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Chanoyu: History and Practice

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II
Chanoyu:
History and Practice
By Mary Kate Kimiecik '10

The tea ceremony also known as chado, which means "way of the tea"[1] or chanoyu, which translates as "hot water tea"[2] has been an integral part of Japanese culture for centuries. Chado "was codified centuries ago…its rites are fantastically rigid, time and place are determined by rules; décor of the chamber, utensils, actions, and even conversation proceed upon the most controlled path with formulas controlling both deed and word".[3] As elaborated upon by tea master Kakuzo Okakura, the ceremony has existed for centuries. Its rigid structure and tradition developed from many influences, in particular those of Zen Buddhism and the samurai tradition. From its humble beginnings, the tea ceremony has grown into a precise art form with specific utensils. While the tea ritual has been affected by many different influences and has grown largely in popularity, it has always stressed attention to detail, an appreciation of nature and life, and the importance of discipline.

The tea ceremony is a transformative practice that has evolved in meaning and practice. Although the aesthetics of the tea ceremony have not changed from its beginnings, the diversity of its students has changed significantly over time, from Buddhist monks, to aristocrats, samurai warriors, and finally, everyday people worldwide. Presently, the ceremony is practiced as an art form, in appreciation of beauty and everyday life. This particular paper is an examination of interpretations of san-Senke, specifically the Urasenke branch of tea tradition dating back to Sen Rikyu. This paper will employ the perspectives of tea masters, of average Japanese people who have engaged in the ritual, and finally the observations of westerners who have been captivated by the discipline. Varying levels of experience and different perspectives will provide a structure through which one can examine the origins, practice and utensils as well as ways to interpret and understand the ceremony.

Jennifer Anderson offers a beginner's perspective to the history of the Japanese ceremony, briefly discussing the roles of Buddhist monks like Eichu, Eisai, Dogen, and Shuko, while also discussing how tea came to be a part of the Daimyo tradition. Anderson offers an interesting perspective to the study of tea as an American

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[1] Anderson, Jennifer Lea. *An Introduction to Japanese Tea Ritual.* (State University of New York Press: Albany, 1991) pp 1

[2] Ibid p.1

[3] Okakura, Kakuzo. *The Book of Tea.* Ed. Everett F. Bleiler. (Dover Publications Inc, New York: 1964) p. xiv

anthropologist newly entering the study. As Anderson began studying the history and the ceremony itself, she immediately noticed how the "wonderfully rich and intricate complex of rituals was virtually neglected in the anthropological literature"[4] As an American anthropologist studying the rituals of various cultures, she came upon the tea ceremony and noticed that there was little literature on the subject. Out of curiosity she ventured to Japan to study the ritual and see its significance in comparison with other cultural rituals and how it is successful as a ritual and way of life in Japan. Upon first entering the study, Anderson expressed her displeasure since it was hard to trace "tea in its cultural and historical matrices on the basis of information available... it was almost impossible."[5] Anderson's displeasure reflects the common problem that until recent years, the Japanese tea ceremony was a ritual practiced by specialized schools solely in Japan. For the most part, only Japanese were encouraged to study this ancient art. However in a move towards friendship and globalization, Japan decided to open the study to westerners and furthermore build schools of tea throughout the world to appreciate the ancient art. So while Anderson must learn the tradition and skills, she comes into the study with a background in anthropology and religion which gives her a different perspective from authors like Okakura or Sen Shoshitsu, Japanese people who have been studying the art for their whole lives.

According to the text of Anderson's book detailing the tea ceremony's historical background, around 804 CE a group of diplomats and scholars left for China and returned soon after, accompanied by a Japanese Zen Buddhist monk named Eichu. Eichu had spent over thirty years in China learning the Buddhist tradition from the Chinese. As a part of his Buddhist training, Eichu always traveled with a ball of pressed tea leaves. Tea was an integral part of meditation since the preparation and consumption of tea created a calm atmosphere and cleared the mind for extended meditation.

According to the *Nihon Koki*, one of the main sources detailing early Japanese tea history, Eichu served simmered green tea to Emperor Saga in the year 815 CE on the shores of Lake Biwa. This event is the first documented time tea was consumed in Japan. By 816 CE, Emperor Saga must have enjoyed the tea, for he had ordered his nobles and priests to grow tea seeds throughout the fertile Kyoto region. Since these plantations were relatively small, and maintained by the King's closest subjects, tea drinking was initially confined to a small group, to the emperor, aristocrats, and the religious. After the death of Emperor Saga in 842 CE, aristocratic tea drinking faded out of common practice while the religious practice and consumption of tea thrived as part of Buddhist monastic meditation. Over the next few hundred years, many Japanese monks traveled to China to learn the art of tea ritual as well as trade for the prized T'ang dynasty tea bowls and other valued utensils.[6]

After Eichu, the twelfth century Buddhist monk Eisai made important contributions to the tea tradition, returning to Japan with the claims that "tea is a divine medicine which prolongs life."[7] After Eisai learned that the shogun of the province, Minamoto Santemono was sick from drinking too much sake, Eisai sent him tea leaves as a remedy. In addition, Eisai wrote a treatise on tea called *Kissa Yojoki* which discussed

[4] Anderson p.3
[5] Ibid p.3
[6] Ibid p.23-24
[7] Ibid p.25

both the physical and spiritual benefits of tea. The treatise was also an endeavor by Eisai to reconcile Buddhist principles with Taoism. A great example of the blend of the two traditions was the response to declare the Japanese kami, the native spirits, as primitive Buddhist bodhisattvas.[8]

While there were other influential monks who carried on the Buddhist tradition, Anderson notes how the samurai and daimyo seemed to enjoy tea in their lifestyles. Tea drinking for the Daimyo, at first, was very unlike that of the monks. From 794-1249 CE, during the Heian and early Kamakura period, court routine involved games (referred to in Japanese as *mono awase)* which were played in court for entertainment. These games included "comparing shells, incense, birds, insects, and various utensils. Some competitions required participants to complete poems or stories." Since many of these new commodities were new imports from China, these courtly games were a clever way for the wealthy courtiers to educate themselves. Later games were referred to as *Cha Awase* as they differed from the earlier games. These new games were inspired more from monastic tea ritual and also involved some of the friendly competition from the earlier court games. In particular, this game tradition revolved around identifying different types of incense as well as different types of tea and the areas from which the originated. This tradition of tea competition preserved the aesthetic of tea more so than the original tea competition. People sat in two lines as two teams and competed to see which team knew more about a certain type of tea. These types of games and interactions fostered social skills while also educating courtiers about the significance of a very traditional ritual.

Horst Hammitzsch delves into the lives of two of the three great tea masters, Shuko and Joo, who came to prominence in the years following the courtly celebrations of tea consumption. These tea masters are largely responsible for the tea tradition that is wisely practiced in Japan and the world today. Hammitzsch's perspective on the tea masters is very interesting since he ties their teachings of the tea back to the Buddhist tradition from which the tea ceremony originated(and then deviated from during the courtly popularity of tea).

While early Buddhist monks brought the tea to Japan and installed it as a religious practice, it was not until Murata Shuko (1423-1502) that people lived by the "Tea Way." Shuko became a Zen monk around the age of thirty and only began to drink tea after suffering from constant exhaustion during meditation. Shuko began to drink and study tea after receiving the recommendation of a good physician, who believed tea to be an excellent remedy. After careful study of the benefits of tea, Shuko developed his own set of tea rules which became known as "the way."

After Shuko completed his Zen studies he was given a hand written text known as a bokuseki from his master as a gift. This *bokuseki*[9] was very valuable so Shuko mounted the gift as a hanging scroll to be a focal point in his tea room. As he established his tea room, Shuko rejected the ostentation, pomp, and luxury that seemed to connote after the influence of the courtly samurai and daimyo in their needless tea competitions.

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[8] Ibid p.25-26

[9] The bokuseki was a "seal document" which like Buddhism opened the way to enlightenment or self knowledge. Shuko places this bokuseki in his tea house as a reminder to follow the basics of Buddhist principles as he develops his own "tea way". Hammitzsch, Horst. *Zen in the Art of the Tea Ceremony.* (E.P. Dutton: New York, 1988) pp.46

Shuko's perspective mirrored that of the Buddhist eight fold path which sought to remove the appetites or cravings in life similar to the ostentation and pomp of court. As a way to separate from the daimyo tea culture, Shuko employed an approach by introducing tea to everyday people like merchants. Shuko taught that tea established self awareness and a way of life, an aspect which Soshitsu Sen many years later in the book *Tea Life, Tea Mind* describes Shuko's tea studies and tries to relate them to a modern audience. Soshitsu Sen teaches that "the peacefulness from a bowl of tea may become the foundation for a way of life."[10]

Following Shuko wa Takeno Joo, the second master of the tea way. Like Shuko, Joo did not enjoy ostentation in his tea ceremony. However, more so than Shuko, he focused on the importance of preserving harmony with utensils, the room, its decorations, and the flowers. Ryiochi Fujioka also highlights the importance of the unity of utensils with the ceremony in his book. Joo more so that Shuko also focused on the attention to detail in setting up and decorating for the tea ceremony. His way involves the discipline and attention to detail often associated with the tea ceremony. His book also suggests the importance of noticing the endeavors of a host for his guest in both preparing for and serving the tea in the ceremony.

Kakuzo Okakura, a Japanese practitioner of the tea ceremony, offers a truly artful perspective within *The Book of Tea*, which he wrote during his prominence in the late Meiji era. Okakura singles out chanoyu as the best aspect of Japanese culture to teach at that time worldwide for tea was a perfect symbol with which to explain how the Japanese viewed their culture, as "steely hardness of thought that is as sharp and incisive as the sword of an ancient samurai."[11] From this quote, it is not hard to conclude that Japan was closed to western influence and lived very isolated from the problems of the west until 1852 when Commodore Perry and the Black Ships opened Japan to western trade and markets. Okakura uses this book and its explanation of tea to explore how tea is a life source for Japan in the same way that salt is a necessity for westerners. He also discusses the importance of teaching tea to others to continue the tradition as it will be a dying art of others do not follow in the steps of old masters. Rather than offering basic facts, Okakura offers an eloquent description of tea ritual, highlighting the importance of tradition, nature, and discipline.

Okakura wrote his book in 1906, highlighting how the celebration of the tea ritual is spiritual; Okakura considers it the "religion of the appreciation of aesthetics."[12] Celebrating the ritual helps the individual find and experience beauty in everyday acts. The difficulty and precision needed to cultivate tea skills increases appreciation of the art and pays homage to the humble roots of the tradition developed from various Buddhist influences.

Okakura's language artfully and eloquently describes the aesthetic of chanoyu, reflecting in particular upon the last tea of Sen Rikyu, the founder of the Urasenke tea tradition. Sen Rikyu was arguably the most important tea master that ever lived and the Urasenke tea tradition is arguably the most open tea tradition for westerners who wish to learn about the tea of the east to study under. It is ironic that Sen Rikyu was a poor

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[10] Sen, Shoshitsu. *Tea Life, Tea Mind.* (Weatherhill: New York, 1989) p. 9

[11] Okakura, Kakuzo. *The Book of Tea.* Ed. Everett F. Bleiler. (Dover Publications Inc, New York: 1964) pp. 3

[12] Ibid 3

merchant's son and later became the greatest Japanese tea master in history since around his time, merchants began to see the benefits of the tea, and went to tea schools to learn the traditions of the tea.

The final chapter of Okakura's book describes the tea ceremony as a penultimate event to death, "a living influence"[13] in contrast to one of the most honorable ways to die in the Japanese tradition, through seppuku or ritual suicide by disembowelment. The appreciation for Rikyu and his role as a focal point in Okakura's tea education differs from the generalities learned and taught by Jennifer Anderson. Although Anderson has learned a lot about the study and has come to appreciate its aesthetic beauty, Anderson will never be bound to the tradition in the same way as Okakura or possess his appreciation for Rikyu since she views the tradition as an enriching part to the study of anthropology instead of as an all encompassing way of life.

"The Last Tea of Rikyu" highlights the artful details of Sen Rikyu's final tea before committing seppuku. After enemies of Rikyu falsely accused Rikyu of planning to poison the tea of the warrior Hideyoshi in an assassination attempt, Hideyoshi ordered the immediate execution of Rikyu. In order to preserve Rikyu's honor, Hideyoshi allowed Rikyu to commit seppuku following a final tea ritual among close followers. Okakura notes the final ceremony and its "rare incense", "established etiquette", "beauty of utensils", and the "the evanescence of all earthly things."[14] Okakura employs such artful, elegant terms to describe the final ceremony of the most influential tea master in his tea school's tradition. After preparing and serving the tea, Rikyu displays his utensils, the proper gratitude is exchanged, and Rikyu gives a utensil excluding his bowl, which he ceremonially breaks to each of his followers. After his followers leave, he takes off his tea robe, bearing his "immaculate white death robe". As he "tenderly gazed at the blade of the fatal dagger"[15] he addressed it with his death poem and "passed forth into the unknown."[16]

Soshitsu Sen is the fifteenth grand tea master. Following in his father's footsteps in the rich tradition of the tea, Soshitsu Sen has initiated efforts to spread the Urasenke tradition of tea abroad. His perspective is interesting because he follows in a long line of past tea masters. His book is that of a tea master attempting to address both Japanese and western people newly learning about and possibly interested in joining the tea tradition. Soshitsu Sen sees the tea ceremony as a ritual which simultaneously joins "the spiritual level and the mundane level to create a unique art…based on an act of everyday life."[17] Soshitsu Sen offers a basic description which highlights the importance of tradition and following the proscribed motions as he generally outlines the Urasenke Japanese tea ceremony.

Shoshitsu Sen elaborates upon his perspective of the tea ceremony by describing the ritualistic steps followed by the host in the presence of his guest or guests to prepare a bowl of *matcha* or hot tea. Shoshitsu Sen, as a tea master or in Japanese an *iemoto*, particularly highlights how the ceremony requires a definite setting and dress. Before the

[13] Ibid 61
[14] Ibid 64.
[15] Ibid 65
[16] Ibid 63-65
[17] Sen, Soshitsu. *Chado: The Japanese Way of Tea.* (Weatherhill: New York, 1979) pp. 4

ceremony, guests often wait in the garden inside a structure outside of the tea house for their host to welcome them. The guests carefully note the design and choice of foliage in the garden since the host takes great care to maintain the garden in a proper manner. A certain courtesy is thus expected. The ceremony itself is traditionally held indoors, in a tea room, with a *tatami* floor, made from soft weaved straw. The room is decorated in a simple, rustic style, known as the *Wabi* style, which was developed by Sen Rikyu. This style of decorating includes a table, the tea utensils, a hanging scroll and floral arrangement, and the hearth around which the ceremony is centered.[18]

The host usually wears a kimono while guests may also wear the traditional kimono. However, if guests, especially westerners, do not own a kimono, tea etiquette asks for simple, but formal dress. The ceremony requires the guests to demonstrate a certain respect for the ritual, which is first determined by the guest's proper dress. Guests prior to the actual ceremony wait until instructed by the host to act, within the garden usually in a small structure with a nice view of the garden set up and foliage. Once the host calls for the guests, they walk up the garden path to the tea room, noting again the décor and foliage, mentally and verbally appreciating the host's taste. Before entering the tea room, guests are required to wash their hands and their mouths, using the water from a stone basin outside of the tea house. The washing is a symbolic purification required of the guests before entering the serene atmosphere of the tea house. In addition, the guests remove their shoes before entering the tea house through the sliding door, opened by the host using ritual movements.

Sen Shoshitsu's perspective until this point is very simple. Yet he clearly focuses on the importance of tradition as it has been passed down over fifteen generations from tea master to tea master. While Shoshitsu tries to attract new followers by explaining the significance of different aspects of the ceremony, he also pays close attention to ensure that he is capturing the important aspects of tradition and explaining those particular aspects in as clear and articulate a manner as possible.

Once the guests have entered, they walk in slowly, admiring the décor of the room, noting in particular the hanging scroll and the floral arrangement carefully chosen and appreciated by the host. After admiring the room, the host invites the guests to sit in front of the table as he prepares the charcoal fire to boil the water for tea. The host then fills the kettle with water from the fresh water jar to prepare the tea water. While the water boils, adding to the serenity of the tea room, the host serves his guests the *Kaiseki* meal. This meal is carefully chosen by the host and is properly prepared and arranged in an aesthetically pleasing way to harmonize with the beauty of the tea experience. After the guests carefully consider the meal, appreciating the host's craftsmanship, the guests eat and enjoy the meal, and immediately after enjoy a cup of warm sake. After finishing the sake, the guests ritually exit the tea room and return to the garden, awaiting the call of their host to return.[19]

In the case that the host does not serve the *kaiseki* meal, the guests immediately enjoy the sweets wrapped in *kaishi* paper, brought by the guests within decorative wallets. After the guest and host share the sweets, the host begins to actually prepare the tea. First, the host, using ritual motions, cleans each tea utensil in a precise order in front of his guests. The host then arranges the utensils in an exact way. After, the host, using

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[18] Ibid 10-18
[19] Ibid 20-44

the tea scoop, adds green powder from the tea caddy into the tea bowl to make the thick tea. Water is added to the powder and mixed together, using a tea whisk in precise movements. When the tea has reached the proper consistency, the host places the tea before the guest. The host and guest exchange bows, the guest replies a proscribed phrase and the guest takes a sip. After two or three more sips, taken from different places around the bowl, the tea bowl is passed from one guest to the next, following the same ritual pattern of discipline and respect. The movements are proscribed and precise to maintain harmony, peace, and beauty. The bowl is passed around until all the guests have sipped the host's tea. After the thick tea is served, the host usually serves a thin tea, following a slightly more relaxed process to make this tea. After the thin tea is completed, it is served in a more relaxing manner. The conversation becomes more relaxed as responses are no longer proscribed and sometimes, the host and his guests will smoke in the company of each other to maintain good spirits. After a period, the host begins to ritually clean all of the tea utensils. After the tools have been properly cleaned, the host invites his guests to ritually examine his tea utensils using a special cloth. After examining the tools, which are sometimes heirlooms passed down through generations, the guests slowly rise and exit the tea house as the host bows, honoring the departure of his guests. The entire ceremony can take up to four hours.[20]

An important component to understanding the tea ceremony is the knowledge of the different utensils and their significance within the ceremony itself. The utensils, in particular their use and the many ways in which they are made, mirrors the significant motions and movements employed the host as he uses the utensils in the ceremony; both aspects are equally important. Ryoichi Fujioka in *Arts of Japan 3: Tea Ceremony Utensils* explores how the simplicity and harmony associated with the ceremony is found as much within the utensils employed in their traditional roles in the ceremony as in the structure of the tea house, its historical origins, the garden in which the house is perfectly placed, and the company of those enjoying the tea. While the utensils are not extravagant, they have very active and significant roles in the ceremony, which a student of tea must learn and appreciate early on in tea school.

The first utensil of importance in the ceremony is the tea bowl or *chawan* in Japanese. The tea bowl is the only utensil in the whole ceremony that passes from the host's hands to his guest and back again. The other utensils have fixed points all within reach of the host for specific instances of the ceremony. The other important utensil associated with the bowl is the chakin, the white or hemp cloth used to wipe the bowl before and after use. Since the bowl is arguably the most important utensil, it is important for a tea practitioner to possess a few fine bowls, differing in thickness (whether the bowl is used for thick or thin tea), and varying in degrees of decoration, (depending on the season and the type of tea served by the host). While early bowls of the ceremony were imported or brought back from China or Korea, Japanese artisans learned how to craft the bowls and sold them from within Japan. Popular bowl kilns which also made other utensils included *Seto, Mino, Oribe, Karatsu, Hagi, Bizen, Shigaraki*, and *Raku*. Each kiln developed its style of bowl, which had a slightly different shape depending on the type of tea it was supposed to serve.[21]

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[20] Ibid 46-143

[21] *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History on Chanoyu.* Ed. Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao. University of Hawaii U.P.: Honolulu, 1989. 16-30

Besides the bowl, the tea caddy and the tea jar are very important utensils. Ryiochi compares the tea caddy and the tea jar to a sugar bowl, holding a small amount of sugar for immediate use and the storage container used to store the rest of a pound bag of sugar respectively. Tea caddies are used to hold the ground tea powder ready for use in a tea ceremony. Practitioners usually owned one of two types of caddies, depending on the type of tea they chose to serve. Ceramic tea caddies held ground thick tea, made from the leaves of older, bitter tea plants, while lacquer caddies held ground thin tea made from young tea leaves. Tea jars were used to store tea in leaf form, after it was purchased. A practitioner would take an amount of tea from a tea jar and grind it up before a ceremony, placing the resulting grinds in an appropriate tea caddy.[22]

The tea scoop *(chashuku)* is designed to transfer ground tea from a caddy to a tea bowl. While the scoop was usually a small strip of bamboo, it was given the proper attention and consideration like every other utensil. Very interestingly, tea masters often made or finished their own scoops; therefore, a master's scoop was a personalized expression of his unique personality. A tea whisk was also essential; it was made out of bamboo and used to stir the tea powder in the hot water to properly prepare the tea.[23]

The kettle is one of the two focal points a guest acknowledges upon initially entering an empty tea room with his or her host. The first focal point is the display of a hanging scroll and an arrangement of flowers. These arrangements are unique to each tea house. Thus, a guest always offers close consideration and appreciation as a matter of politeness. The second focal point is the hearth and the kettle *(chanoyu)* in which water is boiled to make the tea. Ryoichi notes how the boiling of water of tea "establishes a mood of relaxed quietude…likened to soughing of pines on a hill or to waves breaking on rocks".[24] The kettle itself with its "rich textual surface and ornamental lid, expresses the subdued beauty at the heart of the tea ceremony aesthetic".[25]

Before a master can boil the water needed to conduct the ceremony, the master would need to replenish the empty kettle from a fresh water jar or *mizusashi*. A fresh water jar is placed in a very central location so that it correlates in a pleasing way to the other utensils in the room, creating a harmonious environment. A fresh water jar must express the personality of its owner in a similar way to the tea scoop; however, simple, sturdy designs are more favorable than highly decorative pieces as they are more practical. A fresh water jar has a wide opening and a solid base so that it can sit on the table as well as have a wide enough opening with which to fit a ladle to remove water from the jar to the kettle. In contrast to the fresh water jar is the waste water jar. It is very plain and often hidden away in a corner of a tea house. It is only used to hold the dirty water used to rinse the tea bowl. Very simple materials are used to make this jar.[26]

The flower container, *hana-ire*, is a focal point in the tea room and careful consideration is given to the container and arrangement of flowers within the tea room. Along with the decorated scroll, the floral container is the most important ornament of the tea room's display alcove. The purpose of the floral arrangement is to balance the

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[22] Ibid 31-52
[23] Ibid 53-56
[24] Ibid 59-60
[25] Ibid 59
[26] Ibid 72-86

inside of the tea room with the garden which surrounds the tea house on the outside, creating a balance and harmony.[27]

While flowers visually set up the tea room, incense creates an aroma as well as an atmosphere of peace and serenity. This is why incense cases, incense burners, and utensils for laying the fire for the incense are also important. Ryoichi notes how Yabunouchi Choskin, a fifth generation Kyoto tea master, explains the importance of incense "to welcome a guest, to purify the spirit of a room, to show reverence."[28] Incense cases hold the incense while the burners burn the incense prior to the arrival of a guest. Burners are almost never displayed; they are always put away before a guest's arrival. The hearth tools are used after a guest arrives and the host lights a small charcoal fire from the ashes in the hearth using the hearth tools as a way to welcome his or her guest to the ceremony.[29]

Before the tea was served, the host usually offered the guest a simple vegetarian meal based on the traditional cooking of the Zen monasteries. The Kaiseki meal complements the tea being served in the same way the Kaiseki utensils harmonize with the tea utensils. Traditional materials to make these utensils included wood and lacquer. A host owned at least an unlacquered tray, a wood tray and two to three black lacquered bowls to serve this well planned and carefully presented meal. Before eating the meal, a person would often look carefully upon the food and the serving dishes, as a measure of politeness and gratitude for their generous host. Before the end of the meal, the host often served his guest sake before offering tea. A host owned a ceramic sake warmer, a serving flask, and decorated sake cups to serve the sake to guests. After the sake was consumed, a host began the preparations for tea.[30]

To hold all the aforementioned utensils, a tea practitioner owned a wooden box to store the utensils in a practical, but also decorous way. Boxes were a work of art to match the art or important supplies or utensils held inside. Because Japan had an abundance of fins woods, boxes had many different, beautiful wood designs further improved by sturdy construction.[31]

After exploring how each of the authors had a different focus, through the history, important figures, the ceremony itself or the importance of the utensils, two of the final authors in this paper discuss the modern audience, in particular Japanese women and the west. Barbara Mori in *The Tea Ceremony: A Transformed Japanese Ritual* explores how the tea ceremony is an art form women are required to learn before they are married. While this might seem to be a requirement which suggests that women are inferior to men, Mori counter argues that women have used tea studies as a way to advance within Japanese society. The art form provides them a subject to study and livelihood through which to acquire an income, teaching a very important cultural skill. Mori notes the importance of women teaching in the tea ceremony by reminding her readers that the ritual was solely for men in its early history. Over the years, the ritual has transformed full circle as both women and foreigners are not only allowed, but also encouraged to study the traditional ritual of the tea. So the tradition continues well into the future.

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[27] Ibid 87-91
[28] Ibid 102
[29] Ibid 102-108
[30] Ibid 109-131
[31] Ibid 131-132

While women still cannot hold the three highest hierarchical positions in the Urasenke School developed by Sen Rikyu, they have a great opportunity in the tea tradition as teachers, students, and supporters. As supporters they often share the responsibility of manufacturing or selling tea utensils or running a tea house. Many women find the tea tradition an alluring career rather than something in the business world, since as a teacher a woman can pick her own pupils and schedule her own hours as she is available and sees fit. She can also raise a family and keep a house for herself and her husband. Women also enjoy the opportunity to work around beautiful, priceless heirlooms (or in the very least incredibly well crafted utensils) while following an ancient tradition.[32]

Mori concludes in her argument that Chado has opened a door in Japanese society for working women to advance themselves. Although the society is still favorable of men over women, the chado tradition has taught women a skill set through which they can pursue goals, make important choices, and acquire training and skills – all resulting in self confidence. Women, through Chado, will see themselves as successful contributors to society.[33]

The final perspective that is very important when studying the tea ceremony is the reaction of the west. As Mori notes, the study is very tradition based and well respected by men and women alike as evidenced through the many schools dedicated to it in Japan. However, since the ceremony is newly opened to the west, it is interesting to note a western perspective to the traditional phenomenon, which might differ from someone like Jennifer Anderson who immediately was intrigued by the art as an anthropologist. John Whitney Hall's *On the Future History of Tea* explores how Japanese self containment policies may work against the tea tradition, particularly in the eyes of the average westerner. Hall claims, "the average westerner, in his sleek complacency will see in the tea ceremony but another instance of a thousand and one oddities which constitute the quaintness and childishness of the east to him."[34]

The west and east have proven for centuries that they operate under different mindsets. The discipline, the patience required, and the very precise ritualistic aspects of the ceremony could easy frustrate the western mind as westerners do not enter the study with the knowledge of tradition that many Japanese bring as students of the art. With no appreciation with which to understand the ceremony it is not surprising that Hall would be skeptical and the ceremony's initial reception by the west. The study would definitely inspire intrigue, but may not be necessarily understood as an art form that westerners would readily pursue.

Hall further asserts his point as he mentions how the European mindset in particular could see the ceremony as meaningless. He suggests, "When witnessed more than once, it becomes intolerably monotonous in the western mind. Not being born with oriental patience, he (the European) longs for something new, something lively,

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[32] Mori, Barbara Lynne Rowland. The Tea Ceremony: A Transformed Japanese Ritual. *Gender and Society*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Mar., 1991), pp. 86-97 12 Dec. 2008 http://www.jstor.org/stable/189931 p. 86-89

[33] Ibid 96

[34] John Whitney Hall "On The Future History of Tea". From *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History on Chanoyu.* Ed. Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao. University of Hawaii U.P.: Honolulu, 1989. p. 248

something with the least semblance of logic and utility."[35] The west has traditionally been more faced paced and, as suggested earlier, it would not be surprising that the average western individual would not have the patience to learn the precise movements or sit quietly, studying a traditional art form which stresses only silence and discipline for up to four hours. It is a very different kind of study from anything ever offered by the west, which has always focused on endeavors to make things faster and more efficient (as seen with the industrial revolutions and the general mindset of the west as early imperialists taking over the east). No art form like the tea ceremony has ever been (or will ever be for that matter) readily practiced by the west, frankly because most westerners are too impatient and live too fast paced of lives to truly appreciate the traditional aesthetic of the tea way of life.

This paper successfully demonstrates how different authors have explored the subject of the Japanese tea ceremony, each focusing on different facets of the tradition to ensure that the ceremony which has lasted for centuries continues into the future. Tea masters and new students alike can appreciate the tradition, historical origins, as well as the symbolism of the ceremony itself and the tools, in particular their significance and the way in which they are used. While the tea masters may bring an eloquence and depth to the art which has been present since the early drinking of tea, new students, especially those of western origin bring to the study a way for those not knowledgeable of the tradition to at least begin to understand and appreciate an ancient art form.

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[35] Ibid 250

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