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Peacefulness Through a Bowl of Tea:

The Way of Tea as a Medium of Transformation

Mírumilovnost skrze misku čaje:

Cesta čaje jako médium transformace

Diplomová práce

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Prohlášení

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V Praze dne 2. ledna 2015

Barbora Komberec Novosadová

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Abstract in English

The Japanese way of tea has been explored with scientific rigor through the fields of anthropology, aesthetics, philosophy, religion, semiotics, and other academic disciplines. This thesis will examine the phenomenon of the „bowl of tea” (considered here as the axis mundi of a tea gathering) on three levels: as a gift, as the basis for the foundation of responsible and considerate relationships in the community, and as a medium of transformation into peacefulness. First, it will explore the nature of the gift in different social practices of exchange in general and in the way of tea in particular. Second, it will present research connecting the gift and the process of giving as a mode of hospitality in the tea gathering. Third, it will assess, through concepts of spatial semiotics, the transformative nature of the way of tea. It will conclude with a statement as to the potential of the way of tea experience to transform human experience and behaviour to others via the phenomenon of gift.

Key words in English

Japanese way of tea, Gift, Hospitality, Peacefulness, Transformation, Medium, Semiotics

Abstract in Czech

Japonská cesta čaje (japonský čajový obřad) je předmětem zájmu mnoha vědních disciplín: antropologie, estetiky, filosofie, religionistiky, sémiotiky a dalších. Diplomová práce se zaměří na zkoumání cesty čaje a události čajového setkání zejména z pohledu sémiotiky. Fenomén misky čaje (chápaný jako centrum čajového setkání) bude zkoumán na třech různých úrovních: jakožto dar, jako možný základ zodpovědných a ohleduplných vztahů v komunitě, a jakožto médium transformace. Nejprve bude prozkoumán fenomén daru v různých společenských praxích výměny a následně v cestě čaje. Diplomová práce rovněž představí analýzu spojení daru a procesu dávání jakožto způsob pohostinnosti v čajovém setkání. Díky konceptu prostorové sémiotiky se pokusí nastínit transformativní charakter cesty čaje a popsat možnosti proměny lidského chování a vztahování se k druhým prostřednictvím zkušenosti cesty čaje a skrze dar a proces dávání, který je v ní přítomen.

Key words in Czech

Japonská cesta čaje, dar, pohostinnost, mírumilovnost, proměna, médium, sémiotika

Note on transliteration

The transliteration of Japanese words in this thesis follows the Hepburn romanization system. Hepburn system is used for transliteration of Japanese words written with use of *kanji* (a system of Japanese writing using Chinese characters), *hiragana* (the Japanese syllabic alphabet used for the words of mostly Japanese origin) and *katakana* (the Japanese syllabic alphabet used for the transliteration of the words of non-Japanese origin). Person's names and titles of literature are transliterated in the Hepburn system, as well as all frequently used terms connected with the way of tea. The thesis is largely used, modified Hepburn system, where the long vowels are generally indicated by macrons (̄). There are examples of the use: *chadō*, *Rikyū*, *Sōshitsu*, *Jukō*, etc. In the case of citation from English written literatures and other sources, I did not change the originally used system of romanization to preserve the system chosen by the authors. The majority of cited sources, though, uses the Hepburn romanization system as well. Words transliterated from the Japanese (apart from person's names) are written in italics in the original text of thesis as well as in used quotations (to preserve the coherence of the style).

House and dewy ground.
Guest and host both joined as one,
Share a cup of tea.
In tranquil meditation,
No margin divides their hearts.
The *roji*¹ is a way
Apart from this bustling world
And its many cares.
How will that path sweep away
The dust from within our hearts?²

¹ “The Japanese language has a particular term for the garden of a tea house, ‘*roji*’, whose literal meaning is ‘dewy ground’. The Parables of the Lotus Sutra suggest its significance, for they say, ‘There is no peace in the Three Worlds; they are like a house in flames.’ But then the account continues, ‘One emerges from the house in flames to sit on the dewy ground.’ This escape from the consuming passions of the world is the function of the tea garden.” Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998. P. 166.

² A poem „traditionally attributed to Rikyū, sum up in a few words his most important teachings about the *roji*”. Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1998. P. 169.

Introduction

It does not happen very often that the place in the sentence, *where the stress falls*,³ is neither verb, nor substantive, but preposition. From this point of view, our case could be taken as an exception. *Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea*: Not all of the words in the title of this thesis are of equal value, but if we should emphasize one of them, it would be just the preposition. The *through* is the place, where our stress falls and *through* is the one that will be in the center of all our examinations. *Through* is the meaning of the gift and the meaning of the medium, as a space for encounter, as a means for transformation, *through* as notional alpha and omega of the thesis.

The way of tea, tea ceremony, *chadō*⁴ or *chanoyu*⁵, all names that refer to the phenomenon, which is part of Japanese history and tradition, but that also oversteps the boundaries of “Nippon” thanks to its philosophical, ethical, aesthetical and spiritual dimensions. As a main theme of my thesis, I define the way of tea as a complex system of meanings, traditions and cultural specifics that can be examined from many different points of view.

There are many studies and theoretical works based on examination of the way of tea as a matter of study of anthropology as a ritual strongly connected with Japanese culture and mentality. One of them is the book by Dorinne Kondo, whose effort is to provide symbolic analysis of aspects of the way of tea⁶. On the other hand, there are books focusing on the way of tea as an important article, which during Japanese history effected politics, social conditions and even a self-awareness and re-constitution of Japanese nationality during the periods of wars or during the period of very strong “Westernization”.⁷ Kristin Surak works with the concept of *Japaneseness*, using Roland Barthes’ thoughts on Japan and an essence of *Japaneseness*. Surak understands *chanoyu* as a matter, which bears an essence of *Japaneseness* and thus tries to show the role of

³ See Sontag, Susan. *Where the Stress Falls: Essays*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2001.

⁴ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

⁶ See, e.g. Kondo, Dorinne. “*The way of tea: A Symbolic Analysis*.” *Man* 20.2 (1985): 287-306. JSTOR. Web. 21 Aug. 2014. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2802386?ref=no-x-route:29beccc70a27e1009e76a9450203ec98>>.

⁷ See the book by Kristin Surak concerning the relationship of the way of tea and Japanese nationality: Surak, Kristin. *Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2013.

chanoyu in the creation and comprehension of Japanese identity and nationality. Numerous other scholars have published works dedicated to the strong relationship between the way of tea and Zen Buddhism and an equally large number of publications deal with the way of tea as a repository or representation of the Japanese aesthetical principles (*wabi*, *furyū*, *sabi* etc.). The principle of *wabi* is examined for instance, in the doctoral thesis of Minna Torniainen.⁸ We can continue naming many different streams of thinking about the way of tea, but soon we realize that just this fact could be proof that the way of tea matters and that it resonates with people of different ages, social and cultural backgrounds and religions. We feel comfortable in stating unequivocally that there is probably something very *fundamental* and *universal* about the way of tea for people of Japanese heritage and maybe beyond, and thus is reason enough to merit with scientific rigor.

My approach to this investigation of the way of tea began when I became a student of the way of tea. While immersed in the practical inculcation of study, I also spent a long time thinking about the sincere approach to dealing with this phenomenon on theoretical field. Thus, I choose this thesis topic as a result of first-hand experience. I am deeply convinced that the way of tea can transform one's attitude about oneself, to other people and to life. For example, in addition to learning about making a bowl of green tea for someone, there is a wide range of aspects of the way of tea, that can be appreciated and examined: the artistic aspect of flower arrangement, scroll painting, ceramics making, lacquering of tea utensils, the functioning of the community of the followers of the way of tea, the *iemoto*⁹ system (system of tea masters based on family lineage), the relationship between student and teacher, *sempai* and *kohai* (less and more experienced students) and among the followers in general, an importance of the way of tea as spiritual practice deeply connected with the traditions and tenets of Zen Buddhism. In this thesis we will focus on the way of tea as a catalyst to transform human consciousness, the quality of human relationships developed through *chadō* practice, and how peacefulness may evolve through the gift of a bowl of tea.

⁸ See, e.g. doctoral thesis written on the ideal of *wabi*: Torniainen, Minna. *From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi: Philosophical and Aesthetic Aspects of Wabi in the way of tea*. Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2000. Print.

⁹ "A term used in reference to family lines responsible for carrying forward certain forms of traditional culture, such as *chadō* (the way of wear), *kadō* (flower arrangement), *kōdō* (incense appreciation), *nōgaku* (Japanese classical no theatre art), or the person who leads the family. *Iemoto* in traditional culture began to appear in documents from the mid-18th century." See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

In the first part of this thesis we will examine the history of the way of tea from its early beginning until the present with regard to its social role, relationship between host and guest in the tea gathering, and the presence and importance of the concepts that are important for Japanese aesthetics and perception of phenomena (the concept of *wabi* and *ma*). This consideration plays an important role in our interpretation of transformative possibilities of the way of tea.

In the first chapter we will examine the phenomenon of the gift perceived as a center of the tea gathering. We will point out the ambiguity of the gift in the tea gathering and we will try to find parallels in different social practices of giving. We will compare them to the practice of giving in *chanoyu* and we will describe the nature of the gift in its case. We will work with Derrida's conception of the *impossibility* of the gift and we will introduce the concept of *invisibility* of the gift.

In the second chapter we will focus on the relationship between the phenomenon of gift and hospitality, referring, mainly to Emmanuel Lévinas and his concept of *face* and to the Japanese concept of *amae*.

The third chapter is devoted to the introduction of the way of tea as a medium of transformation. In the first part of the chapter, we will use the methods of spatial semiotics to explore transformative possibilities of the spaces of *chanoyu* and especially with *chaji*¹⁰, the tea gathering event. We will promote the concept of *ma* as a crucial for understanding of perception and function of time and space in the way of tea. Additionally we will present research on transformative aspects of *chanoyu*, in particular its capacity as performing art and role-playing space, as a realm of utopia, and as a medium of transformation of consciousness. At the end of the thesis I, will try to outline the possible role of the way of tea in the transformation of human consciousness, the quality of human relationships and its present and possible role in peace development and in transformation of human mind and human relationships into state of peacefulness.

Since I am a practitioner of the way of tea, respectively a student of the Urasenke tea school, we will refer to the style of Urasenke tea school practices while describing the flow of the gathering etc. As an image of the way of tea, which could be helpful for the

¹⁰ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

reader's understanding, we will work with the concept of *wabi* tea¹¹ as described in chapters X.3.2 and 2.5.

Terminology and distinctions: *chadō* and *chanoyu*

It is very important to clearly differentiate between two Japanese terms, that are commonly translated as “the way of tea”, for very basic understanding of the possible meaning of phenomenon of the way of tea. These two terms are “*chadō*” (茶道) and “*chanoyu*” (茶の湯). The word “*chanoyu*” in Japanese means literally: „hot water for tea” (“*cha no oyu*”) and according to *Chanoyu Vocabulary* it refers “the art of preparing tea (...), synonymous with “*chasuki*” in the Middle ages”¹². The term “*chasuki*” means “to admire elegant accomplishments and to be devoted to them”¹³. “*Chanoyu*” refers mainly to the process of making tea itself. It refers to making fire, heating the water, whisking powdered tea with hot water and serving the tea to the guest. Term “*chanoyu*” can lead us to the famous words of the 16th century tea master Sen no Rikyū, whose words on simplicity and the main point of the way of tea are the following: “The way of tea is naught but this: first you boil water, then you make the tea and drink it.”¹⁴ This description can be understood not as the expression of the banality of tea ceremony and the way of tea, but the very meaning of the way of tea and its root.

While the term “*chanoyu*” refers more to the practical side of tea making and to the bowl of tea and tea itself that is always present during every tea gathering (*chaji* or *chakai*), the term “*chadō*” brings to light other connotations. “*Chadō*”, now used as an alternative term for “*chanoyu*”, with its literal meaning tea way (*cha dō*) first appeared in *Chōandō Ki* in 1640. At that time “*chanoyu*” was regarded as a kind of

¹¹ “A word of fundamental principle of the way of tea. It includes such connotations as being perplexed, enjoying the retired life, astringency, soberness, simplicity, and rusticity. As *chadō* developed, *wabi* became the word describing its highest reach.” See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹² Genshitsu, Sen. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the way of tea* [Eigo-ban Jitsuyō Chadō Yogo Jiten]. Vol. 1. Kyoto-shi: Tankosha, 2007.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Sen, Sōshitsu. *Tea Life, Tea Mind*. New York: Published for the Urasenke Foundation, Kyoto Weatherhill, 1979. Print.

common name, whereas “chadō” served as a formal name.¹⁵ The term “*chadō*” includes the understanding that it is the “way” or „spiritual discipline” of *chanoyu*, not a simple “amusement”.¹⁶

For the purpose of the thesis, we will refer to the term “*chadō*” as a complex system of philosophy, aesthetics, ethics, and by the long-established tradition and manners of procedures and values. We will use English phrase “the way of tea” as the term very close to the meaning of “*chadō*”. We will also refer to the term *chanoyu*, but we will use it mainly in referring to the preparation of tea and to emphasize the duration and process of tea preparation and the tea gathering. Thus the English term “tea gathering” will in some cases substitutes Japanese term “*chanoyu*”. Even though we believe there is a certain semantic difference between the terms “*chadō*” and “*chanoyu*” we will use them also according to the choice of the authors of cited resources. The reader will notice that the common usage of these terms does not form a very strict boundary between them.

¹⁵ Genshitsu, Sen. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the way of tea* [Eigo-ban Jitsuyō Chadō Yogo Jiten]. Vol. 1. Kyoto-shi: Tankosha, 2007.

¹⁶ Ibid.

X. History of the way of tea and the transformation of its understanding

The meaning of the way of tea and tea gathering has changed throughout history. The way of tea is the living, social, cultural and spiritual phenomenon which has persisted for more than approximately 800 years, experiencing several transformations until it grew into the shape which we experience now. For understanding this thesis, it is crucial to provide a brief history of the way of tea and to show the milestones of the transformation of its form, social, cultural and spiritual dimension. Paul Varley says in the foreword he has written in the book of Sen Sōshitsu:

Few subjects in Japanese cultural history compare in importance with *chanoyu*. Taking its basic form during the medieval age, from the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries, *chanoyu* has drawn upon and, at the same time, has influenced many spheres of culture, art, and religion, including architecture, interior room decoration, ceramics, painting, calligraphy, flower arrangement, and Buddhism, especially Zen. Because of its involvement with so many spheres, *chanoyu* itself is difficult to define. Some, for example, have described it as a performing art, others as a means of artistic display, and still others as a path to religious enlightenment.¹⁷

What is the way of tea for us? What is its role in contemporary society? Which is the image of the way of tea we work with in this thesis? We hope that brief familiarization with the history and ways of transformation of *chadō* will bring the understanding of the reason for examining the tea as a gift and as a medium of transformation, which is the main focus of this thesis.

X.1 Tea in Zen temples: Tea as a medicine: health and awareness

One of the first references on the preparation of powdered tea (*matcha*), which is used especially for purpose of tea ceremony, comes from Zen Buddhism. The tea was grown and used by monks, especially for its beneficial health effects as well for its ability to keep the mind alert and awake. Sen Sōshitsu XV states: “Thus, as late as the end of the

¹⁷ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. XII.

Kamakura era [1185-1333], for priests, tea was nothing more than a means 'to conquer the devil of sleep'."¹⁸

From the same period also comes the first records of the beginning of „ritualized form” of tea gathering. In the description of first tea gatherings of monks, we can already see the very origins of the developed form of later tea gathering as well as the roots of the nowadays way (bows, thanks, presentation, sound signals etc.):

First, the individual responsible for tea will strike the sounding board before the monks' quarters. When he does, the assembly will place their hands palms together, bow once in thanks, and take their seats. The one who is to prepare the tea will proceed to the center brazier and light incense. There should not be more than nine people assembled at this time. When the small sounding board inside the monks' quarters is struck, there will be a bow and the tea bowls, distributed. Thereupon, the server will move around the room preparing the tea. The assembly will then raise their bowls in presentation and drink the tea. When finished, they will bow and collect the tea bowls. Finally, the chief of the monks' quarters will express thanks to the person who prepared the tea.¹⁹

X.2 Tea contests: Tea as an object of entertainment: Luxury tea parties and profane understanding of the tea

Another way of appreciating tea were tea contests. As we can read in the description of ancient resources used by Sen Sōshitsu XV, tea contests turned into luxurious parties for the rich “tea lovers”. The main focus was on the amusement and showing of precious tea utensils.

Since ancient times the upper classes, both civil and military, as well as priests had enjoyed the pastime of *monoawase*, games or contests for the comparison of various objects. Examples would include contests for paintings, insects, flowers, fans, seashells, prose, poetry, and the like. Dog and cock fights were also part of this same type of entertainment. Finally, beginning in the fourteenth century, tea contests joined these ranks.²⁰

¹⁸ Ibid. P. 75.

¹⁹ Sōtōshū Zensho Shingi, p. 369 cited in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 79.

²⁰ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 79.

Sen, Sōshitsu XV cites the description of the flow of one contest in the book of *Taiheiki*:

All of the riches went to the idlers they brought with them or to actors from *dengaku* or *sarugaku* and courtesans and beautiful women who had gathered to watch. The *daimyo* themselves returned empty-handed. Thus, they gave no help to the poor and isolated; they offered nothing to the Buddha or the priests. It was as if they had simply flung their gold into the mud, their jewels into a bottomless pool.²¹

The experience of the tea preparation and tea gathering (it is almost irrelevant to talk about the way of tea) were transformed into the luxury feast of rich and seems almost incomparable to the understanding of the tea gathering in the later tradition of Sen no Rikyū and the *Senke* Schools. Described were, for instance, the tea rooms with “chairs draped with the skins of tigers and leopards or with seven chambers lavishly decorated”.²² As aforementioned, only the comparison of the meaning and understanding of the way of tea in the background of historical and social context, can help us understand the later efforts to make changes as well as the current understanding of this phenomenon.

X.3 Origins of the way of tea: Transformation through personalities

The situation described by Sen Sōshitsu XV was a precondition for the birth of the way of tea, which laid foundations of its current form and understanding:

The cultural elite of *Heian*, whose first thought was of pedigree and refinement, lived lives of assured economic well-being, political authority, and social status. For them, therefore, culture meant refinement and that in turn implied the creation of an international life-style that necessarily conformed to Chinese patterns, which were merely formal and conceptual. By contrast, the new cultural leaders who ascended the stage at *Kamakura* were the products of a completely different background. Pedigree hardly mattered. Economically insecure, they sought only to eke out an existence in lands far from the traditional centers of culture. Refinement was a frill, and ceremonial formality held no meaning for them.²³

²¹ *Taiheiki*, vol. 36, pp. 252–253 in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 92.

²² *Ibid.* P. 93.

²³ *Ibid.* P. 120.

As tea, thus could become a quotidian matter, the opportunity to “lift the tea higher”, not to make it a privilege for the rich, but to admit its religious and aesthetic dimension was sought.

The later, as well as the present times’ understanding of the way of tea was influenced by several figures and tea masters. The actual conception of *chanoyu* is thus a dialogue between different attitudes and ideas of important figures in the realm of tea. The role of discipleship plays a crucial role in the development of *chanoyu* and is no less important nowadays in the *iemoto* system of the *Senke* Schools. This is the reason why we will explore the story of the way of tea from its origins till present time, mainly through the figures of teachers and students, followers of the way of tea.

X.3.1 Murata Jukō: Clear differentiation of the way of tea

Murata Jukō, presumed founder of the way of tea, perceived the unity of Zen and the way of tea and he categorically stressed out that: “Tea is not play; it is not technique; it is not entertainment.”²⁴ Jukō understood tea as a religious practice, strongly connected with Zen Buddhism. “Jukō first warned against ‘pride and obduracy of the heart,’ by which he meant that feeling of self-centeredness that could cause one to become set in his own ways.”²⁵ At this time we can notice the birth of many ideas and concepts which will play very important role in the later development of the way of tea. We will devote the space for examining them in separate sub-chapters. The concept of selflessness will be examined in chapter 3.3.2.3, idea of „the spirit of the beginner” in chapter 3.3.2.1 and the meaning of making the the specific spaces for a tea gathering (tea rooms and tea huts) as small as possible, the minimal place for sharing, will be researched closer in chapter 3.1.2.

X.3.2 Takeno Jōō: Concept of *wabi*: the way of tea is „straightforward, considerate, and not arrogant”

²⁴ Mitani, p. 8. in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 129.

²⁵ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 132.

Takeo Jōō, another important person in the way of tea development, introduced and described the concept of *wabi* as a definition of the style and quality of the way of tea. Sōshitsu Sen XV cites Takeo Jōō's legacy to his disciples regarding „the spirit” of *wabi* tea:

Jōō left his disciples a set of twelve precepts to clarify the mental attitude needed for the proper performance of *wabi* tea.

Item. One should practice goodwill toward others.

Item. One's manners should be correct and harmonious.

Item. One must not be critical of the gatherings of others.

Item. One must not be filled with pride.²⁶

Item. Do not covet utensils owned by others.

Item. It is entirely inappropriate to think of *chanoyu* only in terms of utensils.

Item. One soup and three other dishes are suitable to the *kaiseki* meal. One should not exceed that amount even for special guests.

Item. Men of tea may find utensils that have been discarded and use them for tea. How much more is this so for ordinary people.

Item. Men of tea, especially hate to be seen as such.

Item. The man of tea observes a spirit of *wabi* and leads a life of quiet retreat. He should know the precepts of Buddhism and experience the feeling of Japanese poetry.

Item. One should lead a secluded life and feel *sabi*. One should also strive for a middle Way, for one who appears too splendid is wanting and if too *wabi*, simple or slovenly.

Item. **There should be no *chanoyu* that does not consider the heart of the guest; such would not be sincere tea.** One's own *chanoyu* should be like this. Also, one should not impose upon one's guests or ask them for help.²⁷

²⁶ All bold text used in original text of this thesis as well as in citation, is consciously used by the author to emphasize words, sentences or larger parts of the text with significant importance for the purpose of thesis.

²⁷ Takeo Jōō, *Jōō Montei e no Hatto*, in CKZ, vol. 3, p. 50. in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 155.

Jōō brought the concept of *wabi* into the world of the way of tea. We will concentrate on this concept in the chapter 2.5, but it has to be mentioned that preferring the *wabi* style was not only the shift from one style of performing to another one, but it was more important turnover in the history of the way of tea development. Jōō turned the attention, probably for the first time explicitly and with major consequences, to the roles of host and guest. If there was not any emphasis on the mission and part of the actors of the tea gathering before, now we can see an expressed need to define them. He defines *wabi* as “straightforward, considerate, and not arrogant”.²⁸ **In his precepts he stresses an attitude of the man of tea to others and thus he makes a connection between the way of tea and ethics. Suddenly the man of tea is not anymore defined by an ownership of precious tea utensils, nor by the precision of his skills in mastering the procedures of preparation the tea, but by his attitude to others.**

This is the point, where the relationship between host and guest is born, and where the relationship between host and guest in the tea gathering becomes a certain maxim of interpersonal relations. While stating “There should be no *chanoyu* that does not consider the heart of the guest; such would not be sincere tea.” in the last item of his precepts, there is expressed the main interest of the tea gathering: the heart of the guest. The host’s consideration of the guest becomes a cornerstone of the tea gathering and of the way of tea itself. Sen Sōshitsu XV puts the turnover and changes in understanding the priorities in the tea gathering into broader context while writing:

Yet to be straightforward, considerate, and not arrogant meant to be conscious of others. This was not tea that one could enjoy in isolation. It was a world where the distinction between self and others did not obtain. This was a new realm for tea.²⁹

It could be the beginning of the realm of the way of tea, where the consciousness of others, the presence of others, and what is more, the needs of others are highlighted and made a priority and the new meaning of the tea gathering.

²⁸ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 154.

²⁹ *Ibid.* P. 155-156.

X.4 Sen no Rikyū and the way of tea becoming a cultural system

The modern concept as well as the formal appearance of the tea gathering at present comes largely from an effort of Sen no Rikyū.

The more profound concept of *chanoyu*, which Jukō and Jōō had helped to shape, saw its completion with the advent of Rikyū, who further refined it and provided it with a philosophical and aesthetic structure.³⁰

Sen Sōshitsu XV emphasizes that Sen no Rikyū “deepened the concept of an art of tea”³¹ and gave it certain structure that very obviously reminds us of a philosophical and aesthetic meaning of the way of tea. At the time of Rikyū also in case of *wabi chanoyu*, the use of Chinese utensils was essential. To be considered a master one has to own wider collection of Chinese utensils. *Wabi* tea practitioners considered these utensils as very expensive; thus, the group of the way of tea followers (or the ones understood as the men of tea), was determined by the means. Sen Sōshitsu, XV. cites one of the very early works on *chanoyu* from the 16th century, which shows the importance of the use of Chinese utensils as possible limitations for potential followers of the way of tea:

Nowadays, people have come to use no Chinese utensils. That is a shame! Yet beginners and those who practice a *wabi* style have difficulty even getting charcoal and tea together. Therefore, how much more difficult it is to own Chinese wares. So they must enjoy their tea without them.³²

An author refers to the practical matters which influences the understanding of the way of tea. If people have problems to get charcoal and tea; with water the most important items for the possibility of the tea gathering; how would they be able to understand religious or aesthetic dimension of *chanoyu* when there is a hindrance for them to enjoy it? What is the true meaning of the way of tea? What is the relationship between the exclusion based on “inadequate equipment” for *chanoyu* and the prescripts of Takeno Jōō, where the main focus is on considerateness, good will, heart of the guest etc.? These questions could be one of the motives for the need of rethinking of priorities, attitude and conviction of the student of the way of tea.

³⁰ Ibid. P. 158.

³¹ Ibid.

³² *Shinshōsai Shunkei, Bunrui Sōjinboku*, in Sen Sōshitsu and Sen Sōshu, eds., *Chadō*, vol. 12, p. 31. There remains some doubt whether 1564 was the date of its composition, but this is thought to be a relatively early work on *chanoyu*. In Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 159.

Sen no Rikyū played an important role in rethinking the meaning as well as the formal appearance of the way of tea. Rikyū conceived of the creation of *chadō* as a cultural system. The way of tea experienced significant transformation in many aspects. Sen Sōshitsu XV writes about the transformation of values in *chadō*:

The transformation of values, moreover, did not stop with aesthetics. Social values also changed. So long as one stood on the dewy ground safe from the flames of the three worlds, so long as one stood before the grass hut, distinctions of wealth or poverty, high station or low, no longer uttered. All such considerations belonged to the dust of the world and could be swept away. The *samurai* had to set his two swords aside and commoners could sit in the grass hut as his equals. Such a spirit belonged to the Way of the Buddha, for whose sake one could reject such mundane considerations. Since differences of wealth and class belonged to the world outside, they had no place in the grass hut. The values of the ordinary world lost their currency.³³

Sen no Rikyū used many different tools to convey the world of transformation of human perception and human self from drinking tea. We will introduce different aspects brought or adapted by Rikyū into the realm of tea in different chapters of the thesis. We will examine the concept of *wabi* in chapter 2.5, the concept of *amae* in chapters 2.3 and 2.4, the spatial elements of *chanoyu* (especially *nijiriguchi*³⁴ and *roji*³⁵) in chapters 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, the relationship between the way of tea and Zen Buddhism in chapter 3.4.4.

Rikyū proposed a framework for the teaching, ideas and technique connected with *chanoyu*. Sen Sōshitsu XV writes:

The various artistic elements that compose tea, such as the tea house and garden, the utensils, and other appointments, must all conform to the spirit of *wabi* tea, for only in this way is it possible to achieve the particular significance of tea as a cultural system.³⁶

³³ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 173.

³⁴ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

³⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

³⁶ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 170-171.

In this way he provides us with a description of successful effort of Rikyū: the creation of a close linkage between all aspects of *chanoyu* enabled the creation of the way of tea as a cultural system.

X.5 The way of tea at modern age

Paul Varley, in his essay *Chanoyu from Genroku to Modern Times*, deals with the transformation of the role of *chanoyu* in the 18th and especially the late 19th century. He describes an important role of *chanoyu* in the *Meiji* Restoration period, in the context of massive “Westernization known as the movement for ‘civilization and enlightenment’ (*bunmei kanka*)”³⁷, which was characterized by the adoption of Western dress, system of government and, last but not least, by adoration of Western culture. In the context of *bunmei kanka*, many of traditional Japanese arts were left “by the wayside”. *Chanoyu* was able to survive this period due to *iemoto* system³⁸. *Iemoto* in that time „were not content simply to sustain their schools”³⁹ writes Varley, they also „sought in innovative ways to adopt *chanoyu* to the tastes of modern world”.⁴⁰ Among these efforts, we can count the use of Western utensils in *chanoyu* (e.g. use of special chairs and tables for tea-making procedures), introduction of *chanoyu* lessons into school curricula especially at women’s

³⁷ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 188.

³⁸ An explanation of *iemoto* system follows:

“*Iemoto* is a term and a title used in Japan which has as literal translation ‘house-origin’ but it is commonly understood that it means ‘founder’ or ‘grand master’ of a certain school of art. When it describes a person, than that person either founded the school or is currently the head and grand master of the school. It can also describe a system of familial generations in traditional Japanese arts like the tea ceremony. In Japan the *iemoto* system is characterized by a hierarchical structure within the school itself, guided by the supreme authority of the *Iemoto*.” in „*Iemoto Grand Master System*.” Japanese Tea Ceremony System of Familial Generations in Traditional Japanese Arts. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2014. <<http://japanese-tea-ceremony.net/iemoto.html>>.

An explanation of the possibility and rules of becoming *iemoto* and the name heritage in Urasenke school follows:

“The title of *Iemoto* in most cases is hereditary. It is commonly transmitted by direct line, or by adoption. There can only be one *iemoto* at a time, which sometimes leads to the creation of new ‘houses’ or ‘lines’. Since there can be only one *iemoto* at a time, splitting up in different houses is a common phenomenon when more than one son is born to an *Iemoto*. By tradition, the title of *iemoto* is passed down along with a hereditary name. In the Urasenke tradition of tea ceremony, the *Iemoto* carries the name *Sōshitsu*. This name comes from Sen *Sōshitsu* who was the son of Sen *Sōtan*, and the founder of the Urasenke school of tea.” in “*Iemoto Grand Master System*.” Japanese Tea Ceremony System of Familial Generations in Traditional Japanese Arts. N.p., n.d. Web. 24 Nov. 2014. <<http://japanese-tea-ceremony.net/iemoto.html>>.

³⁹ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 189.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*.

schools, thus transforming the domain of *chanoyu* from men's to women's pursuit.⁴¹ To illustrate another kind of transformation of the way of tea at the time of World War II, we recall the description of preparation of tea for *kamikaze* pilots before their suicide flights by Sen Sōshitsu XV:

In December 1943, however, Dr. Sen left *Dōshisha* [author's note: University] and joined the Japanese Navy, where he was assigned to pilot training in the Special Attack Unit. He was awaiting orders to fly a suicide mission when the war ended in August 1945. Dr. Sen has written poignantly about his service in the Special Attack Unit: 'Among the experiences I can never forget was the time I served tea during the war as a member of the Special Attack Unit of the naval air force. Since I was told that they wanted everyone to have a cup of tea before setting out on a mission, I performed *chanoyu* using my special box of tea utensils [author's note: probably *chabako* set]. All the pilots drank the tea I prepared, sitting cross-legged in their flight uniforms. Finishing with words of appreciation for the tea, many of the group departed on their mission. My comrades launched their attack the following day, and I thought that perhaps I might be obliged to do the same the day after.'⁴²

In this case using *chanoyu* as a way that reminds us of "extreme unction" or "farewell gift" can seem as a huge contrast with its possible understanding as a throwback of Japanese history. This case helps us realize that there is something both unique and universal in the phenomenon of the way of tea and that the most important milestones in the way of *chadō* were laid in order to emphasize this belief.

X.6 The way of tea in the present times

In the second part of the 20th century, hundreds of *chadō* study groups were established outside Japan. Nowadays there are thousands of followers of the way of tea all over the world. Sen Sōshitsu XV, the former Grand Master of Urasenke Tea School uses as the motto of his life effort "*Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea*" and tries to spread the spirit of *chanoyu* through the world.

The way of tea plays a very important role in diplomacy as well as is the peace development efforts. The way of tea serves as an intermediate in intercultural and

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. XI.

interreligious dialogue. We will deal with the matter of the way of tea and the way of mediation of peacefulness through a bowl of tea in chapter 3.5 and about the transformative aspects of the way of tea in whole chapter 3. Outside of Japan the way of tea is commonly connected with traditional Japanese ways (*dō*) as well as with Zen meditation. It is also broadly viewed through its very strict and austere rules and very precise technique that needs to be observed.⁴³ To the matter of technique and its possible understanding as a tool for liberation we will dedicate chapter 3.3.2.4.

⁴³ These observations should not be understood as any generalization. These are observations of the author of this thesis based on personal experience of examining the common understanding of this phenomenon (by people who do not practise The way of tea) from Japan, United States of America and several countries of central Europe.

1. Tea as a gift

1.1 Description of tea gathering: gift in the center of the gathering?

The question that can be asked here is that about the reason why we can connect the character of tea with the one of the gift⁴⁴ and why we can say that there is an act of giving in the core of tea gathering and the way of tea. We are therefore brought to briefly describe the flow of formal tea gathering and point out to fact that tea is understood as a gift.

A formal tea gathering (*chaji*), in the form which it was developed through the centuries until now, does not consist only of tea preparation and tea drinking, but is composed of many more steps. The duration of a *chaji* is approximately 4 hours and it begins with the entrance of guests into the garden, waiting in the waiting room (*machiai*), coming into tearoom, admiring the scroll and ash prepared by host in the hearth (fireplace; *rō* or *furo* depending on the season), eating a small meal prepared by the host, occasionally drinking sake, watching the host's preparation of charcoal for bringing the water to boil, admiring the garden and finally eating sweets before drinking tea. The first tea offered, a thick tea called *koicha*, is served to all guests in one tea bowl (a usual number of guests vary between two to five, but the number of invitations depends on the host and occasion), which is shared by all guests and given from one to another. The serving of this thick tea is followed by the serving of another kind of sweet and thin tea called *usucha*. In the case of *usucha* the host prepares a bowl of tea for each guest; the guests drink one by one, beginning with the first guest.

In the etiquette for the role of host and guest there are several operations that can uncover the presence of the gift in the core of the gathering. In the beginning there are various types of bows exchanged between the host and the guests and among the guests as well. When the host finishes the preparation of the tea in the case of *usucha*, the guest brings the tea and first places it in the space on *tatami*⁴⁵ (rice mats in the tea room, where the guests sit in *seiza* posture) between himself and next guest. He then bows and says „*Osaki ni*”, meaning: „I am sorry for drinking before you.” Next he places the bowl with

⁴⁴ Thinking only on the level of basic understanding to the word “gift” as something given voluntarily without payment in return, as possible contradictory to “receive” or “sell”.

⁴⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

tea in front of himself, facing the host with the deepest bow, saying “*Oteamae chodai itashimasu.*”, which means “Thank you for making tea.” After that he puts the bowl of tea on the left palm, raises the bowl in the air, and makes another bow, which serves as thanks to every dynamic and every person, who made this bowl of tea possible (expression of deepest thankfulness for everything and for the possibility of the moment happening here and now).

The bows are signs of respect, deep gratitude and thankfulness; words only accompany them so that the meaning can be made more concrete. The bowl of tea is treated as something very special, literally as a precious gift given by the host, who did his best to prepare it. The tea is also treated as a rare gift in the case of apologizing between guests. The first guest is honored to receive the gift before the second one and that is the reason why he feels the need to apologize for that. The apology is not a formal act that has to be done; it comes from the natural gratitude of being given something and natural thoughtfulness to the others’ feeling of the same gratitude for the gift.

In the center of the gathering tea is a very precious gift, which is being given, received and wished. We have described the phenomenon of gift in very abstract terms for now, as something, which is at the core of the gathering, something that is being given, received and wished, even something that serves as a medium which connects all actors of the gathering. If we want to be able to understand the role of the tea and the way of tea in peace development, we should be first able to understand the role of hospitality in the peace development and for that we should understand the relationship between hospitality and gift. And finally in the very beginning of this string for the purpose of the thesis there is the relationship between tea and gift and the common nature of both.

1.1.1 “*osaki ni*” and the ambiguity of the phrase

We have already mentioned the use of the phrase “*osaki ni*” above, but we have yet shown only one possible understanding of this phrase, which is almost omnipresent in the flow of the tea gathering. It is used mainly among the guests before eating sweets, drinking the tea, before having a look at displayed utensils used during tea preparation by the host, but also before leaving the room in certain situations and other similar occasions. All the situations are connected with one common point: the one who is using the phrase is taking

certain advantage: *e.g.* drinking before *the Other*⁴⁶, looking at utensils before another guest, leaving the room before *the Other*.

To show the ambiguity of this phrase, we have to examine its meaning. We can literally translate this Japanese phrase as “Forgive me for going before you.” or “I am sorry to drink before you.” The phrase “*osaki ni*” (お先に) is a shorter variant of phrase “*osaki ni shitsurei shimasu*”, which means literally: “I am sorry that I will do something before you.” The use of the phrase depends on the context. It is mainly used by a speaker, who feels that he is enjoying some advantage in comparison to *the Other* or others.

One of the common environments of use for this phrase is the work place. An employee who leaves an office while others are still working, says “*osaki ni shitsurei shimasu*” to express an apology for leaving the office before others, *i.e.*, to enjoy an advantage of not working any more before others. Its use in the conversation during a tea gathering has the same purpose, which is usually interpreted as an apology and probably a silent request for permission and understanding of *the Other*.

But what else are we saying while expressing “*osaki ni*”? What is very important to point out is the fact that the conversation during the tea gathering is prescribed in etiquette and has certain boundaries. The conversation is also limited by the actors, whose roles are also prescribed and sketched by “scenario” of the tea gathering. We can imagine several different images of the same scene.

- a) The host has just prepared the bowl of tea for the first guest. The first guest comes for the bowl and goes back to his place in the tea room. He places the bowl

⁴⁶ While using the concept of *the Other*, we refer mainly to understanding of Emmanuel Lévinas, who dedicated a large part of his work to the study of human other. “That encounter evinces a particular feature: the other impacts me unlike any worldly object or force. I can constitute the other person cognitively, on the basis of vision, as an alter ego. I can see that another human being is ‘like me’, acts like me, appears to be the master of her conscious life. That was Edmund Husserl’s basic phenomenological approach to constituting other people within a shared social universe. But Husserl’s constitution lacks, Lévinas argues, the core element of intersubjective life: the other person addresses me, calls to me. He does not even have to utter words in order for me to feel the summons implicit in his approach. It is this encounter that Lévinas describes and approaches from multiple perspectives (*e.g.*, internal and external). He will present it as fully as it is possible to introduce an affective event into everyday language without turning it into an intellectual theme. Beyond any other philosophical concerns, the fundamental intuition of Lévinas’s philosophy is the non-reciprocal relation of responsibility. In the mature thought this responsibility is transcendence *par excellence* and has a temporal dimension specific to it as human experience.” In Bergo, Bettina. “*Emmanuel Levinas*.” Stanford University. Stanford University, 23 July 2006. Web. 21 Dec. 2014. <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/levinas/>>.

of tea between himself and the second guest, bows and says: “*osaki ni*”. The second guest bows at the same time and stays silent. He accepts an apology from the first guest and feels gratitude for being the second one who drinks, because he feels the humility⁴⁷ in front of the *face*⁴⁸ of the first guest. The first guest feels the humility as well, his apology is genuine, but he is aware of his role in the tea gathering and understands the justice in the system of roles, because he knows that he can play also the role of second guest.

b) The beginning of the second image is the same, but at a certain point there is a difference: The first guest places the bowl of tea between himself and the second guest, bows and says: “*osaki ni*”. The second guest bows at the same time and stays silent. Suddenly the second guest becomes confused and blamed for the situation that happened. The first guest has already started to drink the tea, but the second guest is still thinking about the meaning of the phrase “*osaki ni*”. He tries to understand it, but he feels an injustice and a certain demonstration of power above himself. The second guest asks himself. *Why am I being pardoned? Is the apology genuine? Do you really mean it? Do you really feel the responsibility for me? Do you really care about how do I feel? Do you only play the role while thinking about your privilege or do you pay attention to me?* He will not get the answers, but he accepts his role and he tries to understand the privilege of *the Other*.

c) The last image we will provide is this one: the host has again just prepared the bowl of tea for the first guest. The first guest comes for the bowl and goes back to his place in the tea room. He places the bowl of tea between himself and the second

⁴⁷ An understanding of **humility** (humiliation) and its role in relationships has certain specifics in Japanese culture and society. The concept of humility is tightly connected with an understanding of politeness. The importance of humility in relationships can be illustrated, *i.e.*, in the phenomenon of compliments. Sanae Tsuda in her article *Contrasting Attitudes in Compliments: Humility in Japanese and Hyperbole in English* analyses the difference between Japanese and English way of creation of the compliments. She finds out that the construction of Japanese compliments is frequently based on the humiliation of the one, who makes a compliment. Humility is an important aspect of Japanese ethics and will be discussed later in the thesis, particularly in connection to the attitude of the way of tea follower as well as to the concept of considerateness and respectfulness. Footnote referred to: **Tsuda, Sanae**. “*Contrasting Attitudes in Compliments: Humility in Japanese and Hyperbole in English*.” *Intercultural Communication Studies* II.1 (1992): 137-46. Web. 10 Dec. 2014.

<<http://www.trinity.edu/org/ics/ICS%20Issues/02%20ICS%20II%201/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20p137%20Tsuda.pdf>>.

⁴⁸ Reference to the concept of *face* described by Emmanuel Lévinas. We will work with this concept and its connection to the way of tea and tea gathering more in depth in chapter 2.1.

guest, thinking for a short while of the proper expression, bows and says: “*osaki ni*”. The second guest bows at the same time and stays silent. The first guest begins to drink from the bowl, filled with gratitude to the host for the preparation of tea and also with gratitude for the possibility of sharing the occasion with the second guest. While drinking, the first guest feels thankfulness to the host and the second guest for giving him the privilege of being the first guest. However, he does not understand the privilege as the consequence of his merits, he understands it as a gift which is being given to him from the side of the host as much as from the side of the other guest. The second guest is supposed to feel filled with very similar feelings of gratitude and thankfulness to both actors and he understands the fact that someone is receiving the tea before himself as his greatest pleasure.

We have outlined three different scenarios of the possible interaction of guests, of their understanding of the phrase “*osaki ni*” during tea gathering considering the meaning and use of this phrase quite important for the comprehension of the phenomenon of gift as well as for that of the process of giving in the way of tea. This leads us to the examination of different social practices of giving. By describing and observing them, it would be possible to see an embodiment of these scenarios in some of them. We regard this excursion into different social practices of giving and into assorted and ambiguous understanding of the phenomenon of gift as a way to find its nature and qualities in the matter of the way of tea.

1.2 Examining the nature of the gift: Gift as a part of the ritual

In the previous section we mentioned that there is a gift in the center of the tea gathering. But what is the nature of this gift? Is it a “genuine” gift? What task has a matter of power in the tea gathering? How does the ritualized form of tea gathering influence the nature of the gift itself? What are the specifics of the gift in the case of a role playing of giving and receiving? What is the nature of the gift if the process of giving is prescribed and has clear rules? Is the phenomenon of giving and the nature of the gift in tea gathering similar to some of known social rituals in indigenous societies? What is the relationship between the gift and ritual? How does the form of ritual influence the nature of the gift? Those are the questions that we should ask to examine the nature of the gift in tea

gathering, its ambiguity and its possible understanding. We will refer mostly to fields of research in anthropology and philosophy.

1.2.1 Gift as a tool for the strengthening of social status

We will start with the description of the social role of the gift in indigenous societies provided by the work of Marcel Mauss, a French sociologist. Mauss dedicated part of his work to examining the gift exchange in different societies regarding its role in the social system. In the book, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*⁴⁹, he writes mainly about his research on societies in the geographical area of Polynesia, Melanesia, and Northwestern America.

Mauss writes about *potlatch*, the feast celebrated by native inhabitants of Northern America and some other indigenous people. *Potlatch* played, and still plays, a very important role in the social life of indigenous people (it was institutionalized by the American Indians of the Northwest Pacific coast). *Potlatch* reached its most elaborate development among the southern Kwakiutl from 1849 to 1925.⁵⁰ *Potlatch* is a very interesting example of “public giving”. However, at the first sight, it can remind us of the idea of philanthropy or even patronage, according to the results of research and common interpretation, however the roots and the aim of this feast are probably different.

Ceremonial formalities were observed in inviting guests, in speechmaking, and in the distribution of goods by the donor according to the social rank of the recipients. The size of the gatherings reflected the rank of the donor. Great feasts and generous hospitality accompanied the potlatch, and the efforts of the kin group of the host were exerted to maximize the generosity. The proceedings gave wide publicity to the social status of donor and recipients because there were many witnesses.⁵¹

Potlatch serves as a public demonstration of wealth and the generosity of the donor and organizer of the potlatch. The term generosity should be understood in this case only in terms of the huge amount of gifts and money spent for the *potlatch*. Very important for

⁴⁹ Mauss, Marcel, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. New York: Norton, 1967.

⁵⁰ The Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. “*Potlatch (North American Indian Custom)*.” Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Encyclopædia Britannica, n.d. Web. 01 Sept. 2014.

⁵¹ Ibid.

better understanding of the purpose of the *potlatch* is the fact that gifts are distributed according to the social rank of the recipients. This is the point, which certainly distinguishes the aim of *potlatch* from any charitable gathering and the position and intention of the donor from the one of Maecenas or *e.g.* charitable foundations in our society.

1.2.2 Gift as creation of debt

The gift is being given with the purpose of maintaining the social status of the donor, or is used as a “face-saving device by individuals who had suffered public embarrassment, or as a means of competition between rivals in social rank”.⁵² The gift is given in the expectation that it will be repaid. The gift acts as a precondition for debt; with the act of giving debt is being born. We can see this aspect also from the description from Franz Boas: “Every present received at a potlatch has to be returned at another potlatch, and a man who would not give his feast in due time would be considered as not paying his debts.”⁵³

1.2.3 Gifts which have to be returned

The title of the subchapter was borrowed from Mauss’ first chapter in the book *The Gift: Gifts and the obligation to return gifts*. Mauss writes of the important discoveries made by his friend R. Hertz about the Maori practice that concerns the description of the belief in a specific spirit of the things (*hau*) connected with its original owner:

I shall tell you about *hau*. *Hau* is not the wind. Not at all. Suppose you have some particular object, *taonga*, and you give it to me; you give it to me without a price. We do not bargain over it. Now I give this thing to a third person who, after a time decides to give me something in repayment for it (*utu*), and he makes me a present of something (*taonga*). Now this *taonga* I received from him is the spirit (*hau*) of the *taonga* I received from you and which I passed on to him. The *taonga* which I receive on account of the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Boas, Franz. Popular Science Monthly/ Volume 32/ March 1888/ *The Indians of British Columbia* - Wikisource, the Free Online Library. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Sept. 2014.

taonga that came from you, I must return to you. It would not be right on my part to keep these *taonga* whether they were desirable or not. I must give them to you since they are the *hau* of the *taonga* which you gave me. If I were to keep this second *taonga* for myself, I might become ill or even die.⁵⁴

From this example we can see an understanding of the gift as something that is given just for the sake of receiving its equivalent in return. The belief in the spirit of the things even fortifies this understanding. There is a non-written law of returning gifts: if the gift is abused or given to another person and being reciprocated, it is even matter of life and death to return „the reward” to the original creator of the need to give back, to the donor. The gift in this understanding is the *medium* of power.

By analyzing the practice and meaning of giving in archaic societies, Mauss comes to the conclusion that gift permeates all aspects of society. The gift, as Mauss sees it, is more than a simple commodity or memento changing hands - it is a “total prestation“ (*préstation totale*), which metonymically (as part for whole) stands for every aspect of the society it is part of. **The gift is economic, political, kinship-oriented, legal, mythological, religious, magical, practical, personal and social.** By moving such an object through the social landscape, the gift-giver so to speak rearranges the fabric of sociality - and it is this that forms the basis of the gift's power.⁵⁵

1.2.4 Gift as a bribe

Another possible understanding of the gift is the one considering it as payment of a certain kind: as a bribe for peace or goodwill. Ceremonies of many indigenous peoples held to satisfy gods or potentially powerful spirits illustrate this idea. Mauss cites Van Ossenbruggen's discovery that for these people, “gifts to men and to gods have the further aim of buying peace”⁵⁶. In this case, however, the gift to gods or to men can look like a

⁵⁴ Mauss, Marcel, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. New York: Norton, 1967.

⁵⁵ “Mauss, Marcel - AnthroBase - Dictionary of Anthropology: A Searchable Database of Anthropological Texts. “ Mauss, Marcel - AnthroBase - Dictionary of Anthropology: A Searchable Database of Anthropological Texts. N.p., n.d. Web. 31 Aug. 2014. <http://www.anthrobase.com/Dic/eng/pers/mauss_marcel.htm>.

⁵⁶ Mauss, Marcel, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. New York: Norton, 1967.

sacrifice; it has much more the character of the bribe - a bribe given to the gods to keep or re-establish peaceful relationship to them.

In the case of this use of gift, beside mentioning only indigenous people's practices, we can count pagan feasts and even current religion feasts often connected with saints, regional patrons or martyrs, to whom gifts are brought as a sacrifice, for example in the form of vegetables, fruits, meat, traditional meals, but also precious handcrafted objects, materials etc. The Feast of Saint George, which is celebrated by Palestinian Christians and Muslims, serves as an example: "To get good harvests farmers go to St George's Church in *Al Khader* where they make religious vows and give gifts. In the courtyard by the church, Muslim pilgrims sacrifice sheep in honor of *Al Khader* (St George)." ⁵⁷

In the case of the use of a gift as a sacrifice that takes the form of a bribe, we deal with a kind of "barter", but somehow with an unbalanced one. In the case of trading with gods, usually a small gift is given in exchange for a big one; *i.e.*, man gives a small one and waits for a big one in return: peace, goodwill, or a rich harvest. The gods are partners in quite a non-convenient situation: "for the gods who give and repay are there to give something great in exchange for something small." ⁵⁸ In this form, the gift or sacrifice becomes cunning, which according to Theodor Adorno is one of the roots of our society: "Cunning is nothing other than the subjective continuation of the objective untruth of sacrifice, which it supersedes." ⁵⁹ The sacrifice of one used for re-establishment of the relationship with the gods, god becomes cunning in the moment when the pure belief of the meaning of sacrifice as a gift to the gods (however it is bribable) disappears.

1.2.5 Gift as stimulation and commitment

The Bible is a very rich source in which we can examine the nature and the possible meaning of the gift. We will find many ways to express the very characteristic of

⁵⁷ "St George the Palestinian Hero – My Telegraph." Iqbal_tamimi. Telegraph.co.uk, 08 June 2007. Web. 01 Sept. 2014.
<http://my.telegraph.co.uk/iqbal_tamimi/iqbal_tamimi/3834571/St_George_the_Palestinian_Hero_>.

⁵⁸ Mauss, Marcel, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. New York: Norton, 1967.

⁵⁹ Horkheimer, Max, Theodor W. Adorno, and Gunzelin Schmid Noerr. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2002. Print. P. 41

the gift. As we read in *Genesis*, and more precisely in the story of Isaac and the wells, Isaac says: “Because the Lord hath now made us room, we shall increase upon the earth.” (1599 Geneva Bible. Gen. 26:22)⁶⁰. Czech translators used the word “give”⁶¹ while describing the fact of God in that story. The well is understood as a gift by Isaac, but not as a gift from the Father simply issued (just from His mercy), but as a gift with a concrete purpose. The good, calm and peaceful situation that accompanied digging the well is understood by Isaac as a gift from God, which has one very urgent and clear purpose - to let humanity proliferate. The gift in this story is a sign of the promise of future events, but also a kind of stimulation and commitment - the people received the gift, which means they should (it is the commitment from God) multiply and thus transform the gift from God in their reciprocal gift.

1.2.5.1 Distinction between Gift as debt and Gift as commitment

We have already mentioned the use of the gift as a foundation stone of the creation of debt in the case of *potlatch*. Isaac accepts the gift from God as commitment, for Isaac a debt is born by the act of being given. Isaac senses the debt and sees its source in God’s gift to him. The crucial question for our distinction is: what can this story teach about the character and purpose of God’s gift? But any answer we may give, it cannot respond to this question. It may respond only to the question: how does Isaac understand the gift from God? How is Isaac receiving that gift? **Isaac receives the gift as commitment and not as a gift; Isaac projects his connotations onto God’s gift.**

As for the *potlatch* gathering, the gift is first a debt – in the case of the participants of *potlatch* because of the traditional system of social relations and ranking based on gift exchange. In the case of Isaac, because of the rupture between the human possibilities of understanding the will and the action of God (the *Otherness*) and the inconceivable possibilities and qualities of the *Other*. Other factors could be also the common

⁶⁰ 1599 Geneva Bible: *The Holy Scriptures Contained in the Old and New Testaments*. White Hall, W. Va.: Tolle Lege, 2006.

⁶¹ See the use of verb “to give” in Czech translation of Genesis 26:22: „Přesunul se tedy odtud dál a vykopal další studnu. O tu se už nehádali, a tak ji nazval Rechobot, Prostranství. Řekl totiž: „Teď nám Hospodin daroval prostor, abychom se rozplodili na zemi.“
in ”Flek, Alexandr, Jiří Hedánek, Pavel Hoffman, and Zdeněk Sýkora. *Bible: Překlad 21. Století*. Praha: Biblion, 2009.

understanding of the role of gift in society of that time and by understanding the communication with God as a string of situations based on the model of cause and effect.

1.2.6 Gift as sacrifice

We have already mentioned the connection between gift and sacrifice while considering the gift as a payment for peace (as a bribe). In this regard, we understand the sacrifice as cunning: first as an exchange of something small for something big (given by the gods) and second, while thinking with Adorno about Odysseus and our society as an actor of the “sacrifice for the sake of sacrifice itself,” but yet with no existence of belief in its reasoning.

We can also find different relationships between the gift and the sacrifice, or consider the form(s) of gift that involve(s) some aspects of sacrifice in itself. An example can be found in the New Testament, notably in the narration concerning the Son of God provided in John, 3:16: “For God so loveth the world, that he hath given his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Are the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to be considered a sacrifice in the purpose of establishing the possibility of a new relationship with God? Or a gift of new life for humans? Another verse, written again by the Apostle John, could be seen as opening different possibilities of explanation: “For God sent not his Son into the world, that he should condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” (John, 3:17) From the perspective of these words we can look at the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ not as at a sacrifice but rather as at a gift.

1.3 Possibility of the gift: Gift and the impossible in Derrida’s conception

Jacques Derrida, in his text *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*, writes on the “double bind” of the gift, whose core is in the *impossibility* of conditions which could provide its existence, *i.e.*, the “genuine gift” can exist only in the case when it remains

unrecognized as a gift both by donor and donee.⁶² Derrida goes even further when he states:

For there to be gift, not only must the donor or donee not perceive or receive the gift as such, have no consciousness of it, no memory, no recognition; he or she must also forget it right away (...) and moreover this forgetting must be so radical that it exceeds even the psychoanalytical categoriality of forgetting.⁶³

Derrida thinks about absolute forgetting, and he assimilates this idea to his other concepts: one of the trace and cinders. Even though the forgetting is absolute, it is not *nothing*. There is always *trace* (even though it has been permanently erasing itself), “cinders there are”⁶⁴, always remaining, however their source is not there, it still exists, still whispers through cinders. We probably do not need to go deeper into Derrida’s terms, but we should ask: Why does Derrida see genuine gift as something impossible? Why does Derrida assimilate the nature of the true gift with the nature of his concepts of *trace* or *cinders*? Is the nature of the gift its transience?

1.3.1 Isaac’s and Derrida’s understanding of the gift

Would it be possible to conceive the nature of gift as different than Derrida suggests? What if the genuine gift was possible and totally consistent with the act of giving and receiving? We have chosen two examples of understanding the gift, its nature and meaning: 1) the story of Isaac in *Genesis* with his understanding of the gift as „gift with purpose”, „gift as commitment” and 2) Derrida’s understanding of genuine gift as something impossible with nature of trace or cinders characterized by its *impossibility* and connected with absolute forgetting.

The problem of the first understanding of the gift lies in thinking of gift as commitment. It lies directly in thinking of gift in terms of exchange, giving back and

⁶² See the extract: “But such displacement does not affect the paradox with which we are struggling, namely, the impossibility or the double bind of the gift: For there to be a gift, it is necessary that the gift not even appear, that it not be perceived or received as gift.” In Derrida, Jacques, and Peggy Kamuf. *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*. N.p.: U of Chicago, 1992. Page, 16.

⁶³ Derrida, Jacques, and Peggy Kamuf. *Given Time: 1. Counterfeit Money*. N.p.: U of Chicago, 1992. Page, 16.

⁶⁴ Derrida, Jacques, and Ned Lukacher. *Cinders*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska, 1991.

fulfilling the commitment. In Isaac's case we think of a gift from God. We should ask here: what nature has God's gift? Is it something whose purpose and fulfilment are delayed on time? Is it something that brings commitment in itself and silently makes us to understand it like this? Or is it possible to understand the gift in the story of Genesis as a gift from the mercy and infinite love that is given to us just as it is; without any purpose, any commitment, any expectations on us, just unconditionally given? This reasoning takes us again to a consideration of gift as a purposeless phenomenon. Purposeless in the terms in which Kant understood art. The idea of purposeless in case of giving leads us to think of some similarities between the nature of gift and that of art. **If the only purpose of the gift is just gift in itself, i.e., the act of giving and the act of receiving the gift, the gift can be a medium for liberation.**

If the gift is purposeless in itself, it can be a medium for the communication of different values and it is capable to relieve us from the common logic of cause and effect. It can be the medium of a liberation from all expectations that we put on others as well as on ourselves. If the gift has a character of medium, could it serve as a space of encounter with *the Other*?

1.4 The *invisibility* of the gift

In the New, as well as in Old Testament, we read dozens of examples of gift giving, mostly connected with the showing of hospitality and love of neighbours. Giving tithes and collecting money for people in need, for the work of church, and charities is a common practice for churches of all denominations. What is notable for us is the recommended way of giving of gifts. We read in Mathew's gospel:

Take heed that ye give not your alms before men, to be seen of them, or else I shall have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou givest thine alms, thou shalt not make a trumpet to be blown before thee, as the hypocrites do in the Synagogues and in the streets, to be praised of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father that seeth in secret, he will reward thee openly. (Mt. 6:1-4)

In the Gospels, the figure of Jesus invites to shift our thinking about a gift from the gift itself (its value, its purpose, receiver) to the process of giving. He does not stress out the value of the gift, but the way in which it is being given. The highest importance is given to the *invisibility of the gift*.

The “true gift” should be invisible. But invisible for whom? Here we can remember Derrida’s concept of *impossibility of the gift*, but only with purpose to show the difference between these two approaches. Derrida writes about the *impossibility* of the gift; or better about its possibility only in the condition of totally forgetting its existence from the side of the donor and donee. The *impossibility* of the gift for Derrida lies in the possibility of its repair.

The Bible does not explicitly speak about the *invisibility* of the gift, but we will try to introduce this concept as a tool to understand what is described in this text. As a feature of the “true gift”, *invisibility* is connected with the audience of the gift giving, not with the participants of the process of giving itself. The gift that Jesus talks about is invisible to others, is silent, do not have to be known by others, published or commented in public. Thus we can deduct that the existence of the “true gift” does not rely on the recognition of anyone. **The gift spreads out of a relationship. Gift arises in the relationship between donor and donee in the process of giving.**

1.4.1 *Invisibility* in the way of tea (*invisibility* of „the men of tea” and *invisibility* of the host)

The quality of *invisibility* is thus in Jesus words not valid only for the gift, but also for the donor, as it is said: “Take heed that ye give not your alms before men to be seen of them, or else ye shall have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.” (Mt.6:1) In this case, neither gift nor the donor is to be seen by anyone. What is important is the donee, who is being helped, who is receiving the gift. From our perspective, the idea of *invisibility* is also present in the way of tea, and in the texts related to it.

One of the twelve precepts, which Takeno Jōō left for his disciples to clarify, was the mental attitude for the proper performance of *wabi* tea: **“Men of tea especially hate to**

be seen as such.”⁶⁵ What does this precept mean and why do we put it into the context of the *invisibility* of the donor in Matthew’s Gospel? We can ask the first question: Why does the man of tea hate to be seen as such? Doesn’t he want to be recognized? Does he want to hide himself? Is he ashamed for his devotion to the way of tea? Or what problem could he have with the fact that somebody sees himself as a man of tea? We suggest to look for the possible answer in another concept that was connected with the creation of *wabi* style of tea. This is the concept of “spirit of the beginner”⁶⁶. “Spirit of the beginner” is understood as the desired inner attitude of the student (man) of the way of tea. It contains an awareness of oneself, lack of knowledge and skill in the matter of tea, respect to all followers of the way of tea regardless their experience or “expertise”.

“Spirit of the beginner” is understood as the desired inner attitude of the student (man) of the way of tea. It contains an awareness of oneself, lack of knowledge and skill in the matter of tea, respect to all followers of the way of tea regardless of their experience or “expertise”. The “spirit of the beginner” also means an awareness of no concrete goal in the way of tea, nor possible mastering of the body of knowledge of all procedures, perfect performance of movements, or certified way of satisfying the guests. Thus, more important than becoming “the specialist” in the field of the way of tea is the means to efface, diminish oneself, and to show the respect to the knowledge and skills of the others. **Thus the *invisibility* or literally “the hate to be seen as such” can have its roots in the inner conviction of the need of elevating the knowledge and skills of others and humiliating one’s own.**

For a better explanation, the man of tea can hate to be seen as such, because he does not see himself as such and he feels embarrassment and inappropriateness when someone is recognizing him or naming him as such. This idea leads us back to our concept of *invisibility*: The man of tea, the practitioner of the way of tea, wants to be invisible. This should be his inner attitude, that can become visible for the others in the situation of facing real recognition or designation.

Apart from the *invisibility* of the men of tea, there is another aspect of *chanoyu* which deals with *invisibility* - “the *invisibility* of the host”, his work with the preparation of

⁶⁵ Takeno Jōō, *Jōō Montei e no Hatto*, in CKZ, vol. 3, p. 50. in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 155.

⁶⁶ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 133.

the tea gathering, and of every single detail that could be appreciated by guests. The host behaves in a way where he tries to minimize any possible disturbing effect on the guests and the flow of the gathering.

Thus we can describe host's effort not only to be invisible (even though being in the presence of guests and being seen by them), but also inaudible during preparations and during the time he is not in the tea room with his guests (the maximalization of remaining quiet as the host and not disturbing the guest by any noise is a matter of course). The host's *invisibility* can remind us of the scene of traditional Japanese puppet theater called *Bunraku*, where usually three manipulators dressed in black on a stage play with half life-sized puppets. The main focus is only on the dolls (puppets); the manipulators are made invisible by black dress and should be also perceived as invisible by the audience.⁶⁷

1.5 Un(re)payable gift

We read several times in the Bible about the difference between human and God's way of thinking, judging and rewarding as well as about the differences in terms of possibility and *impossibility*⁶⁸. We are told that with God all things are possible, that there is a difference between the nature of possibility on the level of "earth and heaven". While thinking about Derrida's conception of the *impossibility* of the gift, we also have to deal with the un(re)payability of the gift. How to be sure that there will be no repay? If we want to make a really generous gift and we do not want to get any repay for it, is there any option for us? Apostle Luke writes about Jesus showing the way to the man who invited him:

He said also to the man who had invited him, „When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. **But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.** (Luk. 14:12-14)

⁶⁷ The aspect of *invisibility* in the way of tea will be discussed further in the chapter 3.2.3.

⁶⁸ See: "And when his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? And Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Mt. 19:25-26)

The reward in the form of blessing is being stressed out in Jesus' quote. If the gift that is given in expectation to be repaid is really repaid on earth, it is not the same one that would be "repaid" in the kingdom of God. But, according to the words of Jesus, the gift that cannot be repaid (and, we can add, is given only to be given, with knowledge that it will not be repaid, with no expectation to be repaid) it's the one which is worth to be repaid at the resurrection of the just. The promise of the repay of resurrection, thus makes a big difference in understanding of the possible repay for gift giving, because this one is the matter of faith and we it is useless for us to compare it with the practice of use of gift for social exchange.

There is obvious asymmetry in repaying in this case. "That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father that seeth in secret, he will reward thee openly." (Mt. 6:4) If we wanted to sketch an equation for the gift and its repay, it could probably look like as follows:

Visible gift in the earth = reward in the earth + no reward in the heaven

Invisible gift in the earth = reward in the heaven + no reward in the earth

This unreasonable equation reminds us the matter of cunning. Is the only option for an existence of the genuine gift the total forgetting of even the possibility of existence of equation as mentioned? Which kind of repay does Derrida think about when stating that there cannot be a genuine gift? Does he also include „the level" of heavenly repay?

1.6 Ambiguity of the gift in tea gathering

What we can see in the case of tea gathering is a phenomenon that can be perceived as paradoxical one. We brought an idea that in the core of the tea gathering is a gift. As far as we do not find any apparent resemblance between the nature of the gift in tea gathering and any of those understandings of gift described in an excursion into ritualized forms of giving, we should look for the nature and characteristics of the gift in our matter. Where do we find the main difference between aforementioned forms of giving and that one in the way of tea? The main difference, according to our understanding lies in social impact and social anchor of different practices of giving. One can argue that the situation which occurs

in the case of tea gathering is similar *e.g.* to that one of potlatch gathering in terms that one must give and *the Other* must receive. The first difference, however arises immediately: in case of potlatch one is obliged to give back, to repay the gift. There is not any similar obligation in the case of tea gathering.

But there is one substantial difference that significantly differs described giving practices from that one we can observe and experience in the way of tea. It is the fact that in case of potlatch, sacrificial gifts or other practices of giving in archaic societies which can be described by the words as exchange, bribe, small gift for the big one, a gift that needs to be repaid etc., the way of giving and the nature of giving is the reflection of common social understanding of the gift. The way of giving and the way of understanding the phenomenon of gift represents common practices of organization of certain societies. **Respectively, the practice of giving serves as a reflection of the social order, values and relationships.** Thus, we suppose, these ritual practices of giving has to be understood as a part of social life and should be conceptualized in the context of a broader understanding of the functioning of societies where these practices appear.

On the other hand the way of tea is established as a system which can be described and understood as a utopia of a certain kind. The way of tea is thus largely independent of the order of society and social relationships and practices, because it can work as a self-sufficient system. **Therefore, we will try to substantiate that even though the way of tea can work as and can be perceived as a closed system, it can serve as a tool for transformation of practices and relationships in society.** Even though it can be seen as the realm of utopia, it is capable to influence and change our experience of the world which is perceived as the real one. To put this statement in the context of the mentioned practices of giving, we suggest that it is possible to transform the social practice of giving and the understanding of the matter of the gift using the reflection of an existing practice of giving and nature of the gift by the one present in the way of tea. In the next chapters we will try to examine the crucial role of the gift in this transformational process. In the beginning of our journey we can propose several initial questions that should be taken into consideration: Which are the motives for the gift giving in the tea gathering? How does the way of giving and receiving look like; *i.e.*, how does the process of giving look like? Is there any possibility to repay the gift? What is the relationship between the gift and liberation? Does the gift serve as a medium in the tea gathering?

1.6.1 The process of giving in the way of tea

Let us again stress that the process of giving and receiving in term of tea gathering is structured into details; if we think about the visible part of giving in this phenomenon. At the first sight (in the position of observer of tea gathering) there is a side of giving and the side of receiving. On one side there is a host (his helper called *hantō*, and possibly other helpers who are not directly visible during *chaji*) who plays the role of donor. On the other side there is a guest or guests who play a role of receivers. The host is giving refreshment, sweets and tea, but also his highest effort to satisfy all possible need of his guests. He tunes the atmosphere of the whole gathering by choosing proper utensils, scroll, flowers, sweets etc. And in this regard, he takes full responsibility for the whole gathering. If the guest is not satisfied, it can be considered as his fault. And in this regard the **host is giving the promise of the phenomenon that could be perceived by the guests as pleasant, satisfying and that could be perceived as a gift**. This is the reason why we can understand the whole effort of the host as a gift, despite the fact that the visible “proofs” of the gift during the tea gathering can be liken only to “the tip of the iceberg” and **only as a partial source in the understanding of the nature of tea as a gift**.

On the other side of the “playing-field” the observer can see the guests, who appreciate receiving. They are expressing gratitude to the host, respectfulness to other guests by bows, apologizes, showing appreciation and thanks. But is the image of “playing-field” which can possibly arise in the mind of the observer really valid for our phenomenon? If we believe so, how can we understand, *e.g.* the statement of Sen Sōshitsu XV that the way of tea is a beautiful way how to find yourself in the presence of others.⁶⁹

1.6.2 Considerateness and respectfulness: Minimizing the inconvenience and maximizing the satisfaction

The fact that the run of tea gathering is based on the system of role playing, is crucial to be able to look for a possible solution of this paradox. The roles of host and guest cannot exist alone. They are interdependent. We can use the concept of *amae*, which we

⁶⁹ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *Tea Life, Tea Mind*. New York: Published for the Urasenke Foundation, Kyoto Weatherhill, 1979.

have already tried to describe. The interdependency, unconditional love and responsibility for *the Other* can depict also the relationship between the host and guest. How? Both host and guest try to think and act in the purpose of minimizing the inconvenience for *the Other* and maximizing the satisfaction of *the Other*. In this, a responsibility is implicitly included, as much as we can presume love for the other and elevation of the *face* of *the Other*.⁷⁰ Thus the realization of the process of giving depends on the host as much as on the guest. **The gift is rooted in the relationship.**

Another question that arises is that of the possibility to repay the gift. We have dedicated a paragraph to Derrida's thoughts on this subject and we have shown an peculiar understanding of the relationship between the gift and the repay (reward) in the Bible. How would it work in the case of the tea gathering? In the planned scenario of the process of the tea gathering does not seem to be any space for repaying.⁷¹ There is a range of different expressions of thank for sweets, tea etc. that can be broadly understood as specific ways to thanks the host. But in the prescriptions of roles there is not any about the need to repay in the materialist sense. But considering the phenomenon as a whole, the tea gathering is nothing else but repay: ongoing interaction between host and guest and among guests, respectfulness and responsibility, everything in here is about repay in the sense of „You are respectful to me, I will try to be as much respectful as I can to you to repay you your respect, love and responsibility for me.”

Should we consider the possibility to repay as a characteristic that shows us that “this is not a genuine gift”? The possibility of repay is also present in the Lévinasian concept of *face*. Even though Lévinas states that there is an assumption of the *asymmetrical reciprocity* in case of responsibility for *the Other*, the possibility that *the Other* will also take responsibility for me is present. Even though my motivation to take responsibility for *the Other* is not the idea of repaying (as a reward for my „goodness”), it does not change the fact that the possibility that the repair will come in any form is still there. But does this virtual potentiality affect the nature of the gift?

⁷⁰ Lévinas, Emmanuel, and Philippe Nemo. *Ethics and Infinity*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1985.

⁷¹ Though common practise of organizing *chaji* or *chakai* consist of giving gifts to the host; usually considerable amount of money or special presents.

2. Gift and hospitality

The process by which humans relate to one another and deepen their bonds is the catalyst from which 'culture' has emerged and been nurtured. So, if culture is born when humans engage with one another, an attitude of considerateness toward others must be at work at its foundations. (...)As it put forward in this line included in Rikyu's Seven Precepts, 'Act with utmost consideration to your fellow guests' the attitude of showing concern for the other person is also indispensable in *chanoyu*, such as the attitude of compromise, of sharing and understanding, and of being openhearted to each other are rooted in well-manneredness.⁷²

The pretext for this chapter, written by *Iemoto Zabōsai Sen Sōshitsu XVI*, can work as opening text for thinking about connection between *chadō (chanoyu)*, hospitality and peace activity. Sen Sōshitsu XVI tries to find the foundation of culture and he finds it in human relationships. When he writes: "The process by which humans relate to one another and deepen their bonds is the catalyst from which 'culture' has emerged and been nurtured." He sees the beginning, the precondition for the existence of something as 'culture' is the need or want of humans to engage with one another. And he points out to a very interesting fact: if the culture is founded on the base of human relations, „an attitude of considerateness toward others must be at work at its foundations". He sees considerateness as a natural quality, which is essential for human culture. This attitude is not obvious or universal. We can name theories and ideologies, where considerateness does not play a key role in the sustainability of society. To make example we can name Marxism or Capitalism. Even though fore mentioned examples are from the political sphere, they have great influence on the nature of thinking of humans living in the society where they occupy a position of predominant ideology. In case of both of them, there is an element of struggle or competition, in which the "fair play" attitude can be legitimately replaced with another one that reminds us the principle of "the end justifies the means".

While considering considerateness towards others as natural and essential quality for existence of our society (and our culture), the element of hospitality comes as its faithful companion. Because what else is hospitality than the expression of respect and love that comes from the attitude of considerateness and respectfulness? And as we can see

⁷² Sen, Sōshitsu, XVI. "The Foundation of Culture." Urasenke Newsletter 129 (1 July 2014): 1. Print.

from many writings about *chadō* and *chanoyu*, hospitality is at its heart. Sen Sōshitsu XVI cites Sen no Rikyū:

As it put forward in this line included in Rikyū's Seven Precepts, 'Act with utmost consideration to your fellow guests' the attitude of showing concern for the other person is also indispensable in *chanoyu*, such as the attitude of compromise, of sharing and understanding, and of being openhearted to each other are rooted in well-manneredness.

Hospitality, which is obvious even from the view of the observer of the tea gathering, contains all written by Sen no Rikyū: showing concern for the guests as well as showing "the attitude of compromise, of sharing and understanding", not finally it contains also the attitude of openheartedness and tolerance. The tea serves as an object, where the hospitality (and all its contents) can be fully expressed. This formulation is not precise, we should correct it: **The tea serves as a space, where the hospitality can be fully expressed, tea serves as a gift.**

In terms of the possible foundations of culture, which Sen Sōshitsu XVI looks for in his article, there is very short way between hospitality and peace (peace development) efforts. We are constantly led back to the idea of considerateness toward others in foundations of culture. When we admit this nature of our society, whose state of things would be "normal", natural one? The answer can be deduced from aforementioned sentences: the respectful one, *i.e.*, the peaceful one. In case of *chadō* and more specifically in performing *chanoyu*, during an attending tea gathering, seeking for peace is not only an idea (as well in Plato's understanding), but it becomes an inner attitude.

All the guests enter the tea room through very low door, where they have to sit in *seiza* position and come into the room crawling into on their knees⁷³. Since this moment all the differences in social status, wealth, hierarchical relations have been erased. In the space of tea room all the actors are expected to be respectful to each other and to put one owns needs not on the first, but on the last place. A very detailed system of different types of bows as well as common use of apologies points out to the fact that the quality of respectfulness and considerateness to *the Other* is at the very core of the tea gathering. It shows that these qualities were the preconditions for the creation of the way of tea as a complex cultural, but also ethical system.

⁷³ See the interpretation of this phenomenon from the point of view of spatial semiotics in chapter 3.1.3.

2.1 Responsibility for *the Other*: The Face and responsibility; Identity based on the responsibility for *the Other*

Sen Sōshitsu writes about considerateness and respectful among humans as about the foundation of relationships and culture. Lévinas finds the precondition of all human relations in seeing the magnificence of the *face of the Other*. According to Lévinas in the *face of the Other* there is a commandment, there is a request for myself to humiliate, to serve and to be obliged in everything for *the Other*. The extract from the conversation between Emmanuel Lévinas and Phillippe Nemo will show us the way of Lévinasian thinking.

Ph.N.: In the face of *the Other* you say there is an 'elevation', a 'height'. *The Other* is higher than I am. What do you mean by that?

E.L. The first word of the face is the 'Thou shalt not kill.' It is an order. There is a commandment in the appearance of the face, as if a master spoke to me. However, at the same time, the face of *the Other* is destitute; it is the poor for whom I can do all and to whom I owe all And me, whoever I may be, but as a 'first person,' I am he who finds the resources to respond to the call.

Ph.N.: One is tempted to say to you: yes, in certain cases. But in other cases, to the contrary, the encounter with *the Other* occurs in the mode of violence, hate and disdain.

E.L.: To be sure. But I think that whatever the motivation which explains this inversion, the analysis of the face such as I have just made, with the mastery of *the Other* and his poverty, with my submission and my wealth, is primary. It is presupposed in all human relationships. If it were not that, we would not even say, before an open door, 'After you, sir!' It is an original 'After you, sir!' that I have tried to describe. (...) ⁷⁴

For Lévinas there is also responsibility, which arises from recognition of the *face of the Other*. Responsibility is understood by Lévinas as the basic structure of subjectivity of human; when the existence of subjectivity is possible only in relation to *the Other*, subjectivity is born only in relation to *the Other*. Lévinas emphasizes ***asymmetrical reciprocity*** in the case of the responsibility. I am the one who is responsible for *the Other*

⁷⁴ Lévinas, Emmanuel, and Philippe Nemo. *Ethics and Infinity*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1985. Print. P. 89.

while recognizing his face. I am the one who is capable to die for *the Other*, but I act in this way without waiting for any reciprocity from *the Other*.

Ph.N.: But is not *the Other* also responsible in my regard?

E.L.: Perhaps, but that is his affair. One of the fundamental themes of Totality and Infinity about which we have not yet spoken is that the intersubjective relation is a non-symmetrical relation. In this sense, I am responsible for *the Other* without waiting for reciprocity, were I to die for it. Reciprocity is his affair. It is precisely insofar as the relationship between *the Other* and me is not reciprocal that I am subjected to *the Other*; and I am „subject“ essentially in this sense. It is I who support all. You know that sentence in Dostoyevsky: ‘We are all guilty of all and for all men before all, and I more than the others.’ This is not owing to such or such a guilt which is really mine, or to offenses that I would have committed; but because I am responsible for a total responsibility, which answers to all the others and for all of the others, even for their responsibility. Then I always have one responsibility more than all the others.⁷⁵

“Reciprocity is his affair.” Resonate Lévinasian words. I am the one who carries the highest responsibility for *the Other*. And the situation is the same for every “I”. Lévinas also writes about substitutability in this responsibility. As far as I am irreplaceable in my responsibility for *the Other*, as much I am unique in my subjectivity. According to Lévinas substitutability in responsibility is what makes one’s identity:

My responsibility is untransferable. No one could replace me. In fact, it is a matter of saying the very identity of the human I starting from responsibility, that is, starting from this position or deposition of the sovereign I in self-consciousness, a deposition which is precisely its responsibility for *the Other*. Responsibility is what is incumbent on me exclusively, and what, humanly, I cannot refuse. This charge is a supreme dignity of the unique. I am I in the sole measure that I am responsible, a non-interchangeable I. I can substitute myself for everyone, but no one can substitute himself for me. Such is my inalienable identity of subject.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Ibid. P. 98.

⁷⁶ Ibid. P. 100.

2.2 Derrida's *impossibility of the Gift* and Lévinasian *asymmetrical reciprocity*

Derrida writes about the *impossibility* of the genuine gift. His argument for the possible denial of existence of the gift (of the existence of anything that can be understood as a gift) is the existence of reciprocity. Even expressing thankfulness for the gift, free wish to give back or the feeling of the need to pay back etc. is for Derrida creation of the relationship of reciprocity. Lévinasian statement on the responsibility of "I" to every *Other* and his idea of *asymmetrical reciprocity* opens a new field for understanding of reciprocity in relation to gift and giving and gives us also an argument against Derrida's understanding the gift as impossible. Lévinas emphasizes *asymmetrical reciprocity* in the case of the responsibility. I am the one who is responsible for *the Other* while recognizing his *face*. I am the one who is capable to die for *the Other*, but I act in this way without waiting for any reciprocity from *the Other*. As Lévinas states: "Reciprocity is his affair." I am the one who carries the highest responsibility for *the Other*. And the situation is the same for every "I".

We can imagine the gift as a kind of medium in literal meaning, *i.e.*, something *between*. On one side there is a donor, on the other is donee; on one side there is "I", on the other side there is *the Other*. Lévinas shows us that we do not have to see the situation of giving from the point of view of "objective narrator", from above, from a distance. We can rather see it from the point of view of each of the actors of the act of giving. If the donor gives the gift from the position of humiliated, serving one, he gives it without any expectations of returning in any form, he gives only because he is responsible for *the Other*, he feels this responsibility when seeing and recognizing the *face* of *the Other*. But what about *the Other*? We can cite very simple, but determined Lévinasian words: "*Reciprocity is his affair.*" The *Other's* understanding of the gift just does not make a difference in the situation of giving that we described above. If *the Other* sees in the act of giving and in the gift itself the commandment, a debt to be paid, something to return, need to exchange etc. and he acts reciprocally, it is just *his affair*. Someone can probably argue that we are balancing on the borders of interpretation, but understanding the gift just as gift as such is not a matter of interpretation.

We understand the gift and the act of giving as tightly connected with hospitality and hospitality as connected with responsibility for *the Other* and we find the root of

responsibility for *the Other* with Lévinas in recognizing *the Other's face* and feeling the need to lift *the Other* high and to serve to *the Other*. Therefore, we see the possibility of the gift, what more, not only the possibility of the gift, but the need to give, the need to give to *the Other* as a consequence of taking the responsibility for *the Other*. Therefore, we understand the reciprocity as something that does not deny the possibility of the gift, but as something that shifts the meaning of the gift, which is truly the gift itself.

2.3 Concept of *amae* and its connection with responsibility for *the Other*

Concept of *amae* is mostly understood as specific for Japanese culture. This image is also strengthened by the fact that there is no word in English (neither in Czech). Japanese word "*amae*" is a noun form of "*amaeru*", an intransitive verb meaning "to depend and to presume upon another's love or bask another's indulgence"⁷⁷ Takeo Doi in his article tries to explain the concept of *amae* to the "Westerners" and to make this concept closer, he uses for an explanation the examples from Western cultural environment. He shows by using "our" examples, that the concept of *amae* is not only a phenomenon compatible to Japanese culture and society, but **it is also present in „our” culture and society, even though there is no expression, e.g. in English to be an equivalent for the word “amae”**. Takeo Doi uses two examples where he sees the presence of *amae*. Both are described in literature. For our purpose, we will remind only the first one that is the relationship between the little prince and the fox in the story of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry called *The Little Prince*. Takeo Doi point out the beginning of the relationship of these two special characters. There is a loneliness of the little prince, who came alone to the Earth.

He meets a fox in the desert and wants to befriend him. The fox advises the little prince to tame him if that is his purpose. The little prince does not understand what 'tamed' means and asks what it is. The fox explains it is to establish ties. The little prince again does not understand what it is to establish ties.⁷⁸

The fox answered to the little prince:

⁷⁷ Doi, Takeo. "On the Concept of *Amae*." *Infant Mental Health Journal* Vol 13.No. 1 (1992) P. 8.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* P. 9.

'To me, you are still nothing more than a little boy who is just like a hundred thousand other little boys. And I have no need of you. And you, on your part, have no need of me. To you, I am nothing more than a fox like a hundred thousand other foxes. **But if you tame me, then we shall need each other.** To me, you will be unique in all the world. To you, I shall be unique in all the world...' ⁷⁹

Takeo Doi makes comments on the relatedness between taming described by the fox and the core of the concept of *amae* when he writes that "taming involves attachment and dependence"⁸⁰. To show stronger relation between *amae* and taming in the story of The Little Prince, he cites the explanation of the fox, how the taming can be accomplished in detail:

'You must be very patient', replied the fox. 'First, you will sit down at a little distance from me like that in the grass. I shall look at you out of the corner of my eye, and you will say nothing. Words are the source of misunderstanding. But you will sit closer to me every day.'

The next day the little prince came back.

'It would have been better to come back at the same hour', said the fox. 'If, for example, you come at four o'clock in the afternoon, then at three o'clock, I shall begin to be happy. I shall feel happier and happier as the hour advances. At four o'clock, I shall already be worrying and jumping about. I shall show you how happy I am! But if you come at just any time, I shall never know at what hour my heart must be ready to greet you.'⁸¹

Takeo Doi pays his attention to one precise moment in the description that the fox gave to the little prince. That is "the happy feeling that accompanies taming"⁸², which he identifies with *amae*. The happy feeling from an assurance that the one, who has tamed us will come, that our expectations of his arrival will be fulfilled. The happy feeling that we are attached to *the Other* as well as *the Other* is attached to us, the feeling of interdependency, this happy feeling, says, Takeo Doi, "corresponds to *amae*".⁸³

⁷⁹ Saint-Exupéry, Antoine De, and Katherine Woods. *The Little Prince*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1971. Print. P. 80.

⁸⁰ Doi, Takeo. "On the Concept Of *Amae*." *Infant Mental Health Journal* Vol 13.No. 1 (1992) P. 9.

⁸¹ Saint-Exupéry, Antoine De, and Katherine Woods. *The Little Prince*. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1971. Print. P. 84.

⁸² Doi, Takeo. "On the Concept Of *Amae*." *Infant Mental Health Journal* Vol 13.No. 1 (1992) P. 9.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

Takeo Doi writes about *amae* as about “a concept that bridges dependence and attachment, two concepts which are conceptually separate in English.”⁸⁴ **The concept of *amae* deals with the matter of love as much as with the matter of responsibility.** Even though it is commonly being connected with love, it can work very well also in the matter of responsibility for *the Other* and coheres with the topic of tolerance and even in the matter of cooperation and peaceful attitude to solving social problems. We can describe the concept of *amae* as a combination of unconditional love with inner feeling of responsibility, but our description will not be precise. The reason why it will not be precise is the fact that it is much more and a lot is not in our power to describe. The concept of *amae* can remind us Lévinasian concept of the *face*. As far as we see the *face* of *the Other*, we find ourselves in the role of a servant, in the role of humiliated one and in the role of protector. While we consider the concept of *amae* being materialized into a relationship, we can observe responsibility, indulgence and love. We can imagine the relationship between mother and child, as the concept of *amae* has its roots in this relationship. The child is being unconditionally loved by his mother, who feel responsible for him. *Amae* is not only the mother’s love for her child, it is the feeling of complete security of the child that his mother loves him, that his mother feels responsible for him and also a certain indulgence in relation to him. We can also describe the relationship between the fox and the little prince in this way.

We think there is certain penetration of the possible nature of both concepts. From *amae* we can learn that love and responsibility for *the Other* can bring happiness to *the Other* and from the concept of the *face* we can learn that taking responsibility for *the Other* and to heighten *the Other* is the beginning of ethics and the role that we should undertake in order to become human; and as well to maintain our society.

One tea proverb says: “*No teishu, no kyaku*”⁸⁵ which means “If there is no host, there is no guest.” This simple sentence does not point out only to the fact that if there is not anybody, who can be a host, there is no place for anybody to be a guest, but it expresses the interdependency between host and guest. The existence of one depends on the existence of *the Other*. The idea of interdependency is deeply rooted in Japanese culture and society and is known as a concept of *amae*. Interdependency is not present only

⁸⁴ Ibid. P. 8.

⁸⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

in roles of host and guest, it takes much more space in the community of followers of the way of tea. Relations of interdependency are present also among students (“younger and older ones”) and between teacher and student. The relationship of interdependency and concept of *amae* can lead our thoughts again to the Bible.

2.4 Concept of *amae* in „Western” World: Bible and Hospitality

The Bible is an unfailing source of parables and stories and many of them show us the importance of interdependency and hospitality at the time of the Old Testament as well as in the time of Jesus and apostles. Barbara E. Ried in her article *What’s Biblical about . . . Hospitality?*⁸⁶ gives us several examples of aforementioned.

Hospitality to a guest was a value of extreme importance in biblical times, as is evident in many episodes in both the Old and New Testaments. Nomadic sojourners in harsh climates depended on the hospitality of others as a matter of life and death. Whether the guest was invited or an unexpected stranger, there was a sacred obligation to extend hospitality in the form of lodging and shared meals. When there is mutual openness in the exchange it can become an opportunity to encounter the divine and unexpected blessings result.⁸⁷

Hospitality in that times and conditions was not a goodwill, but it was the matter of life and death and sacred obligation to be hospitable not only to the familiar guests, but also to strangers. We can see the certainty of disciples of Jesus while staying near the city of Betseida with crowds who followed Jesus. It is written: “And when the day began to wear away, the twelve came, and said unto him, Send the people away, that they may go into the towns and villages round about, and lodge, and get meat: for we are here in a desert place.” (Luke 9:12) Hospitality and interdependency of people was tightly connected. If it was possible to send 5 000 people to close villages and be sure that they will find places to spend a night and to have a meal, hospitality had to be the axiomatic quality of social life.

The hospitality could have several different motives. From the Old Testament we know several stories when the hospitality “paid off”. Barbara E. Reid comments on these stories:

⁸⁶ Reid, Barbara E. *What's Biblical about . . . Hospitality?* Bible Today; May/Jun2014, Vol. 52 Issue 3, p. 169-173

⁸⁷ Ibid. P. 169

Abraham and Sarah entertain three visitors, who turn out to be divine messengers who bless their hosts with the annunciation of the birth of a son (Gen. 18:1-15). In another instance the widow of Zarephath hosts Elijah and shares the very last of her food with him. She subsequently receives the miraculous blessing of jars of meal and oil that do not run out and the prophet resuscitates her gravely ill son.⁸⁸ (1 Kgs. 17:8-24)

New Testament's writings refer to that story of blessings connected with hospitality from a pure heart. Author of *The Hebrews* reminded the experience of some of hospitable people and their blessing to promote the spirit of hospitality, among others, when he writes: "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it." (Hebrews 13:2). Suddenly by obeying this request, our motive for hospitable behavior can become cunning. While we have the stories of people blessed for their hospitality to strangers in mind (but surely we do not know if there is a cause and effect relationship), the reason for hospitality can change and become the cunning performance of hospitality with expectation of reward for an effort to serve.

2.5 The concept of *wabi* and *wabicha*: When a „lack” is more than enough

Wabi can be introduced as one of Japanese aesthetic principle. Although we will see later that *wabi* can be perceived in a much wider scope than in the areas of aesthetics. *Wabi* can be understood as a way of perception of the world, as a way of perception of beauty, but not only in the sphere of art, but also in everyday life experience. Haga Kōshirō in the very beginning of his essay *The Wabi Aesthetics Through the Ages* points out at the complexity of the concept of *wabi*: "Because *wabi* as an aesthetic brings together many diverse elements, it is difficult to encompass in a simple definition. It can, however, be likened to a three-sided pyramid."⁸⁹ He introduces three aspects of *wabi*. According to Haga Kōshirō these are: 1. Simple, unpretentious beauty, 2. Imperfect, irregular beauty, 3. Austere, stark beauty.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Hume, Nancy G. *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995. P. 245.

⁹⁰ Ibid. P. 245 – 277.

Kōshirō begins with the etymology of the word and with an illustration of its meaning:

Wabi is a noun derived from the verb *wabiru*. *Wabiru* and its homophones can have several meanings. The meaning of *wabi* in its aesthetic sense is perhaps best defined by the author of *Zen-cha Roku*⁹¹, who wrote: ‘*Wabi* means lacking things, having things run entirely contrary to our desires, being frustrated in our wishes.’⁹²

Describing the possible meaning of *wabi* we will mainly refer to Sen no Rikyū’s understanding and its manifestation in the shape of *chanoyu*.

Regarding the principle of *wabi*, we can point out two conceptions that can be found and perceived as the core of *wabi* aesthetics and its overlap with other areas of human perception. We have already worked with the first of them before within our thoughts in chapters 1.4 and we will develop the second one in chapter 3.4.3. These are the concept of *invisibility* and the concept of **transformation of loss into the gain (gift)**. Both of them can be illustrated on the statement of Sen no Rikyū:

When Rikyū said ‘one poem is outstanding’, he was referring to the following verse by Fujiwara no Ietaka.

‘To those who wait
Only for flowers,
Show them a spring
Of grass amid the snow
In a mountain village’⁹³

How can we interpret the poem, which has Rikyū chosen as one that represents the very nature of *wabi*? On one side there are someone’s expectations of something that is commonly considered as beautiful. On the other side there is the hindrance of fulfillment of one’s expectations. And the reason of non-fulfillment is the replacement of something

⁹¹ “The Zen Tea Record (*Zen-Cha Roku*) was first published in 1828 in Tokyo. The author was given as Jakuan Sotaku, but it is uncertain whether any such man ever existed. The work was likely written in response to developments in *chanoyu* during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when peace and prosperity encouraged wealthy tea practitioners to focus on the superficial and material aspects of tea rather than its Zen roots.” In “The Zen Tea Record, Part II.” *Urasenke Philadelphia Newsletter*, Vol. 11, No. 5. (Sept. 2012)

⁹² *Ibid.* P. 246.

⁹³ *Ibid.* P. 250.

which is perceived as full, as the whole, with anything else which is understood as the lack in comparison with the expectation, only as a partial substitute for the expected thing. The possible disappointment is thus based on the understanding of the other (a spring of grass amid the snow in a mountain village) as a substitute for an expected phenomenon (flowers) to come and as insufficient one in comparison with the one expected. What is the aim and nature of the *wabi* principle in this case, is the change in understanding of beauty, understanding of lack. On the example of cited poem we can clearly see, what is the aim of *wabi*; to point out to the fact that something seems to be insufficient is not really based on lacking something.

To show someone, who is expecting to see flowers „only” a spring of grass amid the snow can be the way how to highlight the relativity of beauty and the relativity of sufficiency and insufficiency. To show someone, who has a very deep conviction of what is the beauty in its fullness, the phenomenon that can be perceived as very mundane and ordinary, can be the way, how to emphasize that the nature of beauty does not have to consist of pomp and brilliance. In this sense *wabi* can be understood as **a principle based on the transformation of seeming lack into an experienced gain, respectively as a gift.** Our interpretation can be amended by the thoughts of the assumed author of *Zen-cha Roku*, Jakuan Sotaku (cited by Haga Kōshirō):

Always bear in mind that *wabi* involves not regarding incapacities as incapacitating, not feeling that lacking something is deprivation, nor thinking that what is not provided is deficiency. To regard incapacity as incapacitating, to feel that lack is deprivation, or to believe that not being provided for is poverty is not *wabi* . . . Pine pillars, bamboo joists, left as they are, curved and straight, square and round, up and down, left and right, new and old, light and heavy, long and short, broad and narrow, repaired where chipped, patched where torn. Everything at odds, nothing matching.⁹⁴

The concept of *invisibility* can also be illustrated in the aforementioned poem. The beauty of flowers can be experienced very easily (it is evident, flowers' color is easily noticeable etc.). Spring of grass amid the snow on the other hand is not so spectacular as the flowers are. It can be overlooked very easily and it can remain unnoticed. Green detail amid the white snow is almost unrecognizable and it can be perceived as invisible. Without any doubts we can state that in comparison with the visibility of flowers, the spring of grass

⁹⁴ Hume, Nancy G. *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995. P. 246.

amid the snow is invisible. Also in this case the *wabi* principle shows us a way of initiation of the change in our perception. Here *wabi* points out to “much wider range of possibilities of our eyes”. **We can learn how to be able to see more, to see greater nuances of beauty and to see the beauty in these phenomena, where it frequently remains invisible.**

Another angle of looking at the concept of *wabi* can be the one through the contrast of poverty and richness, which is appropriately expressed by the metaphoric image of Murata Jukō. He likened the taste of *wabi* to “a prize horse hitched to a thatched hut”⁹⁵. Jukō’s words can lead us back to the concept of *invisibility* for the quality of the horse can be very likely misunderstood if we judge it only according to the visibly poor condition of horse’s stable. **In the way of tea we can observe the influence of the *wabi* principle mainly in the way of using simple and austere utensils, ordinary and pure materials and unpretentiousness of the elements of the tea gathering. It is expressed in austerity, imperfection and unpretentiousness of *chanoyu*.** To bring our excursion into the concept of *wabi* and its meaning in the phenomenon of the way of tea to its end, we should clarify that *wabi* is not a “product” of *chanoyu*, it is rather its “essence” and “spirit”. But *chanoyu* seems to play a specific role in understanding and expressing of *wabi*, because it can be perceived as a medium of the possible embodiment of its principle and nature. Haga Kōshirō describes *chanoyu* as a medium for *wabi* becoming an art for everyday life, stating:

Wabi was already maturing as a part of the aesthetic consciousness of the Japanese long before the appearance of tea master or the elaboration of *chanoyu*. (...) Moreover it was through *chanoyu* that *wabi* was realized in practice as an art for everyday life.⁹⁶

2.6 Diversion: Plato’s Symposium, the role of the host and understanding of hospitality

While thinking about the form of tea gathering, the role of host and guest, we can look for parallels to this gathering. One can regard as very strange the parallel with Plato’s

⁹⁵ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 226.

⁹⁶ Hume, Nancy G. *Japanese Aesthetics and Culture: A Reader*. Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1995. P. 251.

Symposium, but we believe that it could be fruitful for our short analysis. Plato's Symposium, Dinner-party is cited and examined for the content of speeches of different guest and also in the form of it itself. We will examine the role of Agathon as a host and the roles of guests and we will try to compare them with that one in *chanoyu*.

The symposium is being held in the house of Agathon, whose name can be translated as "good" in Greek. Agathon as a host says noteworthy remark to his servant:

Serve the rest of us anyhow. You have complete liberty to serve what you please when there is no one to supervise you, a thing that I have never bothered to do. So on this occasion treat us as your guests, me as much as the others, and see that your service deserves our praise.⁹⁷

Agathon says to his servants to act as if no one supervises them, to treat himself and *the Other* as their guests and to behave in the way that everybody can praise them for their service. There can be several explanations, why Agathon gives these remarkable instructions to his servants. The first one could be the fact that he himself wants to enjoy the party and does not want to be bothered by wishes concerning food and drink from his guests and therefore gives servants completely liberty to serve what they please. The second explanation is related to different motives. Agathon gives commands to his servants to secure the best conditions for his beloved guests. While emphasizing, that there will be no supervision under their work (which as he adds, is usual for his attitude), while giving complete liberty and asking them to treat himself and others as their guests, he tries to set the servants' mind into a certain mode. No control of their work can on one hand make them to feel that they can take an advantage and not do their best in serving, but the task of treating Agathon and others as their guest makes a huge difference. We should note that the official host is Agathon himself. But the guest in Symposium are described not any more as Agathon's guests, but as the guests of the servants, who can treat them as their own guests. This interesting shift of roles can open us Agathon's understanding of being a host. From his command we see that only in case that his servants treat his guests as their own ones (including Agathon himself, *i.e.*, his role of the host was shifted to servants), he can be sure that his guest will have perfect service and that everything will be done for their highest satisfaction. The last words of Agathon's speech to servants are following: "(...) see that your service deserves our praise"⁹⁸ Servants should treat their guests in the

⁹⁷ Plato. *The Symposium*. Baltimore: Penguin, 1951. Print. Translated by Walter Hamilton. 175c.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

way which deserves their praise, *i.e.*, **the only aim of the host is to act in the way which deserves the praise of his guests.**

Analysis of possible Agathon's motives of his command to servants brought us back to the basic aim of the host in *chanoyu*. Host's main role lies in serving the guest as best as possible and to see that his service deserves guests' praise. Here we can see the common understanding of the role of host: to act in the way that guest can praise him, to act in the way that guests are satisfied, to forget his needs and to concentrate truly on the needs of guests.

2.6.1 How about having tea at Agathon's place?

The described role of host can again show us a very tight connection between giving and hospitality. But in terms of etiquette we will find a lot of differences between our Symposium guests' behavior and that one recommended for the guest of tea gathering. Looking for possible parallel between these two attitudes will look as a madness, but we can use short comparison for emphasizing the importance and necessity of given rules and etiquette in the case of the tea gathering (*chaji*). Behaviour of Agathon's guest seems as parody to that one of *chaji*. The beginning of Apollodoros' narration about Symposium corresponds with the one for *chaji*. The narrator says:

'I met Socrates fresh from the bath and with shoes on his feet, two circumstances most unusual with him, and asked him where he was going so finely got up. 'To dinner with Agathon. I shirked his victory party yesterday from dislike of the crowd, but I promised that I would be there today. As for my finery, one must look one's best when one is going to visit a goodlooking man.'⁹⁹

He describes Socrates in very unusual conditions – “from the bath and with shoes on his feet”, while thinking about the preparation of the guest of tea gathering this will be very basic task of every one: to be well dressed, to make his appearance the most satisfactory for the host and other guests. For Socrates, who, as described, would not usually look that way, visit at Agathon's was very precious and an importance of this visit made him to prepare for it in unusual way. But suddenly we witness that Socrates' behaviour was not a

⁹⁹ Ibid. 174a

matter of etiquette. All of a sudden he stops to pay attention on being at time at Symposium and as we get to know from narrator he stops at neighbour's house. Symposium thus began without Socrates. We read the description of that situation:

'After that we began dinner, and still Socrates did not come. Agathon several times wanted to send for him, but I would not let him. Finally he came, not really very late for him, and found us about halfway through dinner.'¹⁰⁰

Coming late was thus nothing uncommon for Socrates and he showed also this characteristic as a guest. The dinner therefore began without him, however from the whole description of Symposium Socrates was loved very much by Agathon and surely would be understood as the first guest in terms of *chaji*. Impossible in terms of *chaji* etiquette will be also very late and the inappropriate arrival of Alcibiades, who came drunk with shouting very loud. In both cases; in case of late arrival of Socrates and that one of Alcibiades; host Agathon acts with most amiability – he offers to Socrates place next to himself and later on he offers Alcibiades place at the table which he already shares with Socrates. Let the diversion to Symposium serve us as an example of understanding of the role of host, guests and hospitality in the time of Socrates and as well as a kind of comparison for the matter of tea gathering, its rules and process.

2.7 The concept of hospitality in *chanoyu*

The concept of hospitality in *chanoyu* has its specifics. After we carefully examine it, we will find out that in its character it differs from the biblical conception of hospitality. The main difference lies in the fact that in *chanoyu* there is a distribution of the roles: each of the roles has its “script” and each of the roles has its character prescribed to certain degree¹⁰¹. The host should make as much as possible to satisfy guests and prepare the most enjoyable conditions for them, the guests should be considerate to each other and to the host and especially grateful for the host, his care and effort, first guest should also be a

¹⁰⁰ Ibid. 175c.

¹⁰¹ This can remind us the form of popular Italian Comedia del Arte, where in every performance there are the same character with basic characteristics and features, who can go through different situation, but they always act according to their role prescription.

guide for other guest and he is charge of leading conversation with host etc. Giving and taking is thus formally tied in the set of rules and expected “playing the roles”.

One question arises from this description: Why goes the process of giving and taking under a certain form? What is the reason for creating the “ceremony of giving”? Where does the need to give certain form and rules to very basic process of giving (or even possibly viewed only as a matter of preparing and drinking tea) have its origin? One possible explanation can lead us directly to the very deep connection of *chadō* and Zen Buddhism. For our purpose, we will try to look at this problem disregarding this fact.

One of conceivable reasons for the creation of the screenplay of the tea gathering (including the conversation, a way of walking, way of manipulation with utensils, way of moving etc.) can have its roots in the effort to build and preserve tradition. Another reason coheres with the maximizing of safety and satisfaction of all actors of tea gathering. As far as almost everything is prescribed (even though transmitted from teacher to student), it creates „the luxury” of minimization of the need to deal with unexpected situations. Thus originates also the space for concentration to the *hic et nunc* of the tea gathering, of the encounter, of the present moment of sharing among the actors. By observing the rules, which can after the training become almost unconscious, one can be truly present and all his awareness could be fixed and given to the needs of others.

Can the form, the set of rules, the observation and repetition of technique teach us the hospitality? Can the way of tea transform our attitude to others and to ourselves? Can it make us more hospitable and more considerate to others? Can the technique serve as a medium of transformation and further as a medium of liberation? What is the connection between the gift and liberation? And how can these phenomena join in the matter of the way of tea or even in the simple bowl of tea? These questions are the starting point and a motive for the research in the chapter 3.4 and 3.5.

3. The way of tea as a medium of transformation

Can we perceive the tea as a medium? If so, in which regard? How can we understand the sentence “*Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea*”? If we begin by describing the possibility of understanding the tea as a medium, our starting point can be the visible flow of tea gathering. **The tea is the phenomenon that embodies the thought of betweenness in the case of tea gathering.** The tea (bowl of tea) is between the host and the guest, but also between the guests. It is the visible object between them, in the literal sense (the bowl of tea is placed on the *tatami* just between the actors). We can possibly say that the bowl of tea placed on *tatami* divides the space of each actor, that the bowl of tea creates the boundaries between all co-habitors of the space of the tea room. But on the other hand **the tea, even though it is possible to understand it as the spacious medium of diving and making borders, is the phenomenon which makes whole gathering coherent.**

Tea serves as a medium from the regard of the nature of the medium itself. The medium understood as something neutral¹⁰², as something that can be neither the subject, nor the object, just from the fact that its nature does not have any connection with the terms of categories, divisions, arguments, opinions etc. If we understand a medium as the entity that can receive „the meaning” (feeling, state of consciousness, etc.), do not change it in any way, let it go through and transmit it again. The medium we try to imagine is the one which reminds us a plain, open plain, where the wind can blow from north to south, turn and change the direction of its blowing as it wants. Where the grass moves in the breeze and feels no violence in changing its move, its dance, its bows. **Thus the main feature for the medium we tried to describe is the freedom, the liberation.** The character of the tea as a medium in the sense of openness and liberation can help us understand the aforementioned motto of Sen Sōshitsu XV, which says: “*Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea*”. This sentence can be interpreted as follows: There is certain possibility that the peacefulness can be born through the bowl of tea. As far as the bowl of tea, its making, its serving, its place in the framework of *chadō* can be a medium through which the peacefulness can be achieved, received and transmitted.

¹⁰² Barthes, Roland, Thomas Clerc, and Éric Marty. *The Neutral: Lecture Course at the Collège De France, 1977-1978*. New York: Columbia UP, 2005.

3.1 The spatial semiotics of the way of tea spaces

The way of tea is very tightly connected to the spaces where it exists and happens. Even though there are exceptions in preparations of tea (*temae*)¹⁰³, which do not take place in the tea room (*chashitsu*)¹⁰⁴; there are, for example, different *temaes* using *chabako set*, which consists of the box for all specially designed utensils needed for the preparation outside of the tea room. But the majority of tea preparations is designed for being performed in the tea room. *Chashitsu* could be perceived as a semiotic system for it has its own language which one needs to know to be able to use it in a proper way. Detailed description, explanation of possible development and meaning of the arrangement and spatial aspects of *chanoyu* can help us to show **the importance of mediality**, the importance of the *through* in the understanding the way of tea.

3.1.1 Tea room and the spatial preconditions for the possibility of an encounter

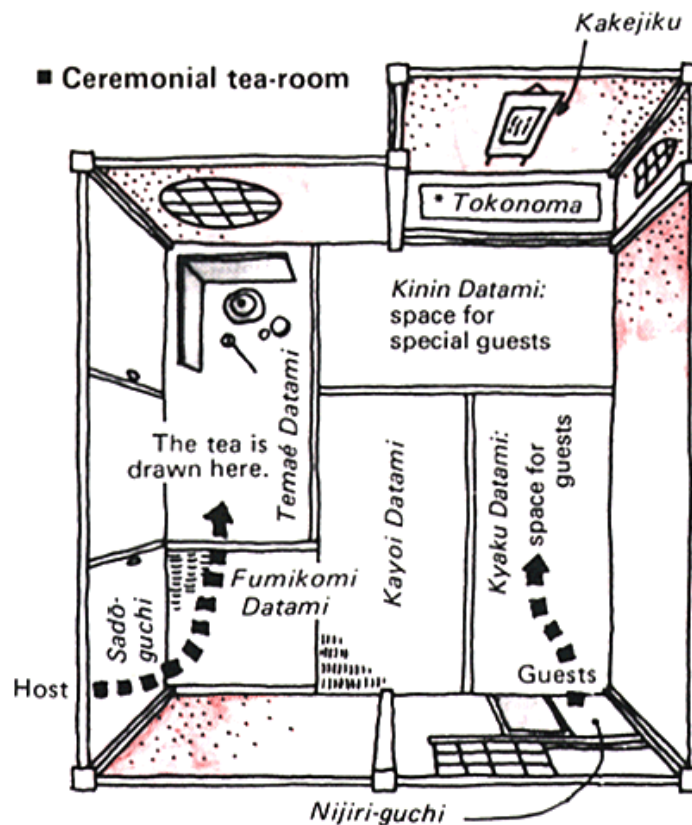
Yet the fact that the creation of the space of *chashitsu* obeys certain rules predicates the possible interest of semiotics, especially of spatial semiotics. There are several indispensable spatial elements in the *chashitsu*: *tokonoma*¹⁰⁵ (an alcove where the scroll or flowers are placed), the heart built into the floor (for use during *rō*, summer season), space for host preparing the tea (*temae datami*), space for guests (*kyaku datami*), an entrance for host and eventually also for his helper (*sadō-guchi*) and an entrance for guests (*nijiriguchi*). These are the basic elements of the space of *chashitsu* (in case of larger sizes of *chashitsu* there is also, e.g. a space for special guests called *kinin datami*).

¹⁰³ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹⁰⁴ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹⁰⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

Image no. 1: The plan of tea room (*chashitsu*)¹⁰⁶



3.1.1.1 “My place”, as “the lowest one” in the tea room

There is another important aspect to be mentioned regarding the way of tea and its spaces, especially *chashitsu*. This is the one that we will later associate with the aspect of handling the tea bowl and it can be named as the „location value” of places in the tea room. There are basic parts and elements which are present in every *chashitsu*, as we mentioned before. The spatial layout of *chashitsu* is crucial for the way of moving in it. The movements in *chashitsu* are prescribed into details. One of very important movements is walking. The way of walking (beginning with left or right leg etc.) depends on many factors, for our purpose, we will point out only to one of them: the place of „me” as a guest in the tea room. There is a certain hierarchy of places in the tea room that can be manifested through the way of walking in it. An alcove (*tokonoma*) where the hanging

¹⁰⁶ *The Plan of Tea Room (chashitsu)*. Digital image.

[Http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/cultural/experience/img/f_03.gif](http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/cultural/experience/img/f_03.gif). N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Dec. 2014.
<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/cultural/experience/img/f_03.gif>.

scroll is hung or flowers are displayed is considered the most important place in the tea room. This is also the reason why the first guest (*shokyaku*)¹⁰⁷ will be seated nearest to the *tokonoma*.¹⁰⁸ The guest's walk to the *tokonoma* begins with the right leg, with the right leg also begins the walk of the host to its place in the tearoom. As far as *tokonoma* is perceived as „the highest” place (semantically) in the room, it becomes a gauge for other moves in *chashitsu*.

On the other hand the place of “me” as a guest inhabits the other “end of the scale”. “I” as a guest am entering “my” place always with the left leg for it is considered to be “the lowest” place in *chashitsu* for “me”. This fact that becomes visible with certain knowledge of the language of the tea room is very interesting for us while thinking about one's humility in front of the *face of the Other* as well as for our later examination of the relationship of the way of tea and one's identity in chapters 3.4.3 and 3.4.5. There is one more matter to be mentioned in this context: „my” place in the tea room has also very strict borders. Although *chashitsu* is a space for encounter, each actor has very clearly defined space and the way of using that space. We can keep this fact in our awareness because it can be a sign of non-spatial understanding of the tea room as well as the pointer to the thought of the minimal space for encounter presented in chapter 3.1.2 and even more detailed in chapter 3.1.2.1.

3.1.2 „*Ichijō-daime chashitsu*: Minimal space for the occasion of encounter

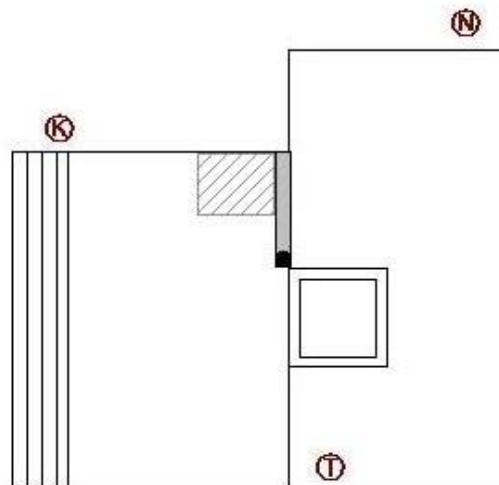
The number of *tatami* mats varies from one tea room to another. The most extreme size of *chashitsu* is being attributed to Sen Sōtan's *chashitsu* with parameters of only one-and-half *tatami* mat. Even in this case the presence of the main elements of tea room was observed. The room was called *ichijō-daime*. *Ichijō-daime* [一畳台目] was a non-standard room (admired, and perhaps created, by Sen no Sōtan) devised to accommodate no more than one guest at best; and, in fact, is far better suited to the host's private pursuit of *chanoyu* as a Zen way to enlightenment, than for the reception of guests. Ultimately, this is

¹⁰⁷ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹⁰⁸ From: “*Japanese Tea Ceremony Chashitsu*.” Japanese Tea Ceremony Chashitsu. N.p., n.d. Web. 03 Dec. 2014. <<http://japanese-tea-ceremony.net/chashitsu.html>>.

the reason why this kind of room was considered to have “nothing to do with *suki*.”¹⁰⁹ The concept of *suki* can be understood as: “the natural result of the combination of orthodox tea (particularly as it evolved as *wabi-no-chanoyu*) with the desire to serve tea to one’s guests. Since this room makes things difficult for the guest, it is antithetical to the idea of service which underlies *wabi* tea.”¹¹⁰

Image no. 2: Sōtan’s *ichijō-daime* – the plan of the tea room¹¹¹



Description of the image: „*Sōtan’s ichijō-daime* [一畳台目] room (reconstruction based on the present *Fushin-an* [不審庵]). As above, ⊗ *katte-guchi* [勝手口], the host’s entrance; ⊙ *nijiri-guchi* [躡り口], the guests’ entrance; and, ⊕ *tokonoma* [床の間].”¹¹²

The minimal space of one-and-half tatami tea room constrains us to think more deeply about its purpose. While having in the mind the words we have stated before, that the main aim of *chanoyu* is to serve one’s guests and to satisfy the heart of the guest, we find ourselves blamed at meeting with this kind of space. In the case of creation of the space which is not truly comfortable for the guest we are impelled to examine the real aim

¹⁰⁹ “*The Three Hundred Lines of Chanoyu*. “ Chanoyu to Wa...., The Three Hundred Lines of Chanoyu (Lines 201. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Nov. 2014. <<http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/57125611559/the-three-hundred-lines-of-chanoyu-lines-201-210>>.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ *Sōtan’s Ichijō-daime – the Plan of the Tea Room*. Digital image. [Http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/57125611559/the-three-hundred-lines-of-chanoyu-lines-201-210](http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/57125611559/the-three-hundred-lines-of-chanoyu-lines-201-210). N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Dec. 2014. <<http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/57125611559/the-three-hundred-lines-of-chanoyu-lines-201-210>>.

¹¹² “*The Three Hundred Lines of Chanoyu*. “ Chanoyu to Wa...., The Three Hundred Lines of Chanoyu (Lines 201. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Nov. 2014. <<http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/57125611559/the-three-hundred-lines-of-chanoyu-lines-201-210>>.

of *chanoyu*. How can we deal with the statement that one-and-half tatami room “is far better suited to the host’s private pursuit of *chanoyu* as a Zen way to enlightenment, than for the reception of guests”?

The practice of creating small tea rooms and huts is documented from the times of Jōō. Rikyū though gave to the product of tea architecture much more resolute direction. An effort of creating the minimal space for the host and the guest where they can enjoy tea gathering was motivated by understanding *chashitsu* as a space for practicing the Buddhist way. It should serve as a space of experiencing an austerity of Buddhism. Sen Sōshitsu XV cites an extract from *Nanpōroku*, whose author is commonly considered to be Sen no Rikyū:

Chanoyu in a small room means first of all to practice the austerities of Buddhism.” Later it continues: „The teaching of the Buddha is the essence of *chanoyu*. (...) [First] we boil water and make tea. [Next] we offer it to the Buddha, serve our guests, and drink it ourselves. We arrange flowers and light incense. All of these are ways to pursue the teachings of the Buddha and his elders.¹¹³

The idea of minimal space and its experience is more deeply connected with Zen as we will show later when talking about *nijiriguchi* and the guest’s perception of the space of *chashitsu* during entering the room.

3.1.2.1 The bowl of tea as a minimal space for encounter

The way of tea examines the possibilities and precondition of an encounter, gathering and sharing. For it uses, e.g. one-and-half tatami mat rooms to serve the tea gathering, it experiments with space, its quality and possibilities. Thus the observation, that conception of space in case of very small room for a tea gathering does not work with the categories of space, can point out to the thought that an encounter (sharing) does not work with the spatial terms as well. This space is not characterized by its spatiality (length, height, width etc.). Should we thus perceive the tea room as a space of happening of the core of tea gathering? And if the space for encounter and meeting of host and guest is not

¹¹³ Sen Sōshitsu XV, „*Reflections on Chanoyu and Its History*,” in *Tea in Japan*, p. 238. In Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. XXIV. (The citation was taken from the foreword to book written by Paul Varley)

the tea room, what would it be? Could it be a bowl of tea itself? **The bowl of tea**, which is free from measurable and practical categories of space: **is it capable to serve as a minimal space for encounter?**

3.1.2.2 The forehead of the tea bowl: the place that faces *the Other*

Attention of observer of the tea gathering can be also captured by handling with the bowl of tea: the bowl of tea is turned several times. The reason for the need of turning is the fact that the tea bowl (*chawan*)¹¹⁴ has its forehead (*shōmen*)¹¹⁵. This part is usually recognizable by looking at the tea bowl (is marked by ceramist) or is freely chosen by the host. *Shōmen* of the bowl of tea is perceived as the most beautiful part of the tea bowl. When host finishes the preparation of tea, he places the bowl of tea on *tatami* between himself and the guest with *shōmen* facing the guests. First guest comes kneeling for the bowl of tea, places it between himself and another guest, bows or say “*osaki ni*”, places it in front of himself, bows to the host and thanks him for the tea, makes another bow with the bowl of tea while holding it on the left palm with the support of the right hand from the side. Before drinking, he turns the *shōmen* of the tea bowl to the side farther from him, so that he does not drink from this part. In case of preparation of thin tea (*usucha*) where each guest drinks the whole bowl of tea, the guest comes kneeling and returns the bowl to the host. During the way the *shōmen* of tea bowl is facing to him and in the end guest turns the bowl again so that the *shōmen* is facing the host. In case of preparation of thick tea (*koicha*) where all the guest are drinking from the same bowl, first guest after drinking several sips of prepared tea cleans the place from which he drank with a small piece of linen cloth. After that, he turns the *shōmen* to the next guest, moves closer to him and gives him the bowl to his hands so that the *shōmen* is again in the same position as for the first guest.

Even in this detail of handling with the tea bowl, we can see a manifestation of the principle of considerateness, respectfulness and also by placing less emphasis of oneself and more on others. In case that we are able to perceive the bowl of tea as a medium, we can imagine a simple handling with the bowl of tea is an example for handling other things

¹¹⁴ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹¹⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

on our own as well as in the interaction with others. The *shōmen* is a place which has very intimate relation to *the Other*. In case of “me” (when we imagine ourselves in the role of the guest), “I” in majority of the moments of handling the tea bowl, turn the *shōmen* of the tea bowl to *the Other* – to the host when I return the bowl after drinking, to next guest when I give him the bowl in the case of preparation of *koicha* or in case of viewing and appreciating the tea bowl. I do not turn the *shōmen* of the tea bowl to „me” without purpose. When „I” do so, it is in the moment of viewing of the beauty of *chawan* and it faces to me also at the moment of receiving it from the host or from another guest. Thus we can state that **the *shōmen* of the tea bowl, which is considered as the most beautiful part of *chawan*, is intended to face *the Other*. Thus *the Other* is given the privilege and thus this privilege is given to me by *the Other*.**

Here we can remind the findings from the chapter 3.1.1.1 about “my” place as a guest in the tea room and put them also in the context of Dostoyevsky’s citation which is mentioned by Emmanuel Lévinas: “We are all guilty of all and for all men before all, and I more than the others.”¹¹⁶, which can be interpreted not as the „mark of Cain”, as stigmatization, but rather as the privilege, as a gift of being responsible for *the Other*, as inner understanding of this responsibility as a gift that is being given to us and that can make us human. This could also be brought into the context of Sen Sōshitsu XVI, who in his article regarding the foundations of culture describes the crucial role of relations and of quality of relations and bonds between humans as the starting point of the origins of culture:

The process by which humans relate to one another and deepen their bonds is the catalyst from which ‘culture’ has emerged and been nurtured. So, if culture is born when humans engage with one another, an attitude of considerateness toward others must be at work at its foundations.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Lévinas, Emmanuel, and Philippe Nemo. *Ethics and Infinity*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 1985. P. 98.

¹¹⁷ Sen, Sōshitsu, XVI. „*The Foundation of Culture*.” *Urasenke Newsletter* 129 (1 July 2014): 1. Print.

3.1.3 *Nijiriguchi*: Going through an eye of a needle

Nijiriguchi is the expression used for guest's entrance into the tea room, precisely, „crawling in” entrance that was found in *sōan* (hut) form of tea rooms¹¹⁸. The very low height of an entrance and its narrowness forces the guests to crawl in on their knees into the tea room. This crawling in could be perceived as a first deep bow (though not completely voluntary) and usually is interpreted as a sign of humility, equality and faith (for the noble men or *samurai* class members *nijiriguchi* did not allowed to enter with sword). We will try to point out to a spatial understanding of *nijiriguchi* which is more deeply connected with the aim of *chanoyu* as well with its origins or background in the teaching of Zen Buddhism. Kumakura Isao in an essay on Sen no Rikyū:

This tiny entrance-way, a bare sixty-six centimeters square, is unquestionably an inconvenience that might irritate not only the critics of tea, but others as well. Nevertheless, it is the *nijiriguchi* that gives the narrowly restricted space of the tea room its unlimited possibilities.¹¹⁹

Kumakura Isao notices the spatial phenomenon that is played out during the entering to the tea room. The guest kneels in the middle of *nijiriguchi* and suddenly whole space begins to open in front of his eyes. This perception is even multiplied by the position that he has in the space. The room with parameters only 2.73 m × 2.73 m opens in front of the guests' eyes. At the same time his attention is absorbed by the presence of the scroll in the *tokonoma* alcove (or by the flowers in the alcove; depending on the situation and the part of tea gathering). We do not have to restrict an interpretation of the statement of Kumakura Isao only on to the realm of perception of visible. He acquaints us with a possible origin of the use of *nijiriguchi* for the purpose of tea rooms and tea huts and shows very interesting relationships between similar uses of minimal space. He introduces to us Rikyū's interest and taste in the passageway of a riverboat, „which was small and had a certain *wabi* feeling about it – whereupon he adapted this passageway to the tea room”¹²⁰.

However Isao thinks that it was not only the form of passageway that attracted Rikyū's attention, but that he was more interested in its purpose and the possible transmission of this formal spatial element into the space of tea gathering. Thus he thinks

¹¹⁸ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 50.

¹¹⁹ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 50.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* P. 51.

that Rikyū found the similar phenomenon to be expressed by this element in both cases. **“Those who board a boat enter another realm where they share a common fate apart from the rest of the world.** Perhaps Rikyū thought of this when he was attracted to the configuration of the passageway of the boat at *Hirakata*.”¹²¹ Isao finds the similar principles of entering another realm through minimal space in Japanese wicket entranceways to theatres: “By crawling through the mouse wicket, people entered a world of the theatre separate from the everyday space in which they usually moved.”¹²² Here we see an **understanding of *nijiriguchi* as a boundary between ordinary and extraordinary world experience.** Isao plays with the thought that Rikyū probably adapted this kind of spatial and semantic boundary into the world of tea at the time when it was already being used and understood in this way in other areas. The idea of stepping or literally “crawling into” the extraordinary, different world is connected with the way of tea again in regard to Zen Buddhism. We can find similar semantic phenomenon on the subject of *roji*.

3.1.4 *Roji*: The way apart from bustling world

A poem traditionally attributed to Rikyū describes the importance of *roji* for understanding of the way of tea:

House and dewy ground.
 Guest and host both joined as one,
 Share a cup of tea.
 In tranquil meditation,
 No margin divides their hearts.
The *roji*¹²³ is a way

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ “The Japanese language has a particular term for the garden of a tea house, ‘*roji*’, whose literal meaning is ‘dewy ground’. The Parables of the Lotus Sutra suggest its significance, for they say, ‘There is no peace in the Three Worlds; they are like a house in flames.’ But then the account continues, ‘One emerges from the house in flames to sit on the dewy ground.’ This escape from the consuming passions of the world is the function of the tea garden.” in Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The*

**Apart from this bustling world
And its many cares.
How will that path sweep away
The dust from within our hearts?**¹²⁴

Roji, the tea garden is described as a place of release from the mundane world. The fact that it is usually sprinkled by the host before the coming of guests makes it “dewy ground” literally as well. Jennifer Lea Anderson finds the usage of *roji* before its adaptation to the realm of tea:

Before it became a part of specialized vernacular of *chanoyu*, *roji* was applied to particular areas with precincts of Buddhist temples. Using it for the path to the tea room was quite likely part of Rikyū’s campaign to revitalize the transformatory aspects of *chadō*.¹²⁵

Anderson states that *roji* was adapted to the realm of tea with a certain purpose, respectively, with Rikyū’s aim of revitalizing transformative aspects of *chadō*. The division between the outer world and unusual world of tea garden, the separation between the bustling world outside the garden and the realm of peacefulness and understanding inside the garden, *roji* serving as a path to the tea house with the only purpose: to transform „pilgrim’s” mind, to let him leave all worries of the mundane world and prepare open, hospitable and considerable heart for the tea gathering. This can be read between the lines on transformatory aspect of *chadō*. As we can already remark, there seems to be a certain semantic analogy between the two spatial elements of tea gathering, *i.e.*, *nijiriguchi* and *roji*. Kumakura Isao takes very deep dive into the development of usage of *nijiriguchi* entrance in *chanoyu* and finds its interconnection with the development and purpose of *roji*. He writes that “it is a mistake to associate the *nijiriguchi* just with *wabicha*. The idea

Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 166.

¹²⁴ A poem “traditionally attributed to Rikyū, sum up in a few words his most important teachings about the *roji*”. In Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 169.

¹²⁵ Anderson, Jennifer Lea. *An Introduction to Japanese Tea Ritual*. Albany: State University of New York, 1991. P. 155.

of establishing the division between the outside world and the world of tea was very likely born in the moment it was realized that tea could be made into performing art.”¹²⁶

3.1.4.1 Purification as the possible gateway towards the realm of transformation: The reciprocity of the relationship between the host and the guest

In the *roji* there are many spatial elements that are linked with the matter of diverse transformation. One of the elements is *tsukubai*¹²⁷, the water basin designed for purification of one's hands and mouth. Lauren W. Deutsch in her article describes the way through *roji* to the tea room and the stop of guests “by” *tsukubai*: „Proceeding one by one, we each crouched down to perform the purification ritual (*misogi*) of rinsing hands and mouth, and thereby the mind, using the bamboo dipper.”¹²⁸ Deutsch writes about the ritual of cleaning of hands and mouth as about one of purification of body and mind. *Tsukubai* is also the part of spaces of Buddhist temples, where it is considered to fulfil the transformative role: to purify human body (even though only a part for the whole) and via the purification of body to purify also the human mind and set it for an entering the temple, or in the case of *roji*, to set it for entering the tea room. Thus entering the tea room requires human's preparation and the ritual purification, which is also used in the case of tea gathering event, serves as a bridge, as a precondition for attaining one's transformation. The role of *tsukubai* also points out to the possible understanding of the way of tea as utopia (discussed more detailed in chapter 3.3.1) and emphasizes the possible distinction between the mundane world and the world of tea gathering.

The function of *tsukubai* is significant for our later examination of the relationship between the host and the guest as well as for the interpretation of Sen Sōshitsu's remark on the way of tea as a possible way how to find oneself in the presence of others. In the case of use of *tsukubai* we can observe interesting way of reciprocity in the relationship of the host and the guests. If there is possibility for the host to transform one's self through

¹²⁶ Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 52.

¹²⁷ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹²⁸ Deutsch, Lauren W. “*Entering the Way of Tea: The “Dewy Path” to the Tea House*“. N.p., n.d. Web. 17 Dec. 2014.

<https://www.academia.edu/9870871/_Entering_the_Way_of_Tea_The_Dewy_Path_to_the_Tea_House_>.

the service to the guests, use of *tsukubai* serves as a way to possible transformation, which is offered by the host to his guests.

It was Rikyū's intent that, for their part, guests were to rinse the hands and mouth at the basin in the garden as a form of mental preparation for the occasion to cleanse their own impurities. It might seem unpleasant in cold weather, but the host was to fill the basin anyway. When it was hot, the water would seem refreshing to the guests. To pour the water into the basin without anyone's being aware was unsuitable; the host should pour it without hesitation before the guests' eyes. **The process of filling and using the basin was an act jointly performed by both host and guests. In this fashion Rikyū sought to leap to a realm of religious freedom through the medium of tea. It was a matter of somehow transcending the mundane and impure by taking advantage of the forms of *chanoyu*.** No matter what one may choose to call these cares of the world, whether 'a house in flames' or impurities, their elimination must always be the foremost consideration. This concept was a fundamental principle of *wabi* tea.¹²⁹

The host by filling and preparing the water in *tsukubai* helps the guest to "cleanse their own impurities" before entering the tea room. The host thus can in some regard play a special role in the guests' possibility of any transformation (if the basin was not filled with water, they could not purify themselves, etc.). We can see the image of baptism and try to liken the role of the host in the tea gathering to the role of priest in baptism (regarding formal and procedural aspects of both of the events). **The relationship of the host and the guests is reciprocal and we believe that the role of symmetry or asymmetry in this relationship does not play the crucial role.**

3.2 Time in *chanoyu*

Daniel Kane in his article *The Epic of Tea: Tea Ceremony as the Mythological Journey of the Hero* very precisely grasps the importance of timing in *chanoyu* and he points out at the paradox of the need of accurate timing on one hand and the perception of timelessness or different time than the one connected with chronology:

¹²⁹ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998.

Ironically, despite the ‘timeless’ feeling the guests’ sense, the *chaji* is carefully regimented. When to prepare food, when to build the fire, when to serve the tea, all depend on a timing as precise as ballet. A Tea ceremony is a seated dance, an orchestrated ritual, as deliberate, paced, and formal as the elevation of the host in a Catholic Mass.¹³⁰

There are two images of the tea gathering: the first one is connected with performing arts concerning the interconnection of the action in the tea gathering with the concept of *ma*, and the second is the subtle simile of *chaji* to a mass. The second one should be examined in greater range and depth for we can find similarities between the occasion of tea gathering and Christian Holy Communion (Eucharist) as well as the roles of host (as Jesus, Lord) and guests clearly expressed by the words used as an invitation to dine with Jesus: “Come: for all things are now ready.” (Luk. 14:17b) In the next chapter, we will examine the first image: the concept of *ma* and its relation to *chanoyu*.

3.2.1 Concept of *ma*

To think about time in *chanoyu* it is essential to understand the Japanese conception of time-space relation called *ma*. Religionist Richard B. Pilgrim in his work grasps the meaning of *ma*:

The word *ma* basically means an ‘**interval**’ between two (or more) spatial or temporal things and events. Thus, it is not only used in compounds to suggest measurement, but carries meanings such as **gap, opening, space between, time between**, and so forth. **A room is called *ma*, for example, as it refers to the space between the walls; a rest in music is also *ma* as the pause between the notes or sounds.** By the same token, it can also mean **timing**, as in the comic recitation, art called *rakugo*, where *ma* is quite explicitly a part of the craft and skill.¹³¹

Ma does not refer to the measurable aspect of time: it does not count intervals in the form of minutes, hours or days. *Ma* does not refer solely to time or space, but understand time

¹³⁰ Kane, Daniel R. “*The Epic of Tea: Tea Ceremony as the Mythological Journey of the Hero.*” *Kyoto Journal*. N.p., n.d. Web. 14 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.kyotojournal.org/the-journal/culture-arts/the-epic-of-tea/>>.

¹³¹ Pilgrim, Richard B. “*Intervals (“Ma”) in Space and Time: Foundations for a Religio-Aesthetic Paradigm in Japan.*” *History of Religions* Vol. 25. Issue 3 (1986): P. 255-256. JSTOR. Web. 13 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1062515?ref=no-x-route:bb70fa9364e3ab885c7077a9d2db05af>>.

and space in the relationship, which is so close that each of the partners cannot exist on its own. In *ma*, time and space are one, as it is believed that space is perceived through a phenomena appearing in it. Richard B. Pilgrim cites contemporary Japanese architect Isozaki Arata, who tries to compare “Western” and Japanese conception of time and space:

While in the West the space-time concept gave rise to absolutely fixed images of a homogenous and infinite continuum, as presented in Descartes, **in Japan space and time were never fully separated but were conceived as correlative and omnipresent.** (...) Space could not be perceived independently of the element of time [and] time was not abstracted as a regulated, homogenous flow, but rather was believed to exist only in relation to movements or space. (...) Thus, space was perceived as identical with the events or phenomena occurring in it; that is, space was recognized only in its relation to time-flow.¹³²

Ma is often described as negative space, emptiness, void or no-action (in *Noh* theatre). It is characterized by its betweenness, “space between the walls”, “rest between notes”, silent pause between words in speech or moment of no-action in *Noh* theatre. ***Ma* is not understood as a lack (as an empty vessel that should be filled to be complete), it is rather seen as the only entity that is capable to mediate connections and relations between all phenomena.**

By extension, *ma* also means ‘among’. In the compound *ningen* (‘human being’), for example, *ma* (read *gen* here) implies that persons (*nin*, *hito*) stand within, among, or in relationship to others. As such, the word *ma* clearly begins to take on a relational meaning a dynamic sense of standing in, with, among, or between. Related to this, it also carries an experiential connotation since to be among persons is to interact in some dynamic way.¹³³

Ma described as “something”, what is a precondition of interaction of persons in some dynamic way or as “something”, what **creates the interaction is the crucial element for understanding of the roles of host and guest during the flow of tea gathering.**

¹³² Ibid. P. 256.

¹³³ Pilgrim, Richard B. “Intervals (“Ma”) in Space and Time: Foundations for a Religio-Aesthetic Paradigm in Japan.” *History of Religions* Vol. 25. Issue 3 (1986): P. 256. JSTOR. Web. 13 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1062515?ref=no-x-route:bb70fa9364e3ab885c7077a9d2db05af>>.

3.2.2 Embodiment of *ma* in *chanoyu*: silence, bows and *kagamibishaku*

The importance of *ma* for *chanoyu* as the phenomenon based on human interaction and dynamics is expressed also in the definition of this term by authors of *A Chanoyu Vocabulary*: “Space, pause, timing. This concerns the timing that connects one movement to the next, and that connects the host and guests. To gain both a mental a physical sense of this timing is essential in *chanoyu*.”¹³⁴ The mastery of the host can be seen in his ability to perform tea-making procedure very smoothly, in the way that it can be perceived as a flow. Host’s movements should be interconnected, follow one upon another, and as well should be connected the movements of host and guest’s: bows, *sōrei*¹³⁵ (the bows that connects a host with all guests). The timing of movements among guests is also very important and the linkage between movements of each of them creates the image of one body.

In the flow of the tea gathering there is a lot of moments, when silence and no-action is very important. These are especially bows between the actors in the tea room, with tea bowl, to a scroll or before entering the tea room. Several actions made by host during the preparation of tea have a function of “signals”. For instance, there is a bow between host and guests after putting down the ladle on lid rest in the preparation of thick tea and another one after the host receives the tea bowl back from guests and sets it in front of himself. The silence and void moments are filled with the atmosphere of an encounter and become the string which connects all actors within time and space of the encounter.

During the tea-making procedure, there is a moment for the host, which also seems to be connected with the concept of *ma*. This is the pose called *kagamibishaku*, which can be translated as “mirror ladle”. It happens when the host takes a bamboo ladle (*hishaku*) and before he lays it on the lid of kettle rest (*futaoki*). “The ladle is held upright in front of oneself, with its cup facing one as if it is a mirror (*kagami*). (...) The eyes focus on the ‘mirror’, and a deep breath is taken to concentrate mind.”¹³⁶ This pose is essential for the host’s experience of the tea - making procedure and it is interpreted as the moment of concentration, for the reflection of one’s heart or for reflection on the condition of one’s

¹³⁴ Genshitsu, Sen. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the way of tea [Eigo-ban Jitsuyō Chadō Yogo Jiten]*. Vol. 1. Kyoto-shi: Tankosha, 2007. P. 133.

¹³⁵ See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹³⁶ Genshitsu, Sen. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the way of tea [Eigo-ban Jitsuyō Chadō Yogo Jiten]*. Vol. 1. Kyoto-shi: Tankosha, 2007. P. 88.

samādhī^{137,138} It is the moment of selflessness that could be likened to the moment described in *The Conference of Birds*, which will be analysed in chapter 3.4.3. The moment, in which the birds realize that the Simurg, to whom they have experienced a tortuous journey, are themselves. Simurg is the mirror reflection of themselves, thus they are Simurg and they found themselves. Looking into a cup of *hishaku* can remind us of the image of looking for one's self and finding it in the mirror reflection of one's own as in case of group of desolated birds full of expectations of Simurg's face. Similarly, in the look into cup of *hishaku* host can see „only” his own heart, the purity of his soul in very deep concentration to the service to guests.

3.2.3 A missing body and trace

In connection to the perception of time and space in *chanoyu* as well as to the concept of *invisibility*, we can bring out one example of the very intriguing phenomenon. In the tea-making procedure using *daisu* (portable shelf unit) for displaying of tea utensils. At the beginning of tea-making procedure with *daisu* there is the rinse-water receptacle (*kensui*) with the lid rest (*futaoki*) inside. Before preparing the tea host puts *futaoki* out of *kensui* and places it near the heart. *Kensui* is then placed on the left side of the host's body. An interesting moment comes when the host takes decorative metal chopstick for handling charcoal (*kazarihibachi*). Host take chopstick and makes the movement with them over *daisu* shelf. He circumscribes with chopstick the place where was the original place of *kensui*. But the *kensui* is not there anymore. It is a missing body and the host „comes around it”, circumvents it.

The host's usage of space reminds himself as well as the guests of the connection between space and time. It clearly reminds all actors in the tea room of transience, of time and space as well as of the one of human life which „takes place” within time and space.

¹³⁷ “This term in Zen implies not merely equilibrium, tranquillity and one-pointedness, but a state of intense yet effortless concentration, of complete absorption of the mind in itself, of heightened and expanded awareness. Seen from the developing stages leading to satori-awakening, however, Samādhī and enlightenment are different.” Definition from Kapleau, Philip. *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966. See Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms.

¹³⁸ “*Chanoyu to Wa...., Kagami-bishaku*. . “*Chanoyu to Wa...., Kagami-bishaku*. N.p., n.d. Web. 13 Dec. 2014. <<http://chanoyu-to-wa.tumblr.com/post/98040353123/video-7-kagami-bishaku-the-name-means>>.

The *kensui* as a missing body, whose original presence is still in the mind of the host and which should stay also in the minds of the guests. *Kensui* is in at one moment present and in another absent on its original place. This transience of the position of the vessel brings to our mind Derrida's thoughts on *cinders* and *trace*. **Host's conscious movement by the chopsticks works as a remembrance of the past and its connection to present and future moments. It functions as the recall of missing body, as an urgent call for cinders, because "the cinders there are", and the movement works also as a representation of a trace, trace of an object in time and space.**

3.3 Transformative aspects of *chanoyu*

3.3.1 The way of tea as realm of utopia?

Kumakura Isao in his search for origins of *nijiriguchi* speculates that this spatial element was not designed specifically for the use of the way of tea and its settings. He writes:

I contend, therefore, that the earliest *nijiriguchi* was not designed exclusively for the tea room. Rather, it was built as a narrow entranceway separating the realm of tea, including the tea garden, from the outside world of everyday life. **Upon going through this entranceway, one entered a utopia conceived as another world in the mountains**, much like the mountain place within the city described in Rodrigues in *Nihon Kyōkai Shi*, a place, which although in the city, gave the appearance of remote mountains and deep valleys.¹³⁹

Kumakura describes the entrance to the realm of tea as entrance into an utopian realm. What does it mean? Does he describe the special and unusual setting of the spaces for tea gathering? Or does he describe as utopia the whole phenomenon of the way of tea, its principles, relationships between the actors of tea gathering and a whole system that was created incomprehensibly with the basis of the most mundane affair: that of preparing and drinking tea?

¹³⁹ Ibid. P. 52-53.

What would it mean if “the realm of tea” is utopia; if the way of tea is a matter that has no place to live and rest in our world? Is the experience of tea gathering capable to transform one’s understanding of the world and his relatedness to others? Is this system capable to serve as a tool for transformation of one’s nature and if so, in which way does it operate and cause the change? To develop the idea of the way of tea as a realm of utopia we will examine closely 1) the aspects of performing art that can be found in its „construction” with respect to their transformative effects in chapters 3.3.2.2 to 3.3.2.4, 2) the role of the gift, seen as a center of tea gathering, as a medium of transformation of human consciousness and relating to the others in chapter 3.4.2 to 3.4.4.

3.3.2 The way of tea as performance: Transformation through identification with role

The idea of connection of *chanoyu* with performing arts can arise in the mind of the observer of tea ceremony. Several observers of *chanoyu* (e.g. during public demonstrations in the Czech Republic) commented on it as on “the theatre with tea”¹⁴⁰ or “the play with more acts where there is a bowl of tea as the main plot”¹⁴¹. There is a lot of aspects that remind us of this nature of the way of tea: clearly divided the roles of actors in tea gathering, prescribed way of moving in the tea room, almost unchangeable scenery of space for tea gathering, certain choices of props in the form of utensils and accessories for host and guests, scenario for conversations during a tea gathering, etc. We will introduce two possible reasons as well as two possible effects of existing configuration of the way of tea.

3.3.2.1 Learning by looking, learning by doing

First one to be mentioned is the possible “educative” effect of role-playing and performing of roles in the way of tea. This effect may not be directly visible for observer of the tea gathering, but we will try to prove that it is present in the phenomenon of the way

¹⁴⁰ Author’s personal notes of reactions of observers during public demonstrations of tea gathering in Czech Republic.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

of tea and that it is very important mainly for its understanding as a way. To be able to fulfil the role of host or guest there is the process of learning. The student of the way of tea should learn how to use different utensils, how to move and behave in the tea room, how to manage different preparations of charcoal, thin and thick tea, how to lead a conversation, how to bow in different occasions etc. Probably because the origins of the way of tea come from the teaching of Zen Buddhism, an important role is played by the teacher (*sensei*). Regarding the fact that in the way of tea understood as a Buddhist path emphasizes an importance of the transmission of knowledge and skills from one human to another, the relationship between teacher and student and among students of different experience is crucial. Haga Kōshiro explains the matter of transmission in Zen enlightenment in this way:

Zen enlightenment is literally beyond words. Even using a billion words its truth cannot possibly be transmitted to, or from, another. There is no recourse other than to 'know hot and cold for oneself'. For this reason Zen rejects reliance on written texts or concepts and denies their logical explanation and expression. Nevertheless, having said this, Zen recognizes that without some kind of expression there would be no way of transmitting one's enlightenment to another person and no way to discuss and deepen Zen.¹⁴²

For this reason the institution of teacher and student is a very suitable form for transmitting the mastery of the way of tea. Similarly as in case of Zen teaching, also in the case of teaching on the way of tea practice is the crucial point. However, there is a lot of written texts on *chanoyu*, but the core of knowledge is being transmitted from one to another.

The process of transmission of knowledge¹⁴³ has its specifics. At the beginning the student learns by watching and observing the technique and „way of doing” of others (teacher, more experienced students), which is called *minarai*. After the period of *minarai*, the student begins to learn how to enter the tea room, how to walk, how to bow etc. and slowly starts to learn to play the role of guest. The next step is learning how to use different utensils, how to move with them, how to turn them, hold them etc. After certain attainment of faculty of handling with utensils (called *warigeiko*), the student begins with

¹⁴² Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 224.

¹⁴³ We will use the word „knowledge“ while examining the proces of learning in the way of tea, but by the word knowledge we mean rather complex set of mastering the way of tea as a whole system.

first basic types of preparation of tea in the role of host. A very important aspect in learning of the way of tea is the constant awareness of the lack of knowledge of oneself or in other words presence of “the spirit of the beginner”¹⁴⁴ in the student. The need for this quality of the student is emphasized by one of “fathers” of the way of tea, Murata Jukō. Sen Sōshitsu XV cites his warning against “‘pride and obduracy of the heart’ by which he meant that feeling of self-centeredness that could cause one to become set in his own ways”¹⁴⁵ and he adds also the recommendation of Zeami Motokyo aesthetician, actor and playwright living in the 14th and 15th century in Japan, and author of *Kadensho*, treatise on *Nō* drama, that the aspirant should never “forget the spirit of the beginner”.¹⁴⁶ Thus the pride and obduracy of the heart are one of the uttermost threats for the student of *chanoyu*.

3.3.2.2 Role-playing in *chanoyu* and possible interfaces with drama therapy

For the necessity of an inner awareness of one’s spirit of the beginner as well as for the qualities of considerateness, hospitality and open-heartedness, which are consensually presented and accepted by the followers of the way of tea as the crucial ones, we should look at the importance of role-playing in the process of learning and performing *chanoyu*. We suggest the way how to be able to work on a set of following questions. **Is it possible to learn how to be grateful/how to be considerate/how to be respectful through playing the role in which the gratefulness/the considerateness/the respectfulness is essential? Is it possible to learn by adopting the characteristics of one’s role in *chanoyu*?** Are there any methods used for similar purposes apart from the way of tea suggested in the thesis? We can observe the use of **the methods of role-playing or simulation** of acting in various situations in the field of **drama therapy**. Drama therapy is the way of therapy using theatre and drama methods¹⁴⁷. Renee Emunah, director of the Drama Therapy Program at California Institute of Integral Studies, describes the way of possible achievement of positive changes in human behavior and maintaining of situations in real life through techniques of drama therapy:

¹⁴⁴ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i, 1998. P. 132.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Definition of drama therapy: “a type of psychotherapy encouraging patients to use dramatic techniques to deal with emotional and psychological problems”. In Dictionary.com, n.d. Web. 18 Dec. 2014. <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/drama+therapy>>.

Under the guise of play and pretend, we can - for once - act in new ways. The bit of distance from real life afforded by drama enables us to gain perspective on our real-life roles and patterns and actions, and to experiment actively with alternatives. Drama liberates us from confinement, be it socially or psychologically induced. The dramatic moment is the one of emancipation.¹⁴⁸

The phenomenon of tea gathering is, as we have already stated before, obviously tied with role-playing: there are permanent figures (host, guests – first guest, second guest etc.). Each role has though its own script and character description and more over whole formal tea gathering has strict scenario. Can we, knowing these facts, liken the effects of the tea gathering (understood as performance) to that one of drama therapy? How can we speak about possible transformation through role-playing within tea gathering if the transformative process of drama therapy is characterized by the liberation of expression and finding the possibilities how to act in new ways? Isn't thus the role-playing practice in *chanoyu* another capture into the confinement of prescribed roles?

3.3.2.3 Mastering the technique and observing the rules: confinement or possibility of liberation?

There is a word *mushin* which plays an important role in Zen teaching. It can be translated as *no mind*. Ishwar C. Harris in his book *The Laughing Buddha of Tofukuji: The Life of Zen Master Keido Fukushima* describes *mushin* as the “Zen state of no-mind”¹⁴⁹. “Roshi Keido Fukushima likes to describe it as ‘creative mind’, ‘free mind’, or ‘open mind’. The goal of Zen is to achieve and function in this state of mind which transcends all dualities.”¹⁵⁰ *Mushin* usually refers to Japanese martial arts, where it is represented by „absence of discursive thought and judgment, so the person is totally free to act and react towards an opponent without hesitation and without disturbance from such thoughts.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ Emunah, Renee. *Acting for Real: Drama Therapy Process, Technique, and Performance*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1994. P. XIII.

¹⁴⁹ Harris, Ishwar C. „Definition of “*mushin*“ - *The Dictionary of Spiritual Terms*. “ Definition of “*mushin*“ - *The Dictionary of Spiritual Terms*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2014.

<<http://www.dictionaryofspiritualterms.com/public/Glossaries/terms.aspx?ID=393>>.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ “*Mushin*.“ *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, n.d. Web. 18 Dec. 2014.

<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mushin>>.

This concept is also valid in the case of the way of tea. We can relate it to the state of mind of the host. Sen no Rikyū's notion in *Nanpōroku* says:

(...) the true art of *wabi* begins to function only when one can 'put the gauge aside'. What emerges is extremely creative and free. One must not mistake the rule, but neither must one be wedded to it. It is the way of *wabi* tea to be free while still in conformity to the rule. To be able to perform in this way is the true spirit of tea.¹⁵²

The understanding of freedom and creativity can differ. In this case the creativity and freedom is born through mastering technique and observing the rules. Thus the rules are not understood as hindrance for creativity, because they are together with technique the way to attainment of *mushin*, the mind without mind, the state of creative and free mind.

Even though the aforementioned citation usually refers to martial arts techniques, we can appropriate it also into the realm of tea. The description of a person, who can "totally free to act and react towards an opponent" can be appropriated to the person of the host. Only in the state of no-mind can host fully concentrate on the guests. Only in the state of egolessness can host completely pay his attention to the satisfaction of the guests, to their needs and their heart, and to the service for them. **Therefore the host's mastery of rules and techniques of *chanoyu* is the precondition for the existence of devoted service to the guest. And therefore the technique serves as a tool for liberation of one's mind and mastery of technique can serve as a tool for transformation of one's state of mind. Thereafter the mastery of technique serves also as an influential factor of a certain quality of relationship between host and guest.**

3.3.2.4 Scenario and character descriptions in *chanoyu*: incarnation of role

Meanwhile the notion on technique and its importance in *chanoyu* can seem as closer related to the role of host, the matter of scenario and character description is more visibly linked to relationship between host and guest. The form of tea-making procedures, the scenario of tea gathering, the conversation between host and guests and other performative and dramatic elements of *chanoyu* can be perceived as very binding ones. To

¹⁵² Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *The Japanese Way of Tea from Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, 1998. P. 171.

the observer and even to the student of the way of tea it may seem that there is no space for expression of one's own creativity, one's own invention. Every movement is scheduled, the conversation has certain limitations, one's self is diminished. Described aspects have very likely their origin in Zen Buddhism and its teaching, as we mentioned before, however we will try to draw the connection between them and different drama concept: an experience of incarnation into the role and identification with the role. The question we deal with is: Is it possible to transform one's self and one's behavior to others (and relating to others) through one's identification with the role? We will hunt for conceivable answers again on the field of drama therapy.

Drama therapy differs from *chanoyu* in one crucial point: drama therapy uses play, role-playing, simulation of situations, mimesis etc. to liberate person from the need to play socially or psychologically induced roles, which we are forced to or we tend to play in "real life". **Drama therapy tries to show unlimited possibilities of human expression and unlimited number of roles that we can freely and consciously play. *Chanoyu* works with the person in a different way. It offers a set of character, who interact together and has a certain character description and scenario, which they should follow. In our interpretation, *chanoyu* can in this manner contribute to one's incarnation into the role one plays during the tea gathering.** It does not offer free choice of characters nor free choice of their qualities, it offers only two characters (of host and guest) with certain qualities and the ideal image of the relationship of these two characters which consists of considerateness, respectfulness and humility.

Hereto there is a main theme of the performance, which consists of four principles: *wa, kei, sei, jaku* (harmony, respect, purity, tranquillity), which are the framework of an encounter of these characters. **Thus the transformation can happen rather through one's identification with the character and its qualities** (especially regarding ethics) than through an opportunity of liberating one's expressions. **In this way *chanoyu* even though perceived as the realm of utopia or ceremony of giving or as performing art renders itself as a tool for possible transformation of human behavior and relating to the others.**

3.4 Transformation through the bowl of tea

3.4.1 (Ir) relevance of the matter of repaying in understanding the phenomenon of gift

“Can we seriously imagine a gift given to someone such that he could, in principle, never repay it? Wouldn't this exercise demand a lack of consciousness or a devotion that would in fact disqualify the practice of the gift?”¹⁵³ This is the question of Jean-Luc Marion which deals with the possibility of conditions for the existence of the gift that can never be repaid. We have already touched this topic in the examination of Derrida's thoughts on the *impossibility* of the gift in regard to its (un)repayability in chapter 1.3 and 1.5. To begin with further analysis, we have to clarify the understanding of the repay.

Does the repay mean any possible expression that can signify that the act of giving will not remain unnoticed and that the notice will be expressed in the way that can be understood as a gain for the giver? If we understand the repay in these terms, we have to admit **that the nature of the gift for the giver is the loss. If the possibility of the repay of the gift is seen as a fact that can disqualify the genuineness of the gift itself, as with the precondition for our thoughts there is the view of giving as losing and then repay as gaining back by the giver. If the gift functions as “minus” (for the giver) and its repay works as “plus” (for the giver), the thought of the possible “nullification” of the gift can be brought into the mind.**

Though completely different situation occurs **when we leave up understanding the gift as a loss of some kind (for the giver). If we understand the gift (the act of giving) as a gain (for the giver), how can we look at the possibility and meaning of the repay in this case? Could the possibility of repaying in this case disqualify the nature of the gift (its value)? How could it, if the imaginary equation of our example would be “plus” and “plus”, i. e. the gain for the giver from the act of giving and the gain for the giver again because of the repay? If we think of the gift as a gain for the giver, the question of *repayability* loses its basis and becomes irrelevant.**

¹⁵³ Marion, Jean-Luc. *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2002. P. 87.

Jean-Luc Marion introduces an attitude of *bracketing* (using Husserl's term) of givee, giver and gift and tries to show the consequences of this kind of examination¹⁵⁴. We find them very fruitful, but we will not work with them more deeply for the purpose of the thesis, though we want to deal with the phenomenology of the gift in future work. The stress will fall on the relationship of the gift in the way of tea and particularly in the process of the tea gathering with its nature of a medium and with the possible transformation through the phenomenon of gift and through the process of giving.

3.4.2 Gift as a medium of transformation

We will introduce one more understanding of the gift inspired again by the teaching of the Bible, precisely by the note of giving or philanthropy. In Judaism alms-giving; named *tithe giving*; has its grounds in The Fifth Book of Moses, called Deuteronomy. We can read an extract of prescription:

Thou shalt give the tithe of all the increase of thy seed, that cometh forth of the field year by year. And thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God (in the place which he shall choose to cause his Name to dwell there) the tithe of thy corn, of thy wine, and of thine oil, and the firstborn of thy kine, and of thy sheep, **that thou mayest learn to fear the Lord thy God always.**
(Deut. 14:22-23)

The gift thus does not serve only for doing good to others, but it has also certain "educative" purpose. The gift (tithe) serves as a „learning tool”, as a medium to learn to fear from God and to respect and honor God. One possible interpretation can be: Through giving we can learn (get to know, find a way) how to fear God. But what is the purpose of fear the Lord? Maybe that our fear has consequences not only in our relationship with God, but also in the relationship with others. Thus the fear of God could transform our relationships to others. And from our extract from *Deuteronomium* we can learn that **the way leading us to this possible transformation is to give a gift** (tithe in our extract). And the gift is being given to God, but through giving to others. At this moment arises the question, what is the role of others in the process of giving? And if the process of giving is capable to transform our understanding of others, ourselves, and the further understanding our relationship with the world (in regard to the matter or liberation), what is the role of

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. P. 85 – 113.

others in the process of our transformation through giving? How can we understand the remark of Sen Sōshitsu XV that the way of tea is a beautiful way how to find yourself in the presence of others?¹⁵⁵

3.4.3 Transformation of loss into the gift

Even though we realize the connection of the state of the host with the teaching of Zen Buddhism, we will try to make a parallel with the words of the Bible as we yet have done several times. Jesus' speech to disciples as is written in Mathew's Gospel will allow us the possibility of broader reception of the thoughts presented in following chapters: "He that will find his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it." (Mt. 10:39) Or in the Gospel of Luke: "For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." (Luk. 9:24)

The principle is that one of finding, finding oneself. Jesus talks about losing and finding one's soul or one's life and introduces us a paradox: one finds it just when he loses it for Jesus. The structure of this statement obviously indicates that losing and finding oneself is not a matter of ownership at all. Why do we put these words earmarked for disciples in connection with host and guest in *chanoyu*? For better understanding of drawing the connection we can remind that elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus explains, what does it mean to do something "for his sake":

Then shall the king say to them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my father: take the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I thirsted, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in unto you. I was naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or athirst, and gave thee drink? And when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in unto us? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? **And the king shall answer, and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it to me.** (Mt. 25:34-40)

¹⁵⁵ Sen, Sōshitsu, XV. *Tea Life, Tea Mind*. New York: Published for the Urasenke Foundation, Kyoto Weatherhill, 1979.

Rikyū does not directly speak about finding oneself, but how can we interpret his proposition “All is quiet, and the host can talk to no one but the kettle. This is a state in which nothing else exists, a state that cannot be known unless one has attained it oneself.” An image of “state in which nothing else exists” can refer to the state of the concentration of the whole human being on the talk with the kettle, figuratively, on the talk to oneself (or on the talk with God?). One cannot talk to anyone else, only to oneself, *i.e.*, one needs to look into himself, one needs to be aware of this state and needs to try to listen and speak to oneself at one time. This state cannot be mediated, one cannot get to know it from other’s stories, this state can be understood only once being experienced by oneself.

3.4.4. The gift, Zen and transformation of human consciousness

The above-mentioned matters are slightly connected with the roots of *chanoyu* in Zen Buddhism namely in Rikyū’s conception. The ideas of **transformation, liberation and accomplishment of a certain state of consciousness** are very common questions in the teaching of Zen Buddhism. While arguing whether there is a possibility of attaining the state of finding one’s self (with the meaning of one’s true nature which is represented by certain the state of consciousness or awareness) **through an experience of being a host, we can think again in terms of the gift and giving.** If the host who is seen to be a donor attains the state of nothingness (or fullness) or *samādhi*, we have to ask the question: **Isn’t host the one who receives the gift?** Aren’t in this case the strict differentiating between the term “host” and “guest”, “giving” and “receiving” without any importance? If the one who visibly gives is the one who is given in the end and the one who is perceptibly in the role of the one who receives, is giving the space for transformation of the host’s mind and in this way is the one who is giving? **If we understand the process of giving in its complexity in regard to its possible power to transform** (and not only understanding it as a matter of reciprocity) **the roles of donor and donee lose their previous importance.** And as a consequence the main focus is being shifted from the roles of host and guest (donor and receiver) to the gift and the process of giving itself. **The process of giving can be perceived as a space of transformation; as a medium of transformation.**

Our premises for further examinations would be (we have already mentioned some of them):

- Understanding of the gift is not strictly determined by the attitude of givee acceptance, refusal, ignorance, effort to repay etc.), but arises from the relationship between the giver and givee
- The gift can be understood rather as gain both for giver than a loss (regardless to its understanding as „gift as such“)
- Understanding of the gift does not have to be determined by the possibility of its repair
- The gift can be understood as a medium of communication between the actors of the process of giving (the giver and givee, also in case of anonymous or universal givee¹⁵⁶)

The gift understood as a medium can serve as a tool for transformation.

3.4.5 Aim of the way of tea: Encounter with oneself?

Sen no Rikyū strongly emphasizes as the headstone of *chanoyu* the relationship and interaction between host and guest. He uses the term *ichigo*, *ichie* to describe the importance of the gathering in *chanoyu*, while *ichigo*, *ichie* can be translated as „one time, one meeting”. This great importance is being situated on the encounter as a core of the way of tea and tea gathering. Sen no Rikyū’s explanation of *ichigo*, *ichie* in case of tea gathering can be made brighter by using his own words:

Even though the host and the guest may see each other often socially, one day’s gathering can never be repeated exactly. Viewed this way, the meeting is indeed a once-in-a-lifetime occasion. The host, accordingly, must in true sincerity take the greatest care with every aspect of the gathering and devote himself entirely to ensuring that nothing is rough. The guests, for their part, must understand that the gathering cannot occur again and,

¹⁵⁶ Jean-Luc Marion considers Christ’s position as the one of universal givee regarding the eschatological parable. We have mentioned before Jesus’ words from Mathew 25:34-40, where Jesus identifies the gift to “the least of my brethren“ with the gift to Himself. Marion, on basis of this parable, writes that Jesus Christ is in the position of universal givee. Thus the gift is a medium of communication with Jesus. The nature of this medium is though very different from, *e.g.* the one from sacrifice to gods or God which can easily become cunning.

appreciating how the host has flawlessly planned it, must also participate with true sincerity. This is what is meant by 'one time, one meeting'.¹⁵⁷

Some observation important for our matter can be made about another Sen no Rikyū's notes on the moments of highest importance in tea gathering. As we could already understand the crucial role of the interaction between host and guest and as we tried to understand the tea, a bowl of tea as a gift and whole tea gathering as a ceremony (or more precisely as a space, encounter) of giving, following quote may bring slightly different light on possibly the main point of *chanoyu*:

This 'one time, one meeting' has come to an end, and the host reflects upon the fact that it can never be repeated. The highest point of a tea meeting is, in fact, to have a cup of tea alone at this time. All is quiet, and the host can talk to no one but the kettle. This is a state in which nothing else exists, a state that cannot be known unless one has attained it oneself.¹⁵⁸

After the encounter of tea gathering, after serving the guests and paying his whole attention to the satisfaction of the guest's heart, host stays alone. He is patiently waiting until the guests are on their way home and then comes again back to "the scene", crawling through the *nijiriguchi* and sits himself in front of the heart in the tearoom. Rikyū describes the host's feeling as the wish to speak a little bit longer to his guests, trying to rediscover the possibility to spend more time with them even in his mind and thinking about guests' safe arrival to their homes.¹⁵⁹ Suddenly the host is left alone in the tea room and becomes aware of the fact that the meeting can be never repeated in a lifetime. He is aware of the fact that the encounter was unique, and it was possible to happen only once in time and space, the encounter that passed and can never repeat again. Thus the host, in the feeling of transience of human life, meeting and all the world's matter, is left to himself and in Rikyū's words "can talk to no one but the kettle" which is talking by the vapor coming out through the lid and reminding him the sound of wind-in-pines.

The question arises with this image: Why does Rikyū call this precise moment, when the host is very quietly having a cup of tea on his own, as the "highest point of a tea meeting"? Had the meeting not already ended with the departure of guests? What kind of meeting is happening in an empty tea room where there is only the host and „the kettle”

¹⁵⁷ Ii, Naosuke (1858). *Chanoyu Ichie Shū*, in Sen Sōshitsu, ed., *Chadō Koten Zenshū*, vol. 10, p. 331. In Varley, H. Paul., and Isao Kumakura. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1989. P. 187.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. P. 188.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

(though not literally, in the room in this time are another utensils, flower or scroll etc.)? Is there any connection between the meeting that has already happened (that between the host and the guests) and the one that Rikyū describes as a following and the most precious one? If there is a connection between these two meetings, how does it look like? Is the „first” gathering, tea gathering between the host and the guests only a means for possible existence of the “second” meeting? If so, what is the role of the guests and what is the role of the tea itself?

In an effort to find the connection and the relationship between these two meetings of crucial importance in the way of tea, we will need to go back to our thesis: tea is a gift in the tea gathering. If the tea is a gift as we previously described it, both host and guest is of the most importance for the possibility of the process of giving. If the tea is a gift, the guest cannot play only a role of a means for host’s self-recognition and the final meeting with himself. If the main aim of the tea gathering would be host’s having a cup of tea alone, the tea gathering would serve only as a means, it would be misused just for the sake of host’s becoming certain coveted state. We will try to understand Rikyū’s statement in another way: we will try to understand the final host’s state and the host’s meeting with himself as a kind of “side product” of whole tea gathering, but not as an original goal of his all effort expended in the preparation and the fruition of tea gathering.

3.4.6 A transformation that brings unity

Let us illustrate the matter of finding oneself also on an example of another body of narration rooted neither in Japanese, nor in the European tradition. In aforementioned Persian narration called *Mantiku’ t-tair, The Conference of Birds*. This narration tells us a story of a group of birds experiencing a journey full of difficulties, challenges and dangers to reach the hill of Simurg. The aim of the journey is the Simurg itself, the figure which can be interpreted as a god (God), as truth, as new life, as awareness etc. A lot of birds will not achieve the challenging way to Simurg – some of them do not want to give up their comfort, others are too tired to continue, others die during the journey. Finally, only a small group of birds is very close to the hill, courtyard of Simurg. All of them, full of expectations and hope from the King Simurg, are led to surprising finding:

Now the Sun celestial began to shine forth in front of them, and lo! How great was their surprise! In the reflection of their faces these thirty birds of the earth beheld the face of the Celestial Simurg. When they cast furtive glances towards the Simurg, they perceived that the Simurg was no other than those self-same thirty birds. **In utter bewilderment they lost their wits and wondered whether they were their own selves or whether they had been transformed into the Simurg.** Then, to themselves they turned their eyes, and wonder of wonders, those self-same birds seemed to be one Simurg! Again, when they gazed at both in a single glance, they were convinced that they and the Simurg formed in reality only one Being. This single Being was the Simurg and the Simurg this Being.¹⁶⁰

The birds little by little realized that the way to Simurg was nothing else but the way to their own self. And suddenly the difference between themselves and Simurg disappeared, there were no more two beings, but there was one in which there was not any struggle, any disproportion, any difference.

Thereupon the birds lost themselves forever in the Simurg. The shade, thus vanished in the Sun. Neither the traveler remained, nor the guide, nor the path. **Finding the Simurg they found themselves and the riddle of I and Thou was solved.**¹⁶¹

Would it be possible that the host's state of mind (state of his whole being) is influenced just by fulfilling his role of host during the tea gathering? Would it be possible that the host's being is transformed by his humility, respectfulness, considerateness and openness towards the needs of guest's heart? Would it be possible that the host is transformed through the service to the guest? Can one lose himself while serving *the Other*, can one forget oneself while thinking of *the Other's* needs and thus find himself, thus find his identity?

3.4.7 The bowl of tea as a tool for peace development activity

As we have already pointed out before, there seems to be a certain possibility that the peacefulness can be born through the bowl of tea, through the act of giving in the tea

¹⁶⁰ Atṭār, Farīd Al-Dīn, and Edward FitzGerald. *Conference of Birds*. England: Aziloth, 2011. Available from web edition created and published by Global Grey 2013. P. 41.

¹⁶¹ Ibid. P. 42.

gathering and through the relationship between host and guests. As far as the tea, its preparation, its serving, its place in the framework of *chadō* can be a medium through which the peacefulness can be achieved, received and transmitted. To illustrate our theoretical work and to show a real use of the way of tea in peace development, we have chosen several examples. One of them is a tea offering ceremony conducted by Urasenke Daisosho SEN Genshitsu (Sen Sōshitsu XV) honoring the spirits of the war dead and praying for world peace in USS Arizona Memorial in Pearl Harbor on the Hawaiian island of Oahu in 2011.¹⁶²

Among the dignitaries in attendance were three former Hawaii Governors: George ARIYOSHI, John WAIHEE, and Ben CAYETANO. Also, three Pearl Harbor survivors were seated in the front row, as honored guests, and there were representatives of the all-Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 100th Infantry Battalion, and the Nisei who served in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) during WWII.¹⁶³

The occasion of this tea offering, which was a part of peace development act can be viewed also through the context of another occasion. That is an experience of Sen Sōshitsu XV of making tea for kamikaze pilots before their suicide flights during World War II., which we have already described in chapter X.5 (page 21). Another example, can be a visit of Aung San Suu Kyi, Burmese opposition politician, chairperson of of the National League for Democracy in Burma and political prisoner, to Urasenke Konnichian in Kyoto in 2013.¹⁶⁴ This kind of invitation can be interpreted as an effort of the Urasenke headmaster to express understanding and support for non-violent struggle for human rights in different parts of the world. *Chanoyu* serves also as communication tool in personal and diplomatic action as described in official report from the visit of Aung San Suu Kyi:

She expressed interest in whisking a bowl of tea herself, and so, seated at her guest table, she prepared *usucha* with Miss Sen there to coach, and when it was ready, she personally carried it to Dr. Sen and, as they both sat on the *tatami*, she offered it to him. Dr. Sen drank it with zest, saying that he was very happy to drink tea prepared by her.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² “*Tea Offering Ceremony by SEN Genshitsu at the USS Arizona Memorial.*”

[Http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html). N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Dec. 2014.

<[http%3A%2F%2Fwww.urasenke.or.jp%2Ftexte%2Fworld%2Fe_usa02%2Fe_usa02.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/world/Fe_usa02/Fe_usa02.html)>.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ “*Aung San Suu Kyi Visits Konnichian.*” [Http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html).

N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Dec. 2014. <http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/organ/e_guest18/e_guest18.html>.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

Sen Sōshitsu XV Was also one of the speakers at 5th East Asia Tea Culture Symposium & 5th Panel Discussion on Culture and Peace in East Asia held in 2013, which was sponsored by The Urasenke Tankokai Inc.¹⁶⁶ As the last example we will choose to illustrate peace development practice (although the list of events is much longer) is an audience of Sen Sōshitsu XV with Pope Benedict XVI. in the Paul VI. Hall at the Vatican.¹⁶⁷

3.5 Possibility of transformation through the bowl of tea

Can the concept of *ma* be compatible or capable of relationship with our image of the bowl of tea as a medium? If the bowl of tea between host and guests and among guests serves as a time and a space for encounter, as the minimal one, can we describe it also as *ma*? If we can do it, what would be the consequences for our thinking of the way of tea as a medium of transformation? The void, emptiness, nothing etc., these terms are understood as phenomena also in regard to Zen, not as the gap, the space and time between phenomena. Thus, they are not understood as a padding, but on a contrary: as a fullness. Richard B. Pilgrim writes on the ideogram of *ma* (間):

The visual image or character, therefore, suggests a light shining through a gate or door. If we were to take the gate itself as representing the things or phenomena and events of the world, the opening in the gate becomes a *ma* or interval between the things. Yet *ma* is not a mere emptiness or opening; through and in it shines a light, and the function of this *ma* becomes precisely to let that light shine through.¹⁶⁸

Could the bowl of tea, considered to be a medium, become a space-time entity, opening that “let that light shine through”? Can we thus perceive the bowl of tea not “only” as a medium with its very quality of neutrality, but as a medium, as a void that let something go through? Accepting the possibility of this understanding of medium, we should also accept

¹⁶⁶ “5th East Asia Tea Culture Symposium & 5th Panel Discussion on Culture and Peace in East Asia.” [Http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html). N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Dec. 2014.

<http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/world/e_korea3/e_korea3.html>.

¹⁶⁷ “SEN Genshitsu has Audience with Pope Benedict XVI.”

[Http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html](http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/events/index.html). N.p., n.d. Web. 19 Dec. 2014.

<http://www.urasenke.or.jp/texte/world/e_italy02/e_italy02.html>.

¹⁶⁸ Pilgrim, Richard B. „Intervals („Ma“) in Space and Time: Foundations for a Religio-Aesthetic Paradigm in Japan.” *History of Religions* Vol. 25. Issue 3 (1986): P. 258. JSTOR. Web. 13 Dec. 2014. <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/1062515?ref=no-x-route:bb70fa9364e3ab885c7077a9d2db05af>>.

its activity. While the passive form is a space-time entity, through which and in which “shines a light”, an active form lets this light shine through. It is an emptiness, which is in some sense productive, which has the nature of the medium, but of the kind of medium that is characterized rather by its ability to bring to live, to create than by the possibility to transmit. It is the entity which offers itself as a platform and let the light shine through.

What is the light in case of the way of tea, tea gathering? Could it be a peacefulness, very tightly connected with the nature of gift and hospitality? How can the understanding of the bowl of tea as *ma* help us to comprehend the possibility of transformation of human consciousness, human self and human relating to others through a bowl of tea? **If the bowl of tea functions as an entity (space-time) and does not work only as “an interval between the things”, but as an active form of medium, *ma*, which is capable of letting “the things” go through and more precisely providing a platform for things to happen. Thus, it is in the same moment a space (characterized by time-space interrelatedness), where “the things” are being born and where “the thing” can meet and as well a space through which they can go through. In this understanding the bowl of tea can be a moment (within time and space), in which the peacefulness is being born (always from the relationship as well as the gift) and through which it can be transmitted to others. And the matter of *invisibility* does not play any important role in the possibility of success of this transmission as well as the emptiness does not have to be understood as the padding, but rather as the fullness.**

Conclusions

In this thesis, we made observations about and analyzed the phenomenon of the way of tea. Initially we provided a brief cross-section of the history and development of the way of tea and its understanding in different periods and contexts. We also introduced the thoughts of significant personalities in the development of the way of tea as a system. Through the description of the tea gathering, we introduced the concept that a bowl of tea (or tea itself) can be understood as a gift; it plays the role of gift in the tea gathering. **Based upon this description we defined and explored the nature of the gift in the context of the tea gathering and in other “giving” practices as well.** With our observation of ambiguity of one of the key phrases of a tea gathering “*osaki ni*” and its possible connection with power and inequality in the relationship between the actors within a tea gathering, we tried to find similar practices and constructs in a variety of “ceremonies of giving”.

We introduced several functions and meanings of “gift”: a tool for strengthening social status, a creation of debt, that which has to be returned, a bribe, stimulus and commitment in human relations, and a sacrifice. We have also discussed Derrida’s understanding of the gift and his idea of the *impossibility* of the gift with regard to its repair. As another approach to the phenomenon of gift and its nature, we introduced the concept of the *invisibility* of the gift. Examination of the practices of giving and their interpretation with regard to the understanding of the phenomenon of gift, its nature and its role, led us to the conclusion that the practice of giving, the nature of the gift, and the character of the act of giving in the way of tea differs and can be connected with the possibility of transformation of humans relating to others and human social behavior.

To distinguish between examined practises of giving and the one in *chanoyu*, we examined the relationship between hospitality and the phenomenon of gift with regard to the occasion of a tea gathering. We reviewed the Lévinasian concept of *face* and his understanding of the responsibility for *the Other*. Following the thoughts of Emmanuel Lévinas, we described the Japanese concept of *amae* as related to understanding hospitality in *chanoyu*. We also introduced a biblical point of view on the matter of hospitality to provide a more complex image. The concept of *wabi* was introduced for its crucial role in

the way of tea, particularly regarding its aesthetic dimension, unique understanding of the idea of insufficiency as well as its focus on simplicity and austerity, which is very important for the interpretation of *chanoyu* as a possible tool for developing peace. We problematized the nature of hospitality in the tea gathering by pointing out the scenario of the gathering with its role-playing.

In the third chapter, which can be perceived as the core of the thesis, we examined the maxim promoted by Sen Sōshitsu XV, “*Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea*”. **We introduced the idea of the bowl of tea as a medium, which, thanks to its character as gift, can serve as a medium of transformation. In regard to our prior examination, we proposed that a bowl of tea (tea itself) is a medium of transformation of human behavior.** In order to examine transformative possibilities of the way of tea, we have used several different perspectives to research different transformative aspects.

We examined the dynamics of a tea gathering by using a spatial semiotics approach. By examining the development, usage and connotations of the *ichijō-daime* tea room (one-and-half tatami size tea room), *nijiriguchi* entrance, and *roji*, we found the roots of transformation in spaces closely connected with a *chanoyu* presentation. The perception of minimal space for an ideal encounter between the host and the guest led us to the idea of the bowl of tea itself as a *place* for meeting. The origin of the *nijiriguchi* - crawling in entrance - directed our focus to understanding of *chanoyu* as a performing art with a strict division of the roles, a scenario, and also as a realm of utopia, of the world that differs from the mundane world. Interpreting the meaning of *roji* in the system of the way of tea highlighted its transformative capabilities and its close relationship to the teaching of Zen Buddhism’s ideas of liberation of the human mind.

Using the “Western” distinction between time and space and describing the understanding of the importance of timing in *chanoyu*, we confronted *the Otherness* of the Japanese understanding of time-space relationship. **Through a close examination of the term *ma*, we were able to see the importance of void, emptiness, interval, and betweenness in the development of our thesis of a bowl of tea as a gift and the possibility of transmission of peacefulness through its giving and receiving.** In relation to the concept of *ma* we were able to go back to Jacques Derrida and his concept of *trace* and *cinders*. Examining *chanoyu* as a kind of performance resulted in a very interesting direction to our thoughts on transformation and precisely to the thought of the way of tea

as a tool capable of transforming one's relationship to the others, but in particular to oneself.

We emphasized the “educative” aspect of the way of tea as well as the way of learning and transmitting the body of knowledge from one human to another one (from teacher to student, etc.). An assimilation of *chanoyu* with methods of drama therapy helped us comprehend the possible transformation through the focus of the practitioner to identify with the role of host or guest. **By analyzing the role of technique and scenario of a tea gathering, we were able to see the mastery of technique in the way of tea not as a hindrance, but rather as a tool for liberation of the human mind and its full concentration put into service to the others.**

In the very last part of the thesis we synthesized our thoughts: **the bowl of tea as a center of tea gathering; the bowl of tea as a gift; the bowl of tea as a gift which cannot be repayed (we also closely examined the relevance of the matter of repaying in understanding of the gift) because of the scenario and rules of tea gathering (of *chanoyu* as the “ceremony of giving”); the spatial element of The Way of Tea as one's giving rise to possibility of transformation of human consciousness; understanding the gift not as a loss, but as a gain; and understanding of the act of giving as an act of transformation of loss into gain and possibly liberation. We also examined the bowl of tea as a medium of transformation of the host's mind and of the service to others as a possible way to finding one's identity.** We looked at parallels in the Bible as well as in the Persian story of the conference of birds experiencing a tortuous journey to King Simurg and resulting with coming to themselves. We introduced examples of peace promoting activities by the grand masters of Urasenke School of Tea as an illustration for the fact that the way of tea is being advanced as peace development tool.

Our last effort focused on a synthesis of the findings of our research. **We emphasized the role of the bowl of tea as a medium by expanding this thought with the concept of *ma*. The conjunction of the concept of *ma* with transformative possibilities of the way of tea helped us to distinguish understanding of “tea” with the nature of the medium and its neutrality, understanding “tea” as *ma* and thus as an active source, fruitful emptiness or an interval full of potentialities.** Here we found the possible source for understanding the way of tea as a tool of transformation of human

consciousness into a state of peacefulness and thus also capable of transforming human relationships and social behavior.

Let us end with paraphrasing the words from the end of chapter 3.5:

If the bowl of tea functions as an entity and does not work only as “an interval between the things”, but as an active form of medium, *ma*, which is capable of letting “the things” go through and more precisely providing a platform for things to happen. Thus, it is in the same moment a place, where “the things” are being born and where “the things” can meet and as well a place they can go through. In this understanding the bowl of tea can be a moment in which the peacefulness is being born (always from the relationship as well as the gift) and through which it can be transmitted to others. And the matter of *invisibility* does not play any important role in possibility of success of this transmission as well as the emptiness does not have to be understood as the padding, but rather as the fullness.

Afterword

I will be grateful to dedicate my further personal and academic research into the many other topics connected with the way of tea and mainly with the matters we have already mentioned, but due to the scope and focus of this thesis, we were not able to research them in the desired depth. Further research will enable me to introduce the nature of gift and the attitude of Jean-Luc Marion, an apology and its nature related with the work of Jacques Derrida, as well as to develop the understanding of the way of tea as utopia and as a specific community in regard to its origins and the way of its functioning. Another topic that is wished to be discussed is the one dealing with an interfaces of the way of tea and Christianity, the concept of *ma* and the concept of *mushin* in *chanoyu*. From the perspective of semiotics I would like to broaden the field of investigation of spatial semiotics to another elements of tea garden and other places connected with the way of tea.

From outlined relationships of *chadō* and ethics and its possible effects of the functioning of community I would like to work further on the ideas of Emmanuel Lévinas with regard to respectfulness and considerateness as attitudes explicitly promoted through the way of tea, as well as on the ideas of Martin Buber¹⁶⁹ regarding the performing *chanoyu* and its role in the possible transformation of the relationship between “I” and “You” (“Thou”).

To further develop the idea of transformation through an experience of the way of tea, I would like to examine the role of human body as a medium of transformation of human self. For this purpose it would be helpful to analyze bodily experience of the actors of the tea gathering as well as of the students and practitioners and try to discover possible links between corporal and mental states.

I deeply believe that I will be able to make a research in some of these fields and I wish to all the followers, students and practitioners of the way of tea (including myself) to be aware of the “spirit of the beginner” and to endeavour to spread the peacefulness through the medium of the bowl of tea.

¹⁶⁹ Buber, Martin, and Walter Arnold. Kaufmann. *I and Thou*. Martin Buber; a New Translation with a Prologue „I and You“ and Notes. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1996.

Glossary of frequently used Japanese terms¹⁷⁰

Chadō

Literally, tea way. A term referring to *chanoyu*. “*Chanoyu*” is regarded as a kind of common name, whereas „*chadō*” served as a formal name. Term “*chadō*” includes the understanding that it is the “way” or “spiritual discipline” of *chanoyu*, not a simple amusement. It connotes a consciousness of it being a way to learn manners, to train and nurture one’s spirit, and to undergo religious training.

Chaji

Literally, tea function. Tea get-togethers, in general referred to as *chakai*. In most cases involve the serving of a bowl of thin tea (*usucha*) to each guest. However, a *chaji* fundamentally consists of two parts. During the first (*shoza*), the host serves a meal and lays the charcoal. Then there is an intermission (*nakadachi*), and in the latter half (*goza*) there is thick tea (*koicha*), the replenishing of the charcoal (*gozumi*), and finally thin tea.

Chanoyu

Literally, hot water for tea. It means the art of preparing tea, and was a synonymous with *chasuki* in the Middle Ages. Since modern times, the word has come to be the popular way to refer to *chadō* (the way of tea).

Chashitsu

Tea house/room; a building designed to be used for a tea function.

Chawan

Tea bowl. In *chanoyu*, this is a synonym for *matchachawan*, a bowl in which to prepare the powdered green tea beverage, and from which to drink it.

Iemoto

¹⁷⁰ The definitions presented in the glossary are adapted and shortened by the author and predominantly comes from Genshitsu, Sen. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the way of tea [Eigo-ban Jitsuyō Chadō Yogo Jiten]*. Vol. 1. Kyoto-shi: Tankosha, 2007. If another sources were used to provide the definitions, they are referred in the footnote.

A term used in reference to family lines responsible for carrying forward certain forms of traditional culture, such as *chadō* (the way of wear), *kadō* (flower arrangement), *kōdō* (incense appreciation), *nōgaku* (Japanese classical no theatre art), or the person who leads the family. *Iemoto* in traditional culture began to appear in documents from the mid-18th century.

Kyaku

A guest of tea gathering.

Nijiriguchi

A small crawl-in entrance peculiar to a tea room. Usually a wooden sliding upper rail. It is thought that this kind of entrance was perfected in the days of Sen no Rikyū.

Roji

A garden approach to a tea house. Sen no Rikyū is the one who first used the term *roji* literally meaning *dewy ground*, for this garden, emphasizing its spiritual aspect and likening its environment to the realm of the Buddhas. It is said, step by step as you pass through this garden to enter the tea room, you can become cleansed of your 'secular dust'.

Samādhi

This term in Zen implies not merely equilibrium, tranquillity and one-pointedness, but a state of intense yet effortless concentration, of complete absorption of the mind in itself, of heightened and expanded awareness. Seen from the developing stages leading to *satori*-awakening, however, *samādhi* and enlightenment are different.¹⁷¹

Satori

In Zen enlightenment that is, Self-realization, opening the Mind's eye, awakening to one's True-nature and hence of the nature of all existence.¹⁷²

Shōkyaku

The principle guest, also called the first guest.

¹⁷¹ Definition shortened from Kapleau, Philip. *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

¹⁷² Definition shortened from Kapleau, Philip. *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice, and Enlightenment*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

Shōmen

Literally, the front. This indicates a position facing direct center front of anything. Vessels and other object have a front point.

Sōrei

A bow by all. This refers to when the host bows to the guests and all the guests together make a deep bow in response.

Tatami

A mat with a straw base covered with rush. In ancient times *tatami* were a kind of seating cushions. There are several *tatami* on the floor of the tea room.

Teishu

A host, a person sponsoring the tea gathering. The counterpart of *kyaku* or “guest (s)”.

Temae

General term for procedures for making tea. In the Urasenke tradition, this term is used to indicate the procedures for making thick tea (*koicha*), thin tea (*usucha*), for laying charcoal, and the procedures included in 16 specific practices and the *shikaden* and *okuden*.

Tokonoma

The alcove in a traditional Japanese room. Every tea room has one. When guests enter a tea room, they approach the *tokonoma* (*toko*) and view the display there.

Tsukubai

The water basin for rinsing the hands and mouth for purification. One has to crouch down (*tsukubau*) to use it. This low style of water basin is incorporated in *roji* garden approaches to tea houses.

Wabi

A word of fundamental principle of the way of tea. It includes such connotations as being perplexed, enjoying the retired life, astringency, soberness, simplicity, and rusticity. As *chadō* developed, *wabi* became the word describing its highest reach.

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