temporarily experienced in spontaneous “happenings” in the margins of the social structure. However, the temporal character of this type of happening requires structure for the continuity of the communal feeling. Turner states that this is the fate of every *communitas*: “*communitas* itself in time becomes structure-bound and comes to be regarded as a symbol or remote possibility rather than as the concrete realization of universal relatedness.” (Turner 1974, 206). The strong emotional connection between the participants of a *chaji* is created by long hours of practice within the Tea structure and its code for proper behavior. Without these, an individual cannot

fully understand or experience the shared sacredness of Tea. Although one may achieve communal feeling the first time they participate in a *chakai* or *chaji*, I would argue that the true feeling of communal emotion is experienced only after one equates themselves as belonging to a “Tea community.” In the sharing of a bowl of *koicha* “oneness is felt among the guests” (Sen 2003, 29), but this “oneness” is both defined and limited by the communal understanding of the term.

As *communitas* grows and becomes more elaborate it loses its spontaneity and immediacy of character. Turner states that even though *communitas* is originally founded on the idea of unstructured “freedom” where fixed statuses are not required, this spontaneity is not maintained for long. As such, *communitas* itself begins to develop a structure in which the “free relationships become converted into norm-governed relationships between social personae.” (Turner 1991, 132).

This is also visible in Tea and especially in the hierarchical nature of the Tea schooling system. As *communitas* will in time develop into a structured social system, Turner distinguishes three models of *communitas*: *existential* or *spontaneous communitas*, *normative communitas* and *ideological communitas* (Ibid., 132-133). According to Turner, every type of *communitas* begins as a spontaneous one. This type is defined by a momentary “happening” created in time and space among a group of people, but which ends as soon as the moment does; spontaneous *communitas* does not have a specific social structure form, and moreover it arises among a group of people unpredictably. Spontaneous *communitas* are emotionally charged and predicated on a pleasure-response, both of which are contrary to “life in 'structure'”, and from a subjective level have a feeling of “endless” power. Normative *communitas* emerge from spontaneous *communitas* under the influence of time; once a spontaneous *communitas* becomes more than just a “happening” it needs to be mobilized and organized and as such requires a level of social control. Ideological *communitas* are often found in utopian societies and are “organized into a perduring social system”, becoming structured over time to maintain the shared goals of the members. (Ibid.). Whether they are spontaneous, normative or ideological in nature, every *communitas* is a “transformative experience”: at their core each is something profoundly communal and shared (Ibid., 138).

Turner (1974, 255) believed that in the course of time all spontaneous *communitas* would either cease to exist or develop the structure of a normative *communitas*. In a way, each *chaji* has the nature of a spontaneous *communitas* for, as followers of Tea so often state, every *chaji* is a unique, once in a life time happening that cannot be recreated ever again, even if the

setting (guests, utensils used etc.) are exactly the same: “it’s about creating something different or special for a group of people at one point in time that would never be, that will never happen again” (Stefan). However, the setting in which the *communitas* emerges, in this case a *chaji*, is both rigidly planned and highly structured. As a result, spontaneous *communitas* cannot define Tea. Turner also drew a link between *communitas* and sacredness. Since social structure resides in the mundane world, *communitas*, which exists outside of that structure, often takes on a sacred character. It may also carry a creative dimension, in which culture is analyzed and experimented with. (Turner 1974, 255). As Tea is highly codified, there is not a great deal of room for experimentation, but one can be very creative when planning the theme of a *chaji* and constructing the symbolic codex surrounding it by means of the utensils. The interesting aspect of Tea is the fact that through normative forms and structured sequences of action, an individual is able to free their mind from the concerns of their daily life through the type of shared meditation practiced in a *chaji*: “when host and guest are in harmony at a tea gathering, they merge into a single entity that transcends their respective roles” (Sen 2003, 40). Outside the context of a *chaji* or *chakai*, when Tea is not put into action through a ritual, it works as a guideline to life: “the Way of Tea is not merely an art or accomplishment or amusement, but it is rather a way of life possessing a strong ethical and moral character” (Ibid., 31). The feeling of *communitas* is recreated during Tea events but for its adherents it is also present in the mundane sphere of life.

#### 6.2.1. Comparing Tea to Turner’s “pilgrimage”

Turner (1974) uses pilgrimages as an example of normative *communitas*. He states that over the course of the journey religious pilgrimages develop a collective experience and that “while the total situation fosters the emergence of existential *communitas*, it is normative *communitas* that constitutes the characteristic social bonds among pilgrims” (Ibid., 167). The organization and discipline that arises among pilgrims stems in large part from the demographic and geographic facts of a large amount of people journeying to the same sacred site. The pilgrims form “a social system, founded in a system of religious beliefs, polarized between fixity and travel, secular and sacred, social structure and normative *communitas*, [...] but stops short at the cultural bounds of a specific religious world view” (Ibid., 171).



Turner felt that “there is a *rite de passage*, even an initiatory ritual character about pilgrimage” (Ibid., 182) in which the pilgrim steps from the structural world toward a sacred route which might also include the threat of physical danger such as robbers. According to Turner, pilgrimage sites in central Mexico tend to be located in the margins of town centers (Ibid., 193) and these pilgrimage centers represent “a threshold, a place and moment “in and out of time” where the pilgrim wishes to experience sacredness (Ibid., 197). Just as the guests in a *chaji* move along a path to the tea hut, passing many symbols along the way, the route of a pilgrim consists of passing landmarks that increasingly begin to function as symbols as he or she nears the sacred site (Ibid., 198). While the pilgrim may have a great physical distance to cover, and the Tea practitioner is only required to pass through the *roji* gardens, the journey in both cases prepares the individual to leave the mundane sphere behind and share in a collective moment of sacredness.

Turner (Ibid., 207) believed that “pilgrimage liberates the individuals from obligatory everyday constraints of status and roles, defines him as an integral human being with a capacity for free choice, and [...] presents for him a living model of human brotherhood and sisterhood.” As in Tea, where inner peace and enlightenment is sought during a *chaji*, so a pilgrim participates in a sacred experience with an aim of “achieving a step toward holiness and wholeness in oneself, both body and souls” (Ibid., 208). In Tea, this wholeness is achieved by creating a time and place where the individuals are brought together by the host. The host is therefore responsible for cultivating the sphere in which his or her guests will leave the mundane and cross over into the sacred. It follows that choosing the right guests is taken into strong consideration by the host, as the entire function of a *chaji* is to create “another world” where, “through sympathetic coordination, host and guest become one” (Sen 2003, 40). All of this necessitates the presence of an initiate: “it’s difficult to create a perfect world for somebody who doesn’t know anything about Tea” (Alise).

This is the principal reason why Tea *communitas* tends to be closed off from the outside world. In contrast to the journey of a pilgrim, the participant in a *chaji* needs to be invited to the event, a fact which predicates the creation of a “we-they” opposition. The Tea *communitas* intensifies in this separation from “others” and as such forms an exclusive community; to become a part of a Tea *communitas* one needs to commit to the rule of a particular school, demonstrating the commitment and willingness necessary to be a “true follower.” The collective experience inherent in a *chaji* rewards this dedication: “you learn something from it [Tea] in a spiritual way, it becomes a part of you and you want to continue that for it gives you

something” (Alise). Many Tea practitioners experience the desire to share this “something” and “spread the word” of Tea to others. As a *chaji* is a private formal gathering, more open and informal *chakai* events are held publically in order to allow non-initiates to participate and become familiarized with *chadō*.

#### 6.2.2. “Peacefulness through a bowl of tea”; spreading the word of Tea

“With a bowl of tea, peace can truly spread. The peacefulness from a bowl of tea may be shared and become the foundation of a way of life” (Sen 2003, 9).

Today, the Urasenke tradition of *chadō* is taught all around the world. Urasenke has overseas branches in twelve countries and foundations in several others (such as the one in Finland) that are actively engaged in teaching the Way of Tea. Former grand master Sen Soshitsu XV in particular has been spreading the word of Tea internationally for over fifty years: “I have personally sought to impart the spirit of this Way to people worldwide, expressing my goal through the phrase, 'Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea" (Sen Soshitsu<sup>73</sup>). The continued and active proselytization of Tea is reflected in Turner's description *communitas* in complex societies. He notes that religions, developed originally from *communitas* but which over time have become structured in societies of greater complexity, eventually seek to influence the greater population. They do this by means of spreading the word of “salvation” or “release” from anxiety, guilt and other “bad things”, and are often led by prophets or gurus. (Turner, 1974, 203). In the case of Urasenke, the legacy and ideology of the “guru”, former Tea master Rikyū, is spread throughout the world by the individual branches and foundations. Turner felt that in the case of these types of *communitas* “seeking oneness is not from this perspective to withdraw from multiplicity; it is to eliminate divisiveness, to realize nonduality” (Ibid.). Echoing these sentiments, Sen Soshitsu XV explains that in spreading the Way of Tea internationally the “knowledge of *Chado* will reach far and wide around the globe, and its ideals might further contribute to the attainment of genuine World Peace and Happiness, the mutual goal of all humanity.<sup>74</sup>” It is in this sense that one can see the manifestation of an ideological *communitas* in Tea.

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<sup>73</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/greetings/greetings.html> (read on 2.4.2012).

<sup>74</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/greetings/greetings.html> (read on 2.4.2012).

The *Midorikai* group has an important role in spreading the doctrine of Tea. In the words of one informant: “for me the most precious thing is sharing it with others and that I give some kind of happiness to others. It’s an amazing feeling” (Alise). Here, she is talking about her sincere desire to share the experiences garnered from participating in a *chaji* and following Tea. At the same time, she noted that one of the roles of a *Midorikai* student is to teach what they have learned to students in their own country. It is a sort of obligation, and an act of reciprocity arising from the fact that they have the honor<sup>75</sup> of taking part in the *Midorikai* program. The *Midorikai* class is based on the idea of spreading the Way of Tea worldwide, as explained on the official web-page of Urasenke:

Their [Midorikai student’s] continuing support of Urasenke Chado after they leave the Midorikai is the pillar of chado propagation at the grassroots level all over the world. Sen Genshitsu and his son, the Grand Master Zabosai (Soshitsu Sen XVI), firmly believe that the discipline, scholarship, and techniques of chado learned in Midorikai will enable the program participants to contribute to world peace by sharing the spirit of Tea with others.<sup>76</sup>

Through its international students and the *Midorikai* program, Urasenke is able to spread the spirit of Tea outside Japan and, in their words, share world peace. Turner states that those types of *communitas* which seek to influence a wider population or the whole of humanity through their guru’s or prophet’s paradigm face the problem of losing the experience of *communitas* which was the basis for their foundation: “this theologizing of experience is to reduce what is essentially a process to a state or even the concept of state, in other words, to structuralize the anti-structure” (Turner 1974, 203). The danger for the Urasenke school of Tea is that the larger they become, the greater the risk of eliminating the very shared communal experience they wish to share.

### 6.3. *Chaji* as means of experiencing *communitas*

It’s about creating a time and space, a specific form for something happening between a group of human beings, about being happy together [...]. It is something very special

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<sup>75</sup> On many occasions the *Midorikai* students talked about how grateful and honored they were to be given the chance to stay and study for a year in the Kyōto Urasenke head school. This is made possible by a scholarship each student receives from Urasenke, enabling them to come to Kyōto and acquire the necessary utensils such as kimonos.

<sup>76</sup> <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/uac/midori/index.html>. (Read on 2.4.2012).

and different from the everyday life. It is about creating some kind of moment, outside of the world but being fully in the world at the same time (Stefan).

The quote from the informant above provides a good example of how Tea is experienced in the liminal realm, “outside of the world”, but at the same time sharing a communal feeling, thus allowing the participants feel “fully in the world”. A *chaji* constructs the experience of *communitas* through emotion, arousing a sense of belonging to a group in which every member has the same goal, in this case enlightenment. Dorinne Kondo (1985, 291) simply states that the Way of Tea “is a path to Enlightenment”, which according to traditional Zen doctrine is a state of emptiness or nothingness – *mu*. The strict behavior form in a *chaji* helps to achieve this state by freeing the participants mind and enabling them to focus on the essential moment; by means of ritual action in a controlled environment, *chaji* participants are able leave the mundane world behind them, finally achieving a sense of oneness with others inside the sacred space of the tearoom.

Turner (1974, 1991) defines a ritual as a process rather than a static form of action, and in referring to the fact that rituals and theater have a great deal in common, demonstrates that ritual can be viewed as a performance or “drama.” The creation of *communitas* arises in these performances when notions of equality, common humanity and shared feelings are expressed. Turner saw rituals as tools for making and remaking society (Ibid.). As Tim Olaveson (2001, 93) states, within ritual society’s “values, norms, and deep knowledge of itself are reaffirmed, and sometimes, created.” Rituals not only carry cultural meanings but they can also be “powerful agents of change” (Ibid., 95) that have an ability to affect individuals in an emotional level. The strong emotions produced in a ritual are a key mechanism in achieving its goals, and a means of creating and recreating a moral community.

As the social structure and the individuals comprising that structure are often in conflict with one other, one function of a ritual is to encourage the members of a society to conform to its norms, values and moral behavior code. This is achieved in the ritual by means of the creation of strong emotions embedded to a symbolic codex. A ritual thus can be said to bind individuals to their society. However, a ritual has another function as well, working as a transgressive possibility and fostering the dissolution of regular social and normative structures. (Ibid., 98). So while a society’s norms and codes are regenerated during a ritual, that same ritual also carries the risk of dissolving these structures (Ibid., 102). Likewise, a *chaji* has the power to change, both the mood of the participants as they enter and leave the event, as well their

state of mind (enlightenment). However, the structured nature of a *chaji* also reflects the importance of social harmony, something essential in the wider context of Japanese society, where following behavior codes is necessary to maintain “smooth” social interaction and avoid conflicts. Kondo (1985, 288) notes that Tea “embodies the appreciation of formalised social interaction [...] the graces necessary to maintain harmonious social interaction.” In Japanese culture the adherence to the proper form reflects an individual’s expression of hospitality (Ibid.) and respect.

The values and paradigms of Tea are not only portrayed in a ritual context. The ideal of *chadō* is that one will learn to appreciate the same things in the mundane world as they do in the context of Tea. As a result, the codex of Tea is constantly present in its follower’s lives, just as religious faith remains with a believer outside of those spheres (such as a church) particular to their religion. Turner (1974, 56) felt that through ritual, the feeling generated by *communitas* can also exist in the secular sphere, but in order to achieve this, there must arise occasions outside the ritual activity in which the *communitas* can be evoked. In Tea the feeling of *communitas* is almost always present while the students are at Urasenke. Most of their time is spent with other “followers”, they live together and see each other almost daily. Since they are subject to the rules of Urasenke, proper behavior is also expected of them outside the school grounds. The students of Urasenke discipline are thereby able to experience the same sense of *communitas* even outside Japan, simply by maintaining their connection to other followers. In committing to a particular discipline, students necessarily define an “in-group, out-group”, embracing their own doctrine while at the same time excluding other “Ways” of Tea.

*Communitas* often carries with it the ideology of homogeneity; a utopian ideal of free and equal comrades. Even if there is no such ideal image of the world, rituals may be performed as a means of emphasizing egalitarian and cooperative behavior. In the mundane world, members of a *communitas* may be divided from one another in many ways, but in the ritual context their cooperation is necessary to ensure “what is believed to be the maintenance of a cosmic order which transcends the contradictions and conflicts inherent in the mundane social system.” (Turner 1974, 238). As in any situation where originally unfamiliar individuals are grouped together, conflicts may arise. This was also visible at Urasenke, where it was necessary for students to cooperate with each other, even if in normal social circumstances they would have avoided such collaboration. However, any personal differences that may have existed between the *Midorikai* students, were put aside in the tearoom, especially during a

*chaji* or *chakai*<sup>77</sup>. The cooperation during a *chaji* is particularly important for the reason of creating a sincere and harmonious feeling among the participants, thus maintaining, as Turner puts it, "a cosmic order." Sharing this harmony between the participants is the key to gaining the inner peace that is the ultimate goal of Tea. Conflicts are surpassed or put aside during a *chaji*, where the disturbance of harmony can even be said to be a taboo. While inter-personal conflicts were visible between students outside the tearoom, once inside the host and guests are striving, as Soshitsu Sen (2003, 40) puts it, to become "one."

#### 6.4. Tea and symbolism; Tea utensils reflecting *communitas*

"It was a terrible offense to treat inanimate objects without respect or to release one's ill disposition on them" (Sen 2003, 20).

In the quote above the former Urasenke grandmaster is referring to his childhood and how he was taught from a young age to respect Tea objects. Material manifestation is of immense importance in Tea, and one cannot fail to notice how much care and attention is directed at the Tea utensils, physical surroundings, food preparation and the flower arrangement in the Way of Tea. The utensils are treated with tender care, and kept clean at all times. They are stored carefully when not in use and admired during a *chaji*. The conversation at a *chaji* is centered around these utensils and they are each considered to be a piece of art. Each utensil is carefully selected by the host to create a story or theme for the event. They construct the symbolic codex for the *chaji*, and function as metaphors of shared culture. The ultimate symbol of Tea is *koicha*, which occupies the core of sacred symbolism in Tea. *Koicha* is a multilayered symbol reflecting solidarity, harmony between men, respect, sincerity, oneness and appreciation. Simply for the fact that the *koicha* is shared from a single bowl of tea among the guests, moving from hand to hand without touching the ground, is a manifestation of its symbolic resonance. Compared to *usucha*, which is drunk from individual bowls, *koicha* has the function of connecting the *chaji* participants and creating a bond between them. Such a bond

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<sup>77</sup> As one informant told me, although she had experienced some trouble with another student, all of this was irrelevant in a *chaji*, the ultimate purpose of which is to promote peacefulness and harmony between people.

is emotional<sup>78</sup> and serves as an excellent example of how strong emotions create the feeling of *communitas*.

The manifestation of *communitas* in a *chaji* is reflected in its utensils, each of which have a special function in creating an atmosphere conducive to experiencing a shared moment. The host is the one who prepares the setting for this experience, but nothing would be possible without the presence of the guests. In referring to the ideal of sincerity in Tea, one of my informants expressed that the “tearoom itself is a representation of bringing guests into your intimacy, so that it’s not about you but about them” (Stefan). The use of utensils occupies a large role in this act of sincerity: “the appropriate combination of the various utensils reveals the heart or sincerity of the host” (Sen 2003, 47). Going further, Sen describes the meaning of the utensils and how they contribute to the whole atmosphere of a Tea event: “in the setting of the tea gathering they are given life and are able to suggest a world of the spirit beyond time and place” (Ibid., 48). But on their own, these utensils do not possess this spirit: they require the human presence to become “alive” (Ibid.).

Turner (1974, 239) notes that during a rite of passage, when the novices occupy a position of liminality for a particular time, they might be presented with sacred objects, symbols that “operate culturally as mnemonics, or [...] 'storage bins' of information [...] about cosmologies, values, and cultural axioms, whereby a society’s deep knowledge is transmitted from one generation to another.” Turner points out that this knowledge is transmitted especially through objects and symbols in cultures where writing is not used, or in which cultural deposits are taught by means of speech or “repeated observation of standardized behavioral patterns and artifacts” (ibid.). In Tea, the utensils work as symbols in a similar way, reflecting Tea paradigms and a sense of a shared community. They reflect the sincerity between the host and the guests, only acquiring meaning by means of the social interaction during a *chaji*. The utensils tell a story, especially in combination, allowing the host to build up an elaborate symbolic dialogue through a material manifestation. As I have stated before, the five elements in traditional Chinese cosmology, fire, wood, water, earth and metal are repeated throughout the tearoom, making the tearoom a microcosm of the universe. Victor Turner observed something similar during his own fieldwork among the *Ndembu* tribe, noting references in metaphoric storytelling to the creation of the world and life. During initiation rituals these stories involved aspects of human physiology used as models for cosmic, social and religious ideas, whereby “the human body is a microcosm of the universe” (Turner 1981, 107). In the case of Tea, the

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<sup>78</sup> As an informant of mine described the moment of sharing the *koicha* bowl: “it creates some kind of emotion, some kind of shared emotion together” (Stefan).

utensils and physical surroundings operate in much the same way; according to Soshitsu Sen (2003, 30), within a *chaji* the “host and guests have been a microcosm of life itself.”

#### 6.4.1. Comparison; *communitas* as constructed in kava ceremony and coca chewing

As I have showed in this chapter, a *chaji* works as a means of creating the experience of *communitas* in the sphere of liminality. Although Tea is often portrayed as a unique phenomenon, I aim to demonstrate how a *chaji* exists within a larger continuum of ritual consumption in which feelings of *communitas* are created and reconstructed. Elements that define a *chaji* can also be found in a kava ceremony in Tonga and coca-chewing in Peru.

Comparing a *chaji* to the kava ceremony in Tonga reveals some intriguing similarities. Elisabeth Bott (1988) describes the role of a kava drinking ceremony in the Kingdom of Tonga in the South Pacific, drawing specific attention to its social function. Simply stated, during a kava ceremony a group of people gather to pound a kava plant root, mix this with water and drink the beverage. However, all of this is done within a fixed ceremonial procedure which has not changed significantly in 160 years. The basic form of a kava ceremony is always the same, but the number of participants can vary from a small, informal gathering of five people to gathering of hundreds. (Ibid., 183). Just as everyone is silent during the sacred moment when the host prepares *koicha* for the guests, all conversation at a kava ceremony stops when the water is poured on the pounded kava root. This is considered to be the most sacred moment of the ceremony. (Ibid., 188). In contrast to a formal *chaji* where only a few people are necessary to achieve a feeling of community, in a kava ceremony, the larger the group the more such a feeling increases (189). Bott states that during a kava ceremony, the sacred moment is created in the combination of the plant, the ceremony, and the group. Similarly, during a *chaji* it is the combination of the setting, the *koicha*, the utensils and the people who constitute what is sacred in Tea. However, where Tea seems to occupy a space in which statuses are broken and equality is emphasized, in a kava ceremony social principles and social roles are clarified. (Ibid., 191).

Bott notes that the traditional political system and chiefly titles among the Tonga are renewed during a kava ceremony. I feel that Turner’s definition of the dualistic nature of ritual is clearly visible here: a kava ceremony lends itself to a strong sense of *communitas*, while at the same



time serving to reaffirm its society's existing social structures. Bott emphasizes that it is the *titles* that matter in a kava ceremony, not the power and prestige of individuals. (Ibid., 193). The same applies to a *chaji*, where the role of an individual outside the Tea world holds no relevance, whereas inside the tearoom the given role defines the individual's actions during a *chaji*. For example, during a *chaji* the role of the first guest is very distinct. It is considered to be a great honor, as the first guest works acts as a spokesman for the group. He or she is always the first to enter the tearoom and drink the tea, both of which offer symbolic weight to the notion that the first guest is "elevated" from the rest, as does the raised stone where they rest their feet in the waiting arbor. As such, it can be said that a type of social structure is also reaffirmed during a *chaji*, and that such a hierarchy is based on one's knowledge and expertise of Tea.

As Turner sees rituals as having a dualistic function, so too does Bott note that ambivalence is a key aspect of the kava ceremony: "in brief, the ceremony says, 'We are all united,' but it also says, 'We are all different'" (Ibid., 196). The same is manifested in a *chaji*; each participant is an equal, and each agrees to behave in the same manner and to maintain the communal harmony by following the lead of the first guest, thus symbolically externalizing his or her rank. Bott feels that this is an expression of a general human dilemma in trying to avert social conflict: "the method of preparing the kava can be seen as an effort to convert envy and jealousy into remorse and affection, to change poisonous feelings into feelings of tranquility and harmony" (Ibid., 200). The participants are not consciously aware of this, but rather have an intrinsic sense that there is something good and even healing about the kava ceremony (Ibid.). From my perspective, it is exactly the same in Tea: almost all of my informants emphasized the strong emotions they experienced in Tea, how it fostered feelings of happiness, made them calmer and more peaceful, and the way in which it created harmony between themselves and the world.

Another illuminating comparison exists between the Japanese Way of Tea and coca chewing in Peru. Catherine J. Allen (1988) has studied coca chewing and its connection to communication among a Peruvian community, the People of *Sonqo*. Allen defines coca chewing as a practice, and especially as a ritual practice through which the *Sonqo* connect themselves to their land and define their sense of identity vis-a-vis their community (Ibid., 24, 32). This connection is maintained through the coca plant and more specifically in the ever-present ritualistic action of coca chewing (*hallpay*); as *koicha* in Tea acts as a sacred symbol of unity and cohesion, so the coca leaf is a sacred symbol of the *Sonqo* community: "the offering of coca leaves draws

one into social interaction.” (Ibid., 23). Just as “an invitation to chew coca is an invitation to social intercourse” so too is an invitation to a *chaji* an invitation to experience and share social interaction. The difference is that while a *chaji* is a special event requiring a great deal of preparation and which is constructed outside the mundane, coca chewing does not take place in the liminal, but rather in the mundane world as a part of a normal routine (Ibid., 128). Nevertheless, coca chewing is a sacred act, and should always be done in a spirit of respect and in a relaxed and meditative manner (Ibid., 129). The life of the students at Urasenke reflects the same idea: their daily life at the school occurs in the mundane sphere, but in taking part in a similar type of ritualistic action they also succeed in generating a shared communal feeling. While the ritualistic coca chewing helps the member of the community to define their own identity in relation to the community, it is also an activity of solidarity. Allen talks about how the offering to chew coca together is never declined, even if the individuals would have some differences between them. In the same sense during a *chaji* differences are put aside as social cohesion is emphasized during the event. As Allen states, “coca chewing is not only a sign of orderly social relations; it is also an instrument through which these relations are defined, created, and maintained.” (Ibid., 133.) The same is relevant in the world of Tea.

The comparisons of a *chaji* to a kava ceremony and coca chewing serve to underline the fact that the Japanese Way of Tea exists within a continuum of similar transition rites and events aimed at fostering *communitas*. There are certainly aspects of Tea that are uniquely Japanese, but it is also a wholly human activity, one with many strong connections to a wider context of human interaction, and consumption rituals in particular. Tea, or coca or kava (or any other substance), therefore becomes a symbol of the creation and maintenance of social relations, and a medium for experiencing connection between members of a group. Sharing drink and food lies at the core of human relations, and the analysis of such activity provides a framework with which to view social relations. I remember eating a piece of cake with my fellow students in a café in Helsinki. As we talked and shared the stress and concerns we felt for our personal studies, I realized that through our long years of studying together we had reached a point where we didn't even ask if it was alright to share the same fork. The simple act of sharing a piece of cake (and the fork we used to eat it) somehow revealed to me the point our relationship had reached. This event in some sense contextualized our relationship, allowing me to see it in a new light. While this was a particularly unstructured moment between friends, it nonetheless serves to underscore the very human way in which individuals come together to experience feelings of friendship and community.

## Conclusion

Teaism [...] inculcates purity and harmony, the mystery of mutual charity, the romanticism of the social order. It is essentially a worship of the Imperfect, as it is a tender attempt to accomplish something possible in this impossible thing we know as life (Okakura 1906).

Tea is about fostering the harmony of a moment within a particular group. As a part of the group, individuals work as agents to maintain social harmony, but the definition of that “harmony” resides solely inside of the understanding and practice of Tea doctrine. The doctrine of Tea implies that human beings live in a chaotic world where people have lost their ability to focus, appreciate the singleness of a moment, and experience harmony between themselves and towards nature. Tea therefore offers a solution or escape from the existential problems humans encounter in their daily lives. It aims to foster a Way of life among its practitioners, a Way that focuses on the essential in an effort to achieve an idealized conception of peace and harmony as constructed around the Japanese tradition of ritual tea consumption.

The ultimate goal of a Tea practitioner is to gain *mu*, an emptiness of mind, and the experience of tranquility. However, this goal is not individualistic; throughout this study I have demonstrated that far from being a vehicle for personal or spiritual development, the aim of “spreading peace through a bowl of tea” is a means for the creation of a *shared experience*. For this reason, the world of Tea is essentially an esoteric one; the least misstep on the part of a host or guest during the ritual will disrupt the harmony of the group. While mistakes in the ritual practice are accepted, they must be transcended into an anti-mistake: the essence of Tea is the maintenance of social harmony, and as a result, if someone accidentally (or purposefully) goes against the proscribed etiquette, it is the role of the host and first guest to transform this “wrong” into “right”. It is therefore possible to say that during a *chaji* there are no actors, only agents; a participant in a *chaji* is not there for their own enjoyment or hope of personal enlightenment, but rather to function as a means of fostering a ritually codified type group harmony.

As this study has shown, Tea was used historically as a tool for peace and power, and its doctrine was created and maintained in order to provide a setting for social harmony. The formal *chaji* is the ritual activity where this doctrine is put into action. In stepping into the world of Tea, a transition takes place from the secular to the sacred realm, but in order to

accomplish this transition, one needs to be aware of doctrinal rules. At the completion of this transition from secular to sacred, an experience of *communitas* among practitioners is achieved, the maintenance of which relies on a ritually constructed social harmony. Only through adherence to the ritual doctrine is it possible to accomplish Tea's ultimate goal of enlightenment.

As Jennifer L. Anderson (1991, 7) states, "the idea that an individual or group practices ritual to confirm or transform their perception of universal order has important implication for understanding tea ritual." Peace and harmony, as conceptualized in Tea, are strictly codified. This is not unique to Tea however, as in any ritual activity the desired outcome is codified into a symbolic codex of meaning where a multi-dimensional cosmology is reaffirmed and recreated. As with any ritual, a *chaji* needs to be interpreted in relation to the context in which it is manifested, in this case, to the larger social system in hand, Japanese society.

The host of a *chaji* has an essential role in creating the perfect moment for his or her guests, to allow them to feel as if they are stepping into another world, one where the chaotic feelings of mundane life are momentarily forgotten. To do this, knowledge of the collective values and some notion of how to adjust to the situation are essential. Social harmony within a *chaji* is epitomized by the idea that each of the participants will act in accordance with the behavior code created through a highly structured mode of interaction. The host and guests know exactly how they should act according to the code of Tea; a guest should know each movement to take, how to sit, how to stand and how to move in the tearoom; the first guest will know the exact line to speak in order to create the correct dialogue with the host, while at the same time working as a spokesman for the whole group. This role is considered being an honor and as such it carries a sense of responsibility. The same type of responsibility exists for the host, who is supposed make his or her guests feel comfortable at all times; maintaining the social harmony within a *chaji* is of utter importance. This implies that the host is forbidden from demonstrating any signs of distress, as this would disturb the harmony inside the tearoom. Individualism is not to be emphasized: the communal feeling and the maintenance of such is everything. Shortly stated, one needs to take others into consideration at all times in order to make the interaction as smooth as possible, a fact which also serves to enforce the social harmony.

This aspect of Tea is relevant to Japanese culture in general. Every social situation is weighted in relation to the social relationships present at the time. Knowledge of the pertinent behavior code is closely linked to this, for in utilizing correct behavior "one is taking into consideration"

the other and ensuring the social harmony of the group. Thus, harmony is applicable only in relation to the group, not individuals: personal behavior patterns are not considered relevant, while collective patterns of behavior are emphasized. From the individual's point of view this type of social interaction may be constraining and or even suppressing. Difference is not commonly appreciated for the simple fact that it can cause disturbance; unusual or unexpected behavior may be considered rude or viewed as selfish. Apart from the teaching and practice of Tea, this mentality manifests in many ways in Japanese society. For example, although there is no law or prohibition against eating on a train, such behavior is almost always met with disapproval. The same applies to eating something while walking, being too direct in one's speech, or any other instant in which one fails to observe underlying group norms. One is expected to follow these "shared norms" of behavior in many different types of social situations, a process which in some sense requires relinquishing one's individual "needs"<sup>79</sup>. In Tea, this is done to create the feeling of *communitas* in a "once in a lifetime" setting but it can also be seen to connect to a broader ideal of correct behavior codes in Japanese culture.

Humbleness and politeness are highly esteemed values in Tea, as is sincerity of appreciation; the host prepares everything in a *chaji* for his or her guests, taking the smallest details into consideration and paying special attention to the preferences of the first guest. The ultimate symbol of this (sincerity of the host towards their guests) is when the host provides a bowl of thick tea for his or her guests. The preparation of the thick tea is done with a "pure heart" and a sincere respect on the part of the host towards the guests. In drinking from this bowl, the guests demonstrate a sincere appreciation and praise the host's preparation as well as the taste of the tea. There exists an element of faith or trust in sincerity in the sharing of the tea bowl, for the host never gets to taste it, and when inquiring as to its taste the guests will never make any negative remarks. The taste is not relevant: even if the tea wasn't well made displeasure is never shown toward the host and when, according to the correct etiquette, the guests write the host a thank you afterwards, they will always compliment the taste of the tea. The true feelings of the guest are superfluous: what matters is the respect and politeness shown for the hard work of the host. In essence, a *chaji* is not really about enjoying a good bowl of tea, it is a setting or stage for the construction and maintenance of the "Tea harmony"

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<sup>79</sup> I base this comment to my own observations while living in Japan. One concrete example occurs on trains during the morning rush hour. Such trains are typically crowded and uncomfortable. As everyone is aware of this and sharing the same small space, during rush hours certain types of behavior are visible that at other times would be unnecessary; speaking is not approved, nor are extra movements. Most people close their eyes to respect the "private space" of others (a space which does not actually exist in this case), and take pains even to enter and exit the train in the "correct" manner.

in an atmosphere of serenity; the tea itself is irrelevant, what matters is the *sharing of* the bowl of tea, and the *communitas* and the accompanying feelings of equality and consensus such sharing generates.

A similar type of interaction model for the maintenance and respect of collective values reflects a dualistic conception pair which has been said to be at the core of Japanese culture, a culture which is stereotypically portrayed as being over-polite. A manifestation of this is the fact that Japanese find it difficult to give what a Western observer would consider a straight answer to questions, especially if the intended reply is “no.” To some extent this is accurate, but the concept of politeness is ambiguous, framed in a world-view defined by the dualistic pair of *honne* and *tatemae*. *Honne* refers to a ‘private self’ and *tatemae* to ‘social face’ (Matsuki 1995)<sup>80</sup>. The private self includes a person’s inner feelings and desires. These feelings can often be in conflict with what the society or community requires of the individual vis-à-vis their position in the given social structure. *Honne* is connected to the term *uchi* (see chapter five) or ‘inside’, for one’s true feelings and needs are usually hidden from the ‘outside’ (*soto*) and revealed only to close family and friends (members are a part of *uchi*). The ‘social face’ (or social self) is the “mask” a person displays for the public. *Tatemae* is employed in the *soto* environment, the outside circle or social structure, in which one is expected to behave according to one’s status and social position in the society. As these two concepts can exist in conflict with each other, they can also produce distress in individuals, this is especially true in situations where the social structure is unclear and one needs to adapt and adjust their own role in relation to others.

The same framework applies to Tea, where the host in particular has to be ready to adapt and adjust to the social situation in a *chaji* in order to help the guests feel comfortable. In a way, this is representative of the functioning of *tatemae* as a means of avoiding conflict in social situations. The role of the first guest links to this concept pair as well; he or she acts as a guide for the behavior of rest of the group. If he or she makes a mistake, no one will correct them, but rather follow their lead, turning the mistake into an “anti-mistake” in order not to cause friction inside the tearoom. The same applies the other way around; if the other guests make a mistake it is the first guest’s responsibility to make it seem as if nothing went wrong. The main thing is to keep up the perfect and socially correct atmosphere. The same type of behavior is visible in the *honne-tatemae* division which from my perspective functions as a means of maintaining the correct atmosphere in any social situation in Japan. Of course, not every

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. Lebra 1976 and 1992.

situation or social interaction will be the same, and as a result, the correct behavior code can morph depending on the needs of a moment. For this reason, locating and conforming to the “correct” behavior can be fairly difficult in Japanese culture, even for the Japanese themselves<sup>81</sup>. In a culture based on such a structured public behavior codex, people are sometimes unaware of how one would act “naturally” without the given social structure. It can also cause severe manifestations of alienation when the expectations of correct social behavior are not met<sup>82</sup>. Tea offers a means of creating a feeling of *communitas* in the context of Japanese culture. It does so by keeping a strict form for behavior, even in that marginal sphere of action where freedom is often experienced. Tea can therefore be viewed as offering a Japanese way to freedom, one in which “freedom” is defined as a structured and harmonious cohesion.

The “Japaneseness” of Tea was always in the background during my research; over and over again during my fieldwork I was told by my informants and the members of the Urasenke school how especially unique the practice of Tea was, both in Japanese culture and in the larger context of the world. This “uniqueness” is also underscored in much of the literature pertinent to Tea, for example in the work of Jennifer L. Anderson, who writes that “*chadō* is one of the richest, most sophisticated, and vital products of the human mind” (1991, 1). However, I believe that in this study I have shown Tea to belong to a much larger continuum of *human activity*; such ritual consumption exists not only in Japan, but all over the world. In approaching the subject through a theoretical framework grounded in Victor Turner’s concept of *communitas*, I have attempted to offer a more thorough definition of Tea, and what happens during a *chaji* in particular. Rather than treating *chadō* as a uniquely Japanese phenomenon, this study has attempted to exhume Tea from its own mythos; it is my hope that in approaching the closed world of the Japanese Way of Tea in this manner that I have succeeded both in humanizing it, and in broadening the theoretical discourse concerning its practice.

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<sup>81</sup> I base this argument on several discussions I had with Japanese while living in Japan. They often told me how difficult it can be even for them to know the correct behavior code for each social situation, remarking on the frustration or distress this can cause.

<sup>82</sup> An example of this is the psychological phenomenon of total isolation: *hikikomori* is a Japanese term describing people (often young people) who completely withdraw from social life by confining themselves to a room or an apartment, sometimes for years.

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## Glossary

*Chabana* – Tea flower arrangement.

*Chadō* – Way of the Tea.

*Chaire* – Container for the thick tea, usually made from ceramic.

*Chaji* – Formal Tea event that lasts from four to five hours.

*Chakai* – Informal Tea event where usually only thin tea is served.

*Chakin* – White linen cloth used for wiping the tea bowl during the “moist purifications.”

*Chamei* – “Tea name” given to a student from the *iemoto* or the student’s direct teacher when graduating from the tea school” (Anderson 1991, 266).

*Chanoyu* – Other term used for Tea.

*Chasen* – Bamboo whisk used for kneading or whipping the tea.

*Chashaku* – Tea spoon.

*Chashitsu* – Tearoom.

*Chawan* – Tea bowl.

*Chiriana* – Symbolic “dust pit” found in the inner *roji*.

*Chū mon* – Gate between the inner and outer *roji*.

*Dora* – Gong used to signal guests back from the middle break during a *chaji*.

*Edazumi* – White branch charcoal.

*Enza* – Round straw cushion used in the *koshikake machiai*.

*Fuchidaka* – lacquered moist sweet container.

*Fujibai* – Decorative white ash sprinkled on top of the ash arrangement.

*Fukusa* – Silk cloth the host uses when purifying utensils; usually purple for men and red for women.

*Furo* – Brazier used in the summer time, placed on top of the *tatami*.

*Futaoki* – Lid rest for the lid of the cold water container.

*Gozumi* – Second charcoal arrangement during a *chaji*.

*Gyō* – Semiformal category of the classification system of objects and behavior in Tea.

*Haigata* – Specific method of arranging the ash in the *furo*.

*Haiki* – Ash container.

*Hantō* – Host's assistant.

*Hassun* – Square cedar tray which is used in the *kaiseki* meal's *hassun* course portion.

*Hibashi* – Metal charcoal chopstick.

*Higashi* – Dry sweets.

*Hikihai* – Red sake saucer used in *kaiseki*.

*Hishaku* – Bamboo water ladle.

*Ichigo ichie* – “Once in a lifetime.”

*Iemoto* – Head of a Tea school.

*Kaiseki* – Formal meal in a *chaji* .

*Kaishi* – Special Japanese paper used in Tea events.

*Kakemono* – Scroll.

*Katanakake* – Sword rack.

*Kei* – Concept of ‘respect’ in *chadō*.

*Keiko* – Tea preparation lesson.

*Kensui* – Waste water container.

*Kimono* – Traditional Japanese garment.

*Koicha* – Thick tea.

*Koshikake machiai* – Waiting arbor in the tea garden.

*Kuromoji* – Wooden sweet picks used to eat the moist sweet.

*Machiai* – Waiting area where guests often enjoy flavored hot water before the Tea event.

*Mizusashi* – Cold water container.

*Mizuya* – Preparation area or room next to the tearoom.

*Mizuya mimai* – Symbolic thank you the guests give the host.

*Nakadachi* – Middle break in the *chaji*.

*Natsume* – Thin tea container.

*Nijiriguchi* – “Crawl-in” entrance to the tearoom (usually 1.2 meters high (Anderson 1991, 287)).

*Obi* – Wide belt worn over the *kimono*.

*Omogashi* – Moist sweet.

*(O)sayu* – Flavored hot water served in the *machiai* before the Tea event.

*Raku* – Tea bowl with a rustic look.

*Ro* – Fire pit cut in the floor inside a tearoom, used during winter time.

*Roji* – Path to the tearoom, used also when referring to a Tea-style garden.

*Roji zōri* – Soft straw sandals worn in the *roji*.

*Sake* – Japanese rice wine.

*Samurai* – Japanese warrior class.

*Satori* – Enlightenment.

*Sei* – Concept of ‘purity’ in *chadō*.

*Sekimori ishi* – ‘Detaining stone’ found in the *roji*.

*Senpai-kōhai* system – “A component of organizational structure according to which seniors owe juniors protection and aid and the juniors owe seniors obedience and assistance” (Anderson 1991, 292).

*Sensei* – Teacher.

*Sensu* – Fan.

*Seppuku* – Suicide by disembowelment.

*Shifuku* – Fabric bag of the thick tea container.

*Shin* – Formal category of the classification system of objects and behavior in Tea.

*Shōkyaku* – First guest of a Tea event.

*Shozumi* – First charcoal arrangement in a *chaji*.

*Sō* – Informal category of the classification system of objects and behavior in Tea.

*Sōan* – Four-and-one-half mat sized tearoom.

*Sumidemae* – Charcoal preparation.

*Sumitori* – Charcoal container.

*Tabako bon* – “A box or tray with several Japanese pipes, a container of ash with a lighted coal centered in it, and a section of bamboo used for discarding used ashes” (Anderson 1991, 296). Used as a symbol of ‘relaxation’ during a *chaji*.

*Tabi* – Traditional Japanese split-toed socks.

*Teishu* – Host.

*Temae* – Specific procedure related to tea preparation.

*Tōcha* – Tea competition.

*Tokonoma* – Alcove where the scroll is hung and where the tea flowers are arranged.

*Toriawase* – Combination of utensils that create a ‘story’ for a Tea event.

*Tsukubai* – Stone water basin in the *roji*.

*Usucha* – Thin tea.

*Wa* – Concept of ‘harmony’ in *chadō*.

*Wabi* – Aesthetical sense of rustic and simple beauty, also refers to the ‘proper mind set’ of Tea.

*Yōhō sabaki* – Symbolic examination of four sides of the *fukusa* before purifying the *chaire*.

*Yoritsuki* – Area where the guests can leave their excess garments before a *chaji* .

*Zenrei* – Formal reply to a *chaji* invitation.

## **Appendix 1: Urasenke Followers' Statement of Goals**

Let us strive to acquire true understanding of the essence of chado, to put it into practice, and to constantly search our souls and, when we take a bowl of tea in our hands, to give gratitude that we are the beneficiaries of many kindness. Through chado, we realize the mutual dependence of our existence. Let us strive to communicate the universal goodness of this way to all people.

- Let us never slight others, but always have empathy prevail.
- The grand master is as a father to us all, and all who have entered his gate to follow the Way of Tea are family. Together, we are part of the greater whole, so let us show a spirit reverence towards whomever we meet.
- As we progress along the Way, let us always maintain the earnest heart of a beginner.
- With warmth and generosity of spirit, let us join together with others so that this world will be brighter place in which to live.

(Received from the Urasenke in the summer of 2010).



## Appendix 2: Division of Japanese History

Nara period (710-784)

Heian period (794-1185)

Kamakura period (1185-1333)

Kemmu Restoration (1333-1336)

Muromachi (Ashikaga) period (1336-1573)

Northern and Southern Courts (Nambokuchō) period (1336-1392)

Kitayama epoch (late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries)

Higashiyama epoch (second half of fifteenth century)

Provincial Wars (*sengoku*) period (1478-1573)

Age of Unification (1568-1590)

Azuchi-Momoyama epoch (1568-1600 or 1615)

Tokugawa (Edo) period (1600-1876)

Kan'ei epoch (ca. 1600-1670)

Genroku epoch (ca. 1675-1725)

Meiji period (1868-1991)

(From *Tea in Japan; Essays on the History of Chanoyu*, edited by Paul Varley and Kumamura Isao, 1989).

### Appendix 3: Figures

Figure 1: Map of the Tea environment (from *Chado the Japanese Way of Tea*, by Sen Soshitsu, pg. 18)

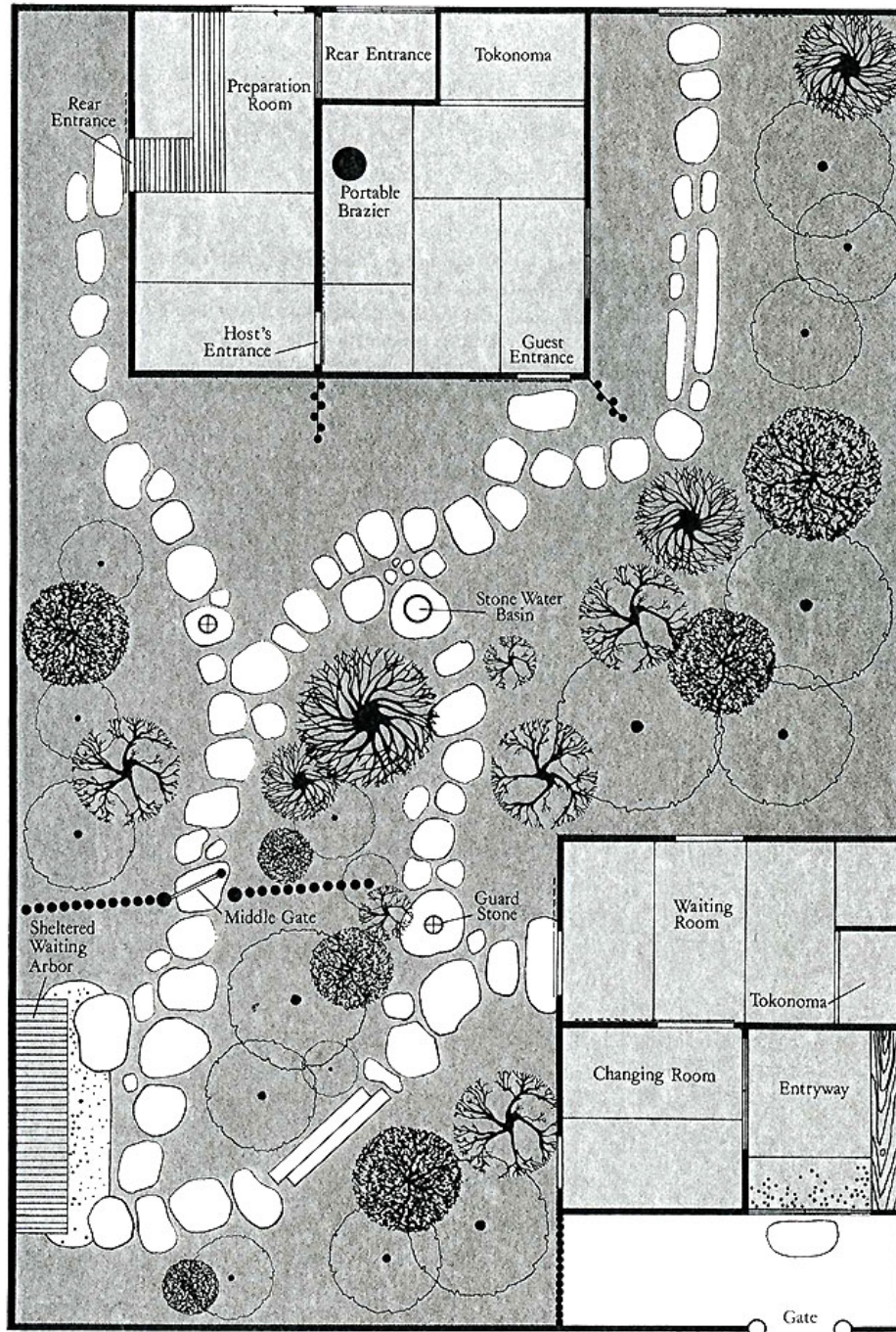


Figure 2: *Sekimori ishi*, detaining stone



Figure 3: *Tsukubai* (covered), stone water basin



Figure 4: *Tokonoma* with scroll and Tea flower arrangement



Figure 5: *Chabana*, Tea flower arrangement



Figure 6: *Higashi* (summer season), dry sweets



Figure 7: *Omogashi*, (*minazuki* type), moist sweets



Figure 8: *Omogashi*, (summer season) moist sweets



Figure 9: *Haigata*, (depicting water trigram from I Ching), ash arrangement

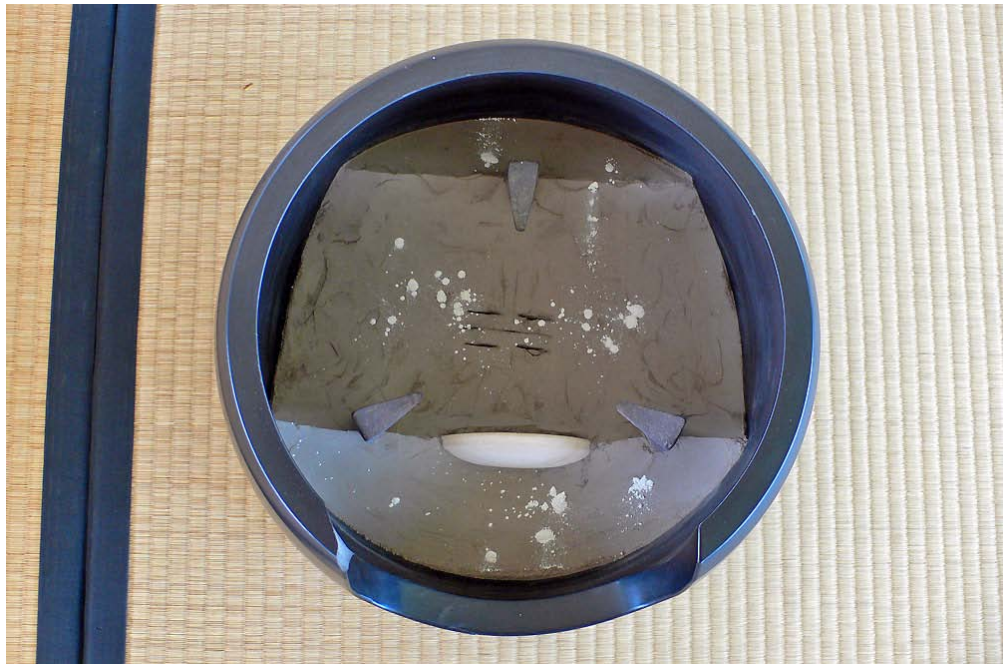


Figure 10: *Koshikake machiai*, waiting bench in the garden

