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## Abstract

Today, *chawan* (tea culture) is predominantly practiced by women and is associated with femininity. However, women's tea practice is said to be a relatively recent development within tea history, dating back only to the beginnings of modernization.

**REDISCOVERING WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF JAPANESE TEA CULTURE, FROM EDO TO MEIJI**

popular literature, guides of tea gatherings, to show the various ways in which women were involved in the practice and production of Japanese tea culture during the Edo period (1600-1868). In particular, it shows that

there was a well-established discourse on women's tea in this period, which laid the foundations for its subsequent resurgence. This research contributes to a new understanding of tea history, and beyond that, it also adds to the growing body of

literature which suggests that the early Meiji period was not the nadir for Japanese women. Rather, it was a period when women were actively involved in cultural practices and production.

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This thesis meets the requirements of submission for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy at the University of Sydney

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Today, *chanoyu* (tea culture) is predominantly practised by women and is associated with femininity. However, women's tea practice is said to be a relatively recent development within tea history, dating back only to the beginnings of modernization during the Meiji period (1868-1912). This thesis argues that women's tea practice has a much longer history. It examines a wide range of sources, including popular literature, guides for women's edification, and records of tea gatherings, to show the various ways in which women were involved in the practice and production of Japanese tea culture during the Edo period (1600-1868). In particular, it shows that there was a well-established discourse on women's tea in this period, which laid the foundations for its subsequent growth. This thesis therefore contributes to a new understanding of tea history, and beyond that, it also adds to the growing body of literature which suggests that the early modern period was not the nadir for Japanese women. Rather, it was a period when women were actively involved in cultural practices and production.

University of Sydney have also been generous with their time and comments, particularly Matthew Snaves. I would not have been able to do this work without the assistance of the Inaga Library Loans staff at Fisher Library. I owe a particularly large debt of gratitude to Hiroko Kobayashi for her help with reading and translating many of the primary sources used in this thesis. I thank her for her patience, kindness and willingness to share her knowledge and experience.

I would like to thank all of the bodies from whom I received funding for my research. The Australian Government and the University of Sydney provided me with an Australian Postgraduate Award. The University of Sydney also provided me with several grants to undertake research trips to Japan, through the Postgraduate Research Support Scheme, the Faculty of Arts Research Travel Grant, and a Grant-In-Aid from the A.R. Davis Memorial Scholarship. The School of Languages and Cultures and the Department of Japanese Studies provided me with supplementary research and travel grants. I also received a one-year research fellowship from the Japan Foundation which I spent as a visiting research student in the department of Japanese studies, The Advanced University for Graduate Studies, at the International Research Centre for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken), with the support of Inaga Shigemitsu. The fellowship gave me a wonderful opportunity to spend time in Japan conducting research and meeting scholars, and indeed the entire direction of my thesis changed as

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a result of this experience. I must thank the staff of the Office of Research Exchange for the assistance in making my time at Nichibunken comfortable and profitable. I also met several scholars there who helped me enormously with my research, in particular Patricia Fister and Andrew Gerstle. I thank both of them for suggesting new lines of enquiry and for their encouragement. I would also like to thank Susan McArver, for her support and friendship.

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## Note

Japanese names follow the Japanese order of surname first, unless it is an author who largely publishes in English. At their first appearance Japanese characters are provided in parentheses. A glossary of names can be found at the back of the thesis.

Japanese place names and words commonly used in English, such as Kyoto and shogun, are not italicized and a macron is not used for long vowels. Japanese words not commonly used in English are italicized. At their first appearance Japanese characters and an English translation are provided in parentheses. Thereafter, the English translation is used where possible. A glossary of all Japanese terms is provided at the back of the thesis for quick reference.

Dates prior to the first year of the Meiji period (1868) have been converted to their approximate year by the Western calendar, following the reference list created by Michael Geoffrey Watson at Meiji Gakuin University, which can be found at:

<http://www.meijigakuin.ac.jp/~watson/ref/dates1600.html>

When discussed in the text, days and months have not been converted to the Western calendar. So a Japanese date of 文政 8 年 1 2 月 1 3 日 is written as the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, 1825. In the footnotes and appendices, for simplicity, dates are written as year/month/day. In this example, the date is written as 1825/12/13.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations in the thesis are by the author.

## Table of contents: Volume I

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Acknowledgments</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Note</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Table of contents: Volume I</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Japanese Tea Culture .....	11
State of the Field: Women in Tea History .....	16
State of the Field: Women and Culture in the Edo Period .....	27
Methodology .....	33
Chapter Structure .....	36
Conclusion .....	39
<b>Chapter One: Representations of Female Tea Practitioners in Popular Literature and Theatre</b> .....	<b>41</b>
Popular Literature and Early Modern Japanese Society .....	41
The Courtesan .....	45
The Accomplished Wife .....	57
The Tea Master's Wife .....	60
The Noble Samurai Woman .....	65
Conclusion .....	69
<b>Chapter Two: Women as Practitioners and Producers of Tea Culture</b> .....	<b>70</b>
Records of Women's Participation in Tea Culture .....	70
Utensils and the Production of Tea Culture .....	83
Women of the Imperial Family .....	84
Tagami Kikusha and Ôtagaki Rengetsu: practitioners and producers of tea culture ..	93
Conclusion .....	107
<b>Chapter Three: Establishing an Elite Discourse on Women's Tea Practice</b> ....	<b>109</b>
Popularisation Among Male Commoners .....	110
An Unexpected Request .....	117
A Handbook for Women's Tea .....	122
Conclusion .....	135
<b>Chapter Four: A Popular Discourse on Women's Tea</b> .....	<b>137</b>
Tea Culture, Gender and Status .....	138
Women as Readers and Consumers .....	141
Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity .....	152
Learning the Basics .....	168
Becoming Graceful .....	174
Conclusion .....	187
<b>Chapter Five: Tea in the Inner Quarters</b> .....	<b>190</b>
Women in Service .....	191
Beyond the Years Spent in Service .....	197
Learning Tea as Preparation for Going into Service .....	200
Women and Tea Culture in the Ii Household .....	209
Putting Theory into Practice .....	216
Conclusion .....	224
<b>Chapter Six: Meiji: A New Beginning or a Continuation?</b> .....	<b>227</b>
Modernisation of the Tea World .....	228



Tea and Women's Education .....	229
A Written Discourse on Tea for Women.....	232
Tea and Modern Life .....	243
Women as Tea Teachers.....	248
The Growth of Women's Tea .....	252
Beyond the Meiji Period .....	257
Conclusion .....	259
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>261</b>

## **Volume II: Bibliography, glossaries and appendices**

## Table of figures

Figure 1: Illustration of chanoyu (Tsutsumi Tōrin).....	10
Figure 2: <i>Scenes of the Twelve Months: Opening of the Hearth in the Tenth Month</i> (Keisai Eisen) .....	49
Figure 3: <i>Picture of a Beauty Doing Tea</i> (Yamazaki Ryūjo).....	50
Figure 4: Tenmoku tea bowl (bridal trousseau of the Hitotsubashi).....	52
Figure 5: Gold lacquer-ware utensil stand (bridal trousseau of the Uesugi) .....	52
Figure 6: Black lacquer-ware utensil stand and tea utensils (bridal trousseau of the Hitotsubashi) .....	53
Figure 7: Stand with tea utensils (bridal trousseau of Chiyohime) .....	54
Figure 8: Brazier and kettle (bridal trousseau of Chiyohime).....	55
Figure 9: Tea caddy (bridal trousseau of Chiyohime).....	56
Figure 10: <i>Tea and Flowers: The Actors Yamashita Matatarō I and Nakamura</i> <i>Tomijūrō I as Watanabe Kiyō Takiguchi and the Courtesan Hatsuhana</i> (Kiyohiro Torii).....	68
Figure 11: Set of portable tea utensils (Hōkyōji convent).....	88
Figure 12: Silver brazier and kettle (Donkein convent) .....	89
Figure 13: Tea utensils on a stand (Reikanji convent) .....	90
Figure 14: Black raku tea bowl with a design of a sacred jewel (Chūgūji convent)...	91
Figure 15: <i>Nashiji</i> lacquer ware tea container (Chūgūji convent).....	91
Figure 16: Procedures for the <i>shin no daisu</i> style of preparing tea (Chūgūji convent)	92
Figure 17: 'Shoka' tea bowl .....	97
Figure 18: 'Idesoyo' bamboo tea scoop .....	98
Figure 19: 'Wakamatsu' tea bowl .....	103
Figure 20: Red Raku tea bowl.....	103
Figure 21: 'Kamiyama' bamboo tea scoop and storage boxes.....	105
Figure 22: 'Matsu' bamboo tea scoop and storage boxes .....	105
Figure 23: Positions for placing the oil lamp, paper-enclosed oil lamp and candlestick in the four and a half mat tea room ( <i>Toji no tamoto</i> ) .....	123
Figure 24: Placement of the fresh water jar, tea caddy and tea bowl in a four and a half mat room ( <i>Toji no tamoto</i> ) .....	124
Figure 25: Utensils for use in laying charcoal during the summer season ( <i>Toji no</i> <i>tamoto</i> ).....	125
Figure 26: Arrangement of utensils on a stand ( <i>Toji no tamoto</i> ) .....	126
Figure 27: Essential Sentences for Women ( <i>Joyō fuku judai</i> ) .....	144
Figure 28: A Reading and Writing School for Girls ( <i>Onna terako chōhōki</i> ) .....	145
Figure 29: Illustrations of tea utensils ( <i>Onna yō kinmōzui</i> ) .....	151
Figure 30: <i>Beauty Playing the Koto</i> (Suzuki Harunobu) .....	154
Figure 31: Illustration of how the utensils are arranged on a stand ( <i>Joyō fuku judai</i> ) .....	156
Figure 32: Illustrations of tea utensils ( <i>Joyō fuku judai</i> ).....	157
Figure 33: Illustrations of tea utensils ( <i>Joyō fuku judai</i> ).....	158
Figure 34: 'Night Rain on Stand' (Suzuki Harunobu), .....	160
Figure 35: 'Night Rain on Stand' (Torii Kiyonaga),.....	161
Figure 36: Tea, a 'women's art' ( <i>Onna rōei kyōkunka</i> ).....	166
Figure 37: 'Information on tea' ( <i>Onna kuku no koe</i> ) .....	170

Figure 38: Wife making tea for her husband and his guest ( <i>Onna shisho geibun zue</i> ) .....	180
Figure 39: Illustrations of tea utensils ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ) .....	181
Figure 40: Illustrations of various sizes and shapes of lacquer-ware tea caddies ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ). .....	182
Figure 41: Illustrations of a <i>tenmoku</i> tea bowl ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ) .....	183
Figure 42: Illustration of a cold water jar ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ) .....	184
Figure 43: Illustration of a kettle ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ) .....	185
Figure 44: Illustrations of stand for a <i>tenmoku</i> tea bowl ( <i>Konrei dôgu zushû</i> ) .....	186
Figure 45: <i>Oku-bôkô shusse sugoroku</i> .....	204
Figure 46: Detail of <i>Oku-bôkô shusse sugoroku</i> .....	205
Figure 47: <i>Musume shogei shusse sugoroku</i> .....	206
Figure 48: Detail of <i>Musume shogei shusse sugoroku</i> .....	207
Figure 49: Detail of <i>Musume shogei shusse sugoroku</i> .....	208
Figure 50: Doll's utensils of Yachiyo, Ii Naosuke's daughter .....	222
Figure 51: Detail of utensil stand with tea utensils from the doll's utensils of Ii Yachiyo. ....	223
Figure 52: Illustrations of tea utensils ( <i>Nihon joreishiki taizen</i> ) .....	234
Figure 53: Elderly woman instructing three young women in tea ( <i>Katei nichiyô fujo hōkan</i> ) .....	236
Figure 54: <i>Matsu toku aoi nigi ô-oku sugoroku</i> . ....	240
Figure 55: Detail of <i>Matsu toku aoi nigi ô-oku sugoroku</i> .....	241
Figure 56: <i>Fujin te-shigoto sugoroku</i> .....	242
Figure 57: Detail of <i>Fujin te-shigoto sugoroku</i> .....	243

## Introduction



Figure 1: Illustration of chanoyu (茶の湯の図 chanoyu no zu).  
Tsutsumi Tōrin III. Kansei period (1789-1801).  
Hanging scroll, colour on silk, 95.4 x 42.2 cm.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Image source: Kobayashi Tadashi (ed), *Nikuhiitsu uikyo-e taikan*, 2: Tokyo Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1994), plate 32. p. 148.

Gengensai [eleventh generation head of the Urasenke school of tea]...was the first, also, to open the doors of tea to women. Together with the martial arts, *chadô* [The Way of Tea] up until the Edo period was considered a skill which samurai warriors and people in that sphere mastered. Involvement in *chadô* also provided such men with a place and opportunity to socialize. Women were not permitted to take part in formal tea gatherings.<sup>2</sup>

How are we to reconcile the *Illustration of chanoyu* by Tsutsumi Tôrin (Figure 1) with the above quote, from the recently retired fifteenth generation head of the Urasenke school of tea, Hôunsai Sen Sôshitsu XV (鵬雲齋千宗室 15代 1923-)? If the world of tea was closed to women during the Edo period (1600-1868)<sup>3</sup>, why would an artist of that time choose to depict a woman alongside tea utensils to represent tea culture? Was this merely an artistic device, with a woman portrayed as part of the vogue for *bijin* (美人 beautiful women) paintings? Or, does it point to a connection between women, indeed between femininity, and tea culture that had meaning for the artist and resonance for his audience?

These are among the questions that this thesis aims to answer, by examining the history of women's participation in tea culture during the early modern period (here broadly defined as the late sixteenth through nineteenth centuries). We will find that not only did women participate in tea culture well before the time of Gengensai (玄々齋 1810-1877), including in formal tea gatherings, they were encouraged to do so. In some circumstances, women were also producers of tea culture. Thus, we find that there were various motivations for women to study tea, and various types of female tea practitioner. By the end of the Edo period, tea had become particularly associated with genteel femininity, paving the way for the growth of women's tea in the Meiji period (1868-1912) and beyond.

## Japanese Tea Culture

This thesis deals with a particular aspect of Japanese tea culture known variously as *chanoyu* (茶の湯 hot water for tea) or *sadô/chadô*<sup>4</sup> (茶道 The Way of

<sup>2</sup> Sen Sôshitsu XV (1993), 'Autobiographical Essay-3: The Diffusion of the Way of Tea', *Chanoyu Quarterly* 73 (1993), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> The family name of the ruling shoguns, Tokugawa, could also be used to describe this period, however, as Edo period is the more commonly employed term in cultural history this will be used throughout the thesis.

<sup>4</sup> The older and more common reading is *sadô*, however, in the post World War Two period the Urasenke school began using *chadô* because they feel it is easier for foreigners, to whom they have been vigorously promoting the

Tea). During the early modern period, which is our concern here, *chanoyu* was the most commonly used term to refer to the practice, with *sadô/chadô* being a later term coined to evoke connotations of a spiritual path. In English, 'tea ceremony' has been the most widely used translation of *chanoyu*. However, scholars have recently begun to move away from using this term, preferring instead to speak of tea culture to capture the breadth of *chanoyu* as a culture and practice which includes more than just preparing and drinking tea, such as art connoisseurship, food preparation, and architecture; a breadth which is not encompassed by the term 'tea ceremony'.<sup>5</sup> Whilst *chanoyu* and *sadô/chadô* are the formal terms used to describe tea culture, in every day life, in both the early modern and modern periods, when most practitioners speak of or write about the practice they simply refer to it as *ocha* (お茶 tea). 'Tea', then, is a beverage, but is also the practice itself; tea is something one does.

Tea culture in the early modern period was not limited to *chanoyu*. *Sencha* (煎茶 Chinese style steeped tea drinking) was also an important cultural practice, which rivaled *chanoyu* for the affections of the literati in the latter part of the period.<sup>6</sup> The example of the Buddhist nun Ôtagaki Rengetsu (大田垣蓮月 1791-1875), discussed in Chapter Two, a woman who was active in both forms of tea culture, suggests that an examination of women's participation in *sencha* may also be fruitful. Here, though, the focus is limited to *chanoyu*, for a discussion of women in the histories of both *chanoyu* and *sencha* would be far too large an undertaking for one thesis. Likewise, other arts in which women also participated, such as flower arrangement (生花 *ikebana*) and incense appreciation (香道 *kôdô*) are not explored. These arts were often treated in the same sections as tea in guides for women's edification, discussed in Chapter Four. Yet, incense appreciation plays only a small role in contemporary Japanese culture, unlike tea and flower arrangement which are thriving arts both in Japan and abroad. Both arts are also, in the contemporary period, practised mostly by women and associated with femininity and thus an examination of the historical roots of this association is of relevance to understanding

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practice, to deal with as in virtually every other instance the reading of the character 茶 is *cha*, for example, *chawan*, (茶碗 tea bowl) *chashaku* (茶杓 tea scoop) etc.

<sup>5</sup> For example see Morgan Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2003).

<sup>6</sup> See Patricia Graham, *Tea of the Sages: The Art of Sencha* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998).

contemporary culture.<sup>7</sup> However, tea is uniquely positioned to provide us with insight into the body and bodily discipline. More so than flower arrangement, or other arts, tea focuses on comportment. Examining tea, particularly those who studied it and why, can thus help us to extend our understanding of status, which was explicitly connected to appearance, in early modern Japan.

The beverage that we speak of when discussing *chanoyu* is a bowl of powdered green tea (抹茶 *matcha*), which has been mixed with hot water and whisked, either to a thin consistency (薄茶 *usucha*), or to a thick, viscous, consistency (濃茶 *koicha*). The practice of drinking tea in this way came to Japan from China in the hands of Buddhist monks, who used it as an aid to meditation, in the Heian period (784-1185). It became popular when it was re-introduced by the monk Eisai in the Kamakura period (1185-1392). As tea drinking spread from the priesthood to the nobility in the Muromachi period (1392-1573), it became a form of leisure involving gambling and games in which different types of tea were classified and compared. During the later part of this period, and the subsequent Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573-1603), tea culture became codified into the form we know today as *chanoyu*. The three key figures credited with the development of tea culture in this period are Murata Shukô/Jukô (村田珠光 1423-1502), Takeno Jôh (武野紹鷗 1502-1555), and Sen no Rikyû (千利休 1521-1591). These men were merchants who adapted the culture of tea that had been popular among the court aristocracy and elite warriors to suit their own lifestyles, which were humbler by comparison. They forged a style of tea practice known as *wabi-cha* (詫茶 austere style of tea), incorporating rustic and rough Japanese wares into their tea practice, rather than the more opulent Chinese wares which had previously been in vogue, and building small tea rooms sometimes no bigger than one *tatami* mat, for example.<sup>8</sup> They also advised and collaborated with the political rulers of the day, such as Oda Nobunaga (織田信長 1534-1582) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣秀吉 1537-1598). By the start of the Edo period, art objects, architecture, and garden design had all become inextricably linked to tea culture. It was practised by wealthy merchants and political rulers alike. Tea had

<sup>7</sup> For a history of *ikebana* which focuses on women's participation see Kobayashi Yoshiho, *Hana no seiritsu to tenkai* (Tokyo: Izumi Shôten, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> On the early history of tea see Sen Sôshitsu XV, *The Japanese Way of Tea: From its origins in China to Sen Rikyû*, translated by V. Dixon Morris, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Kumakura Isao, *Chanoyu no rekishi: Sen no Rikyû made* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 1990); and Ishida Masahiko, *Chanoyu zenshi no kenkyû: Sôdai henchu bunka kansei kara Nihon chanoyu e* (Tokyo: Yuzankaku, 2003).

thus become a necessary cultural accomplishment for those aspiring to political power and elite status.

Following the death of Rikyû, who was forced to commit suicide on the orders of Hideyoshi, the Sen estate was eventually inherited by his grandson Sen Sôtan (千宗旦 1578-1658).<sup>9</sup> He then divided the estate among his three sons, thereby establishing the three Sen (三千家 *san Sen-ke*) branches and tea schools: Omotesenke (表千家), Urasenke and Mushanokôjisenke (武者小路千家).<sup>10</sup> These three schools remain the most influential schools of tea in modern Japan. However, over the course of the early modern period many other schools of tea were also important, and often more dominant within the world of tea than the Sen schools. These include the Sekishû (石州), Enshû (遠州), Oribe (織部), Horinouchi (堀之内) and Yabunouchi (藪之内) schools, many of which were founded by daimyô tea masters. The differences between their style of tea and that of the Sen schools has led to the term *daimyô-cha* (大名茶 warrior style of tea) being used to describe a style which was more ostentatious and therefore suited to the lifestyles of the military and political leaders of the Edo period.<sup>11</sup> It is particularly associated with schools such as Sekishû and Oribe. This, then, is the institutional framework of tea culture in the early modern period, with which we are concerned.

No matter what the school, the practice of tea is centred around the procedures for making tea (点前 *temae*). Slight differences between schools in manners, ways of moving and handling utensils exist. However, these are not of significance to this study. The most salient feature of tea culture for us are the procedures for making tea,

<sup>9</sup> There are numerous anecdotes about the events leading to Rikyû's death but for academic studies which deal with it see Beatrice M. Bodart, 'Tea and Counsel: The Political Role of Sen Rikyû', *Monumenta Nipponica* 32 (1977), pp. 49-74; and Gregory P. A. Levine, *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), pp. 83-143.

<sup>10</sup> On Sen Sôtan and his sons see Morgan Pitelka, 'Sen Kôshin Sôsa (1613-1672): Writing Tea History', in Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture*, pp. 86-109; and Paul E. Demura-Devore, 'The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists in Seventeenth Century Tokugawa Japan: The Case of Sen Sôtan and Sons' (PhD. Dissertation, The University of Hawaii, 2005).

<sup>11</sup> For a more lengthy discussion of the term '*daimyô cha*' see Julia Nakano-Holmes, 'Furuta Oribe: Iconoclastic Guardian of Chanoyu Tradition' (PhD dissertation, University of Hawaii, 1995), pp. 48-52. However, some scholars question this division, regarding it as too simplistic. See Kumakura Isao, *Kan 'ei bunka no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1988), pp. 161-162, 198 and 240; and Tanihata Akio, 'Daimyô chadô no tenkai to shohan no sadôyaku', *Tankô* 50 (1996): *Edo daimyô to chanoyu*, p. 36. Paul E. Demura-Devore, following Satô Toyozô, has suggested the term 'the tea of daimyô houses' as a more inclusive phrase which allows for variations between daimyô and within each daimyô's own tea practice. See Paul E. Demura-Devore, 'The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists in Seventeenth Century Tokugawa Japan: The Case of Sen Sôtan and Sons' (PhD Dissertation, The University of Hawaii, 2005), p. 2; and Satô Toyozô, 'Owari Tokugawa-ke no chanoyu dôgu', in Tokugawa Bijutsukan (ed), *Chanoyu no bi: Tokugawa Bijutsukan no meihin kara* (Gifu: Gifu-shi Rekishi Hakubutsukan, 1990), p. 97.



of which there are countless varieties, depending on the season and types of utensils used. The two main categories of tea procedure are *usucha* and *koicha*, with those of the first category being less complex and formal than those of the latter category. We will see that for women's tea practice this was an important distinction. *Temae* are learnt by a student in class, and they form the basis of any tea gathering (茶会 *chakai*), which involves a host and several guests (during the Edo period usually no more than five). Whilst the order of a tea gathering changes according to time of day and season, the basic elements are that the host lays charcoal, serves a meal (懷石 *kaiseki*), and prepares a bowl of thick tea, shared by all of the guests, and a bowl of thin tea for each guest. The guests' movements and interactions with the host and other guests are also governed by rules and set patterns. Thus, both the host and guests must be knowledgeable in tea culture for a gathering to function smoothly.

*Temae*, then, form the basis of tea culture. It is the central act of a tea gathering but can also be performed outside of this formal space: in class, in private, or among friends in a less structured environment than a tea gathering. This may seem obvious, yet, as Etsuko Kato has discussed, there has been a lack of a clear definition of what exactly *chanoyu* is in the scholarly and tea school literature, with abstract definitions, such as an 'aesthetics of hospitality', being favoured over concrete ones.<sup>12</sup> The issue is important, for Kato's study of women and tea in contemporary Japan, as it is for this study, because in researching women's tea practice we need to have a working definition of what tea is, and by extension what defines a tea practitioner. As will become apparent in the literature review below, many scholars have discounted early modern women's tea practice, because, they argue, women did not participate in official settings of tea culture, such as tea gatherings. Similarly, modern women's tea practice has also been sidelined by scholars for such reasons. However, Kato argues that what defines a tea practitioner is mastery of *temae*. In searching for 'the necessary and sufficient conditions for one's activity to be called 'the tea ceremony'', she says that

As far as I can observe, formalization and control of body movements is what every tea practitioner I have met does. In reverse, one cannot identify oneself as a tea ceremony practitioner unless one has learned the specific body movements required for making tea.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Kato Etsuko, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan: Bodies Re-Presenting the Past*, (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p. 25.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 25-26.

It is these body movements which constitute *temae*, therefore, knowing how to do *temae* should be the criteria against which we judge if one is a tea practitioner or not, rather than participation in official settings. It is the least restrictive definition, as it includes beginners and lay practitioners as well as experienced students and teachers. As Kato uses it, it includes those who never, or very rarely, participate in formal, structured tea gatherings but who may attend regular classes. Furthermore, in the context of a tea gathering, those performing the *temae* are not the only ones who need to have knowledge of tea. The role of guest is also important in tea, be it the first guest who is the most important, due to their level of interaction with the host, or the other guests. Therefore, our definition must also extend to include guests at tea gatherings, for knowledge of the tea making procedures is part of the guests' role, even though they do not perform the *temae* themselves. Having enough knowledge to be a guest, but not necessarily a host, was, we will see, important for women's tea in the Edo period. Thus, having knowledge of *temae*, rather than ability to perform *temae* or participation in official settings, will be the definition of a tea practitioner that will be used in this thesis. When we look at women's tea practice in early modern Japan from this perspective, it becomes clear that there were many more female tea practitioners than the current literature would suggest.

### **State of the Field: Women in Tea History**

One issue which arises from the research presented in this thesis is why women have been left out of the history of tea in early modern Japan if, as will be shown, there were women engaged in the practice and production of tea culture throughout that period? There are several reasons for this neglect of women in tea history. These are related to both the modern historiography of tea and of women in early modern Japan.

Early modern women's tea practice is either ignored or, when it is discussed, it follows what feminist scholars have called the 'compensatory' and 'contributory' model. In this model 'exceptional' women are held up as examples to compensate for the lack of women in previous historical accounts.<sup>14</sup> Such scholarship examines

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<sup>14</sup> Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn, 'Feminist scholarship and the social construction of woman', in Gayle Greene and Coppelia Kahn (ed), *Making a Difference: Feminist Literary Criticism* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 13. Citing Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges', in Lerner

women's contributions and achievements 'according to the standards of the male, public world, and, appending women to history as it has been defined, left unchallenged the existing paradigm'.<sup>15</sup> The only book dealing specifically with women in tea history, Kagotani Machiko's *Josei to chanoyu* (1985), is an example of such 'compensatory' and 'contributory' scholarship. The book presents biographical information about a number of famous female tea practitioners, from both the early modern and modern periods. There is no attempt made to analyse their tea practice outside of the paradigms established by male-centred tea scholarship, or to explore the context of their tea practice to draw conclusions about women's tea practice more broadly. Rather, these women are held up as 'exceptional' and as having been able to practise tea due to their high status, as wives of emperors or shoguns, for example.

Aside from Kagotani's study, women are either ignored or only mentioned in passing in the majority of works on tea history. In both academic and official tea school texts, it is commonly stated that women did not begin to practice tea until after the Meiji Restoration. Whilst the focus here will be on academic texts which present this view, this is also the popular view accepted among tea practitioners today. The anthropologist Etsuko Kato records that when she asked a contemporary female tea practitioner in her fifties if she thought women practiced tea in the Edo period, the woman replied, 'Women started it after the Meiji Restoration. Before that only landlord warriors did it'.<sup>16</sup> Practitioners hold this view because that is what is presented to them by the tea schools, in textbooks and other materials, such as the quote above – which stated that women did not participate in tea culture until Gengensai 'opened the doors' to them in the Meiji period – from the autobiography of the then head of the Urasenke school Sen Sôshitsu XV, that was serialised in the English language journal *Chanoyu Quarterly*.

It is very rarely stated outright that women did not practice tea at all in the Edo period. Rather, it is suggested that they did not participate in tea culture in any official way, such as attending tea gatherings or being enrolled in a school. For example, the above statement that 'women were not permitted to take part in formal tea gatherings' indicates nothing about other forms of practice in which women may have participated, such as classes or informal gatherings. Such vague statements have

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(ed) *The Majority Finds its Past: Placing Women in History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 145-159.

<sup>15</sup> Greene, 'Feminist scholarship and the social construction of woman', p. 13.

<sup>16</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 148.

contributed to the widespread lack of understanding about women and tea culture in the Edo period. Historian Paul Varley presents a similar view to that of Sen Sôshitsu XV in his statement about the recovery of tea after its decline immediately following the Meiji Restoration:

The most important step taken in this recovery, which was led by Urasenke, was the adding of *chanoyu* to the instructional curricula of public schools, especially women's schools. Before, *chanoyu* had been almost entirely a male pursuit. Viewed from this time as an essential means for training young ladies in proper etiquette, bearing, and aesthetic taste, it became mainly an activity for women.<sup>17</sup>

If '*chanoyu* had been almost entirely a male pursuit' prior to Gengensai's 1894 decision to introduce tea into women's education, then clearly this implies that there were women who studied tea before the Meiji period. Yet, we are told nothing about these women.

It is also often implied, and sometimes explicitly stated, that women's practice was not authentic due to a lack of seriousness or spiritual motivation, or that there was so little female involvement in tea at this time as to make it unworthy of scholarly attention. Tani Akira, for example, has looked at records of tea gatherings from the early modern period which include women. While it is significant that such records have been examined and women's occasional participation in tea gatherings as far back as 1595 is acknowledged, he concludes that, on the basis of their minimal presence in extant records of tea gatherings, women constituted, at most, one percent of all tea practitioners during the early modern period, and therefore sees their practice and participation as largely insignificant.<sup>18</sup> This consideration is quite interesting in the light of the minimal research on women and tea in modern Japan, for, if women's tea practice in early modern Japan is dismissed on the basis of women's minimal participation, then surely the fact that the majority of tea practitioners in modern Japan are women (women are thought to comprise something in the order of 90% of all tea practitioners)<sup>19</sup> would generate scholarly interest in their

<sup>17</sup> Paul Varley, Foreword to Sôshitsu, Sen XV(1998), *The Japanese Way of Tea: From its Origins in China to Sen Rikyû*, (tr. V. Dixon Morris), University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, p. x.

<sup>18</sup> Tani Akira, 'chakai-ki ni okeru josei gunzô', *Nagomi*, December 1999, pp. 93-95.

<sup>19</sup> This figure is only an estimate because as the tea schools do not release data about their practitioners it is impossible to accurately gauge the exact number or gender of tea practitioners.

practice. Yet, as Kato has discussed, scholars remain disinterested at best, and at worst are dismissive or even scathing of such work being conducted.<sup>20</sup>

In the Japanese language literature the representative view is that of historian Kumakura Isao, author and editor of numerous works on tea history (see Bibliography for details), who says that it was after the Meiji Restoration that women's participation in tea began, and that the most significant period in the history of women's tea were the years from Taishô to Shôwa (ie: the 1910s and interwar period).<sup>21</sup> Yet, there has recently been greater discussion of women's tea practice in the Edo period. Tanihata Akio has written most extensively about early modern women's tea practice, discussing the eighteenth century tea text for women, *Toji no tamoto* and tea practice among women of the Imperial family in his work on early modern tea history, *Kinsei chadô shi* (1988) and more recently in *Kuge chadô no kenkyû* (2005). Elsewhere, he has discussed the records of the daimyô Ii Naosuke's (井伊直弼 1815-1860) tea gatherings which included women. Despite this, Tanihata still seems to be of the view that there is little to be said about women's tea practice in the Edo period on a broader level. This could be done by making connections between the various sources which relate to women's tea practice. Instead, he treats the women of the Imperial family as exceptions to the norm, describing Shinanomiya as one of the few concrete examples of a female tea practitioner from the Edo period.<sup>22</sup> Whilst in a more recent article on *Toji no tamoto* for the Urasenke affiliated journal *Tanko*, he does suggest that from at least the mid-Edo period there were many women of samurai and merchant families who enjoyed tea, he does not elaborate on his findings to any significant degree.<sup>23</sup> Yokota Yaemi, also in a *Tanko* article, briefly mentions *Toji no tamoto* and the possibility that women of both samurai and commoner status were participating in tea culture during the latter part of the Edo period, before going on to focus on the Meiji period introduction of tea into the curriculum of girls' schools.<sup>24</sup> In recent studies of Ii Naosuke's tea practice, the fact that women of his household participated in his tea gatherings is mentioned.

<sup>20</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, pp. 11-13.

<sup>21</sup> For example, see Kumakura Isao (1985), 'Josei to chanoyu', in Kumakura Isao (ed) *Chadô shokin 6: Kindai no chanoyu*, Tokyo, Shogakukan, p. 246.

<sup>22</sup> Tanihata Akio, *Kinsei chadô shi* (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 1988), pp. 245-247.

<sup>23</sup> Tanihata Akio 'Toji no tamoto ni miru josei to chanoyu', *Tanko: Josei to cha o megutte*, 57:3 (2003), p. 18.

<sup>24</sup> Yokota Yaemi 'Josei to chadô kyoiku', *Tanko: Chanoyu kono hyakunen*, 55:1 (2001), pp. 84-85.

However, this is analysed only within the context of Naosuke's tea practice and philosophy and not in the context of women's tea practice.<sup>25</sup>

Such research, limited in scope and analysis as it is, has yet to make a significant impact on the broader field of tea history, with most discussions of early modern women's tea practice still limited to a few paragraphs, giving the impression that women either did not participate in tea at all, or that their practice was so negligible as to not warrant any significant discussion. In those cases where early modern women's participation in tea is discussed, there is no attempt made to situate the evidence within a broader context. That is, each body of evidence, or each example of an individual female tea practitioner is treated in isolation, thus preventing the emergence of a big picture of early modern women's tea practice. This is because of the approach to tea history taken by many scholars, which can be described as focusing more on tea than history.<sup>26</sup> That is, individuals, their styles and lineages of tea are examined largely without reference to social, political, or economic contexts. Possibly for this reason, such work has failed to generate any change in the master narrative of tea history, which still largely ignores women's participation prior to the Meiji period.

The argument that there was little or no female participation in tea until after the Meiji Restoration extends to the few studies which focus specifically on women and tea culture in the contemporary period. Barbara Mori, who has written several articles on women and tea in contemporary Japan and Hawaii, says of women's participation in tea during the Edo period:

During these early periods, participation by women was limited. Court women were taught *chadô* by some of these masters, and the wives of the grand masters helped their husbands to practice *chadô* in their homes in supporting roles in preparation, cooking and cleaning. Women did not have access to all of the ceremonies...and were not allowed to perform publicly or teach what they learned until the nineteenth century except possibly inside the family, and certainly not as a means of earning a living.<sup>27</sup>

Elsewhere she says that

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<sup>25</sup> Ii Hiroko 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', in Kumakura Isao (ed), *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, (Tokyo: Kokushokankôkai, 2007), pp. 201-227; Tanimura Reiko, 'Tea of the Warrior in the late Tokugawa period' in Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture*, pp. 137-150; and Tanimura Reiko, *Ii Naosuke: shûyô toshite no chanoyu*, (Tokyo: Sôbunsha, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> Demura-Devore, 'The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists', p. 22.

<sup>27</sup> Barbara Lynne Rowland Mori 'The Tea Ceremony: A Transformed Japanese Ritual', *Gender and Society*, 5:1 (1991), p. 87.

*Chadô* was an art form reserved for men of the upper classes for most of its history. Although in the west, it is identified as a women's activity, large scale participation by women did not begin until 1894 when women were granted the right to acquire teaching certificates by the major Sen schools of tea.<sup>28</sup>

Mori takes the Sen schools' 1894 decision to incorporate women formally into their school structure, by allowing them to teach and perform publicly, as the beginning of women's participation in tea. She identifies the right to teach and perform in public as key indicators of whether women practiced tea, rather than knowledge of *temae* as argued above should be the definition of a tea practitioner. Though Mori does acknowledge the participation of women in tea during the Edo period, she sees it as insignificant, even in terms of understanding the history of women and tea in modern Japan. Her ready acceptance of the orthodox position on tea history is likely due to her position as a guest of the Urasenke school whilst conducting research in Japan. Indeed, the close relationship that many researchers, including foreigners, have had with the schools of tea has been an ongoing issue for studies of tea culture, as objectivity cannot always be maintained.<sup>29</sup>

Another anthropologist who has researched the participation of women in tea culture is Etsuko Kato. Her monograph *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan: Bodies Re-Presenting the Past* (2004) focuses on female tea practitioners in post World War II Japan. As can be seen in the discussion of what defines a tea practitioner above, Kato's work has had a significant influence on this thesis. As the only work in any language which has dealt critically with the relationship between women and tea culture, as opposed to Kagotani's work which merely described the lives of exemplary female tea practitioners, her work has added considerably to both the fields of Japanese women's studies and studies on tea culture.

Kato, like Mori and others, acknowledges that some women did participate in tea during the Edo period.

In the late Edo period, however, some upper-middle class young women studied the tea ceremony with private tutors, or at temples, many of which served as schools for commoners. Often taught by female teachers, the tea ceremony by and for women began to develop as a genre. Although women's tea ceremony had no such official discourse equivalent to men's (no texts

<sup>28</sup> Barbara Mori, 'Women in a Traditional Art: the Japanese Tea Ceremony in Hawaii', *Midwest Feminist Papers*, 6 (1986), p. 69.

<sup>29</sup> See the discussion in Pitelka, 'Introduction to Japanese tea culture', in Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture*, pp. 8-10.

survive), one can assume that it was opened to young women to teach them the manners associated with femininity and domesticity, in line with a woman's role as a compliant wife and daughter-in-law for her husband and parents. ... In the feudal era, opportunities for women to participate in the tea ceremony were severely limited. The scarcity of archival findings on tea ceremony practice by women before 1868 suggests, along with the marginality of the topic in studies of the tea ceremony, that women rarely participated in the tea ceremony in official settings.<sup>30</sup>

Yet, Kato seems to regard this as insignificant, even in terms of understanding women's tea practice in modern Japan, dismissing the evidence for early modern women's tea practice as scarce.

There is in fact significant evidence for women's tea practice during the Edo period, along with texts that constitute a discourse on women's tea, such as *Toji no tamoto*, which will be discussed in Chapter Three. The fact that this topic has not been well researched and is not represented in conventional histories of tea, may well have more to do with the dominance of official discourse blinding historians to the existence of alternative sources than the lack of evidence for female participation in tea. For example, both Kato and Varley<sup>31</sup> cite the same evidence that the tea-master Sugiki Fusai (杉木普齋 1628-1706) forbade women from participating in tea, yet they do not mention the tea-masters who did allow, even encourage, women's participation.<sup>32</sup> This suggests that they have unquestioningly accepted Urasenke official discourse and not made any further investigation of the subject of women's participation. Marginality of the topic is not necessarily due to a lack of relevant sources. However, we cannot expect anthropologists of contemporary culture, like Mori and Kato, to do the work of historians. The problem lies in the fact that historians of tea have ignored and dismissed the participation of women in tea culture. That those working on the relationship between women and tea culture in the contemporary period have no work on the historical background to use makes it all the more necessary for such research to be done.

Foreign scholars whose work challenges the dominant narrative of tea history, with its focus on the 'founder' of *chanoyu* Sen no Rikyū, have had a significant impact

<sup>30</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 62.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Varley has significant connections to Urasenke through his position as Sen Sōshitsu XV Professor of Japanese Cultural History at the University of Hawaii.

<sup>32</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 62; and Paul Varley, 'Chanoyu from Genroku to Modern Times', in Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao (eds), *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), p. 189.



on the field of late. Of particular note is the volume *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice* (2003), edited by Morgan Pitelka, and his monograph *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners in Japan* (2005). *Japanese Tea Culture* was the first work to discuss openly some of the difficult issues faced by scholars researching tea culture, and the essays presented a view of tea culture as a diverse practice, which has been constructed and re-constructed numerous times throughout its history. In *Handmade Culture* Pitelka explored the relationship between Raku pottery and tea culture, moving beyond the common mythohistory that focuses on certain individuals to discuss the various producers and consumers of Raku pottery throughout the early modern period. As in this thesis, the focus was as much on the 'ordinary' participants in this process of cultural production as on the famous masters who so often dominate such studies. Earlier works which also broke new ground in the study of tea culture include Louise Cort's *Shigaraki Potter's Valley* (1979), Christine Guth's *Art, Tea and Industry: Masuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle* and Patricia Graham's work on *sencha, Tea of the Sages: The Art of Sencha* (1998).

There have also been numerous dissertations on tea culture in English, which have further contributed to the emergence of a more complex picture of tea history and culture. Those which focus on history include Robert Kramer's critical and insightful examination of tea history, 'The Tea Cult in History' (The University of Chicago, 1985); Julia Nakano-Holmes' work on the warrior tea master Furuta Oribe (古田織部 1543-1615), 'Furuta Oribe: Iconoclastic Guardian of Chanoyu Tradition' (The University of Hawaii, 1995) and Paul E. Demura Devore's work on seventeenth century tea specialists, 'The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists in Seventeenth Century Tokugawa Japan: the Case of Sen Sôtan and Sons' (The University of Hawaii, 2005). Dissertations on tea culture in other disciplines include those in anthropology, speech communication, and ethnomusicology.<sup>33</sup> The number and breadth of studies indicates the importance of tea culture in our understanding of

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<sup>33</sup> See Jennifer Anderson, 'Chanoyu: An Anthropological Approach to Tea' (PhD Dissertation, Stanford University, 1985); James Henry Holland II, 'Allusion, Performance, and Status: The Social and Aesthetic World of Elite Practitioners of the Japanese Tea Ceremony' (Ph.D Dissertation, Cornell University, 1997); Etsuko Kato, 'Bodies re-presenting the past: Japanese women and the tea ceremony after World War II' (PhD Dissertation, The University of Toronto, 2001); Melissa Marie Kane, 'Communicating Tea: An Ethnography of Social Interaction and Relationship Construction in the Japanese Tea Ritual' (PhD Dissertation, the University of Washington, 1998); Jane Elkinton, 'Cha-in/The Sound of Tea: The Sounds of the Japanese Tea Ceremony and Their Relation to Traditional Japanese Music' (PhD Dissertation, The University of Maryland, 1995); and Brenda Murphy, 'Japanese Artist Aesthetics in a Non-Japanese Mode: Chanoyu into Western Music' (PhD Dissertation, New York University, 1993).

Japanese history and culture, as well as the successful expansion of *chanoyu* worldwide, particularly due to the efforts of the Urasenke school.

In some recent English language studies, there have been hints that women were more involved in early modern tea culture than generally thought. In an essay in *Japanese Tea Culture*, Tanimura Reiko mentions that Ii Naosuke included instructions on the appropriate clothing for samurai women to wear when attending a tea gathering.<sup>34</sup> In *Handmade Culture*, Pitelka cites the examples of *amayaki* (尼焼 nun ware), made by the wives of Raku potters after their husband's passing, and the production of tea bowls by Rengetsu. He suggests that 'these are only glimpses of what must have been a complex dynamic of status, class, and gender, but it is a vision that is significantly more informative than the myth of individual male potters operating in isolation'.<sup>35</sup> More recently, in an essay on Rengetsu for the exhibition catalogue *Black Robe White Mist: Art of the Japanese Buddhist Nun Rengetsu* (2007), Graham, citing both Tanimura's discussion of Naosuke's instructions for female tea practitioners and the work of Rengetsu and *amayaki*, comments that 'their production suggests a long tradition of private participation in *chanoyu* by samurai women, which persisted into Rengetsu's day'.<sup>36</sup> There is thus growing recognition of women's involvement in both the practice and production of tea culture in early modern Japan, which only increases the need for a detailed study of the subject, as is undertaken in this thesis.

Particular features of the historiography of tea in modern Japan have contributed to this neglect of women in tea history. In the modern period the Sen schools of tea, and Urasenke in particular, have been dominant in the world of tea culture.<sup>37</sup> This dominance is the result of their successful negotiation of the tumultuous years of the early Meiji period, as described in Chapter Six. Since the launch of *Konnichian Geppô* (今日案月報 *Konnichian Monthly Bulletin*), the first monthly periodical to publish tea related information, in 1907, Urasenke has used the medium of publishing to exert control and influence over the way in which tea culture

<sup>34</sup> Tanimura Reiko, 'Tea of the warrior in the late Tokugawa Period', in Morgan Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture, Art, History and Practice* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), p. 146.

<sup>35</sup> Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons and Tea Practitioners in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), p. 127.

<sup>36</sup> Patricia Graham, 'Ôtagaki Rengetsu and the Japanese Tea Ceremony', in Melanie Eastburn et. al (ed), *Black Robe White Mist: Art of the Japanese Buddhist Nun Rengetsu* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), p. 64.

<sup>37</sup> On modern tea history see Kumakura Isao, *Kindai chadô-shi no kenkyû*, (Tokyo: Hoso Shuppankai, 1980).

and its history is perceived by both tea practitioners and scholars, in Japan and abroad. As Morgan Pitelka has discussed, the influence of the tea schools on research has been considerable, given that they control many of the primary sources, who has access to them, and how and when they are published. They also have influence over the publishing of tea related scholarship, through tea school affiliated publishing houses such as Tankôsha (affiliated to the Urasenke school), and because most tea scholars are students of a tea school, and are therefore less likely to criticise or challenge the orthodox position on a given subject than an unaffiliated scholar. Though the situation has begun to change since the 1990s, the Sen schools still exert a major influence over tea scholarship.<sup>38</sup>

One result of the influence of the Sen tea schools on modern tea historiography has been the neglect of women as a subject. In one sense, we can see that what has happened in the post-war period, is that the dominance of Urasenke in contemporary tea culture has been projected back into the past. Their history has become tea history. Thus, if women did not participate in Urasenke tea during the early modern period, then women did not participate in tea during the early modern period. Sources which relate to other tea schools, or to no particular tea school, but which clearly evidence women's participation in tea, have therefore been overlooked. It is also clear that in many accounts of the history of women's tea practice, there has been a desire to emphasise, one could say even construct, the role of the Urasenke *iemoto* (家元 head of the school and family) Gengensai in 'opening up the doors of tea to women'. Within a modern context that values the ideals of gender equality, presenting Gengensai in such a way gives the Urasenke school a positive image. They become the liberators of women within tea culture. Atsuko Sasaki has suggested that 'it appears that women's literature from the Tokugawa period has been conveniently forgotten in order to invent the notion of women's liberation in modern Japan'.<sup>39</sup> We may suggest that there has been a similar occurrence with regards to women's tea practice in the Edo period. Furthermore, the limited availability of official sources that include women, many of which remain unpublished and are available only to those scholars specially selected by the tea schools, has meant that it is easy for their view of history to remain largely unchallenged. Likewise, the narrow

<sup>38</sup> Pitelka, 'Introduction to Japanese tea culture', pp. 8-10.

<sup>39</sup> Atsuko Sasaki, 'Sliding Doors: Women in the Heterosocial Literary Field of Early Modern Japan', *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*, 17 (1999), p. 4.

selection of sources used for mainstream tea scholarship, which has overlooked popular sources of the kind used in this thesis, has also contributed to the neglect of women as a subject.

In addition, the lack of interest in the subject of women's participation in tea culture by scholars cannot be discounted. This is the case for both women's tea in contemporary Japan and historically. In regards to the contemporary situation, Etsuko Kato has noted that Japanese scholars tend to have a very negative view of women's tea. Indeed, some go so far as to suggest that women's participation has diluted the traditions of tea.<sup>40</sup> Yamamura, for example, comments that 'disappearance of Zen spirit was a necessary consequence of [*sic*] feminization of the tea ceremony'.<sup>41</sup> Kato also notes that this attitude to women's practice is not unique to tea but 'parallels what Talbot finds in the history of studies of language and gender: "One fairly consistent feature has been that, whatever women's contribution to language change is purported to be, it has not been viewed positively [*sic*]"'.<sup>42</sup> It may be that the lack of interest shown by historians in early modern women's tea practice results from their negative view of women's tea practice in the contemporary period.

Furthermore, the popular and social aspects of tea in early modern Japan, in which women participated, have been viewed by some influential scholars as a degradation of tea's true spirit and authentic traditions. Thus, the popularization of tea from the late seventeenth century has often been characterized as a negative phenomenon. Kumakura Isao, for example, states that,

As the entertainments of people during the Edo period there are aspects of the so-called 'genteel pastimes (*yûgei*) which rightly deserve praise. However, with the waning of the Edo period these pursuits were vulgarized, and degenerated into self-righteous decadence. Chanoyu was no exception, and from the mid-Edo period onward the illiteracy and bufoonery of chanoyu practioners was of such an extent that it was even reviled with derisive laughter in published materials.<sup>43</sup>

Similarly Paul Varley describes the situation as such:

By its very intensity, the demand for training and participation in the elegant pastimes threatened to transform them into casual amusements for the masses.

<sup>40</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, pp. 11-13.

<sup>41</sup> Yamamura, Yoshiaki, *Cha no kôzô* (Kanagawa: Seori-shobô, 1996), p. 268. Cited in Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 12.

<sup>42</sup> Mary Talbot, *Language and Gender: An Introduction*, (Oxford: Polity Press, 1998), p. 36. Cited in Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 12.

<sup>43</sup> Kumakura Isao, 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan', trans Zane Ferry, *Chanoyu Quaterly* 75 (1994), p. 8.

One reaction to this danger in *chanoyu* was the rise of a movement to reaffirm, if not restore, its essential traditions, especially those associated with Sen no Rikyū.<sup>44</sup>

The language is very strong – widespread participation was a ‘threat’, which posed a great ‘danger’ to tea. Women were one group who participated in this popularisation. They were among the consumers for the new texts on tea, which eroded the tradition of oral transmission from master to student. Historians have tended to ignore these more popular aspects of tea in early modern Japan. Instead, they have focused their attention on the ‘Rikyū revival’, in the late seventeenth century, and the strengthening of the Sen-ke, in the eighteenth century, through the establishment of the *iemoto* system (described in Chapter Two). Women tend to fall between the cracks of such an institutionally focused history. In an academic environment which views both contemporary women's tea practice and the popularization of tea culture in the late Edo period negatively, understanding the history of women's tea practice has not been a priority.

#### State of the Field: Women and Culture in the Edo Period

The Edo period is widely perceived to have been the nadir for Japanese women. As Yabuta Yutaka discussed in a paper for the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies entitled ‘Rediscovering Women in Tokugawa Japan’ (2000), even a cursory glance at Japanese history textbooks reveals a distinct lack of women from this period. The Heian period (794-1185), by contrast, is regarded as having been a relatively high point for Japanese women's status and learning, as represented by the literary achievements of women such as Murasaki Shikibu (紫式部; 978–c.1025), author of *Genji monogatari* (源氏物語 The Tale of Genji c. 1008-1021) and Sei Shônagon (清少納言 c.966-1017), author of *Makura no sôshi* (枕草子 The Pillow Book c.1002). Other aspects of Heian court society, such as uxorial, neolocal and duolocal marriage practices, have also contributed to the impression that women's status was higher at this time than in the following medieval and early modern periods, when virilocal marriage, generally associated with patriarchy, became the norm.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Varley, ‘*Chanoyu* from Genroku to Modern Times’, p. 165.

<sup>45</sup> See for example, Takamura Itsue, *Bokeisei no kenkyû* (1938). Reprinted in full in *Takamura Itsue zenshû*, volume 1 (Tokyo: Rironsha, 1974-1975). On Heian marriage practices in particular, see William H. McCullough, ‘Japanese Marriage Institutions in the Heian Period’, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 27 (1967), pp. 103-167.

As such, the idea that women's status gradually decreased in Japan, reaching a low point in the Edo period, only to be elevated as a result of the influence of western feminism during the Meiji and then post-World War Two periods, still has wide spread currency. In a survey of Japanese women's historiography, and again in a recent book on modern Japanese women's history, Hiroko Tomida, for example, states that 'Indeed, during the Edo period (1603-1868) Japanese women's social status was at a low ebb. Women (especially those from the warrior class) were constrained by the *ie* system and neo-Confucian theories reflected in the teachings of Kaibara Ekken. They were completely deprived of various legal, economic, political and marital rights'.<sup>46</sup> For Tomida, it was not until the American-led reforms of the post-war period that women's status began to change for the better.

Much of the misunderstanding around women's status in Edo society seems to stem from literal readings of one particular text, *Onna daigaku* [女大学 *The Greater Learning for Women*, early 18<sup>th</sup> century], often mistakenly attributed to the scholar Kaibara Ekken (具原益軒 1630-1714).<sup>47</sup> As several scholars have pointed out, *Onna daigaku* was originally published as *Onna daigaku takarabako* (女大学宝箱 *Treasure Box of the Greater Learning for Women*), and consisted of several sections, which covered topics such as illustrated children's stories, childrearing, housework, literature and the arts, as well as the section which has now been singled out as the main text of *Onna Daigaku*.<sup>48</sup> Analysed as a whole, *Onna daigaku takarabako* can be thought of as a textbook for reading and writing, as much as a guide to morals.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, with regard to the rules for conduct in the well-known section, which advises a woman to 'always be attentive, discreet and well-behaved' and to 'never neglect weaving, sewing, and spinning' nor 'drink much tea or saké', a distinction

<sup>46</sup> Hiroko Tomida, 'The evolution of Japanese Women's Historiography', *Japan Forum*, 8:2 (1996), pp. 191; and Hiroko Tomida and Gordon Daniels, 'Introduction' to Hiroko Tomida and Gordon Daniels (ed), *Japanese Women: Emerging from Subsistence, 1868-1945* (Kent: Global Oriental, 2005), p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> Many scholars now agree that Kaibara Ekken was not the author of *Onna daigaku*, however, attributions to him still persist, as seen in the quote from Tomida above. It is not known who authored *Onna daigaku* or how the false attribution to Kaibara came about, though, as Yabuta suggests, we can imagine that a lesser known scholar or the publisher may have attached Kaibara's name to the text in a quest to sell more copies. In fact, several of Ekken's works evidence his encouragement of women's education. See Ishikawa Shôtarô (ed), *Onna daigaku shû* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1977); Tocco, 'Norms and Texts for Women's Education', pp. 195-196; and Yabuta, 'Rediscovering Women in Tokugawa Japan', pp. 6-16.

<sup>48</sup> Yabuta, 'Rediscovering Women in Tokugawa Japan', p. 6; and Yokota, 'Imagining Working Women in Early Modern Japan', p. 155.

<sup>49</sup> Tocco, 'Norms and Texts for Women's Education', p. 200.

needs to be made between ideology and practice.<sup>50</sup> A text may prescribe one thing, but those who read it may have been doing so for reading practice, or copying it for handwriting practice, and paid little attention to its content. Women would also have interpreted the content in their own way. *Onna daigaku* may be an early and popular example of a book that combined information for women into a sort of encyclopaedic or guidebook format, but it was followed by many others, such as the guides for women's edification discussed in Chapter Four. It should thus not be taken as the sole source for understanding the roles and responsibilities of women in early modern Japan.

Recently, scholars in various fields have been working to redress the gap in our understanding of early modern women's lives, leading us to rethink the designation of the Edo period as the worst of times for Japanese women. Many of the areas in which women were supposedly 'completely deprived of ... rights', have been the subjects of such revisionist scholarship. This is the case for the topic of divorce, for example. *Onna daigaku* lists seven reasons why a man can divorce his wife, then states that divorce brings 'great disgrace to a woman who has left her own home to be married'.<sup>51</sup> This has given rise to the popular notion that a man could divorce his wife for even the most minor reason, with a simple three-line note, and that women who had been divorced were left in a vulnerable position. This sort of view was held by the influential Meiji intellectual Fukuzawa Yukichi, who said in his critique of *Onna daigaku* that, 'the ultimate purpose of every rule is clearly to restrict women's rights and their activities so as to allow men the liberty to abandon their wives'.<sup>52</sup> However, as several scholars have shown, while laws may only have allowed for men to initiate divorce, in practice, divorce could be initiated by either party. Women could initiate divorce by taking refuge in 'divorce temples' such as Mantokuji, or at the homes of officials in certain domains. Their families could also petition for divorce on their behalf. Furthermore, there was no particular social stigma attached to being divorced, with both women and men being able to remarry.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Onna daigaku*, translated in Sakai Atsuhara, 'Kaibara Ekken and 'Onna daigaku'' *Cultural Nippon* 7:4 (1939), pp. 53-54.

<sup>51</sup> *Onna daigaku*, translated in Sakai, 'Kaibara Ekken and 'Onna daigaku'', p. 52.

<sup>52</sup> Fukuzawa Yukichi, 'Onna Daigaku Hyōron', *Jijishimpō*, (April 1- July 23, 1899),. Reprinted in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958-1971), pp. 467-503. Translated by Eiichi Kiyōka, as 'Critique of the Greater Learning for Women', in Eiichi *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women*, p. 183.

<sup>53</sup> See Takagi Tadashi, *Mikudari han to enrikidera: Edo no rikon o yominaosu* (Tokyo: Heibonsha 1987); *Mikudari han to enkiridera: Edo no rikon o yominaosu* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1992); and Diana E. Wright, 'Severing the Karmic Ties that Bind: the "divorce temple" Mantokuji', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 52:3 (1997), pp. 357-380.

Too often the emphasis has been placed on literal interpretations of Tokugawa laws, and texts such as *Onna daigaku*, without research on whether they were put into practice in reality. In the case of divorce, the reality was quite different to what laws and didactic texts prescribed.

In the last two decades, there has been a significant increase in the number of studies relating to, or including a discussion of, women in early modern Japan in both English and Japanese. Yet, in regards to cultural history there is still a noticeable gap. In 2000, in a review of 'The Study of Women in Early Modern Japan', Anne Walthall, who has written several pioneering and influential studies on women in early modern Japan (see Bibliography for details), wrote that 'as a field, the English-language study of women in Japanese history is barely ten years old'.<sup>54</sup> The edited volume *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (1991) was one of the works which signalled a rise in the study of Japanese women's history in the 1990s. In their choice of theme, 'the creation of female gender', and with their focus on the family and the home, the authors treated femininity as something which was socially constructed and constantly changing, according to social norms and political contexts. In giving equal weight to the early modern and modern periods they also broke new ground in the study of Japanese women's history, which had tended to focus on the history of the Japanese women's movement in the post Meiji restoration era. As Gail Lee Bernstein stated in the introduction, 'since most of the published material in English on Japanese women has treated the women's movement, focusing on what women tried to change, we have tended to lose sight of what women could already do'.<sup>55</sup> Two other multi-author volumes which dealt with Japanese women's history over a longer time frame were published in 1999, *Gender and Japanese History* and *Women and Class in Japanese History*. These works made available in English the work of many Japanese scholars for the first time, and they can be taken together as representative of the state of Japanese women's studies at the end of the twentieth century. Of significance here, is that we find no research on the participation of women in early modern culture in either of these representative works. Indeed, even within the relatively small field of Japanese women's history, studies of the Edo period, and of culture and the arts in particular, have been scarce.

<sup>54</sup> Anne Walthall, 'The Study of Women in Early Modern Japan: An Introduction with Bibliography', *Early Modern Japan* 8:1 (2000), p. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Gail Lee Bernstein, 'Introduction' to Gail Lee Bernstein (ed), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 14.



It is not just in regards to tea culture, then, that women's participation has been overlooked. This dearth of women in the scholarly literature is based on the erroneous assumption that women in this period were severely restricted in their ability to participate in social and public activities due to the influence of Confucianism. We thus find limited discussion of women in histories of early modern culture, the notable exception being courtesans who are regarded as having been at the center of popular culture and fashion. Aside from the women of the pleasure quarters, there is the impression that women played very little role in the culture of the period, both the high culture of the court aristocracy and samurai, and the flourishing and vibrant popular culture of urban commoners. The arts in general, which can be subsumed under the term *yūgei* (遊芸 arts of play), are regarded as having been a male domain. For example, in Moriya Takeshi's work on Genroku culture, *Genroku bunka: yūgei, akusho, shibai* (1987) and his article in English 'Yūgei and Chōnin Society in the Edo Period' (1977), there is scant mention of women as practitioners of any of the popular art forms discussed. Rather, he says that almost all *yūgei* enthusiasts were men, because these arts performed a social function and society belonged to men. Even though a small number of daughters from wealthy families also learnt arts, it was not until later, in the eighteenth century, that women really began participating in the arts of play.<sup>56</sup> Yet, as will be shown in Chapter One, many of the same sources Moriya used, such as fiction by Ihara Saikaku, as well as tea school records discussed in Chapter Two, indicate that women too played a role in the artistic and cultural milieu of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The renowned scholar of early modern culture Nishiyama Matsunosuke also saw the world of *yūgei* as closed to women.

[In early modern times,] Japanese women, after the long, inhumane practice of ethics represented by *Onna-daigaku* in the Edo period, did not even have the mindset to long for a compensatory world for their lack of freedom as citizens...Only in this period [after World War II], women were given the freedom to act on their own will. Yet, of course, Japan was not completely renewed. Housewives were surrounded by double and triple difficulties in realizing that theoretical or legal freedom. Their situation is extremely close to that of common men in the Edo period, who established themselves, were ready to get freedom, but could not get it and compensated for their lack of freedom in the world of amusement (*yūgei*).<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Moriya Takeshi, *Genroku bunka: yūgei, akusho, shibai*, (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1987), pp. 41-42.

<sup>57</sup> Nishiyama Matsunosuke, *Iemoto no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Kōsō-shobō, 1959), pp. 146-147. Translated in Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 103.

Thus, women were not participants in the popularisation of arts among commoners during the Edo period, according to Nishiyama. Similarly, Conrad Totman, in *Early Modern Japan* (1993), speaks of 'the rise of a gentlemanly ideal that enabled cultural norms to transcend the ruler-ruled distinction', and says that during the seventeenth century 'this ideal of the broadly cultured samurai evolved into an ideal, identified by the term *yūgei*, that embraced commoners as well as samurai'.<sup>58</sup> Elsewhere in the book he states that by the eighteenth century, 'cultural attributes that had once signified elite status thus became more common property'.<sup>59</sup> However, women, either samurai or commoner, are not included in this analysis; the world of culture is seen as a male domain.

Recent research, though, indicates that we need to re-evaluate women's participation in and contribution to early modern culture. Of particular note is Patricia Fister's work on female artists, in *Japanese Women Artists, 1600-1900* (1988) and more recently *Art by Buddhist Nuns: Treasures from the Imperial Convents of Japan* (2003). Research on diaries, travel, literacy and education further suggests that areas which women were once considered to have been excluded from were not the sole preserve of men after all: examples include research by Shiba Keiko, in *Kinsei onna tabi nikki* (1997) and *Kinsei no onna tabi nikki jietn* (2005); Laura Nenzi, in *Excursions in Identity: Travel and the Intersection of Place, Gender, and Status in Edo Japan*; Richard Rubinger, in *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (2007); and Martha Tocco in 'Norms and Texts for Women's Education in Tokugawa Japan' (2003) and 'Made in Japan: Meiji Women's Education' (2005).

This revisionist scholarship has yet to make an impression in regards to women in tea history, though. The neglect of women in tea history can be partially attributed to the fact that women's position in the Edo period has generally been thought to have been low, and the influence of neo-Confucian patriarchal ideology strong. This created an environment in which the notion that women did not participate in tea culture at this time has been readily accepted.

<sup>58</sup> Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 184-185.

<sup>59</sup> Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, p. 380.

## Methodology

In focusing on women, this thesis follows in the tradition of feminist scholarship which has sought to put women back into history. Yet, simply adding women to history for the sake of it, along the lines of the 'compensatory' and 'contributory' model, is not the aim of this thesis. As the pioneering women's historian Joan Scott said, in adding women to history, we get something in return:

Women are both added to history and they occasion its rewriting; they provide something extra and they are necessary for its completion, they are superfluous and indispensable.<sup>60</sup>

In recovering the history of women in early modern tea culture, we gain a fresh perspective and a greater understanding of tea history and early modern women's history. Furthermore, we can then reinterpret, clarify, and extend our understanding of how status, class and gender functioned in the Edo period.

The insights of feminist scholarship on gender as a performative act are also crucial to this thesis. Gender is regarded as something which is learned, acquired and performed. As the feminist theorist Judith Butler puts it,

...gender is in no way a stable identity of locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.<sup>61</sup>

Here, our concern is with the ways in which a feminine identity was instituted through the stylized body movements learnt in tea.

In addition to women's history and feminist theory, the theory of history from below has also influenced the direction of this thesis. Whilst this theory has had a major impact on all fields of history worldwide for some time, scholarship on tea culture has remained decidedly elite in its focus. Much work still falls under the umbrella of a grand narrative, which privileges the role of a few select – always male – tea masters, the likes of Sen no Rikyū, Ii Naosuke, and Gengensai. Thus, the main emphasis is on sources such as the writings of tea masters, their diaries, and records of tea gatherings. These are selected because the primary focus of tea historians has

<sup>60</sup> Joan Scott, 'Women's History', in Peter Burke (ed), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, (Polity Press, 1991), p. 49.

<sup>61</sup> Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', in Carole R. McCann and Seung-Kyung Kim (ed), *Feminist Theory Reader: Local and Global Perspectives* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), p. 415.

been to examine the history of the tea schools and lineages, particularly the lives of tea masters, and the philosophical history of tea, for example tracing the development of concepts like *wabi/sabi* (侘び/寂び rustic simplicity). Previous scholarship on women in tea history also conforms to an elite view of tea history, by focusing on elite women and on the tea masters who were involved with their practice. There has been no attempt made to discuss the participation of commoner women in tea culture, for example.

In an attempt to broaden the scope of inquiry there have recently been attempts made by Western scholars to incorporate a wider range of sources in studying the history of tea.<sup>62</sup> This thesis follows in that tradition, using sources which have previously been ignored by tea scholars due to their popular nature, such as the guides for women's edification and *sugoroku*, in Chapters Four, Five, and Six and popular literature, in Chapter One. These allow us to include commoner women in our discussion and to write a history of tea as a popular activity: popular in both the sense of having wide appeal and as an activity of ordinary people. Rather than being an institutional history of tea, or biographies of individual practitioners, this thesis is a popular history of tea culture, which focuses on women as practitioners and producers of that culture. At the same time, the writings of tea masters and records of tea gatherings are also used in this thesis. The intention is to combine the use of such elite sources with popular sources in order to capture the variety and breadth of women's tea practice in early modern Japan. This reveals a picture of tea history markedly different from that suggested by traditional tea histories based solely on official sources.

Finally, this thesis makes use of the theories put forward by European scholars of culture, Pierre Bourdieu and Norbert Elias. Bourdieu's concepts of economic, cultural, and symbolic capital help us to understand why a cultural practice such as tea holds significance for those who study it. Symbolic capital is 'the capital of honour and prestige'.<sup>63</sup> Cultural capital, which is gained through education, be it formal or from within the family, allows one to understand cultural relations and products, such

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<sup>62</sup> For example Louise Allison Cort, *Shigaraki Potter's Valley*, Tokyo, Kodansha, 1979, in which she uses material culture to examine the relationship between ceramicists in a rural community and tea practitioners. See also Louise Allison Cort, 'Shopping for Pots in Momoyama Japan', in Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture*, pp. 61-85.

<sup>63</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), p. 118.

as art.<sup>64</sup> Both of these forms of capital can be exchanged for economic capital, but more importantly for our purposes, they can demonstrate the accumulation of economic capital by oneself or other family members in situations where it was economic capital that made the accumulation of symbolic and cultural capital possible. Furthermore, economic capital in modern societies is often the most important form of capital accumulation, yet this was not the case in early modern Japan. In such a context, Bourdieu suggests, symbolic capital becomes particularly important.<sup>65</sup>

Bourdieu's theories have been used previously by Etsuko Kato to analyse women's participation in tea culture. She argues that women in post-war Japan have used the symbolic-cultural capital accrued through their study of tea 'as a means of equilibrating themselves with, and at once defying, the economic and cultural (-educational) capital unequally distributed to men - especially to their male family members'.<sup>66</sup> Here, though, it is argued that women in early modern Japan used the symbolic-cultural capital acquired through their study of tea to either reinforce their elite status, or to take on the appearance of higher status. There was, however, no gender dimension to this capital accumulation strategy such as Kato argues for in the modern context.

Also of relevance to this thesis is the work of Norbert Elias on the 'civilizing process'. Elias showed how manners and etiquette relating to quotidian actions such as eating and blowing one's nose developed in medieval and early modern Europe, gradually expanding in scale to be the standard, not just for the elite, but for the military class of knights and, eventually, the lower classes as well. What had once been considered normal behaviour became uncouth, and even the minutest of actions became governed by a 'civilized' standard. In this way, a common culture of civility emerged.<sup>67</sup>

Elias's insights, as well as Bourdieu's concepts of social and cultural capital, have been applied to early modern Japan by Eiko Ikegami. She showed that a similar civilising process occurred which spread from the court aristocracy and elite samurai,

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<sup>64</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1984), pp. 1-3.

<sup>65</sup> Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 118.

<sup>66</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 5.

<sup>67</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

to the broader samurai community, and then commoners.<sup>68</sup> Whilst she included some discussion of tea in her analysis, her main focus was on other *yûgei*, particularly *haikai* poetry composition. Women were also only a secondary focus for Ikegami, yet she makes the important observation that ‘women generally increased their presence in these aesthetic networks in the later Tokugawa period’ and notes that the practice of sending one’s daughter into service at an elite household became popular among lower ranking samurai and wealthy commoner families, further leading to increased participation in the arts by women.<sup>69</sup> These developments, specifically as they relate to tea, will be expanded upon in this thesis, particularly in Chapters Four and Five.

### Chapter Structure

The chapters are organised thematically with chronological considerations in mind. Beginning with an examination of various types of female tea practitioners as represented in popular culture in Chapter One, we then move to a discussion of evidence which clearly shows that women were active participants in early modern tea culture and, in some cases, producers of that culture in Chapter Two. The next two chapters focus on written discourses on women’s tea, moving from an elite discourse written by a tea master for samurai women in Chapter Three, to a popular discourse aimed at commoner women in Chapter Four. Chapter Five, the last chapter dealing with the Edo period, expands on a theme which is touched upon in both Chapters Two and Four, namely tea practice among female attendants in elite households. Finally, the thesis concludes with a chapter on the Meiji period, which explores the continuities and differences in the discourse on women’s tea with the preceding Edo period, and considers reasons for the growth of women’s tea practice in modern Japan.

Chapter One examines literary and theatrical representations of female tea practitioners in the Edo period. Through these sources, we see how different ideals of femininity, from the courtesan to the respectable wife, were associated with tea culture. Though the women considered in this chapter were fictional, it is shown that the accounts of them were based in reality and would have had resonance for the early modern audience, which included women. It is thus argued that such representations

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<sup>68</sup> See Eiko Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 140-170.

<sup>69</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 155.

of female tea practitioners in print and on the stage can be read as evidence for early modern women's tea practice, and, moreover, that female tea practitioners were part of the popular culture of the time, recognised and celebrated by prominent authors, playwrights and artists. This chapter serves as an introduction to the world of female tea practice in early modern Japan, describing the different types of women who practised tea in different ways.

In Chapter Two we encounter real women who were tea practitioners, as well as producers of tea culture in some instances, throughout the Edo period. Reviewing evidence from records of tea gatherings, diaries, and records of students in tea schools, it is shown that women were active participants in tea culture and the contexts in which they participated are considered. Also considered is the role that some women, particularly women of the Imperial family and Buddhist nuns, played in utensil connoisseurship and production. We find several different motivations for women to study tea; it may have been part of their upbringing and education within an elite family involved in tea culture, or they may have been motivated by artistic inclinations. Moreover, there was never a widespread ban on women's tea practice, but that individual circumstances, particularly family background – or lack of familial ties in the case of nuns – and status governed whether women participated in tea culture.

After having established that women were participants in tea culture during the Edo period, both in reality and in the realm of fiction, our attention is turned to how women's tea practice was conceived of and how information on tea was presented to women. The Edo period written discourse on women's tea practice further evidences that women were studying tea prior to the Meiji period, but more importantly it shows that this was sanctioned, even promoted, in writing. Moreover, in examining this discourse we learn the reasons why women studied tea, or at least why they were told they should study tea. This discussion spans two chapters. Chapter Three looks at the emergence of a written discourse on women's tea practice in the eighteenth century. A handbook for women's tea penned by a tea master of the Sekishû school will be examined. This text stands alone as a single work specifically devoted to the subject of women's tea practice from the Edo period. It is little discussed in the Japanese literature on tea history and has not yet featured in any

English work on tea history.<sup>70</sup> This text reveals how women's tea practice was conceived of and also addresses potential criticisms of women's tea practice. A discourse on women's tea, focusing on morality and modesty was thus established. Aimed at women of samurai status, we also see how standards of 'appropriate' or 'correct' manners, tastes, and behaviour were disseminated through such a text. In the next chapter, we find that this discourse expanded to include commoner women too.

Chapter Four shifts focus from this elite discourse to the popular discourse on women's tea practice, which developed from the mid eighteenth century. In guides for women's edification, tea was presented as essential knowledge for women, including those of commoner status,<sup>71</sup> not just because it was a popular activity, but also because it taught women how to be graceful. We find that accumulation of symbolic and cultural capital was a significant motivating factor behind commoner women's tea practice. This popular discourse on women's tea evidences the breakdown of status boundaries, with the spread of elite culture to commoners. As these guides were not produced by the tea schools, we also see the popularisation of tea culture to a broader segment of society occurring outside of their control.

Chapter Five examines another reason why women, especially those of lower samurai and commoner status, studied tea in the Edo period; learning tea was considered good preparation for going into service at an elite (that is, court aristocratic or samurai) household. In the latter half of the Edo period this became an increasingly common form of marriage preparation and education for women. It is suggested that there may have been a correlation between the rise of this practice and the increasing popularity of tea among women at this time. We see further evidence of the role that women played in bridging and eroding status boundaries, through learning arts such as tea, and entering into service. This chapter concludes with an examination of the tea practice among women of the Ii household in the mid nineteenth century. This example evidences several features of early modern women's tea practice, as described in this and the preceding chapters.

<sup>70</sup> In Japanese see Tanihata Akio, *Kinsei chadō shi* (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1988), pp. 247-252; and 'Toji no tamoto ni miru josei to chanoyu', *Tanko: Josei to cha o megutte*, March 2003, pp. 18-26.

<sup>71</sup> Following David Howell I use the term 'commoner' to denote a single status group comprising peasants, artisans and merchants rather than treating them as separate status groups. Commoners comprised approximately ninety percent of the population of early modern Japan. See David Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 24-25.



In Chapter Six our attention is turned to the Meiji period, long considered the beginning of women's tea practice. As the previous chapters show, though, women's participation in tea culture was already well established by this time, in both practice and in discourse. This chapter again focuses on the discourse on women's tea, to examine the ways in which it both carried on, and differed from, its Edo period counterpart. It is argued that many aspects of the modern, feminine, image of tea had their origins in the Edo period and were carried through into the Meiji period. At the same time, the discourse on women's tea was taking pace in an entirely new social and cultural context by late Meiji, and this is reflected in the changing terminology and reasons used to promote tea to women. In particular, we find that tea became not only associated with femininity but also with national identity. It is argued that studying tea thus took on a new importance for women; tea was no longer just a way to cultivate gender and status identity, it now became a way to cultivate national identity too.

### Conclusion

As Barbara Sato has said of the *moga* (モガ modern girl) in interwar Japan, her significance does not rest with her substantive existence, it is rather her image and her place in the popular imagination that require our attention.<sup>72</sup> Likewise, we cannot make quantitative assumptions about the number of female tea practitioners in early modern Japan from the extant sources, nor should we want to. Instead, we are concerned with the contexts in which women practiced tea, the discourse/s on women's tea, and the spread of these ideas and ideals. We do know of some specific women who practiced tea and they will, of course, be discussed, but there are doubtless many more women of whom we know nothing. More importantly, this thesis shows that the image of the female tea practitioner was very present in the Edo period. She was part of the popular imagination, represented in fiction and on the stage. She was addressed by tea masters in writing. Commoner women were encouraged to be like her by authors of guides for women's edification. She even, occasionally, appears in official tea records: registers of students and records of tea gatherings.

<sup>72</sup> Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media and Women in Interwar Japan*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003).

This thesis adds women to the history of tea, and thereby occasions the rewriting of that history. In so doing, we will gain a more complete understanding of tea history. In particular, we see the popularisation of tea among an ever expanding group of practitioners which, by the late Edo period, included women of court aristocratic, samurai and commoner status, and the development of a discourse which laid the foundations for the growth of women's tea in modern Japan. At the same time, adding women to the picture also occasions the rewriting of Japanese women's history, particularly as it relates to women's status and their participation in early modern culture. We find that the Edo period was not the nadir for women. Rather, women played significant roles in the practice and production of culture – in this case specifically tea culture – and through this, they were active participants in the gradual disintegration of the status system.

## Chapter One: Representations of Female Tea Practitioners in Popular Literature and Theatre

This chapter discusses four literary and theatrical representations of female tea practitioners which serve as an introduction to the world of female tea practice in the Edo period. Each of the examples was chosen because it offers an archetypal representation of an early modern female tea practitioner. In each representation a different ideal of female tea practice is revealed: the flamboyant and extravagant style of tea practiced by a courtesan; the respectable wife's demure and charming manner of preparing tea; the capability and knowledge possessed by the wife of a tea master; and the noble and dignified demeanour of a female attendant in a samurai household, displayed through her knowledge of tea ritual. Significantly, we see that women were represented as tea practitioners in the popular literature and theatre of the day, not as a figment of the imagination but as a reflection of social reality.

### Popular Literature and Early Modern Japanese Society

The use of literature as an historical source has gained acceptance within the field of history for its ability to reveal aspects of the past that more traditional historical sources, such as government documents, cannot reveal. In using literary sources some methodological issues must be considered. Clearly in a work of fiction, such as a novel or a play, certain aspects of reality are distorted or exaggerated for artistic effect. However, this does not diminish their usefulness as historical sources when we consider that all sources have some bias which affects their representation of reality. Indeed, several features of popular literature make it an ideal historical source: information on some of the more mundane aspects of daily life can often only be found in fiction, for example.<sup>73</sup> In particular, in order for a work of popular fiction or theatre to be successful and appeal to its audience, it must reflect reality to a certain extent in order to generate empathy. There is, of course, the possibility that characters and situations are entirely the

<sup>73</sup> See Keith Thomas, *History and Literature*, The Ernest Hughes Memorial Lecture, (Swansea: University College of Swansea, 1998). See also the essays in John M. Wallace (ed), *The Golden and the Brazen World: Papers in Literature and History, 1650-1800* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985) which illustrate the various uses of literature in writing history.

product of an authors' imagination and have no basis in reality. However, in the case of early modern Japan many popular novels and plays were based around actual events or persons. This is the case with several of the sources discussed in this chapter. As Donald Keene puts it, theatre, and we can say literature too, was 'a mirror of society, but it may magnify, diminish or hopelessly distort', yet, 'the one thing we can say with certainty is that as long as something appears in the mirror, no matter how crooked or warped, it still exists in society and has compelled the attention of the makers of the mirror'.<sup>74</sup> It is because of their realistic representations of contemporary society, that historians of early modern Japanese popular culture have made extensive use of such sources.<sup>75</sup>

Two stories from Ihara Saikaku's (井原西鶴 1642-1693) acclaimed book *Kôshoku ichidai otoko* (好色一代男 *The Life of an Amorous Man* 1682) will be discussed below. Saikaku's works are particularly relevant for understanding the life of urban commoners and the women of the pleasure quarters. He himself was an urban commoner (町人 *chônin*) and unlike other authors before him, 'Saikaku was concerned solely with life among the common people'.<sup>76</sup> The settings in which his characters lived and loved was the 'floating world', a term which denoted the transience of life and the celebration of 'those fleeting moments which were devoted to utterly sensual pleasures'.<sup>77</sup> In particular, *The Life of an Amorous Man* is highly regarded for 'the superb character sketches of the women he [the protagonist Yonosuke] dallies with. It was Saikaku who immortalized the famed *tayû* (太夫 top-ranking courtesans) in entertainment houses'.<sup>78</sup> It is two of these *tayû*, Takahashi and Yoshino, who will be discussed below. Saikaku's 'realism', 'vivid treatment of contemporary themes' and 'minute, true-to-life delineation of characters, customs, and events of his day' have led to

<sup>74</sup> Donald Keene, 'Confucianism in Tokugawa Literature', in Peter Nosco (ed), *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 137.

<sup>75</sup> See for example Moriya, *Genroku bunka: yûgei, akusho, shibai*; 'Yûgei and Chônin Society in the Edo Period', *Acta Asiatica*, 33 (1977), pp. 32-54; and Teruoka Yasutaka, 'The Pleasure Quarters and Tokugawa Culture', trans. C. Andrew Gerstle, in C. Andrew Gerstle (ed), *18<sup>th</sup> Century Japan: Culture and Society*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), pp. 3-32.

<sup>76</sup> Kenji Hamada, 'Introduction' to Ihara Saikaku (1682), *The Life of an Amorous Man (Kôshoku ichida otoko)*, trans. Kenji Hamada, (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1964), p. 5.

<sup>77</sup> Peter Nosco, 'Introduction' to Ihara Saikaku (1689), *Some Final Words of Advice (Saikaku Oritome)*, trans. Peter Nosco, (Rutland: Charles E. Tuttle, Co., 1980), p. 12.

<sup>78</sup> Hamada, 'Introduction', p. 7.

his reputation as 'the first truly popular writer of Japanese fiction'.<sup>79</sup> As we will see in the stories of Takahashi and Yoshino, the basis of Saikaku's characters lay in reality, even if he exaggerated and distorted certain elements for dramatic effect.

Another source for understanding the world of popular culture and urban commoners is theatre. Two popular forms of theatre that had commoners as their primary audience emerged during the early modern period: *kabuki* (歌舞伎) and *bunraku* or *jôruri* (文楽 / 浄瑠璃 puppet theatre). These stood in contrast to the traditional and elite forms of theatre, *nô* (能) and *kyôgen* (狂言), which were mostly patronised by samurai.<sup>80</sup> Despite the association with commoner culture, many samurai also enjoyed these popular forms of theatre, though they tried to do so inconspicuously.<sup>81</sup> Here, both a *bunraku* and a *kabuki* play will be used to examine theatrical representations of female tea practitioners. As was often the case, their subject was the samurai and samurai culture, even if their primary audience was not.

One of these plays is by the renowned playwright Chikamatsu Monzaemon (近松門左衛門 1653-1725). His works for the *bunraku* theatre are valued for their realistic depiction of the society of early eighteenth century Japan and the interpersonal relationships of ordinary people.<sup>82</sup> Donald Keene has said of Chikamatsu's *sewamono* (世話物 plays dealing with the lives of ordinary people) that

The rod stick by which they [the audience] measured the excellence of a *sewamono* was its exactness in portraying reality; they wanted to see their close neighbours, if not themselves, faithfully depicted. In practice this meant that the audience insisted on a true-seeming play rather than on the truth itself.<sup>83</sup>

The distinction between 'true-seeming' and 'truth itself' is what allows for dramatic licence on the part of an author. Popular literature and theatre reflect the popular conception of reality, the way people saw themselves and expected themselves to

<sup>79</sup> Nosco, 'Introduction', p. 21; and Hamada, 'Introduction', p. 5.

<sup>80</sup> Haruo Shirane (ed), *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 234.

<sup>81</sup> On the historical development of *bunraku* and *kabuki* theatre see Donald H. Shively, 'Popular culture', in John Whitney Hall (ed), *The Cambridge History of Japan, volume 4: Early Modern Japan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 749-761.

<sup>82</sup> Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, pp. 259-260.

<sup>83</sup> Donald Keene, *World Within Walls: Japanese Literature of the Pre-Modern Era, 1600-1867*, (London: Secker and Warburg, 1976), p. 255.

be reflected back in print and the theatre. Early modern Japanese society saw reflections of contemporary culture and events on its stages and in the pages of its best-selling fiction books. For each of the stories discussed in this chapter, additional evidence will be used to support the conclusion that the characters and events depicted were plausible and can be read as representations of early modern Japanese society.

The popular literature of the Edo period was produced in a context of economic and cultural vitality. During the Genroku period in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries,<sup>84</sup> a flourishing urban culture developed in the cities of Edo, Osaka and Kyoto, and at the heart of this were the commoners. A commercial publishing industry had also developed by the late seventeenth century and fictional prose works constituted a major segment of the market, complemented by poetry, playbooks and other types of fiction, in addition to a wide variety of non-fiction works.<sup>85</sup> More will be said on the development of the publishing industry and on reading practices in later chapters. Here the focus is not so much on the production and consumption of the texts themselves, which were after all not explicitly concerned with tea culture, as what they reveal about popular images and ideals of women's tea practice. It is worth noting here, though, that recent research on literacy in the Edo period strongly suggests that women of both elite and commoner classes formed part of the reading public who consumed popular literature.<sup>86</sup>

So too, were women part of the audience for the theatre. Shikitei Sanba published a 'Critique of Audiences' in 1811 which 'humorously delineates all types of lively fans-from patrons, through connoisseurs, actor worshipers, young ladies, loud-mouthed ruffians, boorish samurai, and country folk, to tough old ladies.'<sup>87</sup> Much of the audience for *kabuki* and *bunraku* may even have been made up of people who did not actually

<sup>84</sup> Although Genroku is the era name for the years 1688-1704 it is generally applied to a broader period in reference to cultural developments.

<sup>85</sup> For examples of such literature see Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*. For a discussion of the commercial publishing industry and its audience see Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 136-143 and pp. 169-269; and Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

<sup>86</sup> See, for example, Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007); and Peter Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women? *Genji Monogatari* and *Ise Monogatari* in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 60: 2 (2005), pp. 147-193. The issue of women's literacy will be discussed further in Chapters Three and Four.

<sup>87</sup> C. Andrew Gerstle, 'Flowers of Edo: Eighteenth-Century *Kabuki* and Its Patrons', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 4:1 (1987), p. 66.

attend the theatre, but who were nevertheless consumers of its stories through the purchasing of playbills, critiques, actor prints, and other visual and literary texts associated with the theatre.<sup>88</sup> The commercialisation of the publishing industry and the widespread popularity of prose fiction and *kabuki* and *bunraku* theatre meant that the representations found therein were widely disseminated and consumed.

### The Courtesan

Tea did not exist in isolation from the rest of early modern popular culture. It should thus not be surprising that we find a relationship between tea culture and the pleasure quarters depicted in popular literature and art. The three licensed pleasure quarters of the major cities were centres of cultural innovation and featured heavily in the literature and theatre of the day: the Yoshiwara (吉原) in Edo; the Shimabara (島原) in Kyoto; and the Shinmachi (新町) in Osaka.<sup>89</sup> The pleasure quarters and the women who inhabited them provided much of the inspiration for the artists and writers of the time and they were the location for a range of cultural activities. These connections make it all the more necessary to incorporate a study of all these areas into the history of tea, rather than attempting to isolate it from contemporaneous forms of popular culture as many histories do.

In Ihara Saikaku's novel *The Life of an Amorous Man* there is an incident involving the protagonist, Yonosuke, and the famous *tayû* Takahashi that exemplifies the style of tea practised by the courtesans of the pleasure quarters.

Takahashi, eager to break the seal of a jar containing the first tea of the year, decided suddenly to have a tea ceremony, with Yonosuke as the chief guest and some of the *tayû* from the Kanbayashi as other guests. Enclosing with screens a part of the upstairs room of the house of Kiemon, she set up a tearoom and, apparently with something in mind, hung blank paper mounted on a scroll. The tea cakes were offered on doll-festival ware. The tea bowl and some other containers bore Takahashi's family crest of mandarin orange. Using new tea-

<sup>88</sup> Gerstle, 'Flowers of Edo', p. 53; and Donald Shively, 'The Social Environment of Tokugawa Kabuki', in James Brandon (et.al), *Studies in Kabuki: Its Acting, Music and Historical Context* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1979), pp. 23-29 and pp. 45-50.

<sup>89</sup> See Cecilia Segawa Seigle, *Yoshiwara: The Glittering World of the Japanese Courtesan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993); Yasutaka Teruoka, 'Kaku to kinsei bunka', *Engekigaku* (1984) 25, pp. 1-19, translated as 'The Pleasure Quarters and Tokugawa Culture' by C. Andrew Gerstle, in Gerstle, C. Andrew (ed), *18<sup>th</sup> Century Japan: Culture and Society*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), pp. 3-32; and Shively, 'The Social Environment of Tokugawa Kabuki', pp. 3-10, 50-53.

ceremony utensils bought to be thrown away after one use can be amusing if it is done in the right way. After a while, an attendant came in from the kitchen, saying, "Kyûjirô has come back from Uji" and they seemed to be filtering the water. This meant, everyone thought to himself happily, that Takahashi had specially sent for water dipped from between the second and third pier of the Uji bridge. When all the guests sat down, she began to grind ink on her ink stone and asked them to improvise a *haikai* (linked verse) sequence together, saying, "It would be a pity if you viewed this snow without even a verse". Each of the five people in the party picked up a writing brush and wrote down the first to fifth link alternately on the blank scroll she had hung, displaying considerable talent. After the intermission, Takahashi played the Deer Dance tune on the shamisen as the signal for the next session. Everyone went back to the enclosure, feeling happy and light-hearted. It was strange that there were no flowers in the bamboo vase hung on the pillar. Could the reason for this be to remind the guests that today's was a gathering of *tayû*, the highest rank of courtesans, and that no flower could excel these beauties? Takahashi was dressed for the occasion in a plum-pink inner kimono, a white satin kimono with the dancing figure of Sambasô embroidered over it, a grass-green light silk wrap tied with red tassels, and another one with long-tailed fowls painted here and there. She looked so appealing that one could have called her a younger sister of the Heavenly Maiden. Her performance of the tea ceremony, too, was so appealing that she could have been the reincarnation of Sen no Rikyû, the patron saint of the tea ceremony.<sup>90</sup>

This excerpt from the story suggests several interesting things about the practice of tea among courtesans. Firstly, courtesans within the 'floating world' used tea as a means of entertaining guests. Not only is Takahashi proficient in the art of hosting a tea gathering, but four other *tayû* are also present as guests, a position which requires substantial knowledge of tea procedures. Moreover, Takahashi is clearly an adept tea practitioner. Her use of water from Uji (considered the most desirable place to draw water from for use in tea), the ability to plan a gathering at a minute's notice and her possession of utensils bearing her family crest, all demonstrate that she has a thorough knowledge of not just how to do *temae*, but that she is familiar with a whole myriad of skills associated with the elite tea practitioner and is deeply involved in tea culture. We can also say that Takahashi's style of tea is flamboyant, shown by the fact that she sends

<sup>90</sup> Ihara Saikaku, *Kôshoku ichidai otoko*, (1682), translated in Kazue Edamatsu Campbell 'A Portrait of a New Woman-In a Cage', in Elizabeth de Saboto Swinton (ed), *The Women of the Pleasure Quarter: Japanese Paintings and Prints of the Floating World*, (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1995), pp. 135-136. Campbell's translation of this section of *The Life of an Amorous Man* is quite different to the standard English translation of the entire novel, by Kenji Hamada, which Campbell says she found unsatisfactory. The main difference is that Hamada's version of the story is condensed, and the comparison between Takahashi and Sen no Rikyû is entirely missing. Comparing the English translations to the Japanese version reprinted in Matsuda Osamu (ed), *Shinchô Nihon koten shûsei* (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1982), Campbell's is the more accurate translation.



a servant all the way to Uji to draw water and that she is using utensils which will be thrown away after one use. This is in keeping with the lifestyle and image of a courtesan and the 'live for the moment' philosophy of the floating world.

Finally, and most significantly, is the way in which Takahashi breaks two rules, or conventions, in her tearoom. One is the use of a blank hanging scroll to be decorated by the guests; the other is the absence of flowers. However, it is made perfectly clear that Takahashi did not break the rules by accident. Rather, these are shown to be innovations by a highly skilled and innovative tea practitioner, hence the reference to Sen no Rikyū, another innovator who often re-wrote the rules or flouted convention and surprised his guests.<sup>91</sup> Within the world of tea, which is highly governed by rules, only when you have reached a certain level of proficiency can you begin to innovate and break the rules in the daring way that Takahashi does. That Yonosuke is impressed by her improvisations shows that Takahashi had reached this level. If she had simply made a mistake or did not understand the usual conventions, then her guest would have been shocked, or even offended, rather than impressed and delighted.

Though Takahashi may be a literary invention, who's who books of the pleasure quarters (細見 *saiken*) indicate that Saikaku's description of Takahashi as an accomplished tea practitioner is not pure invention. Indeed, from the earliest years of the Yoshiwara tea was one of the courtesans' means of entertaining her patron/s.

During the Keichō and Genna eras (1596-1624), men of the most distinguished families invited intimates, telling them that a certain *tayū*, engaged for several days, would make tea at a certain person's house.<sup>92</sup>

Throughout the history of the pleasure quarters, from Kyoto to Edo, tea was recorded as an accomplishment of elite courtesans. The *tayū* Yoshino II, who also features in *The Life of an Amorous Man* and will be discussed below, is, according to Yasutaka Teruoka,

<sup>91</sup> Of the numerous anecdotes surrounding the legendary tea master the 'morning-glory tea party' best exemplifies his willingness to go against convention in order to surprise his guest. According to most versions of the story on this occasion the general Hideyoshi had been invited to a tea gathering and was anticipating a garden full of rare morning-glory flowers but instead found all the flowers had been cut. To Hideyoshi's initial displeasure but subsequent delight upon entering the tearoom, Rikyū had placed one single, perfect, flower in a vase in the tea-room's alcove. Thereby going against the convention that flowers are usually displayed at a later stage, with a scroll being displayed first, as well as surprising his guest who had expected to see a garden full of flowers. For typical versions of this story see Asako Fujikawa, *Cha-no-yu and Hideyoshi*, (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1957), pp. 43-44; and Herbert Plutschow, *Rediscovering Rikyū and the Beginnings of the Japanese Tea-Ceremony* (Folkestone: Global Oriental, 2003), p. 139.

<sup>92</sup> Quoted in Shively, 'Popular culture', p. 743.

known to have been accomplished in *chanoyu*.<sup>93</sup> Another *tayû* famous in the early years of the Shimabara, Yachiyo of the Okumura House, was also renowned for her high level of artistic accomplishment, particularly calligraphy, but also tea.<sup>94</sup> One of the most celebrated courtesans of the Yoshiwara in the mid-eighteenth century was Segawa III of the Matsubaya. She was discussed in texts such as *Yoshiwara hyôban kôtai han-eiki* (Yoshiwara's Record of Successive Prosperity, 1754).<sup>95</sup> Her virtues and accomplishments were also noted by contemporary authors, such as Baba Bunkô. In *Buya Zokudan* (武壘俗談 Secular Tales in the Martial Field, 1757), he notes that after being adopted into the Matsubaya household at a young age, Segawa III became proficient at arts such as shamisen, tea, *haikai* (俳諧 linked verse style of poetry using seventeen syllables), *go* (碁 board game of capturing territory, similar in strategy to chess), *sugoroku* (双六 board game of moving between squares to reach a goal, similar in layout and strategy to snakes and ladders), *kemari* (蹴鞠 kickball), and so forth.<sup>96</sup> Other celebrated courtesans whom Cecilia Segawa Seigle notes as having been known for their skill at tea, include Hanaôgi II and Hanaôgi III, great beauties of the Ôgiya, and Yoso'oi of the Matsubaya Hanzô.<sup>97</sup>

It was a mark of a great courtesan to be accomplished in many arts. This was what set her apart from the lower ranking women of the pleasure quarters, and prostitutes working outside the officially licensed districts. In a list of courtesans and their particular talents, which included Meizan of the Chôjiya who was noted for her skill at tea, it was noted that 'such accomplishments of the Yoshiwara are something that illegal prostitutes elsewhere could never compete with'.<sup>98</sup> As such, courtesans were depicted performing *temae* in prints and paintings of the floating world (Figure 1). They formed a genre known as '*bijin temae*', that is pictures of beautiful women (美人 *bijin*) making tea. In Figure 2, for example, the courtesan, accompanied by her young attendant (禿 *kamuro*), is folding the silk wiping cloth (帛紗 *fukusa*) in the process of making tea.

<sup>93</sup> Yasutaka, 'Kaku to kinsei bunka', p. 6.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>95</sup> *Yoshiwara hyôban kôtai han'eiki*, 3 volumes, (1754). Discussed in Cecilia Segawa Seigle, *Yoshiwara: The Glittering World of the Japanese Courtesan*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), pp. 121-125.

<sup>96</sup> Baba Bunkô, *Buya zokudan*, (1757), (Tokyo: Yûhōdō, 1932), p. 382; and Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 123.

<sup>97</sup> Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 138 and p. 158.

<sup>98</sup> Tamizu Kingyo, *Keiseikai shinanjo*, (1778). Cited with translation in Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 202.



Figure 2: *Scenes of the Twelve Months: Opening of the Hearth in the Tenth Month*  
 (十二月の内 十月ろうひらき *Jūnikagetsu no nai jūgatsu rô hiraki*).

Keisai Eisen. 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Ô-ban size, *Nishiki-e* wood-block print.  
 Ota Memorial Museum of Art, Tokyo.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> Image source: Akai Tashirô (ed), *Chanoyu kaiga shiryô shūsei* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1992), plate 112, p. 197.



Figure 3: *Picture of a Beauty Doing Tea* (茶の湯美人図 *Chanoyu bijin zu*).  
 Yamazaki Ryūjo. 18<sup>th</sup> Century. Painting on silk. 70.5 x 29.9 cm.  
 Tokyo National Museum.<sup>100</sup>

In Figure 3, the courtesan Ainare of the Kadoebi-ya prepares tea in the extravagant style in which only courtesans like her, or Saikaku's Takahashi, could

<sup>100</sup> Image source Kobayashi Tadashi (ed), *Nikuhitsu ukiyo-e taikan, 2: Tōkyō Kokuritsu Hakubutsukan* (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1994), plate 25.

indulge. The tea bowl placed on the floor in front of her, for example, is crystal and she herself is dressed in several layers of sumptuous kimono. Such depictions served to demonstrate the courtesans' high level of accomplishment and the beautiful style of tea they practised. They also contributed to an emerging association of tea with femininity.

From the mid-eighteenth century the position of *oiran* (花魁) took over from *tayū* as the top rank in the Yoshiwara.<sup>101</sup> At the same time, rituals and annual events took on greater significance as symbols of the quarters' prestige and cultural sophistication.<sup>102</sup> One such event was the debut of a new *oiran*. As part of the festivities, a trousseau was prepared, much the same as for a wedding ceremony.<sup>103</sup> The contents of the *oiran*'s trousseau often included 'bedding, chests of drawers, cabinets, tea ceremony paraphernalia, musical instruments, game sets, bookshelves, makeup kit, mirror stand, and so on'.<sup>104</sup> The inclusion of tea utensils reflects the fact that tea was an accomplishment that a top ranking courtesan was expected to master.

The bridal trousseaus (婚礼道具 *konrei dōgu*), and their miniature representations in the form of dolls furniture (雛道具 *hina dōgu*), of elite women included many of the same items as those of a courtesan, with the notable exception of bedding.<sup>105</sup> One category of items commonly included was tea utensils. Items which are commonly found in bridal trousseaus include tea bowls; particularly of the formal *tenmoku* (天目 a tea bowl with a short foot which is placed on a stand) variety (Figure 4); tea caddies, braziers, kettles, waste water baskets, and fresh water jars. Of particular importance for women's tea practice, as will be discussed further in the next chapters, were the utensil stands (台子 *daisu*) onto which these other utensils were placed (Figure 5). In the case of elite women's bridal trousseaus, typically the utensil stand and other utensils constituted a matching set all decorated with the family crest (Figures 4, 5 and 6). The stands were usually lacquer-ware and the other utensils were often made of bronze, or in some cases, gold.

<sup>101</sup> Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, pp. 125-128.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid*, p. 184.

<sup>103</sup> On the similarities and differences in the ritual and sexual values for courtesans and wives, including those surrounding the debut of a courtesan and weddings, see William R. Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure: Ritual and Sexual Values in Tokugawa Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), especially pp. 49-96.

<sup>104</sup> Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 185.

<sup>105</sup> Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure*, p. 88.



Figure 4: Tenmoku tea bowl (天目茶碗 *Tenmoku chawan*) with pattern of chrysanthemums and hollyhock. From a bridal trousseau of the Hitotsubashi family.<sup>106</sup>

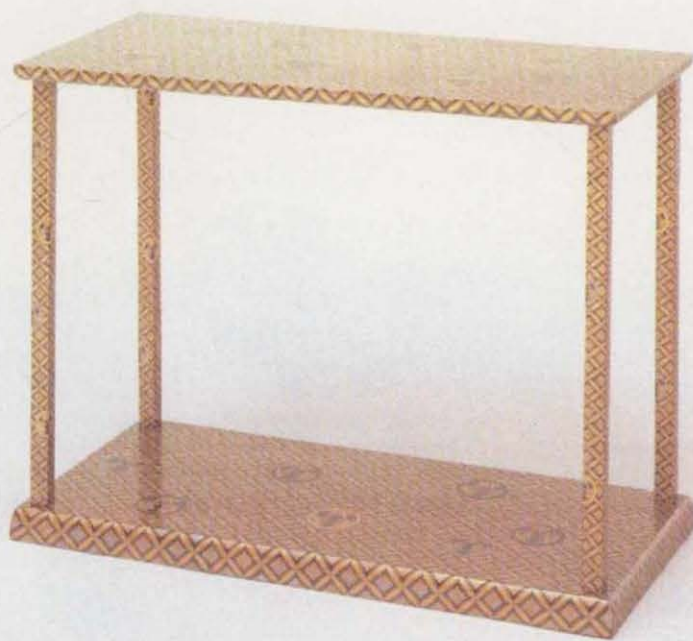


Figure 5: Gold lacquer-ware utensil stand (台子 *daisu*).  
Gold lacquer-ware. 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century.  
Thought to be part of a bridal trousseau from the Uesugi family.  
Sendai City Museum.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Image source: Ibaraki Kenristu Rekishikan (ed), *Tokugawa (kyū Hitotsubashi) ke denrai ningyō: amagatsu, hook, hina, hina dōgu, gosho ningyō, kamo ningyō*, (Mito: Ibaraki Kenristu Rekishikan, 1983), plate 115, p. 40.



Figure 6: Black lacquer-ware utensil stand and tea utensils with pattern of chrysanthemums and hollyhocks. From a bridal trousseau of the Hitotsubashi family.<sup>108</sup>

A particularly beautiful example of tea utensils as part of a bridal trousseau comes from the *Hatsune* collection, created for the wedding of Chiyohime (千代姫), daughter of the third Tokugawa shogun, Iemitsu (徳川家光 1623-1651), when she married Tokugawa Mitsumoto (徳川充元 1625-1700), second lord of Owari, in 1639 (Figures 7, 8 and 9).<sup>109</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Image source: Sendai-shi Hakubutsukan, *Daimyô-ke no konrei: Ohime-sama no yomeiri dôgu*, (Sendai: Sendai City Museum, 2000), plate 76, p. 67.

<sup>108</sup> Image source: Ibaraki Kenristu Rekishikan (ed), *Tokugawa (kyû Hitotsubashi) ke denrai ningyô*, plate 129, p. 42.

<sup>109</sup> See Tokugawa Bijutsukan, *Hatsune no chôdo, Tokugawa Bijutsukan zôhin shô*, volume 3, (Nagoya: Tokugawa Art Museum, 1985); and Richard L. Wilson, 'The Chiyohime Dowry' in *The Tokugawa Collection: the Japan of the Shoguns*, (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1989), pp. 134-137.



Figure 7: Stand with tea utensils.  
 Gold. Design of Shokkô pattern with hollyhock crests. 17<sup>th</sup> Century.  
 Part of the bridal trousseau of Chiyohime.  
 Tokugawa Art Museum.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Image source: Tokugawa Bijutsukan, *Hatsune no chôdo, Tokugawa Bijutsukan zôhin shô*, volume 3, (Nagoya: Tokugawa Art Museum, 1985), plate 85, p. 106.



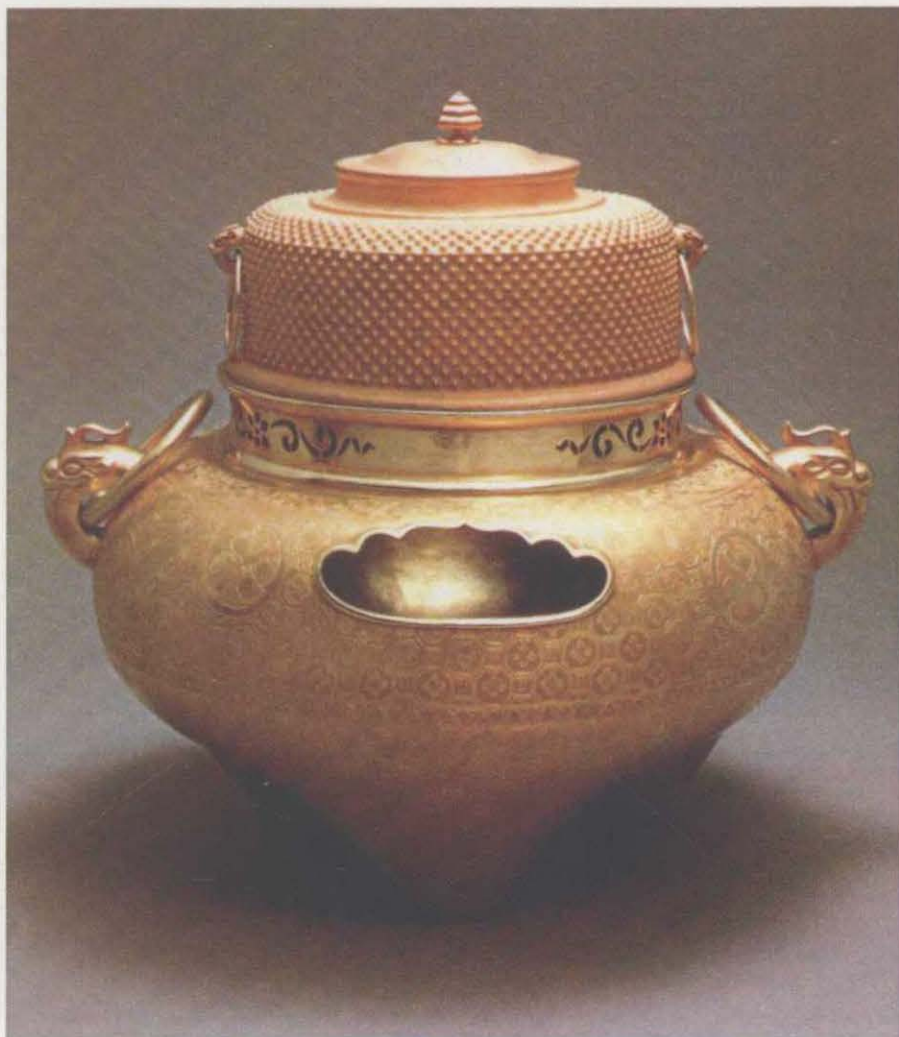


Figure 8: Brazier (風炉 *furo*) and kettle (釜 *kama*).  
 Gold. 24.6 x 34.5cm and 18.6 x 23cm. 17<sup>th</sup> Century.  
 Part of the bridal trousseau of Chiyohime.  
 Tokugawa Art Museum.<sup>111</sup>

<sup>111</sup> Image source: Richard L. Wilson, 'The Chiyohime Dowry' in *The Tokugawa Collection: the Japan of the Shoguns*, (Montreal: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, 1989), plate 91-92, p.135.

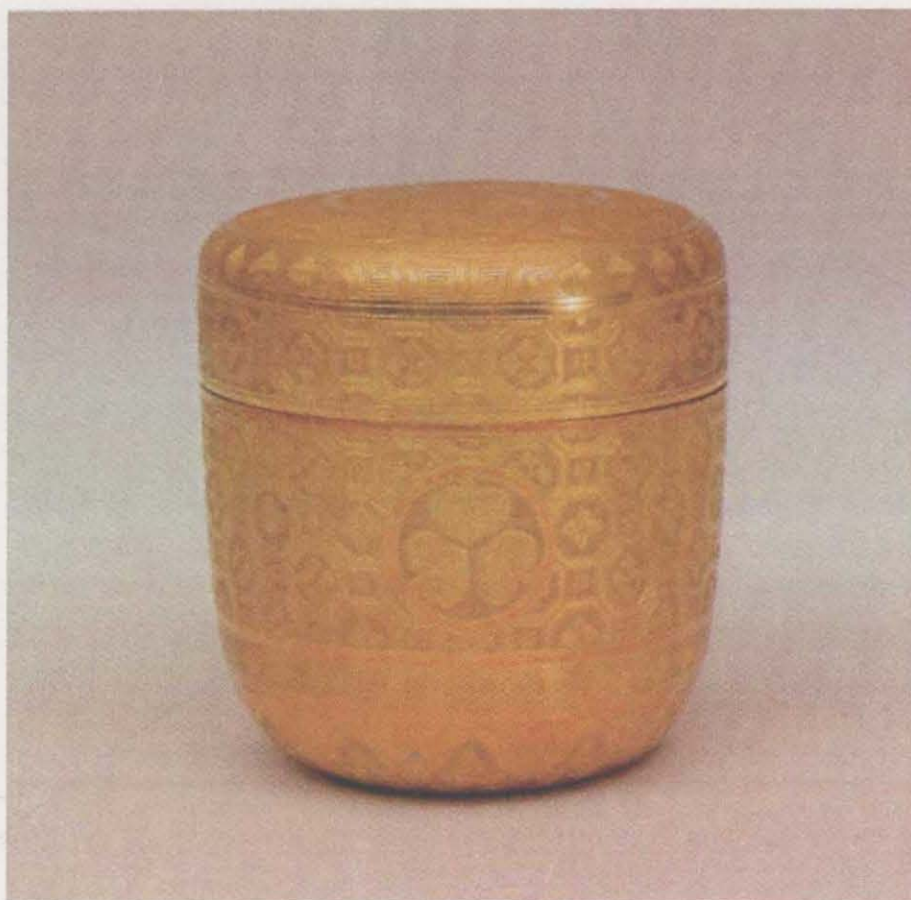


Figure 9: Tea caddy (棗 *natsume*).  
Gold. Design of Shokkô pattern with hollyhock crests. 17<sup>th</sup> Century.  
Part of the bridal trousseau of Chiyohime.  
Tokugawa Art Museum.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Image source: Tokugawa Bijustukan, *Hatusne no chôdo*, plate 86, p. 106.

The similarities between the bridal trousseaus of elite women and those of an *oiran* reflect that the high-ranking women of the pleasure quarters were expected to be as cultivated and refined as the high-ranking women outside the quarters, that is court aristocratic and samurai women.<sup>113</sup> As will be shown in subsequent chapters, elite women were also expected to be well versed in the art of tea. For the courtesans of early modern Japan, tea was an essential skill which they deployed extravagantly and flamboyantly to entertain their customers, as represented by Ihara Saikaku's Takashi. The courtesan's style of tea practice represents a feminine style of tea which is, in some ways, markedly different from that of the respectable wife, yet which has striking similarities at the same time.

### The Accomplished Wife

The story of Yoshino, which takes several forms, encompasses the two contrasting feminine ideals of tea found in early modern Japan: that of the flamboyant and risqué courtesan, and the demure and respectable wife. The story concerns the *tayû* Yoshino I (吉野 1606-1643) and while the story may be an 'urban myth', Yoshino herself was an historical figure. Born in 1606, indentured into the pleasure quarters at age six and so accomplished that by age fourteen she gained the highest rank, Yoshino was one of seven celebrated *tayû* in the Shimabara quarter of Kyoto.<sup>114</sup> According to one version of the story, when entertaining at a gathering of a Kyoto literary circle, she met a merchant's son, Jôeki (sometimes Shôeki) Haiya, who was an accomplished tea practitioner. They fell in love and Jôeki bought out Yoshino's contract so that he could marry her. His father disowned him for bringing 'the family into disrepute', so the couple moved 'to a humble house on the outskirts of Kyoto' and 'Jôeki began to sell off his much-loved collection of tea ceremony utensils to support them'.<sup>115</sup> Then, so the story goes,

<sup>113</sup> The standards of behaviour for a *tayû* to follow as set out in the *Shikidô ôkagami* (The Great Mirror of Sex, 1678) are similar to those required of an aristocratic or elite samurai woman, for example never to laugh out loud or open your mouth without covering it with your sleeve. See. Shively, 'Popular culture', pp. 745-747.

<sup>114</sup> See Yusa Tsunekuni, 'Yoshino den', in Iwamoto Kattôshi (ed), *Enseki jishu*, 6 volumes, (approximately 1830), (Tokyo: Chûô Kôronsha, 1979-1980), volume 6, pp. 303-312; and Yasutaka, 'Kaku to kinsei bunka', p. 6.

<sup>115</sup> Lesley Downer, *Women of the Pleasure Quarter: The Secret History of the Geisha*, (New York: Broadway Books, 2001), p. 46.

One day Joeki's father, far from home, was caught in a rain-storm and sought shelter under the eaves of an unprepossessing house. Through the window he heard a gentle, refined voice inviting him to rest inside. He walked across the stepping stones of a humble but perfectly arranged garden and into a house where everything, though poor, was of the most exquisite taste. On a wall was a single piece of calligraphy by the most famous master of the day.

The lady of the house appeared, dressed in a plain, humble kimono which could only enhance her radiant beauty. Dignified and gracious, she knelt and performed a tea ceremony for him, whipping up a bowl of foaming green tea. On returning home he recounted the tale of his adventure to friends and discovered that this vision was none other than Yoshino. He summoned his son immediately, was reconciled with him, and took the couple back into his family.<sup>116</sup>

This story does not feature in every account of Yoshino's life, though it is widely said that Jôeki was an accomplished tea practitioner and that he and Yoshino married.<sup>117</sup> The historical accuracy of this story is thus unclear, though there is a similar version of this story that is certainly fictional.

This version of the Yoshino story appears as one of the adventures of the playboy Yonosuke in Saikaku's *Life of an Amorous Man*. The events recounted mirror the above version of the Yoshino story, except that Yoshino is married to Yonosuke, Saikaku's protagonist, rather than her historical husband Jôeki. Once again the family has rejected her because of her former status as a courtesan. On Yoshino's instructions, Yonosuke invites the women of his clan over to reconcile, after he has told them he is sending Yoshino away. The story continues:

After they had saké for a while, Yoshino appeared with a tray of dried sliced abalone, wearing a simple blue cotton kimono with the customary red apron of a waitress, her hair covered with cotton cloth like a maid. Seated in front of the elder of the womenfolk, Yoshino bowed deeply and said: "I am Yoshino who once lived at Misujimachi, and I know I am unworthy of appearing in such fine company. I was given my master's permission to leave this household, but before that to serve you for this last time." Then she sang Shizuka's [Minamoto Yoshitsune's concubine's] song so beautifully that the women were enraptured. She played the koto, composed a poem, performed the tea ceremony gracefully, rearranged the flowers, adjusted the clock, combed and set the hair of the younger members of the party, played go with everyone, amused them with a classical flute, and entertained them, with conversation on wide topics ranging from the uncertainty of life to town gossip.

<sup>116</sup> Downer, *Women of the Pleasure Quarter*, p. 47.

<sup>117</sup> For example, see Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 37.

Whenever she went to the kitchen, the ladies immediately called her back. In her charming presence, they quite forgot to leave. Finally, close to dawn, the women returned home and said to their husbands: "For whatever reason, Yonosuke must not divorce Yoshino. Her charm is boundless even to us women; her goodness and intelligence would qualify her as the wife of the finest gentleman. Of the thirty-five or thirty-six women in the clan, none can be her equal. Please forgive her and restore her as Yonosuke's wife." Thus they interceded and soon the formal wedding took place.<sup>118</sup>

There are many parallels between the two accounts of Yoshino as courtesan turned wife: both emphasize her demure and humble appearance, and both focus on her display of polite accomplishments to her husband's family. It is more than likely that this story was something akin to an urban myth, which Saikaku incorporated into his novel, simply switching Yonosuke for Jôeki. According to Haruo Shirane, Saikaku's version is an 'imaginative reworking of the story' which appeared in Fujimoto Kizan's *Shikidô ôkagami* (*Great Mirror of the Way of Love* 1678), in which Yoshino is 'forced to leave the Misujimachi quarter in Kyoto' for breaking the rule against meeting a man of low status.<sup>119</sup>

Whatever its origins, the story of Yoshino gaining acceptance back into her husband's family through her feminine skills and charms is likely to have been exaggerated and re-worked numerous times. However, this does not diminish the story's importance as a reflection of Edo period society and popular ideals. As Cecilia Seigle says of Saikaku's version, 'his Yoshino episode is clearly fiction, but read with caution it provides a valuable glimpse of the historical Yoshino, as well as an ideal woman perceived by a perceptive chronicler of his time'.<sup>120</sup> That is, we can regard the fictional or mythologised Yoshino and the stories that surround her as reflections of the ideal characteristics of a 'proper' wife, which included knowledge of tea. In both versions of the story it is Yoshino's ability to practice tea – among other skills in the Saikaku version – and her modest appearance and manner, which it is implied are connected with her

<sup>118</sup> Thara Saikaku, *Kôshoku Ichidai Otoko*, (1682), translated in Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, pp. 38-39. Seigle's translation is preferred over the standard English version of the novel because on comparison with the Japanese version reprinted in Matsuda Osamu (ed), *Shinchô Nihon koten shûsei*, (Tokyo, Shinchôsha, 1982) pp. 142-146, Seigle's is the more accurate English translation. For another translation of the same passage see Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>119</sup> Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, p. 46.

<sup>120</sup> Seigle, *Yoshiwara*, p. 38.

accomplishment in tea, that allow her and her husband back into the family and social respectability. Though tea was a skill that Yoshino learnt as a courtesan, she puts it to use in cementing her new role as respectable wife.

The story of Yoshino further evidences the similarities between the seemingly disparate feminine ideals of courtesan and respectable wife. Indeed, as Peter Kornicki has said, 'it may simply be the case that we exaggerate the distinctions between courtesans and respectable women'.<sup>121</sup> Whilst there were different ritual and sexual values conceived of for courtesans and respectable daughters and wives, there were also activities and values which they shared in common.<sup>122</sup> Tea was one activity which courtesans and respectable women alike practised. The historical, mythologised, and fictionalised Yoshino embodied the qualities of both courtesan and respectable wife. She displayed these qualities through her *temae*.

### The Tea Master's Wife

The wife of a tea master was another type of Edo period female tea practitioner. She shared much in common with the respectable wife, as represented by Yoshino, but as a tea master's wife she had greater responsibility in regards to tea culture. We see just such a woman depicted in the play *Gonza the Lancer* (槍之権三重帷子 *Yari no Gonza Kasane Katabira*) by Chikamatsu Monzaemon.<sup>123</sup> The play premiered in 1717 and was based on actual events which had occurred in Osaka that same year.<sup>124</sup> Though this is a literary source, it is not entirely fictional. Even more so than the stories of Takahashi and Yoshino, though they were also based in reality, we can regard it as a reflection of actual historical conditions.

The story concerns a typical Chikamatsu theme of a double suicide by star-crossed lovers, in this case a samurai, Gonza, and Osai, the wife of another samurai, Ichinoshin, a tea-master of whom Gonza is a student. At the start of the play Ichinoshin is away in Edo and Osai has responsibility for managing her husband's affairs, including

<sup>121</sup> Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 176.

<sup>122</sup> See Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure*.

<sup>123</sup> Chikamatsu Monzaemon, *Yari no Gonza Kasane Katabira* (1717). Reprinted in full in Torigoe Bunzô et.al (ed), *Nihon koten bungaku zenshû, volume 44: Chikamatsu Monzaemon shû*, (Tokyo: Shôgakkan, 1975), pp. 309-362. Translated in Donald Keene, 'Gonza the Lancer' in *Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 270-312.

<sup>124</sup> Keene, *Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, p. 270.

those to do with tea. Her position, and responsibilities, as the wife of a tea master are outlined in the following section of the play.

Osai watches over Asaka Ichinoshin's house during his absence. Elegant and gay, as a tea master's wife should be, her slender and delicate build gives her a grace and charm that belie her thirty-seven years, though she is the mother of three children. She sweeps and dusts the tea room, never letting a maid inside, so devoted to tidiness that her broom never leaves her hand. Today she scatters pine needles along the path of stepping-stones to the teahouse.<sup>125</sup>

In addition to having charge of the maintenance of the teahouse and gardens, Osai also has responsibility for the upbringing of the children. Thus she instructs her ten year old son,

Now, while you're still young, you should learn how to hold the tea ladle and how to fold the napkins. I'll get a terrible reputation if people start saying that you children are being brought up badly while your father's away in Edo. I'll be mortified.<sup>126</sup>

It is implied that Osai will be the one to instruct her son in the basics of tea. Though the young son has not yet gained any skill in tea, the eldest daughter, Okiku, has. The narrator tells us that

Okiku is exactly as an eldest daughter should be [and suggesting her mother should rest a while]...She offers powdered tea in a cup of Otowa ware ('*kaka sama ikai o sewa, chito o yasumi to sashi idasu.*' *Usucha chawan no otowa yama*). Osai notices how grown up her manner has become.<sup>127</sup>

The most interesting part of the story, for our purposes, concerns the preparations for the performance of the *shin no daisu temae* (真の台子点前 a method of preparing tea using the formal shelf unit [*daisu*] for holding and displaying utensils which is lacquered in the *shin nuri* style and has four posts) at the celebrations for the marriage of the local daimyo's son. As Ichinoshin is away in Edo, one of his students must perform the service. However, the *shin no daisu* is one of the secret procedures which is only transmitted orally from father to son. The service has not been transmitted to any of Ichinoshin's students, nor have any of them received certification to perform it publicly.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, p. 278.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, p. 279.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, p. 279; and Torigoe, *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shū*, p. 322.

Gonza and another student, Bannojô, both desire to perform the *temae*. The first approach to Gonza asking him to perform the procedure is made by Ichinoshin's father-in-law Iwaki. After Gonza agrees, Iwaki hands over responsibility for making the decision to his daughter, Osai.

It's nothing I can decide myself. My daughter, as you know, is Ichinoshin's wife, and she must be consulted. Any mistakes made about initiation into the formal ceremony will disgrace his lordship.<sup>128</sup>

Osai must have considerable knowledge of the procedures involved in order to be able to make the important decision as to whether Gonza can perform the procedure or not, for as Iwaki says, this decision has ramifications for the reputations of several people. Gonza then goes to see Osai and asks her to show him the scroll, and in doing so, 'he bows his head to the matting with all the courtesy expected of a disciple' (*hitai o tatami ni oshisagete, shitei no reigi miekereba*).<sup>129</sup> Indicating that Osai has taken over the position of Ichinoshin in his absence, with all the respect accorded to him shown to her by Gonza. She responds by saying,

I admire your zeal and your unusual devotion. As you know, however, the secret teachings are transmitted within a family, and may be revealed only by the master to his son. In unavoidable cases a pupil may be shown the scroll, but only after a contract of marriage has been arranged with the master's daughter.<sup>130</sup>

Here, Osai speaks to Gonza of the protocol involved in transmission with considerable authority. She does not appear to be merely a caretaker but someone with real knowledge who is up to the task of managing the affairs of a tea master. Osai then offers Gonza her daughter Okiku in marriage. Once this issue is resolved, Gonza, as the future son-in-law of Ichinoshin, is able to be shown the scrolls by Osai in a secret night time meeting.

The authority which Osai has in such an important matter is also reflected in the instructions of her father, once he has learned of Gonza and Osai's meeting.

Remember, if he performs the ceremony badly, it will be blamed on Ichinoshin, and reflect unfortunately on his lordship. Let him learn all of the secret traditions.

<sup>128</sup> Keene, *Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, p. 277.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 283; and Torigoe, *Chikamatsu Monzaemon shû*, p. 326.

<sup>130</sup> Keene, *Major Plays of Chikamatsu*, p. 283.



But you must not breathe a word of this even to the servants—not that they'd understand—it's much too important for our family.<sup>131</sup>

Clearly Osai is being entrusted with an extremely important matter, for the local daimyō and her whole family. Even though her father has had some involvement in the preparations, most of the important work is being left to her. Her competence in handling this matter is shown when she hands over the scrolls to Gonza and explains them to him.

This is the illustrated scroll. Here, you see the tables used at weddings, manhood ceremonies, and departures for the front. This is a picture of a tea ceremony behind a screen of state. And this is the True Table ceremony [*shin no daisu temae*], performed on the occasion of an imperial visit. The three hanging scrolls, the three utensils, the placing of the decorative tea caddies—everything is explained in these scrolls of authorization. Once you've read them you won't need any oral instruction. Please compose yourself and read carefully.<sup>132</sup>

Once again, Osai is taking on the role of tea master with confidence and authority, even though she does not give any oral instruction as her husband would have.

What the story of Osai shows above all else is that, in the position of a tea master's wife, a woman could have considerable knowledge of tea. Though she may not have been licensed to teach or perform in public, Osai is familiar with tea procedures. Her daughter Okiku is also proficient in tea, and it appears that it is Osai who has, if not sole, then major responsibility for instructing both Okiku and her younger brother in tea. Moreover, even though Osai is not officially a teacher, she does, when it is appropriate and necessary, take on the role of tea master, and she is accorded due respect by her husband's pupil. Osai's knowledge of tea and ability to take over the role of tea master are an integral part of the story and must have had some resonance with the intended audience for the play.

Evidence suggests that the events depicted in this play, of a tea master's wife having substantial knowledge of tea, was not unheard of. Records, which will be discussed in the next chapter, exist of tea master's wives attending tea gatherings, at which even to be a guest one must have basic knowledge of tea procedures and etiquette. In Chapter Five we will encounter a wife of a tea master who was not just a tea

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<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

practitioner but who also taught tea herself, Katagiri Sôtetsu. The story of Yoshida Ito will be discussed in Chapter Four. Suffice to say here that as a young girl she studied tea from the wife of a local priest. Thus, female tea teachers were not unknown in the Edo period. The likelihood that wives of tea masters would themselves have been tea practitioners is very high. Internal transmission of the art within the household, particularly to other women and young children, may well have been carried out by wives.

Furthermore, there is evidence that it was not uncommon for a wife to take over the headship of the family when the husband was absent. In a 1705 record of residents in the castle town of Kasama, out of thirty-seven female household heads registered, in twenty-two cases the woman was temporarily serving as family head whilst her samurai husband was away on official duties.<sup>133</sup> In other cases, women are known to have taken over the running of the family business upon the death of a husband. In a discussion of Raku potters Morgan Pitelka notes that the term *amayaki* developed in reference 'to the practice of a wife in the Raku household taking Buddhist vows after her husband's death and making ceramics'.<sup>134</sup> As he suggests, we can assume that these women had prior knowledge of both pottery and tea, but they could not be 'publicly acknowledged as a Raku potter' until there was no 'husband to "front" the occupation'.<sup>135</sup> Joyce Lebra has also discussed the circumstances under which women could succeed to the family headship of Osaka merchant houses during the Edo period.<sup>136</sup> She particularly focuses on the case of Tatsu'uma Kiyô who after learning about sake brewing as a child, ran the family business from 1842-1897 with great success, though never formally becoming the family head.<sup>137</sup>

These examples can be thought of in terms of the 'wife-as-deputy' phenomenon described by Gerda Lerner. In such situations, the 'wife-as-deputy' has real influence in shaping events and power over both the men and women below them, yet they derive this

<sup>133</sup> *Kasama machikata kenbetsu kakiage* (1705). Cited in Gary Leupp, 'Population Registers and Household Records as Sources for the Study of Urban Women in Tokugawa Japan', *Gest Library Journal* 5:2 (1992), p. 70.

<sup>134</sup> Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons and Tea Practitioners in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005), p. 127.

<sup>135</sup> Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, p. 127.

<sup>136</sup> Joyce Lebra, 'Women in an all-male industry: the case of the sake brewer Tatsu-uma Kiyô', in Gail Lee Bernstein (ed), *Re-creating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991), pp.136-137.

<sup>137</sup> Lebra, 'Women in an all-male industry', pp. 140-148.

power from 'the male on whom they depend'.<sup>138</sup> In the case of Osai in *Gonza the Lancer*, she took over her husband's role whilst he was absent in Edo. Her power was derived both from Ichinoshin and her father, who entrusted her with making decisions about the performance of the tea procedure. Osai exerted influence and power over the events and over Gonza, forcing him to acquiesce to her wish that he marry her daughter, for example. The extraordinary circumstances of the high-level procedure needing to be performed and the family's reputation being at stake warranted such action. Had everything gone as Osai planned, after Ichinoshin's return from Edo, things no doubt would have returned to normal. However, in a Chikamatsu play life is never quite so simple, and Osai was killed by her husband after being accused of adultery with Gonza.

### The Noble Samurai Woman

A different theatrical depiction of a woman in a samurai household who had knowledge of tea ritual is found in the kabuki play *Meiboku Sendai Hagi* (銘木仙台萩 The Precious Incense and Autumn Flowers of Sendai). The play was originally performed in 1777 and has evolved considerably since then, with the current version of the play having taken form in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>139</sup> It has achieved great popularity, with at least one performance being held every year since its premiere. The plot is based on the 1660 attempted coup by retainers of the Date military household in the Sendai region of Japan. The lead female role of Masaoka, nursemaid to the young lord of the Ashikaga household, has become widely regarded as the 'greatest and most difficult of all kabuki roles for a female-role specialist (女形 *onnagata*)'.<sup>140</sup> The character is regarded as such because in performing her duty to protect the young lord, Masaoka sacrifices the life of her son, stoically watching his murder at the hands of the court lady Yashio.

The scene which concerns us here is *Goten no Ba* (御殿の場 The Mansion), the beginning of which features Masaoka preparing a meal of rice for her son, Senmatsu, and

<sup>138</sup> Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 74.

<sup>139</sup> See the introduction to the translation of *Meiboku Sendai Hagi*, (1777) by Matthew Johnson, in James R. Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter (eds), *Kabuki Plays on Stage*, volume 2: *Villainy and Vengeance, 1773-1799*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), pp. 50-52.

<sup>140</sup> Johnson, *Meiboku Sendai Hagi*, p. 51.

the young lord, Ashikaga Tsuruchiyo. However, this is no ordinary meal as Masaoka is concerned about the possibility of poison and so forces the two hungry boys to wait patiently as she prepares the rice in the manner of a *temae*, according to the sixty-six steps of the Oribe school of tea. She thus prepares each utensil by ritually cleansing it as in *temae*, for example wiping the brazier with a feather before laying charcoal. The scene is visually striking, as the audience feels Masaoka's pain throughout her focused and intricate preparation of the rice.

We see that a female attendant of high rank within a samurai household would be familiar with tea ritual. The choice of the Oribe school of tea's style of tea reflects the household's status; 'the famous Senke schools are thought to be too "popular" for a high-ranking household'.<sup>141</sup> Though there was differentiation among schools of tea according to status, this did not apply to gender. Women followed whatever style of tea was appropriate to their family or household. In this case, a woman serving in a samurai household followed a style of tea popular among those of samurai status.

The nobility and dignity with which Masaoka is often described stems in part from her intricate performance of the steps involved in the preparation of rice in the style of *temae* while under extreme stress, as well as her heroic sacrifice of her son. There is thus an association made in this characterisation between the attributes of a female attendant in a samurai household – nobility, dignity and loyalty – and knowledge and performance of tea. Produced during the spring season, this play was designed to appeal to court ladies and female attendants in samurai households, who took their vacations at that time and would go to the theatre.<sup>142</sup> They expected to see characters and plots with which they could empathize. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, girls often had training in tea prior to going into service in an elite household and they may have continued their tea practice whilst in service. The case of the Ii household, where some female attendants studied and practised tea on a regular basis, will be discussed in detail. The playwrights and producers assumed there was, likewise, some familiarity with tea procedures among the women who went to see this play. The connection between Masaoka's performance of *temae* and her noble character would have had resonance with

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<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51.

<sup>142</sup> James R. Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter 'Introduction', in Brandon and Leiter (eds), *Kabuki Plays on Stage*, volume 2, p. 9; and Shively, 'The Social Environment of Tokugawa Kabuki', p. 29.

the court ladies and female attendants in samurai households of the Edo period. Indeed, her performance may well have been something they wished to emulate.

As women were banned from performing on the stage during this period, the role of Masaoka was performed by a male actor. These female role specialists were, by the mid-eighteenth century, not just actors who imitated women on the stage. They were widely regarded as models of femininity, themselves the object of emulation by women, including courtesans, who had previously been held up as the epitome of femininity.<sup>143</sup> As mentioned above, the role of Masaoka was considered to be one of the greatest roles a female role specialist could take on. For a male actor to embody femininity by performing *temae* on stage, or in a print (Figure 10), further evidences how accomplishment in tea was representative of femininity in early modern Japan.

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<sup>143</sup> Maki Morinaga, 'The Gender of *Onnagata* As the Imitating Imitated: Its Historicity, Performativity, and Involvement in the Circulation of Femininity', *Positions*, 10:2, pp. 245-284; and Gerstle, 'Flowers of Edo', pp. 61-63.



Figure 10: *Tea and Flowers: The Actors Yamashita Matatarô I and Nakamura Tomijûrô I as Watanabe Kiyô Takiguchi and the Courtesan Hatsuhana* (茶の湯と花：初代山下又太郎の渡辺競滝口と初代中村富士郎の傾城初花).

Kiyohiro Torii. 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Ô-ban size, benizuri-e wood-block print.

Riccar Art Museum, Tokyo.<sup>144</sup>

<sup>144</sup> Image source: Akai, *Chanoyu kaiga shiryô shûsei*, plate 109, p. 196. The image can also be found in Muneshige Narazaki (ed), *Ukiyo-e Masterpieces in European Collections*, volume 2: *The British Museum*, (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1998-1990), monochrome plate 18, p. 163.

## Conclusion

Early modern Japanese women were recognised and represented as tea practitioners by some of the most acclaimed authors and playwrights of their time. The respect and recognition accorded to such characters by authors and playwrights shows the extent to which female tea practitioners had become participants in early modern culture. These fictional characters were sometimes figments of the author's imagination and sometimes fictionalised accounts of real women. In either case their stories had resonance with the audience because they were grounded in reality. Significantly, women formed part of the audience for these works. They saw examples of skilful female tea practitioners depicted in novels and on the stage, which may have contributed to the growth in women's tea practice as women saw characters whom they wished to emulate.

The female tea practitioners depicted in popular literature and theatre were characteristic of the various styles of women's tea practice in early modern Japan. We see that women could employ tea to various ends. They could entertain their customers in the pleasure quarters, they could teach their children and assist their husbands in instructing pupils, and women could demonstrate the strength of their character and suitability to be part of a respectable household through their proficiency at tea. There were thus multiple images of the female tea practitioner and multiple styles of female tea practice portrayed in literature and theatre: from the tea of samurai and wealthy commoner women, focused on etiquette and manners, to the tea of the pleasure quarters, focused on entertainment. Just as there was no single, all-encompassing concept of femininity in early modern Japan, so too there was not one, but many styles of female tea practice. However, as the next chapters will show, it was one type of femininity in particular that became most closely associated with women's tea practice – genteel femininity.

## Chapter Two: Women as Practitioners and Producers of Tea Culture

In this chapter, we will see that women were not just tea practitioners in fiction and on the stage; women were practitioners and producers of early modern tea culture in reality too. Sources such as records of students, records of tea gatherings, diaries and tea utensils, evidence this. These sources will be analysed with reference to the concept of cultural networks, to suggest how, even from limited evidence, we can make some meaningful conclusions about early modern women's tea practice. In these networks, participants came together to enjoy a common cultural or artistic interest, regardless of status differences. Women's participation in these networks suggests that gender distinctions could also be put to one side for the purpose of mutual enjoyment of the arts. There were, though, limits to women's participation. In regards to tea culture, we find that women usually participated in networks within a family or household context. Further, women were not generally equal participants in the network; they rarely hosted tea gatherings or took on the role of first guest. However, this was not always the case. In the examples of women of the imperial family and Buddhist nuns, we find exceptions to the norm. They evidence the extent to which women could be involved in tea culture, not just as practitioners but also as producers.

The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that status, rather than gender, was the most significant factor in determining the degree of women's participation in tea culture. We also find that status boundaries were being blurred and broken down by women's participation in these cultural networks. This was particularly the case with the tea practice of female attendants in elite households. This is important to keep in mind when we come to examine the expansion of women's tea practice in subsequent chapters.

### Records of Women's Participation in Tea Culture

One of the most problematic issues in examining early modern women's tea practice concerns women's inclusion, or lack of inclusion, in official tea school records of students. As discussed in the Introduction, official recognition is not necessary to qualify a person as a tea practitioner. Rather, knowledge of the most basic and fundamental aspect of tea culture in the form of *temae* should be what defines one as a



tea practitioner. However, because the focus of scholars has so often been on the lack of official participation in tea culture by women, it is necessary to examine the evidence and consider what conclusions can be drawn about women's tea practice from this. We find that small numbers of women, from elite backgrounds, were official participants in tea culture. Women were recorded as students in two tea schools, and they attended formal tea gatherings along with prominent male tea practitioners in various schools.

Official records of students are kept by the tea schools in the form of a register (門人録 *monjinroku*) indicating when a new student's details were sent to the *iemoto* by their teacher. Generally, the student would have been studying tea for some time with the teacher already prior to being registered. Being entered into the school's register was thus official recognition of their status as a student, not just of the teacher but, more importantly, of the *iemoto*. It is probable that the use of such registers emerged at the same time as the 'iemoto system' (家元制度 *iemoto seido*) in the eighteenth century, a pyramid like system which sought to give the tea school *iemoto* greater control over increasing numbers of students.<sup>145</sup> At the same time, it is highly likely that such records are not on their own accurate representations of the tea population in the Edo period. There may well have been many more students studying tea than were registered with an *iemoto*, because of the potential costs involved in doing so, for example, or because they studied in an informal environment.

Though all of the tea schools have such records, they are generally kept private. Only one tea school to date has published their official register of students, the Horinouchi (堀之内) school, which is a branch school of Omotesenke. The record starts in 1816 and lists the name of each student next to the date on which they were registered. Sometimes it was indicated that a student was a woman below their name by the character 女 (*onna* woman), which suggests that they were an exception thought to be of note. The women were not, however, segregated in a different section of the records. They were listed alongside male students according to the date on which they were registered. Information about a student's family and place of residence was also occasionally provided. In this register, we find the names of ten women, entered

<sup>145</sup> See Nishiyama Matsunosuke, 'Iemoto seido to ryūha', in Murai Yasuhiko (ed), *Chadō shūkin*, volume 5: *Chanoyu no tenkai* (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1985), pp. 79-84; Hayashiya, 'Chadō zensho no seiritsu', pp. 383-385; and Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, pp. 91-92.

between 1825 and 1851 (Appendix A). The Yabunouchi (藪之内) school's records from the nineteenth century also include women, again often indicated by the character 女 below their name. There are five women from the Edo period and three from early Meiji listed (Appendix B). It is thus clear that, at least in these two tea schools, it was possible for women to become officially registered tea practitioners in the nineteenth century. One pattern that emerges from the Horinouchi records, limited as they are, is that women of the same family were often registered together. For example, Nomura Sakae and Tsuru, Toyama Nui and Sue, and Konoe Iwase and Kaji. This corresponds with the finding, as will be discussed below in relation to records of tea gatherings, that female tea practitioners in the Edo period generally participated in familial networks of tea practice.

Another type of record of early modern tea practice is those detailing tea gatherings. *Chakai* in the Edo period generally had no more than five guests. As discussed in the Introduction, both guests and host at a tea gathering need to be knowledgeable about tea culture. The host, of course, selects and arranges particular utensils to suit the occasion and performs several *temae* for laying and replenishing the charcoal and making both thick and thin tea. The guests for their part must know the rules for receiving and partaking of the meal and bowls of tea, and how to interact with the host and other guests. The first guest, in particular, plays an important role in guiding the other guests and asking the host questions about the utensils. In early modern Japan tea gatherings were an occasion for displaying the knowledge, refinement, and accumulation of material wealth (through the display of utensils), of both the host and guests. They were also occasions at which social and political ties could be cemented. To this end tea gatherings were a central aspect of early modern tea culture and participating in them confirmed one's status as a tea practitioner.<sup>146</sup>

Records of women's participation in tea gatherings will now be outlined, to give some indication of the context of women's participation in tea as a social activity through tea gatherings. In reading the records two things in particular become clear: many of the gatherings were hosted or attended by prominent male tea practitioners; and there was a tendency for women to participate in familial/household-based<sup>147</sup>

<sup>146</sup> By contrast, in modern Japan tea gatherings generally play a lesser role in the lives of most practitioners. As Etsuko Kato has suggested, rather than small gatherings, tea classes, demonstrations and large-scale tea gatherings are the most frequently held tea events. See Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 33.

<sup>147</sup> For female attendants the network was based in their household rather than their family.

networks of tea practice. Records of tea gatherings (茶会記 *chakaiki*) were often made by the host or another participant at a tea gathering. They included details such as who the host and guests were, and what utensils were used. These records are a commonly used source by tea historians as they reveal very specific details about early modern tea practice and the networks forged by practitioners.<sup>148</sup> Such records indicate that women were participating in tea gatherings from very early in the history of tea culture, with the earliest extant records of women attending gatherings dating from the late-sixteenth century, the period in which the culture and practices of *chanoyu* were being formalized.

The earliest record of women participating in a tea gathering evidences a pattern which is to be repeated in other records: women from an elite household occasionally attended tea gatherings, hosted by an elite man, with a male family member. In this case, the records come from the diary of the head of Yoshida Shrine in Kyoto in the late sixteenth century, Yoshida Kanemi (吉田兼見 1535-1610). We find that his wife, Seijo (青女), and daughter, Michiyo (満千代), sometimes accompanied him to tea gatherings. For example, on the seventh day of the ninth month, 1577, Kanemi, Seijo and Michiyo were guests at a tea gathering held by Satake Ushū (佐竹羽州), lord of Dewa province.<sup>149</sup> Seijo also attended another gathering held by Satake, on the third day of the ninth month, 1579.<sup>150</sup> Yoshida Kanemi was an influential figure in Kyoto, he had a successful career at court and was an associate of the military leaders Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi.<sup>151</sup> He regularly attended tea gatherings, including many hosted by Satake, but Seijo and Michiyo did not accompany him the majority of the time, although the names of other guests are not always listed in his diary entries.

The implication is that wives and daughters of men who were tea practitioners could also be involved in tea and the social networks forged through tea gatherings,

<sup>148</sup> See, for example, Tani Akira, *Chakaiki no kenkyū*, (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2001); Tsutsui Hiroichi, *Chasho no keifu* (Tokyo: Bun'ichi Sogo Shuppan, 1978), pp. 135-188; and Kumakura Isao, *Chanoyu no koten*, 3: *Shidai chakaiki* (Tokyo: Sekai Bunkasha, 1984). In English see Andrew M. Watsky, 'Commerce, Politics and Tea: The Career of Imai Sōkyū', *Monumenta Nipponica* 50: 1 (1995), pp. 47-65; and Tanimura Reiko, 'Tea of the Warrior in the Late Tokugawa Period', in Pitelka, Morgan (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), pp. 138-150.

<sup>149</sup> Yoshida Kanemi, *Kanemi kyōki*, (1570-1592) (Reprinted Tokyo: Zoku Gunsho Ruijū Kanseikai, 1971), volume 1, p. 124.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, volume 1, p. 180.

<sup>151</sup> He was also related through blood and marriage to Hosokawa Fujitaka (Yūsai), the father of Hosokawa Sansai (Tadaoki) who will be discussed below. See the entry on Yoshida Kanemi by Itō Satoshi in the online Encyclopedia of Shinto:

<http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=583>, accessed 01/06/07.

especially when they were conducted among family and close friends. In another example of this, on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month, 1595, a gathering was held by Kobayakawa Takakage (小早川隆景 1533-1597), a senior retainer of Hideyoshi, who held the title *chūnagon* (中納言 an Imperial Court rank of Middle Councillor). Five days earlier his adopted son, Hideyoshi's nephew, Kobayakawa Hideotoshi (previously Hideaki) (小早川秀俊 (後の秀秋) 1577-1602), had held a tea gathering in the tearoom of the Kobayakawa castle to mark his succession as the head of the family domain, Najima, in Chikuzen province. The guests at the subsequent gathering held by Takakage were Hidetoshi's wife and five of her attendants (御ツボネ様外女房衆五人),<sup>152</sup> as well as Hidetoshi, and the Hakata merchant and associate of Rikyū and Hideyoshi, Kamiya Sōtan (神屋宗湛 1553-1635).<sup>153</sup> Sōtan was an avid chronicler of all tea gatherings he attended and according to his record of this occasion in his diary, *Sōtan nikki* (宗湛日記), after Hidetoshi left his seat the remaining guests enjoyed themselves all day long, drinking saké and listening to music (ハヤシ/囃子 *hayashi*).<sup>154</sup> Tani Akira suggests that the purpose of this *chakai* cum all-day long banquet must have been to recognize the women's service to the family.<sup>155</sup> Whatever the motivation, this was clearly a social occasion and women participated in the proceedings as guests alongside a prominent male tea practitioner and male members of their family/household.

This is a particularly early record of women's participation in a tea gathering. However, it was not an isolated instance of women's participation even in these early days of tea culture, with the records of Yoshida Kanemi cited above also being from the late sixteenth century. We may presume that there were other such gatherings which were not recorded or for which records do not survive. Certainly Sōtan does not give any indication in his record to suggest that this was an anomalous event.

<sup>152</sup> The term '*nyōbō*' (女房) indicates that the women may have served at the imperial or shogun's court. However, as this term also meant 'wife', it is difficult to tell. The English term 'attendants' is used for them, and for the term '*jochū*' (女中) which is found in other records, as the women appear to have been attendants to the wife of Takakage, who herself may have served as a lady-in-waiting at court given her title '*tsubone*' (御ツボネ様). I came to this conclusion after personal correspondence with Anne Walthall on the 01/09/2007 and 05/09/2007. The use of the English 'attendant' as a translation for the Japanese '*jochū*' will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

<sup>153</sup> Kamiya Sōtan, *Sōtan nikki*, Haga Kōshirō (ed), in Sen Sōshitsu (ed), *Chadō koten zenshū*, volume 6 (Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1958), p. 311. Also discussed in Tani Akira, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzō', *Nagomi*, December 1999, p. 93.

<sup>154</sup> Sōtan, *Sōtan nikki*, p. 311.

<sup>155</sup> Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzō', p. 93.

A common feature of all of the recorded instances of women's participation in tea gatherings during the Edo period is that there were several women of the same family/household as the host and one of the male guests, as seen in these two early examples. Other examples include gatherings at which daughters and granddaughters were present, in addition to wives and female attendants. On the fourteenth day of the fifth month, 1642 at a gathering hosted by Hosokawa Sansai (Tadaoki) (細川三斎 (忠興) 1563-1646), one of Rikyū's seven disciples (利休七哲 *Rikyū shichitetsu*), a female grandchild is recorded as having attended.<sup>156</sup> As she was listed simply as 'female grandchild' (御孫女), her exact identity is unknown. Scholars have suggested that she was probably either Hosokawa's own grandchild, who would have been of a reasonable age as he himself was in his eighties at the time, or the daughter of another guest, such as his younger brother, Nagaoka Kyūsai (長岡休斎) or his son Nagaoka Kyūmu (長岡休夢).<sup>157</sup> Again, this is an example of a woman participating in a gathering which included her male family members, as well as several other prominent men who were invited, such as the court aristocrat Tsuchimikado Yasushige (土御門泰重 1586-1661), head of the Tsuchimikado family of court diviners, and Hagiwara Kanazumi (萩原兼澄), the head priest of Kyoto's Yoshida shrine.

In another example of a familial tea gathering attended by elite women, on the thirteenth day of the ninth month, 1713, Konoe Iehiro (近衛家熙 1667-1736) held a gathering at which the guests were his heir Iehisa (家久 1687-1737), Tokudaiji Kinmasa (徳大寺公全 1678-1719) and three of Iehiro's daughters, one of whom was the wife of Tokudaiji.<sup>158</sup> Iehiro was the Imperial Chief Advisor from 1707-1712 and the son of Konoe Motohiro (近衛基熙 1648-1722) and Princess Shinanomiya Tsuneko (品宮常子 1642-1702), whose own participation in tea culture will be discussed below. Whilst Tani has suggested that this was a rare example of a court aristocrat holding a tea gathering to which he invited his daughters and sons-in-law as guests,<sup>159</sup> it fits into the overall pattern of female participation in tea-gatherings, including those of the court aristocracy such as the gatherings attended by Shinanomiya to be

<sup>156</sup> Nagashima Fukutarō, *Matsuya kaiki*. Reprinted in full in Sen Sōshitsu (ed), *Chadō koten zenshū*, volume 9 (Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1967), p. 402. Also discussed in Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzō', p. 93.

<sup>157</sup> See note 3 in Nagashima, *Matsuya kaiki*, p. 402; and Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzō', p. 93.

<sup>158</sup> Tani, 'chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzō', p. 94.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 94.

discussed below. That is, women attended gatherings at which other women to whom they were related were guests and a male family member was either the host or a guest.

This is also the pattern in tea gatherings hosted by the heads of tea schools. By far most of the examples of women attending gatherings held by tea masters come from the Sekishû school in the nineteenth century, which will be discussed in Chapter Five. They too fit this pattern. Even within the Sen lineages, which have largely been responsible for promoting the idea that women did not participate in tea until after the Meiji Restoration, there is evidence that women occasionally participated in tea gatherings during the Edo period. Yûgensai Ittô (又玄齋 1719-1771), the eighth generation head of the Urasenke school, for example, held a gathering on the tenth day of the eleventh month, 1758, at which the guests were his wife, Shina (志那), and daughter, Chie (ちえ), as well as three nuns: Sorin (祖林); Sosen (祖仙), who was the younger sister of Rikkansai Taisô (六関齋泰叟 1694-1726, 6th generation *iemoto* of Urasenke);<sup>160</sup> and Soshun (祖春).<sup>161</sup> This was one of the gatherings held for the one hundred year memorial for Sen Sôtan (宗旦百年忌茶会 *Sôtan hyakunenki chakai*). The relationship between nuns and tea, which will be expanded upon below, is hinted at by the participation of three nuns in a tea gathering held by the Urasenke *iemoto* on such a significant occasion. The involvement of women of tea families in tea culture is also made apparent, with the *iemoto*'s wife and daughter participating. In the Omotesenke school the tenth generation *iemoto*, Kyûkôsai (吸江齋 1818-1860), held a gathering on the thirteenth day of the third month, 1838, at which his second wife (後室), the second wife of Morita (守田後室), and Risai (利齋), head of the Kamazawa (釜沢) family of Sen-ke affiliated (千家授色 *sen-ke jushoku*) woodworkers, were guests.<sup>162</sup> Even these two instances suggest that wives and daughters of tea masters may have been involved in the practice of tea and occasionally participated in gatherings – we may recall the discussion of Osai and Okiku in the previous chapter in this regard. The tea school *iemoto* also invited women from outside their family to be guests at their gathering on occasions when women of their own family were present.

<sup>160</sup> Tsutsui Kôichi and Kumakura Isao (ed), *Chanoyu: kenkyû to shiryô*, 1 (1969), p. 94.

<sup>161</sup> *Sôtan hyakunenki chakaiki*. Reprinted in *Chanoyu: kenkyû to shiryô*, 1 (1969), pp. 71-72. Also discussed in Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzô', p. 95.

<sup>162</sup> *Kyûkôsai sôshô chakaiki*, private document. Listed in the compiled records of women in records of tea gatherings of Tani Akira, Nomura Museum, Kyoto, viewed 03/07/2006 and 11/07/2005.

Further evidence of both the inclusion of women in gatherings of tea masters and the familial nature of women's participation comes from the records of Kawakami Fuhaku (川上 不白 1719-1807). Fuhaku was a disciple of the seventh generation *iemoto* of Omotesenke, Joshinsai Tennen (如心齋 1705-1751), who went to Edo to promote Omotesenke style tea and founded his own school there, Edosenke. He is credited with increasing the popularity of Sen style tea among commoners in Edo, as well as daimyô, among whom the Sekishû style had been dominant.<sup>163</sup> In the records of his tea gatherings women were present on four occasions. On the fourteenth day of the ninth month, 1782, he held a gathering at which the guests were Matsudaira Kuranosuke (松平内蔵助), his wife (奥様) and three of her attendants (老女若三人).<sup>164</sup> Matsudaira, his wife and her attendants also attended two other gatherings held by Fuhaku, later that same year on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month (this time the female attendants were listed as 御供女中三人)<sup>165</sup> and the following year on the twelfth day of the second month (on this occasion the female attendants were simply listed after the wife as 女中).<sup>166</sup> We can infer that Matsudaira, who Tani suggests may have been a direct shogunal retainer (旗本 *hatamoto*),<sup>167</sup> and his wife were students or otherwise close associates of Fuhaku. In any case, this eminent tea master does not seem to have had any prejudice against inviting women to be guests at his gatherings.

Fuhaku also held a gathering in 1788, on the second day of the ninth month, at which there were four guests: the wife of Lord Nakagawa (中川殿奥方), her female attendant, Hôshô Shinojô (宝生進之丞) and Ano Yasoemon (阿野八十右衛門).<sup>168</sup> Lord Nakagawa refers to Nakagawa Shuri (中川修理), the lord of Bungo-Takeda province, who was a supporter of Fuhaku. Hôshô Shinojô was a nô actor. The identity of Ano Yasuemon is unknown but Tani suggests he may have been a retainer of Nakagawa's.<sup>169</sup> Even if we assume that the wife of Nakagawa was accompanied by a retainer of her husband, this stands out as a rare instance of a wife attending a tea

<sup>163</sup> Murai Yasuhiko, 'Ô Edo no cha: Kawakami Fuhaku o chûshin ni', in Murai Yasuhiko (ed), *Chadô shûkin*, volume 5: *Chanoyu no tenkai*, (Tokyo: Shogakkan, 1985), pp. 223-228.

<sup>164</sup> *Kawakami Fuhaku Rikyû nihyaku kaiki chakaiki*. Reprinted in full in Kusama Naokata (ed), *Chaki meibutsu zui* (Tokyo: Bunsasha, 1976), pp. 619-618. Also discussed in Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzô', p.94.

<sup>165</sup> *Kawakami Fuhaku Rikyû nihyaku kaiki chakaiki*, p. 629. Also discussed in Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzô', p.95.

<sup>166</sup> *Kawakami Fuhaku Rikyû nihyaku kaiki chakaiki*, p. 640. Also discussed in Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzô', p.95.

<sup>167</sup> Tani, 'Chakaiki ni okeru josei gunzô', p. 95.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid*, p. 95.

gathering without her husband. It also serves as an example of just how a tea gathering could operate as a space in which people from various social backgrounds came together – with a tea master, a provincial lord's wife, her attendant, a nô actor and a samurai retainer all sharing tea together.

In these recorded instances of women's participation in tea gatherings, a wife was often accompanied by her female attendants. As the attendants are also recorded as having been guests at these gatherings, we can assume that they too were well versed in the procedures and etiquette of tea. Thus, tea practice was not limited to women of elite status, but was also an accomplishment of the lower ranking samurai and commoner women who served them. Indeed, in the guides for women's edification discussed in Chapter Four, one reason given for why women should study tea was that it would help them gain a position in service at an elite household. The tea practice of women in service will be the subject of Chapter Five. However, here is important to note that records of tea gatherings indicate that wives who were tea practitioners would have expected some of their female attendants to be proficient at the art, so they could accompany their mistress to gatherings. In only one case do we actually find female attendants attending a tea gathering alone. Sumiyama Yoho (住山楊甫), a student of Omotesenke tea under Joshinsai – whose wife was accepted as a student by Rokurokusai (碌々齋 1837-1910), eleventh generation head of Omotosenke –<sup>170</sup> held a gathering on the sixteenth day of the twelfth month, 1848 at which the guests included three female attendants of the Dainagon (大納言 Imperial Court rank of Major Councilor of State).<sup>171</sup>

At most of the gatherings just described individual women did not attend alone. Rather, there were usually two or more women in attendance together, usually of the same family/household, such as a wife and her attendants, or daughters and granddaughters. Whether women participated in tea gatherings thus depended on their family, or the household in which they were serving, rather than there having been any general social taboo against women attending tea gatherings.<sup>172</sup> The fact that women, for the most part, participated in gatherings at which a male family member was also

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 95.

<sup>171</sup> *Kyūkōsai sōshō chakaiki*, private document. Listed in the compiled records of women in records of tea gatherings of Tani Akira, Nomura Museum, Kyoto, viewed 03/07/2006 and 11/07/2005.

<sup>172</sup> This also appears to be the case with other arts and cultural networks more broadly, the author Tadano Makuzu's family often hosted artistic and intellectual social gatherings at which she was present, for example. See Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking Like a Man*, pp. 49- 59.



present reflects the view we will find in guides for women's edification that women should not learn tea if their husband does not, and that learning tea must not come in the way of fulfilling their duties as a wife and daughter.<sup>173</sup>

Yet, this does not necessarily mean that women were passively following in the footsteps of their husband or father in learning tea and participating in gatherings. The example of Lady Nakagawa attending a gathering without her husband suggests that women could be involved in tea culture as independent participants. When we consider the example of Konoe Iehiro's daughters, it is worth remembering that his interest in tea may have been passed down from his mother, Princess Shinanomiya, who was herself a serious tea practitioner, as discussed below. It was also through his wife, Iehiro's daughter, that Tokudaiji Kinmasa was involved in this gathering.

The fact that women seemed to have participated in tea gatherings within a family environment may also give a clue as to why more gatherings involving women are not recorded. Unless a prominent guest such as Kamiya Sôtan or Tsuchimikado Yasushige was present, then a family-based gathering was not so likely to be recorded or have its record survive. In addition, we find records of only women from wealthy and elite households having attended gatherings. While they were certainly able to invest the time and finances necessary for the study of tea more than commoner women, it is also the case that tea gatherings at which they were present were far more likely to be recorded. There is thus every possibility that women participated in many more tea gatherings than extant records indicate. Yet, if commoner women were participating in tea gatherings, whether they were doing so in the same context as elite women, that is within the family and a circle of close friends, is difficult to say without further evidence.

For those commoner women who went into service at an elite household and participated in that household's network of tea culture this was the case. Moreover, they were interacting with people beyond their immediate family and status in an intimate environment. In Chapters Four and Five, we will find that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, commoner women's participation in tea culture increased, as did the numbers of women going into service. These trends were related, with studying tea being a means of preparation for going into service. Once in service,

<sup>173</sup> Takada Seibe'e, *Joyô fuku judai* (Kyoto: 1785). Reprinted in full in Aikawa Jindô (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 33 (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1995), p. 18; and Kimura Shigeo, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* (1841). Reprinted in full in Aikawa Jindô (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 40 (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1995), part 2, p. 19.

women may have continued their practice of tea: participating in tea gatherings within their household, or accompanying their mistress to tea gatherings outside of the household, for example. Tea gatherings were thus spaces in which women of varying statuses could interact with each other, and with men.

As such, tea gatherings can be described as a form of 'aesthetic socialization' in early modern Japan, along with activities such as poetry writing gatherings, and gatherings for flower arrangement and incense appreciation.<sup>174</sup> In what has been described as a 'salon culture', personal relations among people of various social backgrounds could be forged through mutual enjoyment of arts such as tea in these gatherings.<sup>175</sup> In this sphere of aesthetic social interaction, officially prescribed status identities could be left behind and artistic identities assumed, through the use of artistic names (芸名 *geimei*).<sup>176</sup> They therefore provided sites where people of various social backgrounds could mingle freely for the pursuit of a common interest. Indeed, Takeshi Moriya has argued that aesthetic pursuits became increasingly popular during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because they provided a much needed vehicle for social interaction among strangers in the large urban centers.<sup>177</sup> Tea was one such vehicle for social interaction. As the author of one guide for women's edification told his readers, 'tea has become very popular, so if you don't know the rules you cannot interact with people'.<sup>178</sup> Tea, as a group activity, was thus an important form of social interaction in which a woman could display her learning to others. For elite women, and those who served them, it was usually a familial/household context in which this aesthetic socialization and display occurred.

In records of tea gatherings we only find isolated instances of women participating in these sites of social interaction. Nonetheless, we can draw some conclusions about women's participation in tea culture from this. For a male practitioner, hosting a tea gathering at which your own wife, daughter or granddaughters were present would have been a way of acknowledging their tea practice and displaying this to a select group of associates. Through the women's knowledge of tea, the family/household's accumulation of cultural and economic

<sup>174</sup> Ikegami uses this term in *Bonds of Civility*.

<sup>175</sup> Kumakura, 'Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*', pp.155-157.

<sup>176</sup> Nishiyama Matsunosuke, '*Kinsei no yūgei-ron*', in Nishiyama Matsunosuke, Watanabe Ichirō and Gunji Masakatsu (ed), *Kinsei geidō-ron* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1972), pp. 613-614.

<sup>177</sup> Moriya, '*Yūgei and Chōnin Society in the Edo Period*', pp. 44- 45.

<sup>178</sup> *Shinzō onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 18.

capital was thus on show for all to see. Elite women displayed not only their personal accumulation of capital at such occasions but that of their female attendants too, which served to further enhance their own prestige. Having attendants who were proficient in tea was evidence of a household's economic and social status, for only the very affluent could afford to employ attendants who spent their time indulging in arts rather than productive labour.<sup>179</sup> For a host, extending an invitation to a man's wife and her companions, rather than just him alone, would have been a way of honoring both her and the husband. Tea gatherings, then, could serve as sites for the conspicuous display of capital, as embodied by women. They could also function as important occasions for socializing, even if only within the family and a close circle of friends. Personal and familial relationships were reinforced and strengthened through such gatherings and women could play a role in these networks.

A common feature of all early modern cultural networks, be they centered around poetry or tea, was that 'they created "publics", or spheres of socialization that represented intersections of various social and cognitive networks'.<sup>180</sup> Through these networks not only did people of various backgrounds come into contact with each other, but also a common culture based on aesthetic values and common notions of civility developed. It is these developments which led Ikegami to the conclusion that 'the growing popularization of aesthetic networking practices began to blur the outlines of the *mibun* [status]-based categories'.<sup>181</sup> It did so, according to Ikegami, because participation in 'sites of aesthetic sociability required the temporary leaving of feudal official identities'.<sup>182</sup> The practice of adopting artistic names most clearly evidences how feudal identities could be transcended through participation in the arts. A practitioner would adopt a name which would be used for all activities associated with a particular art; one person could have multiple names as they adopted a new one for each art form. Therefore their 'real' identity in the context of the social status system was theoretically concealed. Much has been made of the ability for people to transcend their official identity through adopting artistic names, yet as Anne Walthall has commented, 'it is possible that even though samurai, artisan, merchant, and actor

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<sup>179</sup> See Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 28-48; and Gary Leupp, *Servants, Shophands and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 54-55.

<sup>180</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 158.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

checked their identity at the door, they remained aware of them nonetheless'.<sup>183</sup> In any case, cultural networks created a space in which interactions could take place that would not generally occur within the context of a hierarchically structured status system, whether or not people actually remained aware of their real world identities in that space.

But what of gender identity within the context of cultural networks? Could gender identities be transcended or 'checked at the door' as status identities could? Ikegami, for one, suggests that women's participation in such networks was another form of boundary trespassing.<sup>184</sup> However, this only holds true if we assume, as Ikegami does for the arts in general and as historians of tea do, that cultural and artistic practices were at one point an exclusively male domain. If this were the case, then women's participation would indeed have been a form of boundary trespassing. Yet, the evidence presented here suggests that such a boundary did not actually exist, but has been created by modern historians, who have ignored and dismissed women's participation and thereby created the impression that tea was an exclusively male activity. Certainly women's participation in arts such as tea did increase towards the end of the Edo period and there were always some male practitioners who did not approve of this. However, evidence shows that small numbers of women were participating in tea from its early days, presumably with the support and encouragement of those men with whom they interacted. Take the Kobayakawa women who participated in tea in the late sixteenth century, for example. This kind of evidence suggests that women always participated in tea, even if only in small numbers initially, and that their participation did not require or lead to them to transcend their gender identity. This is not to say, though, that the tea room was a gender equal environment, for as we have seen, women were most often guests, rather than hosts, and were not usually the first, or main, guest at gatherings in which they participated. This suggests that gender hierarchies were maintained to a large extent within tea culture. As will be discussed further in subsequent chapters, the growth of female participation in tea culture reflects the popularisation of elite culture and the break-down of status boundaries more than it does the break-down of gender boundaries.

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<sup>183</sup> Anne Walthall, 'Networking for Pleasure and Profit', Review Article in *Monumenta Nipponica*, 61:1 (Spring 2006), p. 102.

<sup>184</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, pp. 153-155.

## Utensils and the Production of Tea Culture

This chapter has thus far focused on records of women's participation in tea culture. Our attention will now be turned to evidence which shows that women, though only a very few to be sure, were also involved in the production of tea culture. This occurred through their hosting of tea gatherings as well as their selection, arrangement, and production of tea utensils; either individually, in collaboration, or through patronage. Tea utensils are a central component of tea culture. The tea bowls, caddies and tea scoops, along with every other type of utensil used in a tea gathering, are all carefully selected by the host to reveal something to the guests of their personality and taste, and the theme or desired tone of the occasion. When a practitioner crafts a tea utensil, or when they order a utensil from a craftsman to their own taste, they are engaging in the production of more than just that object, for tea utensils are not just functional or decorative objects; they are symbols. Thus, connoisseurship, collecting, designing, and producing tea utensils are all essential skills of a tea practitioner.

To give one example, which will be central to the discussion below, tea scoops (茶杓 *chashaku*), are distinct among tea utensils in that they are often made by the practitioners themselves, rather than master craftsmen. Though there are professional craftsmen, tea practitioners enjoy crafting and naming their own scoops as an extension of their tea practice. This practice became popular among tea practitioners from the late sixteenth century, as they can be carved out of bamboo and are therefore a relatively simple utensil for an amateur to make. The tea practitioner can 'make tangible objects to suit their own tastes', which will then be viewed by other practitioners at tea gatherings and can be exchanged as gifts.<sup>185</sup> As Herbert Plutschow describes it, tea utensils from the sixteenth century onward 'often functioned as an ontic extension of the owner – that is, owners displayed these utensils as personal substitutes'.<sup>186</sup> Tea scoops are thought by tea people to reflect the practitioner's 'character, personality, refinement and style' when they have been personally crafted.<sup>187</sup> The practice of naming tea scoops with poetic names (御名 *gomei*) gives the practitioner an avenue through which to express their erudition. Names reflecting

<sup>185</sup> Morgan Pitelka, 'Tea Taste: Patronage and Collaboration among Tea Masters and Potters in Early Modern Japan', *Early Modern Japan*, Fall-Winter 2004, p. 30.

<sup>186</sup> Herbert Plutschow, *The Grand Tea Master: A Biography of Hounsai Soshitsu Sen XV*, (Trumbull: Weatherhill, 2001), p. 62.

<sup>187</sup> Sen Sôshitsu XV, *The Spirit of Tea*, (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 2002), p. 82.

the season or a Zen Buddhist concept are the most common, and poetic or literary allusion can be used to suggest multiple layers of meaning. A practitioner with knowledge of ancient court poetry can demonstrate this through a well-chosen name, for example. The accompanying boxes, usually a small cylindrical one and a larger, often rectangular one into which the smaller one fits, are also carved from bamboo. They provide a surface on which practitioners can display their skill at calligraphy. Tea scoops could thus function as a symbol of the maker's identity as an artist within early modern tea culture.

### Women of the Imperial Family

Some of the most prominent female tea practitioners of the Edo period, particularly as represented in the literature on tea history, were women of the imperial family. These women were not just practitioners of tea, they were also involved in the production of tea utensils, through patronage and connoisseurship. The activities of women connected to the Emperor Gomizunoo (後水尾 1596-1680; r. 1611-1629), in particular, evidence the depth of participation in tea culture by imperial women. Both his wife, the empress Tōfukumon'in Masako (東福門院和子 1607-1678), who was a daughter of the second shogun Tokugawa Hidetada (徳川秀忠 1579-1632), and his sixteenth daughter Shinanomiya were tea practitioners who were involved in utensil production.

Tōfukumon'in was a tea practitioner who was involved in networks of connoisseurship and patronage, which included gift exchanges with one of the most prominent tea men of her day. She married Gomizunoo in 1620 and was provided with a large endowment by the Tokugawa, which she used to establish herself as a 'patron of the arts'.<sup>188</sup> She was also a practitioner of the arts, including *waka* poetry composition and *oshi-e*, 'stiff paper cut-outs wrapped with fabric that are pasted on silk or paper'.<sup>189</sup> In addition, she is known to have studied with the tea master Sen Sōtan (千宗旦 1578-1658) and exchanged gifts with him, which often included tea utensils. Sōtan's letters to his sons Kōshin (江岑 1613-1672) and Genshitsu (Sensō)

<sup>188</sup> See Elizabeth Lillehoj, 'Tōfukumon'in: Empress, Patron, and Artist', *Woman's Art Journal* 17:1 (Spring-Summer 1996), p. 28.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

(仙叟 1622-1697) describe these gift exchanges.<sup>190</sup> Sôtan, for example, gave her items such as flower vases (花入 *hanaire*) and tea scoops, while Tôfukumon'in gave him a handcrafted image of the poet Ono no Komachi (小野小町 809-901), painted *kai-awase* shells and a rabbit-ear cold water jar (水指 *mizusashi*).<sup>191</sup> Sôtan is also said to have designed several utensils for the empress, including a red cloth for wiping tea bowls (茶巾 *chakin*) so that her lipstick stains would not show, and a type of utensil stand which is partly painted vermilion (爪紅台子 *tsumagure daisu*).<sup>192</sup> Whether she had any input in the design of such utensils, though, is unclear. Nonetheless, she acted as muse for Sôtan and through her patronage of other artists she contributed to the vibrant culture of tea utensil production in the seventeenth century. She collected both antique and contemporary tea utensils, including the works of the renowned potter of her day Nonomura Ninsei (野々村仁清 1574-1660), for example.<sup>193</sup>

Shinanomiya, too, was actively engaged in the production of tea culture, through the design and selection of utensils. Shinanomiya was a cultivated woman with knowledge of music, *nô*, *kyôgen* and calligraphy.<sup>194</sup> Her deep involvement in tea culture is evidenced in her diary, *Mujôhôn-dono gonikki* (无上法院殿御日記), written between 1666 and 1700. The first day of the diary records a tea gathering for opening the new jar of tea for the year (口切 *kuchi-kiri*) at which the retired Emperor Gomizunoo, the retired Emperor Gosai (後西 1637-1685; r.1654-1663 – her half brother to whom she was extremely close) and several imperial princesses were in attendance.<sup>195</sup> She was also a regular guest at tea gatherings held by Gosai.<sup>196</sup> Beyond attending numerous tea gatherings at the Imperial Palace and Gosai's private residence, Shinanomiya made preparations for such tea gatherings, including the arrangement and selection of utensils, a skill in tea known as *toriwase* (取合わせ). In selecting

<sup>190</sup> Sen Sôsa (ed), *Gempaku Sôtan monjo* (Chatobisha, 1971), p. 233-235; and Sokabe Yôkô and Kiyose Fusa, *Sôtan no tegami* (Kawara Shôten, 1997), pp. 176-184.

<sup>191</sup> Elizabeth Lillehoj, 'Flowers of the Capital: Imperial Sponsorship of Art in Seventeenth Century Kyoto', *Orientalism* 27:8 (September 1996), p. 65; and Kagotani Machiko, *Josei to chanoyu* (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 1985), pp. 89-90.

<sup>192</sup> Lillehoj, 'Flowers of the Capital', p. 65; Kagotani, *Josei to chanoyu*, p. 90; and Kumakura Isao, 'Kan'ei Culture and Chanoyu', trans. Paul Varley, in Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao (eds), *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), p. 153.

<sup>193</sup> Lillehoj, 'Tôfukumon'in: Empress, Patron, and Artist', p. 32; and Kagotani, *Josei to chanoyu*, pp. 85-98.

<sup>194</sup> See Cecilia Segawa Siegle, 'Shinanomiya Tsuneko: Portrait of a Court Lady', in Walthall (ed), *The Human Tradition in Modern Japan*, pp. 3-24; and by the same author in Japanese, Yoshiko Segawa, *Kôjo Shinanomiya no nichijô seikatsu: Mujôhôn-dono gonikki o yomu*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2001).

<sup>195</sup> Tanihata Akio, *Kinsei chadôshi*, (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 1988), pp. 139-140; and *Kuge chadô no kenkyû* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 2005), pp. 281-282.

<sup>196</sup> Tanihata, *Kinsei chadôshi*, p. 140; and *Kuge chadô no kenkyû*, pp. 282-283.

utensils she dealt directly with craftsmen and was not content just to choose from what was available; she had tea utensils made according to her own taste.<sup>197</sup>

Tanihata Akio has argued that whilst Shinanomiya serves as an example of women's involvement in tea during the Edo period, we cannot concretely know about the other women of aristocratic, samurai and commoner families who may also have practiced tea.<sup>198</sup> Although Shinanomiya is certainly a unique case, due to the detailed accounts of her tea practice preserved in her diary, she is not the only example of an early modern female tea practitioner that we know of. As has been discussed, records of tea gatherings show that other women were similarly involved in intimate, familial, networks of tea practice. We will also see that the production of tea utensils was an area in which women, particularly Buddhist nuns, could be active.

It is, of course, due to their high status and connection to prominent male tea practitioners that information about Tōfukumon'in and Shinanomiya's tea activities is available to us. For this reason too, their tea practice was known to other women. Indeed, a motivating factor behind women's tea practice was the prestige which came from its association with women of the imperial family. These women served as role models for commoner women. In guides for women's edification, which will be discussed in Chapter Four, the vermilion utensil stand designed by Sōtan for Tōfukumon'in is recommended as a suitable type for women to use in their rooms.<sup>199</sup> The early eighteenth century handbook for women's tea *Toji no tamoto*, to be discussed in Chapter Three, also mentions Tōfukumon'in's tea practice.<sup>200</sup> The imperial family was perhaps not as isolated and distant from the lives of commoners as often depicted; they had relevance as cultural models to be emulated.

Tōfukumon'in and Shinanomiya were not the only imperial women involved in tea culture. Other imperial princesses participated in the tea gatherings held by Gosai, for example. The imperial family was at this time extremely large, with Gomizunoo having thirty-three children, and as they were reliant on the *bakufu* for most of their income it was necessary for some children to find other means of securing a livelihood. Many imperial princesses thus entered convents, which were established and housed exclusively by imperial women (尼門跡 *amamonzeki*), and received separate funding

<sup>197</sup> Tanihata, *Kinsei chadōshi*, pp. 143-144.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 145.

<sup>199</sup> Takada, *Joyō fuku judai*. p. 19; and *Shinzō onna shorei ayanishiki*. part 2, p.22.

<sup>200</sup> Oguchi Shōdō, *Toji no tamoto* (1721). Reprinted in full in Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishū ryū* volume 2: *Sekishū kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), p. 190.



from the *bakufu*.<sup>201</sup> There they devoted their lives to the study of arts as well as religion, living a secluded lifestyle away from both the court and society. Secluded, though, did not mean impoverished. Rather, Patrica Fister describes how ‘imperial convents were beautifully decorated with finely crafted furnishings and exquisitely painted sliding doors and folding screens’, they also had ‘vast quantities of books and scrolls’, thus, ‘it seems clear that imperial convents functioned as mini cultural salons as well as sanctuaries, microcosms of court life tempered by Buddhist rituals’.<sup>202</sup>

One of the activities practiced by women at the imperial court, as we have seen, was tea, and it seems that tea may also have been part of the cultural life of aristocratic nuns. Recent scholarship cataloguing the contents of imperial convents has revealed that tea utensils are among the items housed there. In the collections of Hôkyôji (宝鏡寺) and Donkein (曇華院), for example, we find formal and lavish tea utensils, befitting the status of the women who lived there (Figures 1 and 2). Reikanji (靈鑑寺) has in its collection a large stand with utensils (Figure 3). Chûgûji (中宮寺) has both Edo period tea utensils (Figures 4 and 5) and Meiji period instructional texts on tea procedures, including one covering the *shin no daisu* tea procedure using the formal utensil stand (Figure 6). The abbess of this convent, Jigan’in miya (慈眼院宮 1749-1776) had been a practitioner of both tea and flower arrangement, and these traditions were passed on through successive generations in the convent, to be written down in this text in the Meiji period.<sup>203</sup> Without knowing the provenance of the utensils it is impossible to say for certain that they were used by imperial princesses at a particular time. However, it is highly likely that such utensils were acquired by the convents during the seventeenth century, when they flourished under the patronage of Gomizunoo and Tôfukumon’in. Given the involvement of other members of the imperial family in tea culture at this time too, and certainly the abbess of Chûgûji, it is probable that some of the imperial princesses who entered the convents (including thirteen of Gomizunoo’s daughters and thirteen of his granddaughters)<sup>204</sup> were also tea practitioners.

<sup>201</sup> Patricia Fister, ‘The Artistic Practices of Aristocratic Buddhist Nuns’, in Patricia Fister (ed), *Art by Buddhist Nuns: Treasures from the Imperial Convents of Japan* (New York: Institute for Medieval Japanese Studies, 2003), p. 17.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, p. 17.

<sup>203</sup> Nara Kokuritsu Hakubunkan (ed), *Chûgûji no bi* (Nara: Chûgûji, 1988), p. 85.

<sup>204</sup> Fister, ‘The Artistic Practices of Aristocratic Buddhist Nuns’, p. 17.



Figure 11: Set of portable tea utensils (御旅用茶道具 *Go ryōyō chadōgu*), including *tenmoku* tea bowl, black raku tea bowl, silver tea caddies, whisks (茶筴 *chasen*) and kettle. Hōkyōji convent (宝鏡寺).<sup>205</sup>

<sup>205</sup> Image source: Asahi Shinbun Nagoya Honsha (ed), *Kyō no miaybi kyū goshoten: mikōkai no amamonzeiki no meihō o ichidō ni* (Nagoya: Asahi Shinbun Nagoya Honsha Kikakubu, 1986), figure 77, p. 66.



Figure 12: Silver brazier and kettle (銀造風炉釜 *Gin furo kama*).

Donkein convent(曇華院).<sup>206</sup>

<sup>206</sup> Image source: Asahi Shinbun (ed), *Kyō no miaybi kyū goshoten*, figure 76, p. 69.



Figure 13: Tea utensils on a stand (茶道具と台子 *Chadôgu to daisu*).

Reikanji convent (靈鑑寺).<sup>207</sup>

<sup>207</sup> Image source: Asahi Shinbun (ed), *Kyô no miaybi kyû goshoten*, figure 90, p. 68.



Figure 14: Black raku tea bowl with a design of a sacred jewel

(玉之絵黒楽茶碗 *Tama no e kuro raku chawan*).

Edo period. Chûgûji convent (中宮寺).<sup>208</sup>

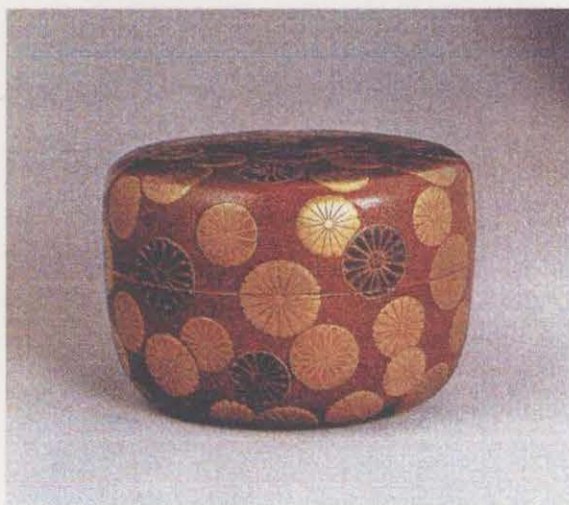


Figure 15: *Nashiji* lacquer ware tea container with design of the Imperial chrysanthemum crest (梨子地菊紋棗 *Nashiji kikumon natsume*).

Edo period. Chûgûji convent (中宮寺).<sup>209</sup>

<sup>208</sup> Image source: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubunkan (ed), *Chûgûji no bi* (Nara: Chûgûji, 1988), figure 80, p. 106.

<sup>209</sup> Image source: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubunkan (ed), *Chûgûji no bi*, figure 83, p. 107.



Figure 16: Procedures for the *shin no daisu* style of preparing tea  
 (真の台子手続 *Shin no daisu tetsukzuki*).

Booklet, ink on paper.

Meiji period. Chûgûji convent (中宮寺).<sup>210</sup>

<sup>210</sup> Image source: Nara Kokuritsu Hakubunkan (ed), *Chûgûji no bi*, figure 58, p. 85.

### Tagami Kikusha and Ôtagaki Rengetsu: practitioners and producers of tea culture

Though women's participation in networks of tea culture was often limited to their family/household, we have seen that there were exceptions to this rule. We have also seen that women could be active as producers of tea culture, by hosting tea gatherings and producing tea utensils. Women of the imperial family, who had a unique status, were one group of women who had a deep involvement in tea culture. Another group of women who had a unique status in the Edo period were Buddhist nuns. Two Buddhist nuns – Tagami Kikusha (田上菊舎 1753–1826) and Ôtagaki Rengetsu (大田垣蓮月 1791–1875) – provide us with notable examples of women's participation in tea culture as both practitioners and producers. These two women shared much in common. Both became Buddhist nuns after the death of a husband and both were well known poets. Kikusha worked in the *haikai* tradition, and Rengetsu composed *waka*. Both women were also tea practitioners who crafted their own utensils, including tea scoops onto which they inscribed their poetry.

Like the women of the imperial family, who were privileged by their particularly high status, Rengetsu and Kikusha enjoyed an unusual position within society. As nuns, they could lead lives which existed independent of the gender and status restrictions commonly faced by other women. As Patricia Fister notes, becoming a nun was a socially acceptable way to relinquish the normal social roles and responsibilities of women, as wives, mothers and daughters.<sup>211</sup> Women such as Rengetsu and Kikusha took the tonsure because as a nun they would have the freedom and independence to live a life devoted to the arts. For example, another nun, Chiyo, wrote a poem on the occasion of taking the tonsure that alluded to the fact she would now have the free time to pursue writing poetry.<sup>212</sup> Similarly, there does not appear to have been any particularly strong religious motivation behind Rengetsu and Kikusha's decisions to take the tonsure. Indeed, Kikusha seems not to have resided in a temple at all. In becoming a nun, they were not withdrawing from the world but choosing a path

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 17.

<sup>212</sup> Fumiko Y. Yamamoto, 'Chiyo and Kikusha: Two Haiku Poets' in Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*, pp. 55–60.

that enabled them to live independently and focus their activities within a particular sphere of society.<sup>213</sup>

Kikusha, Tagami Michi in her youth, was born in 1753 to samurai parents in Chôfu.<sup>214</sup> Her father was a medical practitioner who also wrote poetry in the Chinese style. Kikusha is believed to have received a good education as she had no other siblings until a brother was born when she was 16 years old, at which time she married. Her husband, the son of a wealthy farming family, died after eight years of marriage, and Kikusha returned home to her parents' house. She did not have any children. Choosing to devote her life to art she took the name Kikusha (菊者 Hut of Chrysanthemums) and became a nun at age 27, in the Shin sect of Pure Land Buddhism (浄土真宗 *Jôdo shinshû*).

After taking the tonsure Kikusha led a peripatetic life, journeying to north western Japan in 1780 and eventually to Edo where she spent the next three years. During the next thirty years she travelled extensively, visiting the southern island of Kyushu four times and Kyoto and surrounding areas seven times, as well as making another long stay in Edo. As a nun, Kikusha may have been able to travel more easily than other women, who were restricted in their movements between domains. In the early Edo period female travel restrictions came about as part of the alternate attendance system (参勤交代 *sankin kôtai*), in which daimyô were required to leave their wives in Edo when they returned to their domain. In order to prevent wives from leaving Edo, strict regulations on female travel were established.<sup>215</sup> Female travellers faced difficulty in obtaining the necessary documentation for travelling, having to go through different and more complicated procedures than men, and their permits had to list much more detailed information, including clothing and hairstyle.<sup>216</sup> Female nuns, for example, were distinguished through their hairstyle, with three categories of

<sup>213</sup> Sayumi Takahashi has discussed this apparent contradiction between Rengetsu's simultaneous withdrawal from and engagement in the social world. Sayumi Takahashi, 'Ôtagaki Rengetsu's *gassaku*: friendship and the spirit of collaboration' in Melanie Eastburn et al. (ed), *Black Robe White Mist: art of the Japanese Buddhist nun Rengetsu* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), pp. 105-117.

<sup>214</sup> The following biographical information on Kikusha comes from Yamamoto, 'Chiyo and Kikusha: Two Haiku Poets', in Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*, pp. 61-68; Makoto Ueda, *Far Beyond the Field: haiku by Japanese women*, (New York, Columbia University Press, 2003); Nakagawa Shinshô, *Joryû haijin Tagami Kikusha: inochi o aruku yasashisa o mitsumeru* (Kyoto: Honganji Shuppan, 2003); Oka Masako (Ichijian XII) (ed), *Unyû no ama Tagami Kikusha*, (Yamaguchi: Kikusha Kenshō-kai, 2004); and Ueno Sachiko, *Tagami Kikusha zenshû* (Osaka: Izumi Shoin, 2000).

<sup>215</sup> Herbert Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, (Kent: Global Oriental, 2006), p. 22.

<sup>216</sup> Constantine Nomikos Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers: Travel and the State in Early Modern Japan*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 138-159.



tonsured women being listed as distinct from other women who had cut their hair.<sup>217</sup> We know about the difficulties female travellers faced from women's travel diaries.<sup>218</sup> They describe how 'women could be held back for days when their passes did not exactly correspond with their identity or itinerary', situations in which male travellers were usually allowed to pass after being questioned.<sup>219</sup> Yet, female travel became more common towards the end of the Edo period, and pilgrimages to popular sites such as Ise were often the stated reason for such travel, presumably because travel for a religious purpose was more readily sanctioned than travel for leisure or other reasons.<sup>220</sup>

Kikusha would likely have had greater mobility than other women, for she was in a religious occupation and free of familial ties to a husband or children. Her male counterparts, such as mountain ascetics (山伏 *yamabushi*) and itinerant monks (六部 *rokujurokubu*), were, according to Herbert Plutschow, probably 'the freest of all travellers in the Edo-period'.<sup>221</sup> Intellectuals and artists also found it relatively easy to travel, as they were supported by networks of local artists and scholars across the country.<sup>222</sup>

Wherever she visited on her journeys, Kikusha frequently attended cultural gatherings with other poets and artists and actively sought out masters of various arts with whom she could study. She studied poetry with Chôboen Sankyô (朝暮園傘狂 1726-1792) in Mino, who gave her the pen name Ichijian (一字庵). In Kyoto, she studied *ch'in* (or *shichigenkin* 七絃琴 a seven stringed Chinese musical instrument similar to a Japanese *koto*) with Hiramatsu Akira (平松明章), who held the court rank of Dainagon.<sup>223</sup> On her second trip to Kyushu she became acquainted with local Confucian scholars and under their influence began composing poems in the Chinese style.<sup>224</sup>

<sup>217</sup> Katsuura Noriko, 'Tonsure Forms for Nuns: Classification of Nuns according to Hairstyle', in Barbara Ruch (ed), *Engendering Faith: Women and Buddhism in Premodern Japan* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Japanese Studies, 2002), p. 129.

<sup>218</sup> See Shiba Keiko, 'Tabi nikki kara mita kinsei josei no ichi kôsatsu', in Kinsei Joseishi Kenkyūkai (ed), *Edo jidai no josei tachi*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1990); *Kinsei onna tabi nikki*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1997); and *Kinsei no onna tabi nikki jiten* (Tokyo: Tokyodo Shuppan, 2005).

<sup>219</sup> Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, p. 25; and Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, pp.155-157.

<sup>220</sup> Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, p. 23; and Vaporis, *Breaking Barriers*, p. 4

<sup>221</sup> Plutschow, *A Reader in Edo Period Travel*, p. 23

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid*, p. 23

<sup>223</sup> See the list of her teachers and acquaintances in Oka (ed), *Unyû no ama Tagami Kikusha*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>224</sup> Yamamoto, 'Chiyo and Kikusha', p. 65; and Oka (ed), *Unyû no ama Tagami Kikusha*, p. 20.

Kikusha was well connected, through a network of *haikai* poets across Japan who belonged to the Shikô school, as well as through her other artistic skills. In Kyoto her talents at *ch'in* allowed her an entrée into elite court society. She attended the musical gatherings of a former minister of court, for example. In Nagato the daimyô Môri Motoyoshi (Baimon) (毛利元義「梅門 1785-1843) invited her to work on a poem and painting with another artist, Watarai Bunryûsai, (度会文流斎) and Baimon himself exchanged verses with Kikusha.<sup>225</sup> She was able to make a modest living out of her art, selling the occasional painting.

In 1784, when Kikusha left Edo after a stay of three years, she travelled along the Tôkaidô (東海道 Eastern Coastal Road) to Mino. In Edo she had enjoyed tea as a hobby, along with her main artistic activity *haikai*.<sup>226</sup> During her stay in Mino she frequently participated in artistic gatherings with other poets in the area, and it was at one such gathering that she seems to have met the tea master Itô Munenaga (伊藤宗長), whereupon she began formally studying tea under Munenaga, in the Sen-ke style.<sup>227</sup> In letters to her Munenaga wrote basic information about tea, the handling of tea utensils and the procedures for holding a *chaji* (茶事 a small, intimate tea gathering).<sup>228</sup>

With such information in hand, Kikusha continued to participate in tea after leaving Mino, often being invited to tea gatherings during her travels, as well as hosting them herself. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the twelfth month, 1796, for example, Kikusha hosted a tea gathering whilst in Nagasaki.<sup>229</sup> This was a noon (正午 *shôgo*) gathering, the standard type of formal tea gathering. It included a full *kaiseki* meal as well as the laying of the charcoal (初座 *shoza*), the thick tea service, an intermission (中立ち *nakadachi*) when the guests retired from the tearoom to a waiting area, rebuilding of the charcoal (後座 *goza*) and the thin tea service. Kikusha acted as the host for five guests. The utensils used included a black raku tea bowl made by Raku Sanyû (樂左入 1685-1739), and a black lacquer-ware tea-caddy (棗 *natsume*) given to Kikusha in

<sup>225</sup> Yamamoto, 'Chiyo and Kikusha', p. 65; and Oka (ed), *Unyû no ama Tagami Kikusha*, p. 20.

<sup>226</sup> Nakagawa, *Joryû haijin Tagami Kikusha*, p. 57.

<sup>227</sup> The sources do not state which of the Sen schools she studied in. Nakagawa, *Joryû haijin Tagami Kikusha*, p. 66.

<sup>228</sup> Yoshimura Hitomi, 'Kikusha no chakaiki o yomu (agari)', in Kikusha Kenkyûkai (ed), *Kikusha kenkyû nôto*, 2 (2007), p. 20.

<sup>229</sup> The record of this gathering is reprinted and discussed in Yoshimura, 'Kikusha no chakaiki o yomu (agari)', pp. 20-21.

the summer of 1794 by Nakamura Sôtetsu V (中村宗哲五代 1764-1811), a lacquerware master who worked for the Sen-ke.<sup>230</sup> The following year, on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the tenth month, Kikusha held a tea gathering for four guests in Saga.<sup>231</sup> For this occasion, she displayed a *koto* onto which Nakamura Sôtetsu had lacquered the name *ryûsui* (流水 Flowing Water), which had been given to her by Minister of the Right (右大臣 *Udaijin*), Lord Saienji (西園寺公).<sup>232</sup> In her tea gatherings Kikusha was thus displaying her connections to other artists and the cultured elite through her selection of utensils.

Kikusha's network of associates spanned the country, from Edo, to Mino and Kyûshu. She was acquainted with tea people in Kyoto such as the tea master Kamibayashi Jôrin/Dôan (上林道庵), and of course Nakamura Sôtetsu V, as discussed above.<sup>233</sup> Though she spent much of her life travelling she did collect tea utensils, using them not just as functional objects but as items through which her artistic identity was expressed. Among her possessions we find various items, such as an incense container (香合 *kôgô*) with a *haikai* by Kikusha on the lid of the box, and a tea bowl (茶碗 *chawan*) fired in Hagi with a *haikai* by Kikusha inscribed on it (Figure 7).<sup>234</sup>



Figure 17: 'Shoka' (初夏) Hagi-fired tea bowl with *haikai* inscribed by Kikusha. Made in 1810. 8.5cm x 9.2cm.<sup>235</sup>

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>231</sup> The record of this gathering is reprinted and discussed in Yoshimura, 'Kikusha no chakaiki o yomu (agari)', pp. 22-24.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>233</sup> Oka (ed), *Uryû no ama Tagami Kikusha*, p. 19.

<sup>234</sup> Items are catalogued in Ueno, *Tagami Kikusha zenshû*, volume 1.

<sup>235</sup> Image source, Ueno, *Tagami Kikusha zenshû*, volume 1.

As well as inscribing her poetry onto tea bowls made by professional craftsmen, Kikusha also inscribed her poetry onto tea scoops which she crafted herself, such as the 'Idesoyo' tea scoop with accompanying boxes (Figure 6). On one box (pictured right) are written the name of the scoop 'idesoyo' (いでそよ) and 'inano take jisaku' (いな野竹自作 made by myself using bamboo from Ina). On the other box (pictured left) is her pen name 'Ichijian' (一字庵) and the following *haikai* poem:

*Sasanaru ya  
ide soyo koko ni  
arima yama*<sup>236</sup>

As with the enduring rustling,  
I will be steadfast here  
At Mount Arima.



Figure 18: 'Idesoyo' (いでそよ) bamboo tea scoop and storage boxes.

Made by Kikusha. 15.5cm.<sup>237</sup>

<sup>236</sup> Ueno, *Tagami Kikusha zenshū*.

<sup>237</sup> Image source: Ueno, *Tagami Kikusha zenshū*.

This poem alludes to a *waka* from the *Ogura hyakunin isshu* (*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*) poetry anthology, by Daini-no Sammi (Fujiwara-no Katako):<sup>238</sup>

*Arima yama  
Ina no sasahara  
Kaze fukeba*

*Ide soyo hito o  
Wasure ya wa suru*

As Mount Arima  
Sends its rustling winds across  
Ina's bamboo plains,

I will be just as steadfast  
And never will forget you.<sup>239</sup>

In her *haikai* Kikusha thus borrowed three concepts from the classical *waka* – ‘*sasa*’, ‘*idesoyo*’ and ‘*arima-yama*’ – in addition to using bamboo from Ina for the scoop itself. Kikusha did not just craft a tea scoop; she displayed her skill at composing *haikai*, her knowledge of ancient court poetry and her mastery of calligraphy. From this one tea scoop and its accompanying boxes, a picture emerges of a woman who practised tea as an art. Tea gave her an avenue through which she could express her identity as a poet, calligrapher and cultural connoisseur.

Kikusha's deep involvement in tea can be ascertained by her possession of such utensils, and is corroborated by a letter she received while in Kyoto in 1785 from her mentor, the priest Hyakuchabô (百茶坊), with whom she usually stayed when in Mino. He begins the letter cordially, mentioning her recent attendance at a tea gathering held by the *iemoto* in Kyoto and giving his approval of the poem she wrote as a salutation. The fact that Kikusha was invited to attend a tea gathering with an *iemoto*, presumably of whichever of the Sen schools of tea in which she was studying, is an indication of her deep involvement in tea culture. Hyakuchabô, however, warns her that, while a tea gathering is enjoyable, one should be careful not to become too immersed in the world of tea, for that would be regrettable. He further admonishes her that tea is simply an

<sup>238</sup> I am grateful to Hiroko Kobayashi for making the connection between the two poems.

<sup>239</sup> Japanese and English translation from the University of Virginia Library Japanese Text Initiative, *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu* (*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*), no. 58.  
<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/japanese/hyakunin/frames/hyakuframes.html>, accessed 26/04/2007.

enjoyment for oneself, whereas poetry is a path which creates harmony among people.<sup>240</sup>

Even after receiving such a critical letter from her mentor, Kikusha did not abandon her tea practice, but continued to participate in tea gatherings as a guest and to organise them herself until late in life.<sup>241</sup> For example, in the tenth month of 1808 Kikusha borrowed the premises of Ito Mokunojô (伊藤壱之允) and held a tea gathering which lasted for twenty days.<sup>242</sup> A feature of this gathering, and indeed several others hosted by Kikusha, was the display of a *ch'in* or an old *koto* instead of the conventional hanging scroll (軸 *jiku*) in the alcove (床の間 *tokonoma*), which Kikusha then played during the intermission.<sup>243</sup> Kikusha's use of unique utensils for such tea gatherings, which expressed her personality and taste, and her continued involvement in tea despite the admonition of Hyakuchabô reveal her to have been a committed and innovative tea practitioner.

In 1813 Tachibana Jihei published a collection of poems by Kikusha about her travels under the title *Taorigiku* (手織菊 Hand-Picked Chrysanthemums).<sup>244</sup> In *Taorigiku* Kikusha described her philosophy of life at age fifty-seven as such:

It is said that a man less than one hundred years old has the worries of one thousand years. In contrast to this saying, I have the enjoyments of one thousand years. In my life, entertainment is my trade and I entertain myself alike with those I know and with those whom I do not know. I enjoy years spent in travelling and I also enjoy returning home. I enjoy both criticism and praise. I have devoted myself to enjoyment and I hardly have time to fold my fingers to count my age.<sup>245</sup>

Kikusha was an independent woman, she was well travelled, and she immersed herself in artistic and cultural pursuits, including tea. Through her tea practice she associated with other practitioners and producers of tea culture, such as utensil makers, and tea masters, including an *iemoto*. Kikusha herself was a producer of tea culture, hosting tea gatherings which expressed her individual personality and inscribing her poems

<sup>240</sup> Reprinted in Nakagawa, *Joryû haijin Tagami Kikusha*, p. 66.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>242</sup> Kikusha compiled a record of the gathering entitled '*Kûgetsuan muda bukuro*' to thank Ito. In Nakagawa, *Joryû haijin Tagami Kikusha*, p. 113.

<sup>243</sup> She also placed an old *koto* in the alcove and played it in during the *nakadachi* at the gatherings on 1796/12/3 and 1797/10/4 described above.

<sup>244</sup> Reprinted in 2003 by the *Kikusha Kenshō-kai* (Society in Honour of Kikusha).

<sup>245</sup> Kikusha, *Taorigiku* (1813), in *Kasei Tenpo haikai shû*, volume 16 of *Koten haibungaku taikai* (Tokyo: Shûeisha, 1971), p. 189. Translated in Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*, p. 65.

onto tea utensils, including the tea scoop she handcrafted, thereby expressing her identity as an artist and cultural connoisseur.

Ôtagaki Rengetsu was likewise involved in the production of tea culture through the creation of tea utensils. As a maker and seller of utensils, she provides an example of a woman who could make a living through tea-related activities. Rengetsu was one of a number of female *waka* poets who studied under Kagawa Kageki (香川景樹 1768-1843).<sup>246</sup> The period in which she was active as a poet, the middle of the nineteenth century, witnessed a rise in the number of female *waka* poets, due to the increasing number of women receiving an education and the encouragement of male poets such as Kagawa. Rengetsu stood out as exceptional at the time, attracting a large number of patrons and being listed three times in the 'Who's Who in Kyoto' (平安人物史 *Heian jinbutsu shi*). To this day she has remained a recognized and celebrated artist, with her work being featured in exhibitions and on the art market. Her talents included not only poetry, but calligraphy, pottery and painting. She is most famous for the way in which she combined these skills, inscribing and incising her poems onto her pottery.<sup>247</sup>

Rengetsu was born in 1791 and given the name Nobu. Her father is believed to have been a samurai in service at Ueno Castle in the domain of Iga; her mother's position is less clear.<sup>248</sup> Shortly after her birth she was adopted by the Ôtagaki family, whose family head was a samurai in service at Chion'in temple. In her youth Rengetsu followed a path common for women of her status, serving as an attendant for the Matsudaira daimyô family at Kameoka Castle in Tanba. There she would have spent much time learning the arts for which she later became famous. After returning home from this post at age seventeen, Rengetsu married the first of two husbands, both of whom were brought into her family to serve as heir after the death of her stepbrother. By age thirty-three Rengetsu had lost both husbands and three children. It was at this time that she became a Buddhist nun, moving to a residence within the Chion'in temple complex, and taking the name Rengetsu, (連月 Lotus Moon). Though

<sup>246</sup> The biographical information on Rengetsu's life is taken from Patricia Fister, *Japanese Women Artists, 1600-1900* (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), pp. 143-159; Koresawa Kyôzô et al. (ed), *Rengetsu* (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1971); Sugimoto Hidetarô, *Ôtagaki Rengetsu* (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 1976); Tokuda Kôen, *Ôtagaki Rengetsu* (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1982); and Roger Thomas, *The Way of Shikishima: Waka Theory and Practice in Early Modern Japan* (forthcoming), chapter 6 'Bakumatsu'.

<sup>247</sup> On her unique combination of pottery and poetry see Sandra Scheckter, 'The ceramic art of Ôtagaki Rengetsu: where pottery meets poetry' in Melanie Eastburn et al. (ed), *Black Robe White Mist: art of the Japanese Buddhist nun Rengetsu* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), pp. 89-103.

<sup>248</sup> Many argue that she was a courtesan but there is no certainty.

Rengetsu took the tonsure in the Pure Land sect of Buddhism (浄土宗 *Jōdo shū*), she appears not to have exclusively adhered to this form of Buddhism, living at various temples throughout her life and associating with Tendai, Shingon and Zen monks.

Upon the death of her stepfather, who had joined her in taking Buddhist vows, Rengetsu moved to the Okazaki area of Kyoto in 1832, known for its artistic, literary and intellectual atmosphere. There, from around the age of 42, she began to sell pottery in order to support herself and it became immensely popular. Indeed the popularity of her pottery was such that Rengetsu was forced to move constantly to avoid publicity and frequent visitors. Although some have suggested there may have been more political motives behind her frequent moves, she suggested in letters to her friends that this was the reason.<sup>249</sup> She sold her work quite cheaply and lived modestly. The cultural skills Rengetsu had learned in her youth, such as poetry and calligraphy, were turned into economic capital in her adulthood, very little to be sure, but enough to live on.

Rengetsu's pottery featuring her poems consisted mostly of utensils for use in *sencha* (煎茶 Chinese style steeped tea drinking), which was popular among the literati at the time as an alternative form of tea culture to *chanoyu*.<sup>250</sup> Less well-known is that she also produced utensils for use in *chanoyu*, which she inscribed or incised with her poems. Rengetsu was essentially an amateur, though her works sold well, and she used major professional kilns, such as those in the Awata district of Kyoto, to fire her works. 'A typical batch of pottery sent for glazing included 'twelve large *sencha* pots, two large saké bottles, one cooking pot, one flower vase, one 'plover', ten small saké bottles, fifty-three small tea-pots, two incense burners, and seven tea-bowls'.<sup>251</sup> Examples of her works produced for use in tea include tea bowls (Figures 9 and 10), flower vases, incense containers and cold water jars.

<sup>249</sup> See Thomas, *The Way of Shikishima*, Chapter 6: pp. 52-62.

<sup>250</sup> See Patricia Graham, *Tea of the Sages: The Art of Sencha* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998); and 'Ōtagaki Rengetsu and the Japanese tea ceremony', in Melanie Eastburn et al. (ed), *Black Robe White Mist: art of the Japanese Buddhist nun Rengetsu* (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2007), pp. 61-73.

<sup>251</sup> Roger Thomas, *The Way of Shikishima*, Chapter 6: p. 52.





Figure 19: 'Wakamatsu' (若松) tea bowl.  
 Made at age seventy-five.  
 8.5 x 9.7cm. An example of a  
 tea bowl onto which Rengetsu  
 inscribed a poem.<sup>252</sup>

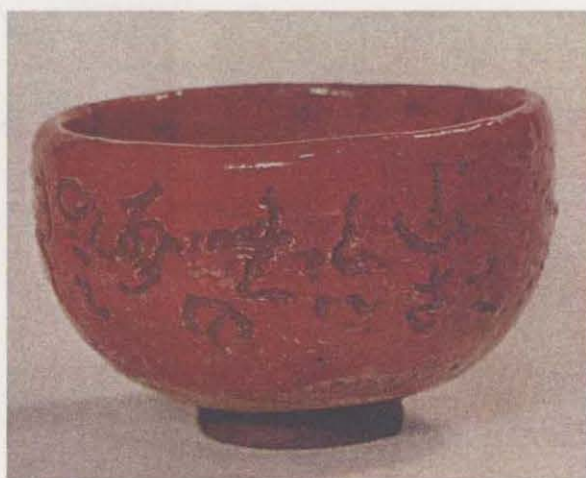


Figure 20: Red Raku (赤楽) tea bowl.  
 Made by Raku Keinyû XI,  
 poem incised by Rengetsu.  
 7 x 12.1cm.<sup>253</sup>

<sup>252</sup> Image source: Koresawa et.al, *Rengetsu*, figure 2.

<sup>253</sup> Image source: Koresawa et.al, *Rengetsu*, figure 6.

Whilst it could be said that Rengetsu simply made such tea utensils to satisfy the market, this seems unlikely. At least a certain level of familiarity with tea is desirable for a potter crafting utensils such as tea bowls and cold water jars so that they understand how the objects are to be used and what attributes are required. As the red Raku tea bowl (Figure 10) indicates, Rengetsu also had connections with the Raku (楽) family of ceramicists, renowned for their production of tea bowls favoured by tea practitioners and close associates of the Sen schools of tea. It was the eleventh generation head of the Raku family, Keinyû (慶入 1817-1902), with whom she collaborated on this tea bowl.<sup>254</sup> As Morgan Pitelka notes, such pottery by Rengetsu and *amayaki*, made by the wives of Raku potters after their husband's passing, indicates that these women 'must have been trained in tea as well, as making Raku ceramics by definition required a sensitivity to the way in which the wares would eventually be used in the tea gathering'.<sup>255</sup> It is highly probable that Rengetsu, raised in a samurai family and having served at Kameoka Castle between the ages of eight and sixteen, would have studied tea at some time in her youth.

Like Kikusha, Rengetsu also handcrafted tea scoops onto which she inscribed her poetry. The tea scoop pictured below was made by Rengetsu at age seventy (Figure 11). The accompanying small box (pictured left) gives the name of the scoop as '*kamiyama*' (かみやま). On the larger box lid (pictured right) the following poem is written:

*Okurezo to*  
*Takeyo takeyo to*  
*Kamiyama no*

*Hototogisu sae*  
*Naki-watarunari*<sup>256</sup>

So as not to fall behind,  
 Rushing, rushing,  
 Even the cuckoo of Mount Kami

Is urging me on  
 With its song echoing over.

<sup>254</sup> On the practice of tea practitioners collaborating with the Raku workshop in the production of their own tea bowls, see Pitelka, *Tea Taste*, pp. 31-32; and *Handmade Culture*, pp. 41-68.

<sup>255</sup> Morgan Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, p. 127.

<sup>256</sup> In Koresawa et.al, *Rengetsu*, p. 265.

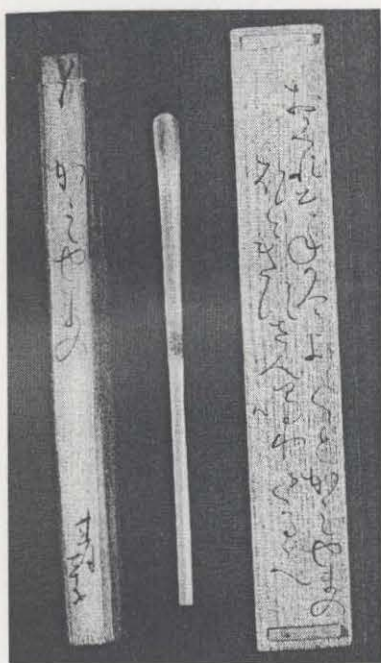


Figure 21: 'Kamiyama' (かみやま) bamboo tea scoop and storage boxes.  
Made by Rengetsu.<sup>257</sup>

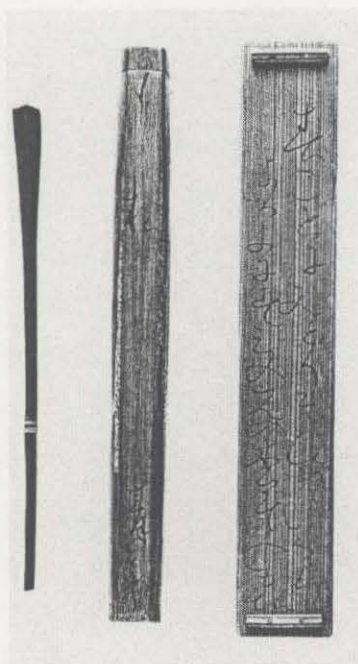


Figure 22: 'Matsu' (松) bamboo tea scoop and storage boxes.  
Made by Rengetsu. 17.7cm.<sup>258</sup>

<sup>257</sup> Image source: Koresawa et.al, *Rengetsu*, figure 35.

<sup>258</sup> Image source Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*, p. 155.

Another tea scoop crafted by Rengetsu was named 'matsu' (松 pine), an auspicious symbol of longevity (Figure 12). The poem on the larger box lid also develops this theme, referring to the pines at Sumiyoshi:

*Harugoto ni  
Midori sohitsu hitsu  
Iku chiyo ka*

*Yo ni suminoe no  
Matsu zo hishiki*

Each Spring,  
Putting forth new greenery  
For many thousand years-

In this world, Sumiyoshi  
Pines have long endured.<sup>259</sup>

The pine motif alludes to Rengetsu's own longevity; she made these pieces at age seventy-seven – Patricia Fister suggests that she may have been 'marvelling at her ability to have withstood so many cold winters'.<sup>260</sup> Rengetsu inscribed her own poems on the larger box lids, from which she also took the names of the scoops. These tea scoops and their accompanying boxes therefore served as objects through which Rengetsu's identity as a tea practitioner, poet and calligrapher were expressed.

Unlike commoner and samurai women, who we will find in the next chapters practised tea as a means of cultivating genteel femininity, for these Buddhist nuns tea practice held a different meaning and purpose. As Katsuura Noriko has suggested, when a woman took the full tonsure this 'signified a negation of or release from female sexuality'.<sup>261</sup> Rengetsu and Kikusha were women for whom tea was a form of artistic practice, which related to the other arts they practised, such as poetry composition, calligraphy and pottery. They were both participants in and producers of tea culture. In activities such as crafting a tea scoop they could demonstrate the breadth of cultural capital they had accumulated. As nuns, this was capital they held in their own right, not as capital bearing objects for other (male) family members. For women such as Rengetsu and Kikusha their artistic pursuits also provided them with a modest livelihood.

<sup>259</sup> English translation in Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*, p. 155.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>261</sup> Katsuura, 'Tonsure Forms for Nuns', p. 123.

While Rengetsu and Kikusha may have been in the minority of female tea practitioners, their experience is symptomatic of the overall trends of a growth in women's participation in culture and the arts, particularly from the eighteenth century, and an increase in the degree of women's participation, with women becoming economically independent through their art as artists and teachers.<sup>262</sup> More specifically for our purposes here, they are indicative of women's involvement in tea culture. We have seen that women who were of particularly high or unique status, such as members of the Imperial family and Buddhist nuns, could play an active role in selecting and creating tea utensils, either through patronage of artists, collaboration with artists, or self-production. We have also seen that women were participants in tea gatherings, most often as guests in a familial/household context, but as the example of Kikusha indicates, they could host their own gatherings and participate in broader networks of tea practice beyond their family/household. Though Kikusha and Rengetsu should by no means be taken as representative, they do serve as examples of the possibilities for women to participate in tea culture during the Edo period, and of an alternative vision of women's tea practice to the dominant model of genteel femininity. There was not just one type of woman who practised tea in early modern Japan and not just one reason for them to do so.

### Conclusion

In this chapter evidence for the participation of women in early modern tea culture has been discussed. It has been shown that not only were women participating in tea culture throughout the Edo period, as students in tea schools, and as guests at tea gatherings, but that some women were also producers of tea culture through their involvement in the creation of tea utensils and hosting of tea gatherings. Furthermore, it appears that the numbers of women and the degree of their participation increased over the Edo period. Thus, if there was ever a gender boundary, it gradually became irrelevant as more and more women participated in tea culture.

The context of women's participation in tea culture was most commonly family/household-based networks, though women's cultural networks could extend beyond this, in the case of Kikusha covering the length and breadth of Japan, or in the case of Lady Nakagawa and her attendant including men of various social statuses and

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<sup>262</sup> For examples of women in other artistic and cultural practices and growth from the eighteenth century see Fister, *Japanese Women Artists*; and Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, pp. 153-158 and 187-191.

occupations. The degree of women's participation in tea culture may thus have depended on their status. Buddhist nuns, for example, were involved in tea culture to a greater extent than women of elite families. Women of elite families, in turn, were more involved in tea culture than commoner women, particularly prior to the nineteenth century, for their families had the financial and social capacity to enable their tea practice. In all these cases, women who were participants in tea culture were also participants in cultural networks that gave them the opportunity to communicate with others outside of their usual sphere of social interaction.

We have also seen that some of the most prominent male tea practitioners of the Edo period, such as Sen Sôtan, Kamiya Sôtan, Hosokawa Sansai, Kawakami Fuhaku and even *iemoto* of both Urasenke and Omotsenke, were involved with women's tea practice. This, along with the records of female students in the Horinouchi and Yabunouchi schools, strongly suggests that there was no general taboo against women's tea practice in the Edo period. Women's involvement in tea culture may have been limited but it was not hidden and it was certainly not forbidden wholesale, even if not all male tea practitioners approved. Indeed, we will see in the next two chapters that both an official, elitist, discourse and a popular discourse on women's tea practice developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which served to encourage the spread of tea culture among women of the commoner class as well as those of samurai and court aristocratic status. As tea culture spread among women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, status boundaries were being blurred and broken-down, but there was no gender boundary to be crossed – for any boundary that did exist had already been crossed by elite women in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

### Chapter Three: Establishing an Elite Discourse on Women's Tea Practice

We have seen that women, particularly those of high status, were practicing tea from the late sixteenth century. Whilst some tea masters, such as Sugiki Fusai (杉木普斎 1628-1706), forbade women from participating in tea, women's tea practice was in fact already established by the seventeenth century. The focus of modern scholars has been on such attempts to discourage women's tea practice, with scant attention being paid to those tea masters who encouraged it, such as Ôguchi Shôô (大口樵翁 (also Gansui 含翠) 1689-1764), author of *Toji no tamoto* (刀自袂 A Woman's Handbook, 1721).<sup>263</sup> Though the readership of *Toji no tamoto* can be assumed to have been limited and it is specifically focused on women's tea practice, it nonetheless holds significance for understanding the history of tea culture more broadly in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

*Toji no tamoto* provides clear evidence of one tea master's attempt to establish a discourse on women's tea practice in the eighteenth century. However, Shôô was not writing a handbook for any woman who may have wished to study tea. Rather, his handbook was meant to apply to women of aristocratic court and samurai status. Significantly, the text addresses the potential criticisms of those who were opposed to women's tea practice. We thus see both sides of the argument. We also see how one tea master, at least, conceived of women's tea, what he thought were the reasons why women should study tea, and what women must be mindful of in their tea practice. Through *Toji no tamoto* we gain an understanding of how women practised tea, for example the particular rules and procedures they followed, in greater detail than in any other document. But *Toji no tamoto* was more than just a guide on how to make, serve and drink tea in the formal manner of *chanoyu*. It was also a guide on morals and proper behaviour for samurai women which exhorted the importance of modesty above all else.

<sup>263</sup> See for example Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment* p. 62; and Paul Varley, 'Chanoyu from Genroku to Modern Times', in Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao (eds), *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), p. 189. Interestingly, Sugiki Fusai was a disciple of Sen Sôtan, who had been closely involved with the Empress Tôfukumon'in's tea practice. This suggests that opposition to women's tea practice may have been a matter of individual choice, rather than there being any widespread, institutionalised bias.

It was also part of a broader discourse on tea which had multiple strands: those coming from the tea schools and tea masters, and those being produced commercially by tea school outsiders which found an audience among wealthy commoners. During the seventeenth century, tea culture became popularised among wealthy male commoners through the publication of texts on tea, which were not always officially sanctioned by the tea schools. This was the first step in the popularisation of tea culture. This expansion of tea culture to new social groups occurred in a cascading process – first with commoner men emerging as an audience for written texts on tea in the seventeenth century, followed by elite women in the early eighteenth century, then commoner women from the mid-eighteenth century.

#### **Popularisation Among Male Commoners**

The period in which Ôguchi Shôô was active, from the late seventeenth through to the early eighteenth century, was a time of expansion for tea culture. Wealthy commoners increasingly had the financial means to study tea, and knowledge of tea became widely disseminated through the circulation of print and manuscript texts. Though the Sekishû school stood somewhat outside of these developments, due to its unique structure and affiliation with the samurai elite rather than commoners, it is nonetheless important to understand the broader context of economic growth and the expansion of tea culture in which *Toji no tamoto* was produced.

During the seventeenth century Japan experienced a period of major economic growth, including both agricultural and commercial expansion, resulting in population growth and urbanisation. Over the course of the Edo period long-term economic growth led to rising standards of living, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Increases in agricultural productivity, for example, meant that farmers could accumulate surpluses which they could use to invest further in agriculture, particularly new technologies or techniques, or to engage in commerce. Whilst samurai were on fixed stipends, commoners derived their income from this agricultural and commercial activity and could thus accrue profit. In the cities, a new stratum of wealthy merchants emerged,



whilst in the countryside there was a new stratum of rural elite.<sup>264</sup> These new elites were able to invest time and money into education and leisure activities, once the preserve of the court aristocracy and samurai.

Wealth and status, that is one's position in the official social hierarchy, which theoretically went hand in hand, thus became disconnected, as Ogyû Sorai (荻生徂徠 1666-1728) noted several times in *Seidan* (政談 A Discourse on Government, c. 1726):

The profits of merchants in the last hundred years are quite unprecedented since the world began...The military class, no longer thinking highly of rice and valuing only money, are being deprived of their wealth. They are being sucked dry by the merchants and forced day by day into greater poverty.<sup>265</sup>

The fact is, if they only have the money, even the lower classes can imitate the daimyo with impunity. It is very sad to notice how in today's world those who are without money feel of no account and how even men of high rank and virtue are, as a matter of course, humbled and treated with contempt.<sup>266</sup>

Exceeding the daimyo are the (*shimôtaya* 仕舞夕屋) entrepreneurs among the townspeople...From clothing to food and housing, their extravagance is equal to that of the daimyo...in today's difficult situation the merchants flourish more and more. The result is that might and power (*ken*) automatically gravitate to them and their supreme bliss (*gokuraku*) grows.<sup>267</sup>

Whilst Sôrai may have exaggerated his claims for rhetorical effect, given that he was promoting his own moral code for society, there is no doubt that over the course of the Edo period samurai impoverishment vis-à-vis commoners was a real and increasing trend.

A new, wealthy, stratum thus emerged within the commoner status group. These wealthy commoners looked for ways in which they could live the lifestyle afforded by their wealth, a lifestyle above that which was deemed appropriate to their socio-political position. There was 'a dramatic change in the nature of cultural production and

<sup>264</sup> On economic growth see Susan B. Hanley and Kozo Yamamura, *Economic and Demographic Change in Preindustrial Japan, 1600-1868* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Michael Smitka (ed), *The Japanese Economy in the Tokugawa Era, 1600-1868* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998); Nakai Nobuhiko and James L. McClain, 'Commercial change and urban growth in early modern Japan', in John Whitney Hall (ed), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, volume 4: *Early Modern Japan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 519-590; and Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 140-159.

<sup>265</sup> Ogyû Sorai, *Seidan* (c.1726), translated with annotations by Olof G. Lidin (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999), p. 140.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid*, p. 149.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 152-153.

consumption' across all artistic and cultural pursuits.<sup>268</sup> This change was the result of the commercialisation of cultural activities such as tea, brought about by population and economic growth. Participation was no longer limited to those who had the right status or connections but was open to anyone of financial means; they could purchase guides which detailed all aspects of elite culture, and pay for lessons and licences. Yokoyama Toshio suggests the term '*kuge*-fication' to describe the growing popular interest in the literary and religious heritage of the court aristocracy (公家 *kuge*) in the nineteenth century, as evidenced in the reading patterns of household encyclopaedias.<sup>269</sup> A similar process occurred in relation to the arts of play from the seventeenth century.

Such attempts at overturning the status quo by commoners living above their station were unsurprisingly condemned by the old elite. An advisor to the Maeda domain said of the situation in 1835 that

among the households of urban commoners... are many who do not preserve their status... [they] coveted [*sic*] the houses of those of higher status...[and] there are many who no longer observe the status regulations, who spend too much money, who have a poor sense of social responsibility.<sup>270</sup>

To control such attempts of commoners to blur or cross established social lines, the Tokugawa bakufu periodically issued sumptuary regulations, relating to what clothing members of each status group could wear and how they could decorate their houses, for example.<sup>271</sup> Donald Shively and Eiko Ikegami have both noted that the bakufu's attempts to maintain social distinction through sumptuary regulation was symptomatic of the threat posed to the social and political order by the rise of wealthy commoners.<sup>272</sup> Whilst commoners were, in many cases, becoming wealthier than their superiors, moving up the social ladder was still blocked by the official status hierarchy. A wealthy commoner

<sup>268</sup> Shirane, *Early Modern Japanese Literature*, p. 2.

<sup>269</sup> Yokoyama Toshio, 'The Illustrated Household Encyclopedias that Once Civilized Japan', in Susanne Formanek and Sepp Linhart (ed), *Written Texts - Visual Texts: Woodblock-printed Media in Early Modern Japan* (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), p. 69; and 'In Quest of Civility: Conspicuous Uses of Household Encyclopedia's in Nineteenth-Century Japan', *Zinbun* 34:1 (1999), p. 198.

<sup>270</sup> *Kaga han shiryō* (Documents of Kaga domain), vol. 14 (1835), pp. 597-602. Quoted in Nobuhiko Nakai and James L. McClain, 'Commerical Change and Urban Growth in Early Modern Japan', in Smitka (ed) *The Japanese Economy*, p. 206.

<sup>271</sup> See Donald H. Shively, 'Sumptuary Regulation and Status in Early Tokugawa Japan', *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 25 (1964-1965), pp. 123-164.

<sup>272</sup> Shively, 'Sumptuary Regulation and Status in Early Tokugawa Japan', p. 124; and Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 258.

could take on the lifestyle of an aristocrat or samurai, yet they could not so easily become an aristocrat or samurai in official terms. The trappings of success, such as clothing, cultural attributes and manners, therefore became important markers of an alternative status hierarchy in which wealth and not socio-political rank defined one's position.<sup>273</sup> Further, with economic growth came new and ever-increasing opportunities for communication across status boundaries, as commoners began to engage in the arts of play, for example. This made it increasingly important for commoners to learn the appropriate modes of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, with which to communicate with their social superiors.

The world of aesthetic pastimes associated with the aristocracy and samurai was particularly attractive to the *nouveaux riches* as an area in which their wealth and cultural learning could be displayed, and as a means of learning elite manners and modes of communication. By the end of the seventeenth century wealthy commoners had come to embrace the arts of play as an ideal and contact across status lines was not uncommon.<sup>274</sup> Saikaku described this connection between upwardly mobile commoners and the arts of play associated with the elite as such:

In general, the Osaka rich were not descendants of old families that had prospered for many generations. Most of them were the type of person who was formerly called "Kichizō" or "Sansuke" [typical "redneck" names] but now they strive to enrich themselves. They have learned to socialize with people from "good" families while learning poetry-making, playing *kemari* [a ball game], archery, koto-harp, flute, or drum music, the perfume game, or the tea-ceremony. By that time they have lost their countrified accents.<sup>275</sup>

Another early modern author, Nishikawa Joken (西川如見 1648-1724), also described the links between economic growth, status, and accomplishment in the polite arts.

Now that the townspeople have piled up a lot of money, they proudly attempt to raise their status by aping the manners of the aristocracy and samurai. When the rest of the people, whether educated or not, look at these newly refined city folk, they are consumed with envy and push themselves to the limit in order to imitate

<sup>273</sup> See David Howell's discussion of customs and 'other elements of outward appearance' and status in *Geographies of Identity*, pp. 15-16 and pp. 25-39

<sup>274</sup> Conrad Totman, *Early Modern Japan*, p. 186; and Moriya, 'Yūgei and Chōnin Society in the Edo Period'.

<sup>275</sup> Ihara Saikaku, *Nihon eitagura*. Reprinted in Asō Isoji and Fuji Akio (eds), *Taiyaku Saikaku zenshū*, volume 12 (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1975), p. 19. Translated with annotations in Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 150.

[their arts of play]. In this way, the behaviours associated with the arts of play became the custom of the country as a whole.<sup>276</sup>

Nishikawa also noted that an increasing number of masters of the arts of play came from *chônin* stock.<sup>277</sup> Thus, artistic pursuits associated with elites became popular as a way for upwardly mobile commoner men to increase their social standing and have contact with those of higher status.

As tea gained popularity among this new social group, demand for information on tea led to the publication of woodblock-printed texts detailing that which had previously only been orally transmitted. The context for this was a commercial publishing boom from the seventeenth century.<sup>278</sup> Certain features of Tokugawa publishing, such as the use of woodblock printing, which allowed for phonetic glossing of Chinese characters in the text, and extensive illustrations accompanying the text, meant that most books were suitable for popular consumption.<sup>279</sup> And with approximately 10 000 books in print, 'being sold or lent in more than seven hundred bookstores nationwide', by the Genroku period, popularly consumed they were.<sup>280</sup> The numbers of bookstores continued to grow, whilst lending libraries (貸本屋 *kashihonya*), sometimes consisting of a stack of books being carried around on a persons' back, and credit systems operating in bookshops also made books available to a wider market.<sup>281</sup>

The market included a wide variety of books on different topics, from specialised works on tea, like those described below, and works dealing with the latest scientific and medical information coming from Europe, to guides to travel and the pleasure quarters, military 'mirrors' and rosters of the shogunate, household encyclopaedias, and of course

<sup>276</sup> Nishikawa Joken, *Chônin bukuro* (1692). Reprinted in Nakamura Yukihiro (ed) *Kinsei chônin shisô: Nihon shisô taikai*, volume 59 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975), p. 98. Translated with annotations in Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 150.

<sup>277</sup> Nishikawa, *Chônin bukuro*, cited in Moriya, 'Yûgei and Chônin Society in the Edo Period', p. 44.

<sup>278</sup> See Peter Kornicki, *The Book in Japan: A Cultural History from the Beginnings to the Nineteenth Century*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), pp. 169-207; Donald H. Shively, 'Popular culture', in John Whitney Hall (ed), *The Cambridge History of Japan*, volume 4: *Early Modern Japan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 725-733; and Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

<sup>279</sup> Eiko Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 291-294; Donald Keene, *World Within Walls: Japanese literature of the pre-modern era, 1600-1867* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1976), pp. 1-7; and Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), pp. 80-85.

<sup>280</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, p. 83. Citing Konta Yôzô, *Edo no honya-san: Kinsei bunka shi no sokumen* (Nihon Hôsô Shuppan Kyôkai, 1977), NHK bukku: 299, p. ii; and Shively, 'Popular culture', p. 726.

<sup>281</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 83-84.

various genres of popular fiction.<sup>282</sup> The plethora of genres and seemingly insatiable appetite of the early modern reading public has led Mary Elizabeth Berry to describe the book market as a 'library of public information'.<sup>283</sup> One part of this library consisted of how-to-books and guides to popular arts. Eiko Ikegami suggests that 'the popularity of how-to books and introductory guides to the various arts indicates that the new Tokugawa readership was no mere collection of passive consumers but included active participants in cultural production'.<sup>284</sup>

The first mass-market text dealing with tea culture was *Sôjinboku* (草人木 *Grass, Person, Tree*, 1626), which, in three volumes, detailed the procedures for making and serving tea, handling the utensils, and the layout of the tea room.<sup>285</sup> At that time, most texts on tea culture contained the teachings of one tea master and were for a select readership of disciples. They were circulated through private networks in manuscript form. Furuta Oribe's *Chadô hiden* (茶道秘伝 *Transmitted Secrets of the Way of Tea*, 1615) was one such text.<sup>286</sup> By reading it, one gained access to the knowledge of the tea master himself. Thus, dissemination of such texts was purposefully limited.<sup>287</sup> *Sôjinboku* departed markedly from this tradition.

In the late seventeenth century more commercially produced books, such as *Chadô zensho* (茶道全書 *Complete Writings on the Way of Tea*, 1693), and *Chanoyu hyôrin taisei* (*A Collection of Tea Commentary*, 1697), entered the market.<sup>288</sup> *Chadô zensho*, carrying on from *Sôjinboku*, represents a significant shift in the way information about tea culture was presented. This was an encyclopaedic text in which the author aimed to 'bring together the secrets of every house, including ... [Takeno] Jôô, Rikyû,

<sup>282</sup> For examples of such texts, see Berry, *Japan in Print*; and Yokoyama, 'The Illustrated Household Encyclopedias that Once Civilized Japan', pp. 47-72; and 'In Quest of Civility', pp. 197-222.

<sup>283</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, pp. 13-53.

<sup>284</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 298.

<sup>285</sup> Hayashiya Tatsusaburô, 'Chadô zensho no seiritsu: Iemoto seido e no michi', in Hayashiya Tatsusaburô (ed), *Koten bunka no sôzô* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppan, 1964), pp. 375-376; Tsutsui, *Chasho no keifu*, pp. 31-36; and Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, p. 113. *Sôjinboku* is transcribed in full in Iguchi Kaisen et.al., *Chadô zenshû*, volume 12: *Bunken hen*, (Tokyo: Sôgensha, 1936), pp. 226-368.

<sup>286</sup> Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, 114.

<sup>287</sup> On the transmission of secret (*hiden*) knowledge see Maki Morinaga, *Secrecy in Japanese Arts: "Secret Transmission" as a Mode of Knowledge* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

<sup>288</sup> *Chadô zenshō* (1693) is transcribed in *Chanoyu bunka gaku* 2 (March 1995), pp. 81-185. *Chanoyu hyôrin taisei* (1697) is in the collection of the Kyoto Furitsu Shiryôkan.

Furuta [Oribe], Kobori [Enshû], Hosokawa [Sansai], Katagiri [Sekishû], and more'.<sup>289</sup> It thus exposed the secret teachings of these masters to an anonymous reading public.

The publication boom was not limited to books on tea procedures. Catalogues of utensils, such as *Wakan shodôgu* (和漢諸道具 *Diverse Domestic and Foreign Utensils*, 1694), were also popular, as they could provide information on ideal utensil types for those who may not have had access to the real objects, as well as acting as catalogues and guides for those who could travel to Kyoto and purchase the original goods.<sup>290</sup> In addition, books which gave more weight to illustrations than text may have been popular among those with limited literacy.<sup>291</sup> Some texts on tea utensils went beyond the scope of a catalogue, giving guidance to amateurs on how to make their own utensils. Information on Raku ceramics, popular among tea practitioners, was disseminated in this way.<sup>292</sup>

Starting with *Sôjinboku* and then *Chadô zensho*, commercially produced texts on tea culture thus contributed to the popularization of cultural and artistic activities among a wider segment of the population and in areas well beyond the cultural centres of Kyoto and Edo, as they made information on these pursuits readily available. The publication of such texts in the late seventeenth century was a sign of the increasing desire of commoners to participate in tea culture. This, in turn, was a contributing factor in the Sen tea schools' attempts to control the spread of tea culture through the *iemoto* system.<sup>293</sup> This system developed in the eighteenth century and allowed the head of each school to have absolute control over the granting of licenses to study. Under this pyramid-like structure, the *iemoto* at the top possessed absolute authority and would transmit complete knowledge of rituals, procedures and forms to only one disciple, the next *iemoto*. This limited the potential for new schools to be established but allowed for continuing growth in the student base of the school. Previously, it had been common for tea masters to transmit complete knowledge to several disciples, which had naturally led

<sup>289</sup> *Chadô zenshō*, in *Chanoyu bunka gaku* 2, p. 84. Translated in Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>290</sup> *Wakan shodôgu*, volume 8 of *Banpô zenshū*, is transcribed in *Kibutsu hen (4)*, Iguchi Kaisen et. al., *Chadô zenshū*, volume 15, (Tokyo: Sôgensha, 1936).

<sup>291</sup> On literacy see Richard Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*.

<sup>292</sup> Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, pp. 112-131.

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92 and p. 197.

to the dispersal of knowledge to an even wider group of practitioners.<sup>294</sup> The *iemoto* system enabled the tea schools to tap into the growing popularity of tea among wealthy male commoners by controlling the spread of tea culture on their own terms.

Yet, wealthy male commoners were not the only new audience for information on tea culture. From the eighteenth century another new audience emerged for texts on tea: women. Initially, the written discourse on women's tea in *Toji no tamoto*, like the early texts on tea in general, took the form of a privately circulated manuscript penned by a tea master and it was aimed at an elite audience. We will see in the next chapter, that from later in the eighteenth century, it too expanded to include commercial texts aimed at wealthy commoners.

### An Unexpected Request

The author of *Toji no tamoto*, Ôguchi Shôô studied tea in Osaka under his father-in-law Ônishi Kansai (大西閑齋), a tea master in the Sekishû school.<sup>295</sup> Ônishi was of samurai origins, as were most practitioners in this school, and is regarded as having adhered to a warrior mode of tea.<sup>296</sup> His son-in-law inherited this style of tea practice but is considered to have been less of an adherent to the warrior mode of tea and more in favour of popularisation.<sup>297</sup> The Sekishû school, founded by Katagiri Sekishû (片桐石州 1605-1673), was one of the major tea schools of the Edo period. Sekishû set himself up in opposition to the then-head of the Sen family, Rikyû's grandson Sen Sôtan, by not acknowledging the tradition of blood descent but instead stressing the importance of transmission from teacher to disciple.<sup>298</sup> The school was popular among daimyô in particular, and Sekishû served the fourth shogun, Tokugawa Ietsuna (徳川家綱 1639-1680), as official tea master from 1665. Because of Sekishû's opposition to transmission through blood lineage, which was the practice in the Sen schools for example, the school

<sup>294</sup> Nishiyama, 'Iemoto seido to ryûha', pp. 79-84; Hayashiya, 'Chadô zensho no seiritsu', pp. 383-385; and Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, pp. 91-92.

<sup>295</sup> Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* volume 2: *Sekishû kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), p. 171.

<sup>296</sup> On tea practice among the samurai see Tanimura, 'Tea of the Warrior'; Tanihata, 'Daimyô chadô no tenkai'; and Demura-Devore, 'The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists'

<sup>297</sup> Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* volume 2, p. 172.

<sup>298</sup> Nomura Zuiten, *Sekishû ryû: rekishi to keifu* (Kyoto: Kôdondui Koshoin, 1984), pp. 72-99.

proliferated into many branches. Many daimyô adherents did not wish to submit themselves to the authority of a teacher and established their own lines.<sup>299</sup>

Unlike the other schools of tea then, the Sekishû school was not controlled from the centre. Ôguchi Shôô thus established the Ôguchi school, as a branch of the Sekishû school. Through his writings Shôô was attempting to popularise tea by making information about rules and procedures more readily accessible.<sup>300</sup> The fact that Shôô was able to operate independently of any hierarchical school structure which dictated ideology from a central authority figure, may have contributed to his willingness to embrace change and follow the popular mood for opening up tea culture to new social groups, including women. As we will see, he made his decision to promote women's tea practice by writing *Toji no tamoto* in consultation with friends but ultimately took individual responsibility for it.

In addition to *Toji no tamoto*, Shôô wrote several other books on tea, such as *Gyakuryû gendan* (逆流玄談 *To Tell the Truth, Contrary to Generally Accepted Opinions*).<sup>301</sup> In *Gyakuryû gendan* Shôô demonstrated his desire to share information on tea with a wide audience, covering topics such as the tea procedures for old, middle-aged and young people – instructing old and young people (under the age of fifteen) to use a red cloth and to place utensils such as the cold water jar a little closer to themselves than normal (presumably because this would make them easier to reach).<sup>302</sup> Much of the content takes the form of hints or tips on particular aspects of tea culture, such as how best to cut fresh flowers according to their variety – wisteria and mountain hydrangeas should be cut with their stems immersed in boiling water, for example – or how to arrange the charcoal during mid summer so as to avoid making the room unduly warm.<sup>303</sup> Compared to *Toji no tamoto*, in which moral teachings and advice on modesty and good behaviour are interspersed throughout the instructions on tea procedures, *Gyakuryû gendan* is written in a matter-of-fact tone, providing only advice on tea culture.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 100-256.

<sup>300</sup> Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* volume 2: *Sekishû kei chajin*, p. 172.

<sup>301</sup> Ôguchi Shôô, *Gyakuryû gendan*. Reprinted in full in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, pp. 172-187.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173 and 174.



*Toji no tamoto* was written by Ôguchi Shôô in 1721 in Osaka (浪華 *Naniwa*) and is comprised of two volumes.<sup>304</sup> The title, Shôô explains, comes from ‘*toji*’ (刀自), a general term for women, and ‘*tamoto*’ (袂) meaning something you have at hand.<sup>305</sup> It is a ‘handbook’ for women’s tea. The impetus for writing it was a request by a visitor from Echigo in the tenth month of 1721 that Shôô write a book on tea for women, as there had not been any books written on the subject.<sup>306</sup> In fact, *Toji no tamoto* is the only extant text devoted entirely to tea for women from the Edo period. Shôô seems not to have thought about the subject of women’s tea practice in any detail prior to this. He describes how he mulled things over for a while before having a discussion about it with a close friend who was also a tea practitioner. The friend was not convinced, saying that ‘women should not do tea’, reminding us that even though women had been participating in tea for some time, this was not universally accepted.<sup>307</sup> Shôô was more open to the idea. He suggested that, ‘even though there were no documents by our forbears constituting a written tradition on the subject of tea for women’, as lacquer-ware utensil stands (蒔絵台子 *makie daisu*) were ‘among the items women have at hand’, they must be doing tea, for there would be little point in them having these stands otherwise.<sup>308</sup> Here, Shôô is referring to the custom, discussed in the previous chapter, that women may have had utensil stands among the items in their bridal trousseau or set up in their room, particularly in the households of court aristocrats, daimyô or the shogun. Continuing to lay out his reasons for writing the book, Shôô tells his friend that ‘not only men have the sensitivity’ (閑情 *kansei*) necessary for tea, women have it too.<sup>309</sup> There are women who have written poetry, for example. ‘Even today’, he says, ‘women have this sensitivity’.<sup>310</sup> He gives the example of Rikyû’s second wife Soon, who had an interest in the oil lamps

<sup>304</sup> Ôguchi Shôô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721). Reprinted in full in Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* vol 2: *Sekishû kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), pp. 188- 223. This transcription is based on the manuscript copy of the text made by Nakajima Munetaka (中島宗貴) held at the National Diet Library, Tokyo. I have also consulted a microfilm edition from the National Institute of Japanese Literature, which is from a manuscript copy held at the Imabari City Kawano Art Museum, Ehime Prefecture. This edition is signed ‘By Yôkôsai of Naniwa, Ôguchi Gansui’ (浪華養浩齋 大口含翠 述). It does not show any significant difference to the version transcribed in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*.

<sup>305</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 223.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

used in tearooms and also carved tea scoops, for example. These traditions, Shôô says, have been passed on to his house.

After hearing all of these arguments, the friend agrees with Shôô that 'it is helpful for women to enter the Way of Tea'.<sup>311</sup> It is to assist women in this that Shôô then begins writing *Toji no tamoto*. He tells his readers that it is not for experts, but a handbook for beginners, to make sure they follow the right path. He also explains that, whilst he follows what has been said by tea masters like Rikyû and Furuta Oribe, he discards that which is wrong or not useful in what he himself has seen and heard.<sup>312</sup> He therefore saw himself as continuing in the path of previous tea masters, but not following them blindly. Nor did he see himself as someone who was revolutionising tea culture, just helping to develop and spread it as necessary.

In the introduction to the book, then, we discover the circumstances of its production. There was a demand for such a text, clearly indicating that a reasonable number of women were studying tea by this time, even in the somewhat remote region of Echigo. There was, however, no consensus on the appropriateness or necessity of women studying tea. Rather, there seem to have been multiple views, as represented by the three men involved in the book's conception. The visitor who requested that a book be written seems to have been completely accepting of women's tea practice and was wanting to encourage and promote it, presumably among women of their acquaintance. Shôô seems not to have given the subject much thought prior to receiving the request, but once he considered the matter came to a positive view. The friend was initially against women's tea practice, but was convinced by the arguments put forward by Shôô to change their mind. No doubt Shôô included a summary of these events to inform any readers who may hold similarly negative views to those of his friend why he wrote the book and, hopefully, to win them over to a more positive view of women's involvement in tea culture.

*Toji no tamoto* is a hand-written, rather than woodblock printed, book and we can thus assume that it was not widely read nor intended to be so. Rather, manuscripts would

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<sup>311</sup> *Ibid*, p. 188.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid*, p. 188. Making reference to famous masters of the past, especially Rikyû, was common in tea texts as it lent an air of legitimacy to the author.

have been circulated among interested parties with people writing out their own copies (写本 *shahon*). The text is written in a mixture of Chinese characters and the phonetic *furigana* script, so-called *kana-majiribun* (仮名混じり分), in the cursive style (*hentaigana* 変体仮名), without phonetic glossing for the Chinese characters. It is, of course, difficult to know whether women read *Toji no tamoto* themselves, or whether it was read by male (or female) teachers, who then transmitted the information to their female students through oral instruction. In all likelihood, both occurred. As the extant copies of *Toji no tamoto* do not provide phonetic glossing for Chinese characters, women who did read it must have been well educated and highly literate. However, there is also the possibility that phonetic glossing could have been added when transcriptions were made, thereby making it available to an even wider audience who were *kana* literate. In his study of popular literacy in early modern Japan, Richard Rubinger, while acknowledging the scarcity of concrete evidence, suggests that in the eighteenth century, at the time *Toji no tamoto* was written, rural and urban commoner women from both commercial and artistic families may have had functional literacy in both phonetic *kana* and Chinese characters.<sup>313</sup> For women of samurai families and the court aristocracy, who appear to have been Shôh's intended audience, as indicated by several references to these status groups in the text, the rates of literacy would have been even higher. Of course, the audience of this text would also have included male tea practitioners interested in fostering women's tea practice. Whether read by men or women, however, one thing is clear – *Toji no tamoto* was about women's tea practice.

Although it is difficult to say how widely *Toji no tamoto* was read, certainly, its immediate audience was limited to those within the Sekishû school who had an interest in women's tea practice. Nevertheless, because of the structure of the school, having many semi-autonomous branches rather than a powerful center, the Sekishû school spread throughout Japan. A text such as *Toji no tamoto* could thus have reached a wide audience. We know that there are at least three extant hand written copies of the original text, today held in Kyoto, Ehime and Tokyo.<sup>314</sup> Whether *Toji no tamoto* made its way to

<sup>313</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 100-103.

<sup>314</sup> These are held at the National Diet Library, Tokyo; the Imabari City Kawano Art Museum, Ehime Prefecture; and the Urasenke Konnichian Library, Kyoto.

these different regions of Japan in the eighteenth century, however, is unclear. The text certainly would have made its way from Osaka to Echigo at that time, in the hands of Shôô's visitor. It was also circulated throughout the next century, with a copy making it into the hands of Ii Naosuke, probably whilst he was in Edo, in the 1850s, as will be discussed further in Chapter Five. Naosuke then circulated an abridged, revised version of the text among the women at Hikone castle. It was quite common for information on specialised subjects, such as women's tea practice, or books on medicine written in Dutch, to be shared among interested parties through the circulation of manuscripts among a network of scholars.<sup>315</sup> We can imagine that *Toji no tamoto* was circulated among a network of tea masters and practitioners affiliated with the Sekishû school. Manuscripts were also used to disseminate information that was unable to be commercially published due to censorship. In cases where it was desirable to keep knowledge secret or limited to a select audience, then manuscripts were also favoured over woodblock printing.<sup>316</sup> This may have been the case with *Toji no tamoto*, as tea masters often considered their work to be passing on secret traditions (秘伝 *hiden*) and did not want it to be accessed by those outside of their school.

### A Handbook for Women's Tea

In many respects, the information presented in *Toji no tamoto* differs little from that presented in other tea texts of the time, such as *Gyakuryû gendan*, indicating that on the whole the actual method of preparing and serving tea as a host, and of receiving and drinking tea as a guest was the same for women and men. There are, however, some unique instructions for women to follow. It is these aspects of the text that constitute a discourse on women's tea practice. Thus, the focus here will be on these sections of *Toji no tamoto*. A large portion of the first volume of *Toji no tamoto* is devoted to explaining the placement of utensils in the room with accompanying diagrams (Figures 1-4). This volume also contains information for guests at a tea gathering. The second volume covers the role of the host, including serving the *kaiseki* meal, how to lay the charcoal,

<sup>315</sup> See Terrence Jackson, 'Invisible College, Visible Community: Book Circulation and Community Formation among *Rangaku* Scholars in Tokugawa Japan', paper presented at the Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting 2008.

<sup>316</sup> On manuscript culture in early modern Japan see Peter Kornicki, 'Manuscript, not Print: Scribal Culture in the Edo Period', *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 32:1 (2006), pp. 23-52.

how to make thick and thin tea and so forth. Most of the instructions and explanations given are no different from those in tea manuals for men. For example, the instructions on how to prepare thin tea include all of the basic information one would expect in a handbook for tea, such as where to place the utensils, the order in which to wipe them and the method for scooping tea from the tea caddy into the tea bowl, ladling hot water from the kettle into the tea bowl, whisking the tea and presenting it to the guests.<sup>317</sup>

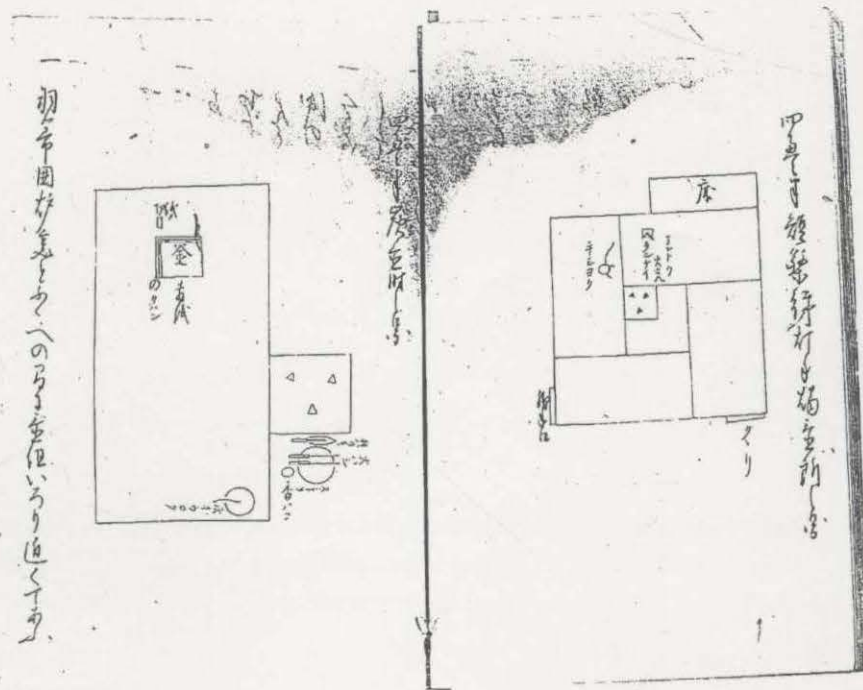


Figure 23: Positions for placing the oil lamp, paper-enclosed oil lamp and candlestick in the four and a half mat tea room (四畳半短檠行燈手燭置所之図 *yojôhan tankei andon teshoku chishô no zu*). Ôguchi Shôdô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721).<sup>318</sup>

<sup>317</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 213.

<sup>318</sup> Image source: Ôguchi Shôdô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721), Imabari City Kawano Art Museum, Ehime Prefecture. These diagrams are also reprinted in Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* vol 2: *Sekishû kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), p. 191.



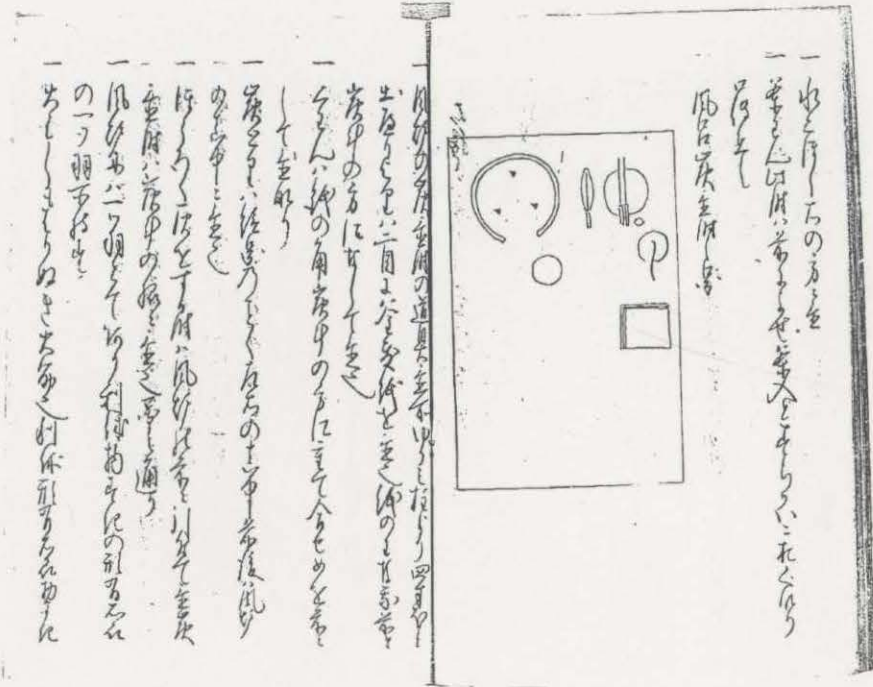


Figure 25: Utensils for use in laying charcoal during the summer season (風炉炭置時の図 *furo sumi chiji no zu*). Ôguchi Shôô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721).<sup>320</sup>

<sup>320</sup> Image source: Ôguchi Shôô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721), Imabari City Kawano Art Museum, Ehime Prefecture. This diagram is also reprinted in Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishû ryû vol 2: Sekishû kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), p. 198.

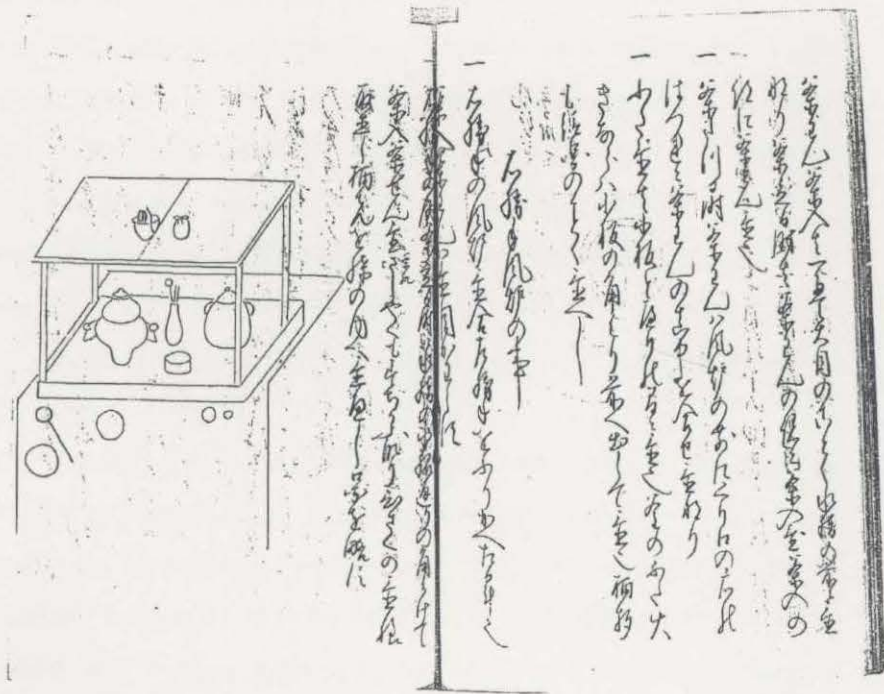


Figure 26: Arrangement of utensils on a stand 台子手前の☒ *daisu temae no zu* .  
 Ôguchi Shôô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721).<sup>321</sup>

Instructions which specifically state a different or somewhat altered procedure for women evidence a concern for elegance and propriety. For example, when women are making tea, 'it is not good to stand up in the tearoom continually and carry in utensils'.<sup>322</sup> Rather, they should have the utensils set up on a utensil stand.<sup>323</sup> Thus we see the importance of utensil stands for women's tea; using one allows them to have all of the utensils in place so they do not have to stand up and carry in utensils in front of the guests which may not be elegant. In another example, before passing a bowl to another guest, the lip of the bowl must be wiped clean, but 'a woman should not wipe the lip of the bowl

<sup>321</sup> Image source: Ôguchi Shôô, *Toji no tamoto* (1721), Imabari City Kawano Art Museum, Ehime Prefecture. This diagram is also reprinted in Nomura Zuiten, *Teihon Sekishû ryû* vol 2: *Sekishû kei chajin* (Tokyo: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985), p. 199.

<sup>322</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 191.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid*, p. 191.



with her hand, it is best to take out paper from your pocket and wipe it with that'.<sup>324</sup> In both cases it seems to be a concern for women to appear elegant which governs the particular instructions and only minor adjustments to regular procedures need to be made. The instructions on wiping the lip of the bowl, as well those for eating, are governed by general rules of etiquette, rather than being specific to tea. It may be that Shôh intended the text to be a general guide on morals and proper conduct for women, as well as a handbook on tea. We also see the articulation here, for the first time, of a specifically feminine discourse on tea. Tea culture was being adapted to fit with established social norms of feminine behaviour.

The inclusion of instructions on eating and manners further suggest that learning tea was part of a broader civilizing process. As Norbert Elias has shown, manners and etiquette relating to eating were a particularly important part of the 'civilising process' in medieval and early modern Europe, for both the military class of knights and, gradually, the lower classes.<sup>325</sup> Similarly, in early modern Japan the military class of the samurai were civilized according to the standards of the court aristocracy. These modes of behaviour and manners were then disseminated to commoners in the latter part of the period. Thus, *Toji no tamoto* included explanations of manners and etiquette for eating the *kaiseki* meal which served to disseminate the elite standards of the day to samurai women, particularly those at the lower end of this status group and perhaps those living in more remote areas (such as Echigo) who were not privy to the latest fashions at the imperial court or in Edo. Ôguchi instructs his readers that,

In the old days, it was good to take hot water and clean the dish completely, not leaving anything remaining, when you had finished eating what had been served. Having said this, even if there is something left it is acceptable. Rather than eating everything reluctantly, it is best not to pick it up with your chopsticks from the start. If you do not finish eating something, place the lid on the dish without anyone seeing; this is considerate and looks gracious. Until the time of Furuta Oribe, any remains were cleaned with hot water in this way. But [these days] you should not pour hot water into a dish which you have eaten from completely, this is particularly something women should refrain from doing.<sup>326</sup>

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>325</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994).

<sup>326</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 206.

'Table manners' had changed over time and the current standards of politeness and refinement had to be taught to samurai women. Tea was a vehicle for teaching such elite manners. It is also of note that we find, as we do time and time again in *Toji no tamoto*, that women are cautioned to be more refined in their behaviour than men.

Modesty is a major theme in *Toji no tamoto*. In an introductory discussion of some of the famous women of the past, like Murasaki Shikibu, Shôô recounts the story of how Muasaki learnt classical Chinese (漢文 *kanbun*) by overhearing her older brother's lessons, but still pretended she could not read Chinese in public.<sup>327</sup> The lesson is that even if a woman has knowledge and talent, she should not show it off. Shôô feels that the women of his day did unfortunately show off.<sup>328</sup> In regards to tea then, 'it is desirable for women's tea to seem as though it is lacking something; the impression should not be perfect'.<sup>329</sup> Shôô then goes on to say that 'from looking at you people can see if you know tea or not'.<sup>330</sup> This highlights the importance of learning etiquette and deportment through tea because it influences the way that people see you. Many of these themes and ideas would subsequently be promoted to commoner women in guides for women's edification.

Shôô gives his readers several examples to follow, one of which is the story of Keikyô. An old man happened to go to her house when her husband was not home. Seeing that the man was very thirsty Keikyô laid charcoal and served him tea. The old man thought she was a wonderful woman.<sup>331</sup> The lesson for readers to learn from this story, and the other similar examples given, is that a woman should know how to do tea but be modest about it. She should not go out into the world showing off her knowledge, but if the occasion arises when it would be appropriate to do tea, she should be prepared to do so. This story has similarities to one of the Yoshino stories presented in Chapter One, indicating that this was perhaps not an uncommon theme in the Edo period.

We also get a sense of the quiet demeanour which is expected of women when Shôô recounts the saying that 'hen's do not cry in the morning, so if one does, then bad things will happen to your house' and like this, 'if a woman talks too much then bad

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid*, p. 190.

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid*, p. 190.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid*, p. 190.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid*, p. 191.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid*, p. 190.

things will happen to your house'.<sup>332</sup> A Lady Konoe, we are told, once said that 'she who does not use many words and is amiable is the best woman'.<sup>333</sup> Women must also be modest in their dress. The appropriate clothing for women to wear in the tearoom, it is suggested, is a five layered kimono (五つ重ね *itsutsu gasane*) for women of the imperial palace; *kaidori* (かいどり a kind of *uchikake* worn by lower ranking court officials and samurai women) for samurai women, or for those samurai women of slightly lower standing just an ordinary *uchikake* (打ちかけ a long outer robe worn over a kimono) is fine. 'Even young women', he says, 'should not wear fancy clothes', once again highlighting the importance of modesty.<sup>334</sup> In confining his description of appropriate clothing for women to those of the imperial palace and samurai status, Shôô clearly indicates who his intended audience is. As the Sekishû school was predominantly practised by those of samurai status, this is not surprising. Yet, even within this elite group status distinctions are made with reference to clothing, indicating that the issue of status was ever present in the tearoom, and that status distinctions amongst women were often as important as gender distinctions between men and women.

Shôô cautions the inexperienced that, whilst they must prepare themselves properly before attending a tea gathering, when it comes to the actual event they 'should leave things to those who are experienced' and 'this', he says, 'women must learn'.<sup>335</sup> This statement indicates that, despite his claims in the conclusion that aside from physical difference men and women are the same, Shôô envisioned a subordinate role for women within the world of tea – it is implied that the 'experts' were men. Indeed, the notion that women should appear to be ignorant is found repeatedly throughout *Toji no tamoto*. For example, when discussing the placement of the kettle, Shôô says that you should have an experienced person check it and fix the positioning if it is unbalanced. 'A beginner should act as though they know nothing if the kettle is unbalanced. All the more so, a woman should appear to know nothing'.<sup>336</sup> Thus, among male practitioners there is a division between those who are experienced and beginners, while for women no such

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid*, p. 204.

<sup>333</sup> *Ibid*, p. 204.

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid*, p. 202. The instructions for men are that they should shave, do their hair, bathe and cut their nails.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid*, p. 202.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid*, p. 205.

division seems to exist. Women are always to appear ignorant, as though they were a beginner. Similarly, in the context of putting out the utensils for display, he says that 'women should not show their intentions'.<sup>337</sup> That is to say, women should not act with great purpose or appear confident, even if they know what they are doing.

In *Toji no tamoto* Shôô must deal with various issues that arise when women participate in tea. Some are dealt with quite easily, as in the examples discussed above of how women can adapt procedures so as to appear elegant. Others are a little more complex. On the subject of how the order of seating among guests is to be determined, Shôô explains that generally the most experienced people will take the positions of first and last guest, with beginners seated in between so that they can either follow the lead of the first guest or leave things to the last guest. When women are guests, the order in which to seat them should be 'determined by their husband's court rank (爵 *shaku*)' (*otto no shaku ni shitagau*), as 'women have no court rank' (*fujin wa shaku nashi*).<sup>338</sup> Again, the reference to court ranks indicates the high status of his intended audience.<sup>339</sup> This rule, Shôô says, is based on the Book of Rites. 'If the man is of high position, or if he is lowly, then so too will she be, and this goes for the order of seating too'.<sup>340</sup> Another consideration is the husband's age. 'If the man is of advanced age then the wife should be seated higher, and the wife of a younger man seated lower'.<sup>341</sup> In the case of an unmarried woman, her own age is considered, with older women being seated higher. Or, her father's position can be considered, so that regardless of age it is possible to determine the seating positions of unmarried women.<sup>342</sup>

Gender and status are also considerations for the host when greeting guests. As a general rule the host should greet the guests in the garden and then open the side gate a little. However, 'it is generally not good for women to go out and greet guests' (*fujin daitai wa mukaeni deru koto ashikarubeshi*). Rather, 'they should send a servant to

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid*, p. 211.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid*, p. 203.

<sup>339</sup> We also see that women are situated somewhat outside of the status system. This will be discussed further in the following chapter.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid*, p. 203. While the notion of determining the seating order of guests by their social status or court rank may seem to be at odds with the supposedly egalitarian ideals of tea, in the context of the Edo period and in the Sekishû school in particular, popular as it was among daimyô, the maintenance of status distinctions inside the tea room was important. There was thus an inherent conflict between the ideals of tea and accommodation to socio-political realities. Ii Naosuke, for one, had a different opinion to Shôô on this matter, which will be discussed in Chapter Five.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid*, p. 203.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid*, p. 203.

welcome them'.<sup>343</sup> Yet, 'this also depends on the social position (品 *hin*) of the host and guest' (*teishu kyaku no hin ni yorubeshi*).<sup>344</sup> That is to say, there may be occasions when either the status of the guests or of the female host makes it appropriate for her to greet the guests herself.

Another issue that needs attention is how to deal with the close physical proximity of men and women in a tearoom. This issue is first addressed in relation to the *kaiseki* meal. 'When passing a side dish to a woman, if the host is male then he does not have to hand it to her directly. If the guest is male and the host female, then it is needless for her to pass it to him by hand'.<sup>345</sup> The same holds for passing the tea bowl among guests, 'a woman must not pass a tea bowl to a man by hand, it should also be placed down [on the *tatami*]',<sup>346</sup> This injunction against male-female intimacy is developed further in the second part of the book. 'Women, both young and old, cannot invite a man on his own [to a tea gathering]. Men also cannot invite a woman on her own'.<sup>347</sup> This, he says, is so that they avoid arousing people's suspicions. Shôô quotes the Chinese saying 'do not adjust your shoes in a melon field and do not tidy your hat under the plum trees' (so as to avoid suspicion that you are stealing), and the saying that 'women going out at night should carry a torchlight' (so that they can be seen) to emphasize this point.<sup>348</sup> General lessons on morality and good behaviour are thus included alongside specific rules for tea, which in this case are aimed at avoiding potentially inappropriate situations.

The connection between learning tea and proper conduct is made explicit by Shôô in a passage that begins with two poems often used to describe the concept of *wabi*.<sup>349</sup> The first, by Fujiwara no Teika, was selected by Takeno Jôô as representative of *wabi*:

*Miwataseba  
Hana mo momiji mo  
Nakarikeri  
Ura no tomoya no  
Aki no yûgure.*

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>344</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 205.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 208.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217.

<sup>348</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 217-218.

<sup>349</sup> For example, see Yagi Ichio, 'Uta-mei: The Poetic Names of Tea Utensils', translated and adapted by Hiroaki Sato, *Chanoyu Quarterly: Tea and the Arts of Japan* 83 (1996), p. 17-18; and Haga Kôshirô, 'The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages', translated and adapted by Martin Collcutt, in Varley and Kumakura (eds), *Tea in Japan*, pp. 199-200.

Looking about  
 Neither flowers  
 Nor scarlet leaves,  
 A bayside reed hovel  
 In the autumn dusk.<sup>350</sup>

The second poem, by Fujiwara no Ietaka, was selected by Rikyū:

*Hana o nomi*  
*Matsuran hito ni*  
*Yamazato no*  
*Yukima no kusa mo*  
*Haru o misebaya.*

To those who wait  
 Only for flowers,  
 Show them a spring  
 Of grass amid the snow  
 In a mountain village.<sup>351</sup>

For Shōhō too these poems encapsulate the essence of tea. Just as importantly, though, they act as a guide for correct behaviour:

Women, in particular, will behave with modesty if they take these poems to heart: from their hair, to their clothes and manner of speaking. Those who put on a showy front will capture men's hearts and have the love of others for the time being, but will eventually lose that love and be abandoned strikingly. Women who put their hearts into tea even a little will not be showy [but] will possess natural dignity. This is ideal. Even if it is a small matter, they will not be doubted by others and thought badly of. Even if they are not particularly good at tea, they will be in line with the Way of Tea.<sup>352</sup>

Thus, it is in line with the *wabi* spirit of tea that women should be modest in all aspects of their appearance and demeanour. While men, of course, are also expected to behave in accord with the *wabi* spirit of tea, we detect in *Toji no tamoto* that women must be even more modest and humble in their attitude. Repeatedly, Shōhō indicates that the general

<sup>350</sup> The original poem is included in the *Shin-Kokin Shū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times), compiled in 1206. Cited, with English translation by Martin Collcutt, in Haga, 'The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages', p. 199.

<sup>351</sup> The original poem is included in the *Shin-Kokin Shū* (New Collection of Ancient and Modern Times), compiled in 1206. Cited, with English translation by Martin Collcutt, in Haga, 'The *Wabi* Aesthetic through the Ages', p. 200.

<sup>352</sup> Ōguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishū ryū*, p. 220.

instructions alone are not enough for women; they must be more conscious of not showing their knowledge and more cautious to behave properly and be morally virtuous.

In the conclusion Shôô returns to the theme of women's ability to follow the Way. In his view 'women also have the will to follow the Way of Tea to the end, and are no different from men' in this capacity.<sup>353</sup> This is because 'the fundamental laws of Buddha are possessed by both men and women'.<sup>354</sup> It is just the 'physical form' that is different.<sup>355</sup> He is thus indicating that, in his view, there was some level of equality between men and women. We know that not all tea masters felt this way, with Sugiki Fusai for one banning women from studying tea. As will be discussed in the next chapter, in sections on tea in guides for women's edification, which began to appear from the mid-eighteenth century, it was often said that women need only know the basics of how to make thin tea and how to be a guest for the thick tea service, which suggests that these authors did not think women had the same capacity as men to follow the Way, or the need to do so. In this light Shôô's comments stand out as unique.

In other contexts, though, we also find arguments for what we might call 'gender equality'. Masuho Zankô (増穂残口 1665-1742), for example, said that 'in celebrating our harmonious union of yin and yang and the divine transformation, men and women are on the same level with no distinction of high and low, superior and inferior. To think of women as men's slaves or to expect them to follow men in all matters is a delusion based on Chinese manners and is a deviation from our country's Way'.<sup>356</sup> Generally, those who claimed some level of equality between men and women, Andô Shôeki was another, were writing in an anti-Confucian/anti-Chinese context. Zankô, for example, was a Shintoist.<sup>357</sup>

In Shôô's case, however, he does not appear to have been anti-Confucian. On the contrary, he cites Confucian texts such as *The Book of Rites*, refers to the sage Mencius, and makes some statements that do appear to adhere to Confucian thinking about women.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>356</sup> Masuho Zankô, *Kamiji no tebigigusa*. Reprinted in Taira Shigemichi (ed), *Nihon shisô taikai*, 39: *Kinsei shintô ron* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1927), p. 214. Translated in Peter Nosco, 'Masuho Zankô (1665-1742): A Shinto Popularizer between Nativism and National Learning', in Peter Nosco (ed), *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), p. 180. Nosco cites the title as *Shinro no tebigigusa*.

<sup>357</sup> See Nosco, 'Masuho Zankô', pp. 166-187.

In fact, despite his claims that men and women are essentially equal, the overall impression given by him is that women must be more modest than men, and there are hints that he did not anticipate an equal role for women in the tea world. That is, while women may have had the same capacity to learn tea, that did not mean they had the same role to play, or the same right to display their knowledge and skills as men. For Shôô, the Way of Tea is also related to the Way of Poetry, Shinto, and Buddhism.<sup>358</sup> 'Tea', he says, 'is a path of Zen enlightenment without words'.<sup>359</sup> The seeming inconsistencies on the status of women in relation to men in *Toji no tamoto* may be a reflection of the fact that Shôô was influenced by multiple ideologies: Confucianism, Shinto and Zen Buddhism. More broadly, it reflects the complexity of gender ideology in the Edo period, which ranged from the conservative and patriarchal views expressed in a text like *Onna daigaku* to the more liberal views of Ando Shôeki. Many scholars and intellectuals fell somewhere in between, and it was not uncommon for them to espouse ideas on gender that seem inconsistent by modern standards.<sup>360</sup> Further, making reference to multiple ideologies, as Shôô did, does not necessarily indicate adherence to any or all of those ideologies. Rather, it may have been a rhetorical device, employed by the author to appeal to the myriad sensibilities of his audience, or to pre-emptively counteract potential criticisms.

In his conclusion, Shôô returns to the issue of morality: 'If women are not prepared against suspicion and just enjoy tea as an amusement, they will not escape people's slander and the path will be very heavy with criticism of [their] indiscretions'.<sup>361</sup> He is very wary of potential criticism of women's tea practice, the suggestion being that participating in tea may somehow lead to immoral behaviour by women. To what extent such attitudes were prevalent is, of course, difficult to know, but Shôô certainly felt that he had to address such concerns. *Toji no tamoto* may be seen then as a way in which one tea master was attempting to come to terms with the implications of women's tea practice. If women were already studying tea, which they certainly were when Shôô wrote *Toji no tamoto*, then it was necessary to develop a discourse which supported this

<sup>358</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 223.

<sup>359</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>360</sup> See, for example, the discussion on gender discourse in Bettina Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking Like a Man: Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825)* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 173-208.

<sup>361</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 223.



while making sure women were guided along the right path, hence the focus on morality and modesty. Even as he advocated women's tea practice, Shôô's keenness to ensure that women who studied tea maintained the highest moral standards suggests a lingering sense of unease about the task that had been requested of him. The final sentence of *Toji no tamoto* is particularly revealing in this regard. Shôô says that in encouraging women to enjoy tea thoroughly he is leaving himself open to the possibility of slander and may be considered a sinner, so he feels he must be cautious.<sup>362</sup> It would appear then, that there was still not wholesale acceptance of women's tea practice in the early eighteenth century, even though women had been practicing tea for some time. The view held by his friend that 'women should not do tea' was perhaps in the back of Shôô's mind as he wrote a text which said they should.

### Conclusion

By focusing on moral guidance and modesty in *Toji no tamoto*, Ôguchi Shôô developed a distinctively feminine discourse on tea. Significantly, this discourse presented a strong and clear argument in favour of women's tea practice, stating that women have the same capacity for following the Way as men and providing guidelines for women to participate in tea gatherings as both hosts and guests. As Shôô himself says, there were no writings on women's tea at the time he wrote *Toji no tamoto*. Yet, it is clear that he was not establishing a tradition of women practising tea, but rather, a tradition of writing about their practice. Women of the imperial family, such as Tôfukumon'in and Shinanomiya, had been active in tea in the late seventeenth century. Records of tea gatherings also show that aristocratic and high-ranking samurai women were participating in tea at this time. *Toji no tamoto* is clearly directed at such women. By the early eighteenth century, tea was an established social and cultural activity among elite women, despite the reservations still held by some. *Toji no tamoto* can be seen as a reflection of this. It may also have led to the further spread of women's tea by sanctioning it, as it were.

Thus, alongside published texts such as *Chadô zensho*, privately produced and circulated manuscripts like *Toji no tamoto* helped to popularise tea among an even wider

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<sup>362</sup> *Ibid*, p. 223.

audience. Whilst general tea texts were influential in the spread of tea among a new status group, that is commoners, *Toji no tamoto* contributed to the spread of tea among a new group within the already dominant status group in the tea world: women of the court aristocracy and samurai status groups. It was not until later in the eighteenth century that women of the lower, commoner, status group would also become the subject and audience of the discourse on women's tea. This discourse was not confined merely to the basics of making, serving and drinking tea. It was part of a process in which the manners, behaviour and morals of a small elite became the standard for others to aspire and adhere to; a model of genteel femininity was being created and disseminated. In *Toji no tamoto* it was women of samurai status who were the target audience of this civilizing mission. We will see in the next chapter that commoner women – as had commoner men before them – later became the focus of both this discourse and civilising process.

## Chapter Four: A Popular Discourse on Women's Tea

From the mid-eighteenth century the discourse on women's tea, which had begun earlier that century with *Toji no tamoto*, rapidly developed and expanded in scale. No longer confined to private circulation in manuscript form, the discourse was found instead within the pages of guides for women's edification, which were a burgeoning genre at this time. These guides were commercially produced texts, which had a potentially wide audience, mostly among those of wealthy commoner status. The discourse on women's tea was thus not limited exclusively to those of elite status, but became popularly disseminated and consumed. In the period when the tea schools were attempting to gain increasing control over all aspects of tea culture, including book production, we see in these texts evidence of the popularisation of tea outside of the parameters set by the schools.

The eighteenth century saw the institutionalisation and popularisation of tea culture. These two developments were linked, with new training and licensing systems put in place by the schools allowing for even greater growth. This process, as Robert Kramer has discussed, has striking parallels to what Eric Hobsbawm has observed on the transformation of sport culture in late nineteenth century Britain:

This institutionalisation provided a public show-case for sport...and a mechanism for extending activities hitherto confined to the aristocracy and rich bourgeoisie able to assimilate its life-styles to a widening range of the 'middle classes'...it provided a mechanism for bringing together persons of an equivalent social status otherwise lacking organic social or economic links, and perhaps above all for providing a new role for bourgeois women.<sup>363</sup>

Kramer suggests that, 'with the exception of the "role for bourgeois women", tea culture was similarly transformed from an elite to popular pastime.'<sup>364</sup>

This chapter will show that wealthy commoner women can also be included in an analysis of the popularisation of tea culture in eighteenth and nineteenth century Japan. However, it would appear that the spread of tea among commoner women did not occur directly as a result of policies put in place by the tea schools, or at their behest, unlike in

<sup>363</sup> Robert Kramer, 'The Tea Cult in History', Ph.D. dissertation, (University of Chicago, 1985), p. 101. Citing Eric Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914', in Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger (ed), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 298 -299.

<sup>364</sup> Kramer, 'The Tea Cult in History', p. 101.

the modern period. Rather, we see that tea was promoted to women as an art with which they should be familiar in guides for women's edification, which had no connection to the tea schools. There were three main reasons given for why women should study tea in these guides: it was essential knowledge for those wishing to be up-to-date with the latest social customs; they would learn to be graceful; and it was useful preparation for going into service in an elite household. Wealthy commoner women thus learnt tea in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for similar reasons to women in modern Japan; learning tea was a way of learning manners, deportment, and etiquette. The underlying intention was to acquire the appearance of genteel femininity, associated with those of higher status.

### Tea Culture, Gender and Status

As discussed in the previous chapter, tea had become popular among wealthy commoners seeking to comport themselves in the manner of the elite from the seventeenth century. Among the arts of play of early modern Japan, tea was particularly suitable to those wishing to elevate their status through appearing refined and graceful. In an examination of the popular Ogasawara school of etiquette and manners, Eiko Ikegami notes that 'the deployment of the body in acknowledging and expressing status differences was the most basic principle in Tokugawa manners'.<sup>365</sup> Tea was one way of training the body as *temae* is learnt through repetition of set body movements. Students would learn to control their body so as to appear graceful and elegant in each action they undertook. Students would also learn how to deploy their body to express status difference through actions such as bowing. Though in the popular perception of tea it is thought that status distinctions have no place inside the tearoom, in the Edo period preserving status distinctions was very much a part of tea culture, as seen in *Toji no tamoto*. Thus, two purposes were achieved through studying tea: a student learnt to control the body so as to appear elegant and graceful, and to express status difference in interactions with others. It was therefore an appealing pastime to take up for upwardly mobile commoners wishing to increase their social status through their appearance. Indeed, tea had long been an art used by social climbers to demonstrate their new

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<sup>365</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 332.

standing in society. The great unifier Hideyoshi, who rose from humble origins as the son of a farmer to become the military ruler of Japan, famously employed tea and Sen no Rikyū in his quest to become cultured and 'pursue legitimacy'.<sup>366</sup>

Tea's usefulness as a means of expressing one's status can be understood by using the concepts of Pierre Bourdieu, specifically by looking at tea practice as both a form of 'symbolic capital' and as a form of 'cultural capital'.<sup>367</sup> Symbolic capital arises from the prestige which tea has as an activity of the social elite; cultural capital arises from the knowledge and skills acquired by a tea practitioner, which allows them to communicate and interact through a specific code rendered un-meaningful and un-intelligible to outsiders. As Bourdieu has suggested, symbolic capital becomes particularly important when economic capital is not recognised.<sup>368</sup> In early modern Japan economic capital, while significant, was not recognised formally or institutionally as the most important form of capital accumulation. Symbolic capital thus took on particular significance for those who wished to deny the importance of the economic capital of others. It also served as a form of capital accumulation for those whose economic capital went unrecognised. As Etsuko Kato puts it, '*temae* has always been a means for nondominant groups to obtain symbolic-cultural capital, because *temae* enabled relatively disadvantaged but ambitious groups to acquire a type of self-discipline [of the body and mind] usually associated with socially superordinate groups'.<sup>369</sup> While Kato sights women as one of the 'nondominant groups' who have used tea to increase their social standing, she sees this as a modern, and predominantly post-war, phenomenon. Evidence from guides for women's edification suggests that this was a phenomenon that began to occur from at least the mid-eighteenth century.

<sup>366</sup> See Paul Varley and George Elison, 'The Culture of Tea: from its origins to Sen no Rikyū', in George Elison and Bardwell Smith (ed), *Warlords, Artists and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1981), pp. 212-222; George Elison, 'Hideyoshi: the bountiful minister', in George Elison and Bardwell Smith (ed), *Warlords, Artists and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1981), pp. 233-241; Mary Elizabeth Berry, *Hideyoshi*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), particularly pp. 189-191; and Theodore M. Ludwig, 'Chanoyu and Momoyama: Conflict and Transformation in Rikyū's Art', in Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao (eds), *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989), pp. 71-100.

<sup>367</sup> See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), pp. 112-120; and *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1984), pp. 1-3.

<sup>368</sup> Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, p. 118.

<sup>369</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 4.

Despite the apparently fixed nature of the official hereditary status system (身分制 *mibunsei*), which placed the imperial aristocracy and samurai at the top above commoners, upward social mobility became a distinct possibility for those commoners who achieved financial prosperity. This was rarely, however, upward social mobility in the sense of actually crossing the boundaries from one status to another. There was a distinction between material and social mobility, with the accumulation of material wealth not having the same impact on social status that it would in a society not bound by officially prescribed status distinctions. Rather than raising their official status, commoners generally heightened their standing within the group to which they already belonged. Thus, within the status group of commoners, a new stratum of a wealthy, cultured elite arose, who through the deployment of their economic capital, were able to acquire the sort of symbolic and cultural capital which had previously been the sole preserve of the court aristocracy and samurai. Whilst, in official socio-political terms, the old elite remained at the top of the social ladder, in some areas, the *nouveaux riches* overtook them, as arbiters of social taste and connoisseurship, for example.

The position of women within the status system, though, was less clearly defined than for men. Because of the gendered nature of status, being assigned as it was to units of organization such as households usually headed by men, it was easier for women to move around within the system.<sup>370</sup> Marriage, in particular, provided women with an opportunity for upward social mobility – in the true sense of moving from one status group to another – in early modern Japan which was not so readily available to men (although the practice of adopting sons-in-law also provided men with this opportunity). Therefore, parents were willing to invest in their daughters' education in the hope that it may pay dividends in the form of a good marriage. Though the status of a woman's natal household was not directly affected by her upward rise in status through marriage, there were indirect benefits, such as access to goods and services and acquiring prestige within

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<sup>370</sup> David Howell, *Geographies of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 27. The gendered nature of status is evidenced in *Toji no tamoto*, as discussed in Chapter Three, which stated that 'women have no rank' and therefore the order in which to seat them at a tea gathering should be 'determined by their husband's court rank'. Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 203.

the local community.<sup>371</sup> We will see that the guides for women's edification were sources of information on elite practices and tastes for wealthy commoner women. They evidence a thirst for knowledge about the lifestyles of the elite among commoner women, and the existence of a market which catered to this by presenting upward social mobility as something to aspire to.

### Women as Readers and Consumers

Before going on to discuss the presentation of tea in these guides, it is first necessary to discuss the role of women as readers and consumers of such texts, including the issue of women's literacy. Women formed part of the new readership of consumers and cultural producers who were targeted by commercial publishers. It is thought that women may even have been the main purchasers of books for the home from the mobile lending libraries.<sup>372</sup> Women may also have been involved in the early modern publishing industry, as copyists, publishers and booksellers.<sup>373</sup> A testament to the existence of a large female reading public is the proliferation of texts for women and debates among intellectuals on what constituted suitable reading for them.<sup>374</sup> Indeed, a new category of 'women's books' (女書 *joshonyosho*) entered the booksellers' catalogues in 1670,<sup>375</sup> 'a development that bespeaks professional recognition of a new class of reader, if not purchaser, and identification of certain types of books as appropriate for women'.<sup>376</sup>

Coinciding with the commercial publishing boom discussed in the previous chapter was an increase in women's education, with women studying and teaching at private academies (私塾 *shijuku*) and temple schools (寺子屋 *terakoya*), as well as in the home.<sup>377</sup> It is estimated that during the eighteenth century there were two or three such

<sup>371</sup> For example, see Anne Walthall's discussion of the positive benefits for Yoshino Michi's parents, both during her time in service and after her marriage to a samurai, in 'From Peasant Daughter to Samurai Wife: The letters of Yoshino Michi', *The Annual Report of the Institute for International Studies, Meiji Gakuin*, no. 8 (December 2005), pp. 99-102.

<sup>372</sup> Andrew Gerstle, *Kinsei enpon shiryō shūsei IV: Tsukioka Settei 1 Onnashimegawa oeshi-bumi* (Kyoto: International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2007), p. 127.

<sup>373</sup> See Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, pp. 178-179.

<sup>374</sup> On the second issue see Peter Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women?', *Genji Monogatari and Ise Monogatari in Late Seventeenth-Century Japan*, *Monumenta Nipponica*, 60:2 (Summer, 2005), pp. 147-193.

<sup>375</sup> Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 160. Citing Shorin Shuppan, (*Edo jidai*) *Shorin shuppan shojaku mokuroku shūsei*, (Tokyo: Shidō Bunko, 1962-1964), volume 1, p. 100.

<sup>376</sup> Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 160.

<sup>377</sup> Sugano Noriko, 'Terakoya to onna shishō: Edo kara meiji e', in Ishizaki Shōko and Shiomi Minako (eds), *Nihon joseishi ronshū*, volume 8: *Kyōiku to shisō*, (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1998) pp. 140-158.

temple schools in every ward (町 *machi*) in Edo, where middle and lower class commoner women could go to learn reading and writing. Further, about one in three of these schools had a female teacher, often a commoner or the wife of a masterless samurai (浪人 *rônin*).<sup>378</sup> Female tutors were also hired to teach young girls in the home from at least the late seventeenth-century.<sup>379</sup> This growth in women's education can be linked to the economic growth of the period. As commoners became financially stable and even prosperous, families were able to invest in the education of daughters.

In general, the rationale for women's education differed from that of men's, which was intellectually oriented. A woman's education was intended to provide her with the skills to manage her domestic and social responsibilities after marriage, and potentially, to raise her social status and that of her family by marrying upwards. Women also played important roles in the early modern political economy, often contributing their labour to a family-run business in the case of merchants, but possibly also by engaging in paid work outside the home. Texts such as *Onna Chôhōki* (女重宝記 A Record of Treasures for Women, 1692) and *Onna daigaku takara bako* (女大学宝箱 A Treasure Chest of Greater Learning for Women, 1716), show that women were employed in all sorts of occupations, from prostitution, to farming, fishing, spinning, weaving and sewing, and working in service as attendants, wet nurses and cooks, to name but a few.<sup>380</sup> Education was necessary to prepare girls not just for future roles as household managers, but for many of the occupations women took on. Access to education was of course determined by geography and family circumstances. Girls in Edo, Kyoto and Osaka were far more likely than those in regional areas to attend school, and girls from wealthy families were far more likely to have a private tutor come to their home than girls from a poor family.

One result of both the publishing boom and the growth in education was a rise in literacy levels among women. As Richard Rubinger has discussed, though, literacy could mean different things in the context of early modern Japan, from merely the ability to

<sup>378</sup> Tamiko Seki, *Edo kôki no joseitachi* (Tokyo: Aki Shobo, 1980), pp. 36-37.

<sup>379</sup> Scholars such as Yamaga Sokô (1622-1685) and Nakamura Tekisai (1629-1702) referred to this practice. See Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', pp. 157-159.

<sup>380</sup> Yokota Fuyuhiko, 'Imagining Working Women in Early Modern Japan', trans. Mariko Asano Tamanoi, in Tonomura, Walthall and Wakita (ed), *Women and Class in Japanese History*, (Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1999), pp. 153-167.



write one's own name, through to the ability to read government documents and conduct commercial transactions written in complicated, epistolary style hybrid Sino-Japanese (候文 *sôrôbun*).<sup>381</sup> For the purposes of reading the guides discussed below, being literate in the phonetic *kana* script would suffice, as Chinese characters were used sparingly and, when used, were glossed with *kana*. That is, functional literacy for our purposes here, means being *kana* literate. As Rubinger has suggested in regards to agricultural manuals, 'the *kana* glosses made these works ideal for oral presentation, enabling the content to be communicated with only *kana* literacy to those who could not read the phonetic script themselves'.<sup>382</sup> The use of illustrations would also assist in the dissemination of information to those whose literacy level fell below that needed to read the text. To make a comparison with the agricultural manuals discussed by Rubinger again, he notes that 'in terms of the dissemination of agricultural information and technology, it does not matter much whether "ordinary farmers" actually read the books themselves or had the books read to them'.<sup>383</sup> This also holds true for women and the dissemination of information about tea. However, it may still be useful to consider the issue of women's literacy with regard to the guides to be discussed below.

Evidence, though much of it anecdotal, indicates that reasonable numbers of women, including those from both samurai and commoner, and urban and rural backgrounds, were *kana* literate in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when these guides were published. Indeed, many of the guides themselves feature sections on reading and writing.<sup>384</sup> For example, *Joyô fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Lives and Happiness, 1774, 1785), which will be discussed below, has a section on 'essential sentences for women' (女要文章福寿台 *Joyô bunshô fuku judai*), and above there is an image of a young girl about to begin practising writing characters whilst an older girl sits opposite her with an open book on the floor in front of her (Figure 1).<sup>385</sup>

<sup>381</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid*, p. 90.

<sup>384</sup> For a sample of sections from guides for women's edification dealing with reading and writing see Emori Ichirô (ed), *Edo jiai josei ezu daijiten*, (Tokyo: Ôzorasha, 1993), volume 4, pp. 2-90.

<sup>385</sup> A similar scene is also found in *Onna daigaku takara bako*. See Emori, *Edo jiai josei ezu daijiten*, volume 4, pp. 4-5 for several different versions of this image.



Figure 27: 'Essential Sentences for Women' (女要文章福寿台 *Joyô bunshô fuku judai*), in *Joyô fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity, 1774, 1785).<sup>386</sup>

Girls could have lessons in reading and writing in the home, either from another family member or from a hired tutor, if their family was wealthy enough to hire one and had books available for them to use. Even commoner girls could have access to books in the home. In 1736 the Sanda family from Kashiwara Village, Shiki County, in the suburbs of Osaka, had among their collection of 239 titles, consisting of 1054 volumes,

<sup>386</sup> Image source: Takada Seibe'e, *Joyô fuku judai* (Kyoto: 1785). Reprinted in full in Aikawa Jindô (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 33 (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1995), p. 22.

'texts for basic writing and books for instructing girls'.<sup>387</sup> We can assume that in these cases the women of the family would have been literate to some degree. Research conducted by Japanese scholars on early modern women's diaries, including accounts of travel, as well as the study of letters written by women also adds to the emerging picture that literate women were not out of the ordinary in the mid to late Edo period.<sup>388</sup>



Figure 28: A Reading and Writing School for Girls (女実語教 *Onna jitsugo kyō*), in *Onna terako chōhōki* (女寺子調法記 *Primary School Handbook for Girls*, 1806).<sup>389</sup>

<sup>387</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, p. 96.

<sup>388</sup> See Shiba Keiko, 'Tabi nikki kara mita kinsei josei no ichi kōsatsu' in Kinsei Joseishi Kenkyūkai (ed), *Edo jidai no joseitachi* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kobunkan, 1990); and *Kinsei onna tabi nikki* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997); Yabuta Yutaka, *Otoko to onna no kinseishi* (Tokyo: Aoki Shoten, 1998); and Amano Haruko, *Joshi shosokugata ōrai ni kansuru kenkyū* (Tokyo: Kazama Shobō, 1998). Rubinger discusses one such letter in *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, pp. 159-160.

<sup>389</sup> Image source: *Onna terako chōhōki* (1806). Reprinted in full in Nagatomo Chyoji (ed), *Chōhōki shiyō shūsei 8: Ōraimono 3: Tōji senyō terako chōhōki* (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 2005), p. 119.

Aside from having access to books in the home, another way in which women learnt to read and write was by attending schools, where they may have used guides such as those discussed below in their study. In a story published in 1725 a father reflecting upon the different opportunities available to his children than when he was young comments that, 'nowadays the world has changed, and even the daughter of a humble household like ours [they ran a rice-cleaning shop] can have lessons in writing and reading'.<sup>390</sup> In *Onna terako chōhōki* (女寺子調法記 Primary School Handbook for Girls, 1806), the opening image shows a scene from a 'reading and writing school for girls (女実語教 *Onna jitsugo kyō*)' (Figure 2).<sup>391</sup> In the foreground two girls are practising writing Chinese characters on large scrolls whilst a younger girl looks on and an older girl, standing behind them, holds the scroll with the title of the image. In the back of the picture, three girls are reading books. A woman, possibly a teacher, is peering around the door from the room where the girls are reading, looking in on those practising writing. The image represents a school for reading and writing such as the daughter of the rice-cleaning shop would have attended.

The shogunal authorities encouraged the spread of literacy by these means. A proclamation to writing school teachers issued as part of the Tenpō reforms of the 1840s, stated that, 'everyone – boys and girls, high and low – should be able to read and write appropriate to their station...For women *Onna Imagawa* [an illustrated primer for girls], *Jokai* [a Chinese Confucian reader for girls], and *Onna kōkyō* [Filial piety for women] are recommended along with writing practice'.<sup>392</sup> The phrase 'appropriate to their station' reminds us that status usually determined the type and amount of education people received, or were meant to receive, in the Edo period.

While increasing numbers of women were learning to read and write, there were also major disparities in literacy levels among women. Indeed, Rubinger suggests that geography and class may have been far greater barriers to learning and literacy than

<sup>390</sup> 'Mukashi gome mangoku tsū' (1725). Cited in Nagatomo Chiyoji, 'Kinsei gyōshōbonya, kashihanya, Dokusha: Media, Dokushosō, ba', in *Kokubungaku, kaishaku to kanshō* 45, no. 10 (1980), p. 104. Translated in Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 302.

<sup>391</sup> *Onna terako chōhōki*, p. 119.

<sup>392</sup> Bakufu no bu: Gakusei', *Monbushō* (ed), *Nihon kyōiku shi shiryō* 7 (Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1980), pp. 10-11. Translated in Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, p. 117.

gender.<sup>393</sup> This is because the data he analysed suggest that, 'in merchant-dominated areas of big cities, women enrolled at writing schools at a far higher rate than their rural sisters, higher even than the rate for many rural males, and virtually on a par with the rate for males of the merchant class'.<sup>394</sup> As a general rule, women's literacy rates were higher in areas where male rates were also high. This does not mean, though, that women in rural areas were necessarily at a disadvantage to their urban sisters, for they too could have the educational opportunities to become literate depending on their class. As Anne Walthall has shown in her analysis of provincial family diaries in the nineteenth-century, 'female literacy characterized the style of life that set the rural entrepreneurs apart from ordinary peasants'.<sup>395</sup> Again, we see that class and not gender was the determining factor in whether or not women were literate.

With a substantial population of literate women and a thriving commercial publishing industry came an extensive body of literature aimed at a female audience. One specific type of text were guides for women's edification (女訓/女訓書 *jokun/jokunsho*).<sup>396</sup> These shared many similarities with other genres of texts within the same broad category of instructional books, guides, or manuals, such as: 'dictionaries' (節用集 *setsuyōshū*); 'illustrated encyclopaedias' or 'illustrated lexicons for the ignorant' (訓蒙図彙 *kinmō zui*); 'treasuries' (重宝記 *chōhōki*); and 'primers' or 'textbooks' (往来物 *ōraimono*).<sup>397</sup> They constituted a substantial part of the print market by the early nineteenth century.<sup>398</sup> As Berry describes,

<sup>393</sup> Rubinger, *Popular Literacy in Early Modern Japan*, p. 136 and 169.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>395</sup> Anne Walthall, 'Family Ideology of Rural Entrepreneurs in Nineteenth-Century Japan', *Journal of Social History* 23: 3 (1990), pp. 471-472.

<sup>396</sup> Many of the texts used in this chapter are categorised in the Japanese literature as *ōraimono*, or specifically *joshi yō ōraimono* as they were largely aimed at a female audience. The term *ōraimono* [往来物] is variously translated as 'textbook', 'primer', 'manual' or 'moral guide'. Some of the texts used here, however, could be categorised under other terms, such as *kinmōzui* or *chōhōki*. Here I have chosen to group them together as 'guides for women's edification', to indicate the similarities between them and their common purpose, which was to provide information and instructions on the lifestyles of elite women for the improvement, both moral, intellectual and social, of lower status women. Another possible term suggested by Lindsey is 'women's lifestyle guides'. See Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure*, p. 10. Peter Kornicki has referred to them as 'conduct books for women'. See Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 182. For an outline of the history of the term *ōraimono* see Ishikawa Ken, *Joshiyō ōraimono bunrui mokuroku: Edo jidai ni okeru joshiyō shotō kyōkasho no hattatsu*, (Tokyo: Dainihon Yūbenkai Kōdansha, 1946), pp. 1-10.

<sup>397</sup> For definitions and descriptions of the terms see Berry, *Japan in Print*, p. 196; and Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 328.

<sup>398</sup> Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, p. 140.

Many cover a specific skill – such as letter writing, calligraphy, poetic composition, the conduct of the tea ceremony, healing practices, child raising, cooking, geomancy, or spell casting – in simple, systematic, and heavily illustrated style. Many others cover a variety of skills pertinent to a particular group – such as young men, young women, newlyweds, and housewives. Still others...serve as more or less universal digests of more or less indispensable common wisdom.<sup>399</sup>

The texts discussed here are of the type which ‘cover a variety of skills pertinent to a particular group’, namely commoner women. The numbers of this type of text published increased significantly from the 1750s.<sup>400</sup> A large market was necessary to sustain such guides, which were remarkably similar in content. Many of the guides, including those discussed in this chapter, went through multiple re-printings, also suggesting enduring popularity and a large market.<sup>401</sup> It would not have been commercially viable for publishers to continue printing new guides and reprinting old guides if there had not been high demand. Indeed, guides for women’s edification were so popular that they generated a spin-off genre of erotic parodies.<sup>402</sup> Together, these guides formed what could be described as a canon of ‘civilized knowledge’.<sup>403</sup> As Martha Tocco argues, such texts ‘provided an element of commonality to women’s education at a time when education was not standardized’.<sup>404</sup> Women of all classes and in all regions could potentially access the same information contained in these guides.

It has been suggested that no other texts on tea for women aside from *Toji no tamoto* existed in the early modern period.<sup>405</sup> However, in guides for women’s edification published from the later half of the eighteenth-century through the first half of the nineteenth-century, we also find a discourse on women’s tea. Tea was presented as an activity with which well-bred women should be familiar, along with other arts such as

<sup>399</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, p. 196.

<sup>400</sup> Ishikawa, *Joshiyō ōraimono bunrui mokuroku*, pp. 9-13.

<sup>401</sup> Unfortunately there is no available data on print-runs and prices for such texts to establish just how accessible they were. See Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, pp. 184-187.

<sup>402</sup> See Gerstle, *Kinsei enpon shiryō shūsei IV*.

<sup>403</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 328. Similarly, Anne Walthall uses the phrase ‘cultural database of civilized knowledge’, in ‘Networking for Pleasure and Profit’, *Monumenta Nipponica* 61:1 (Spring 2006), p. 96.

<sup>404</sup> Martha C. Tocco ‘Norms and Texts for Women’s Education in Tokugawa Japan’, in Dorothy Ko, JaHyun Kim Haboush and Joan R. Piggot (eds), *Women and Confucian Cultures in Premodern China, Korea and Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), p. 197.

<sup>405</sup> Ii Hiroko, ‘*Oku jochū no chanoyū*’, in Kumakura Isao (ed), *Ii Naosuke no chanoyū* (Tokyo: Kokushokankōkai, 2007), pp. 220-222.

flower arrangement and incense appreciation. In some texts detailed and lengthy discussion of tea procedures and depictions of utensils are featured, whilst others have only a short general text on tea. In all cases, tea is dealt with as it applied to women, though the authors encouraged women's participation to differing degrees.

Interestingly, none of the texts make reference to any particular schools of tea. This suggests that the tea schools were not involved in the production of these texts, for we must imagine that they would not have passed up the opportunity to put their name in print and try to attract new students should it come their way. The discourse on women's tea practice in the guides is therefore a popular discourse, which does not necessarily reflect the views on women's tea practice held by the schools and high-level tea masters. Rather than ignoring this discourse, as many scholars have done, its popular nature makes it all the more important for understanding the spread of tea culture to the broader population in the latter part of the Edo period.

As early as the late seventeenth-century tea was listed among a number of arts which women should learn in *Onna chōhōki* (女重宝記 A Woman's Treasury).<sup>406</sup> In addition to arts such as tea, flower arrangement and incense appreciation, this guide also states that women should be able to write *renga* and *haikai* forms of poetry, and be familiar with historical texts such as *Genji Monogatari* (源氏物語 *The Tale of Genji*), *Ise Monogatari* (伊勢物語 *The Tales of Ise*) and the *Manyōshū* (万葉種) poetry anthology.<sup>407</sup> It thus sets out quite a demanding list of accomplishments for women to pursue. Tea was but one among a myriad of activities women studied, though it is the focus here. *Onna chōhōki* set the tone for texts on women's education and though it was based on the education of court women, it became the model for samurai and later commoner women to follow.<sup>408</sup>

<sup>406</sup> Namura Jōhaku, *Onna chōhōki* (1692). Reprinted in full in Arima Sumiko, Wakasugi Tetsuo, Nishigaki Yoshiko (eds), *Eiri Onna chōhōki* part 1, in *Josei bunka kenkyū sōsho* volume 3 (Tokyo: Toyoko Gakuen Joshi Tanki Daigaku, 1989), p. 11.

<sup>407</sup> The education set out for women is similar to that outlined for men in the *Nan chōhōki* (Record of accumulated treasures for men) (1693), a companion volume by the same author. Samurai boys were also advised to learn tea and flower arrangement as well as the various forms of poetry. Namura Jōhaku, *Nan chōhōki* (1693). Reprinted in full in *Kinsei bungaku shiryō ruijū: sankō bunken hen*, volumes 17-18 (Tokyo: Benseisha, 1981). See also Shivley, 'Popular culture', p. 720.

<sup>408</sup> Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure*, uses this text in his analysis of ritual and sexual values.

In another guide, *Onnayô kinmô zui* (女用訓蒙図彙 An Illustrated Encyclopaedia for Women, 1687), the arts and skills of elite women were depicted visually. The reader is presented with illustrations of 'women's tools' (女器財 *onna kizai*) such as: screens; *shamisen*; games, like *sugoroku* and *go*; implements used for hair and make-up; dishes; dolls and other toys; types of vehicles, such as a palanquin; types of clothing; tools used for spinning and weaving; and tea utensils (茶湯具 *chanoyu no gu*) (Figure 3).<sup>409</sup> All of the illustrations have a simple description accompanying them, with phonetic notation alongside the kanji. In the case of the subheading 'women's tools' two alternative readings are provided for the characters 女器: *onna kizai* and *onna no utsui mono*. The basic nature of the information makes it likely that the audience was those unfamiliar with the objects and with limited literacy, in other words, commoner women. In the pages of *Onna chôhōki* and *Onnayô kinmô zui* we see that, even in the first century of the Edo period, women's education in cultural, literary and artistic fields was flourishing and it was being promoted to women through published texts. These trends continued throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

<sup>409</sup> Okuda Shōhakuken, *Onnayô kinmô zui* (Kyoto, Osaka and Edo, 1688). Reprinted in full in Aikawa Jindō (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 97 (Tokyo: Ozorasha, 1998).



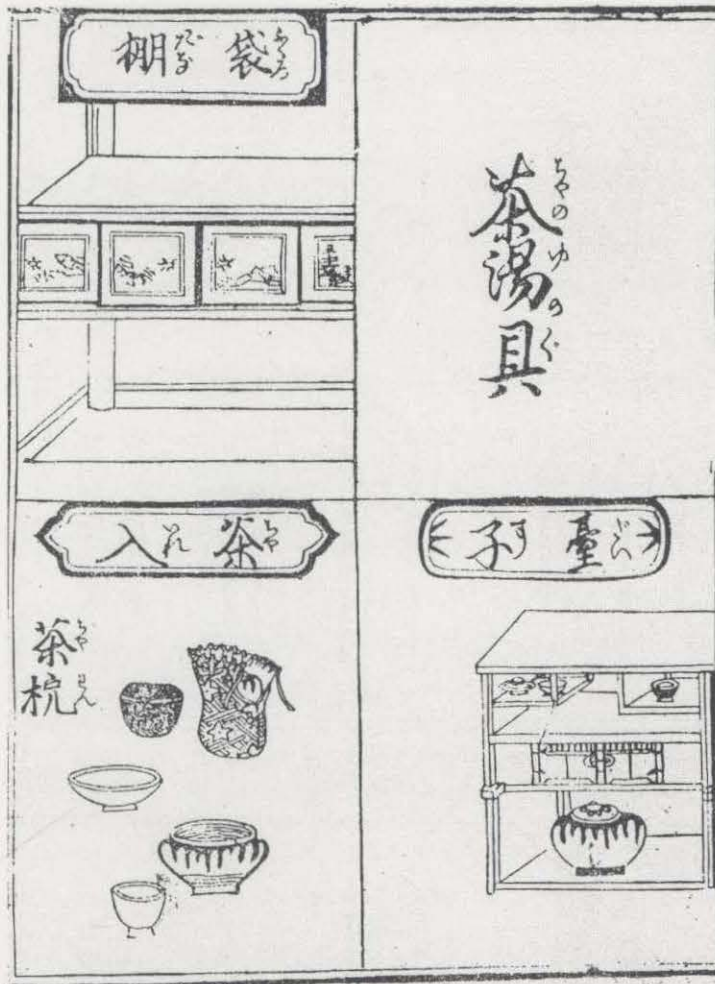


Figure 29: Illustrations of tea utensils (茶湯具 *chanoyu no gu*), including a utensil stand, tea caddies and tea bowls.

*Onna yō kinmōzui* (女用訓蒙図彙 An Illustrated Encyclopaedia for Women, 1687).<sup>410</sup>

Unlike *Toji no tamoto* then, these texts were not exclusively concerned with tea culture, it was just one subject among many. These guides were commercial products subject to the usual market forces of demand and supply. Therefore, the fact that tea was regularly included in them indicates that it was a subject deemed relevant to the audience and including it was commercially viable.<sup>411</sup> That is, there must have been a demand for this information. As Peter Kornicki has suggested, ‘the publication of conduct books for

<sup>410</sup> Image source: Okuda Shōhakuken, *Onnayō kinmō zui* (1687). Reprinted in Aikawa Jindō (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, vol. 97 (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1998).

<sup>411</sup> On the commercial aspects of the early modern publishing industry see Kornicki, *The Book in Japan*, pp. 169-222.

women bespeaks the emergence of a market, if not a public, of literate women'.<sup>412</sup> Although Ishikawa notes that the audience for such texts may have included men as well as women, of more significance than who read these guides, is that they contained a discourse that was specifically about women's tea practice.<sup>413</sup> In any case, the content and use of phonetic glossing both suggest that the primary audience was women, particularly of commoner status. Jorge Ardití has said of etiquette books, they 'are not written for the dominant classes, for whom knowledge of the infrastructure comes naturally'. Rather, they are written 'by and for people who aspire to belong to and succeed among the dominant class'.<sup>414</sup> Likewise, Norbert Elias comments that 'people living in the example-setting circle do not need books in order to know how "one" behaves'.<sup>415</sup> Guides for women's edification would have been of little value for elite women of the court aristocracy and samurai status, who would have learnt the information they contained as part of their upbringing. These guides therefore evidence the spread of elite culture and values to those of commoner status, most likely those in the new and ever expanding class of wealthy commoners. The guides also represent the aspirations of commoners to have knowledge of, if not become part of, elite culture. One aspect of this culture was tea, and commoner women were encouraged to become familiar with it. Indeed, the guides to women's edification presented it as essential knowledge.

### Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity

The manual *Joyô fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity, 1774, 1785) typifies the style and intent of the guides for women's edification described in this chapter. As the title suggests it was billed as a collection of essential knowledge for women and with a first edition in 1774 followed by at least one reprint in 1785, the edition used here, it had some success. The guide covers topics such as marriage and protocol for the wedding ceremony, along with appropriate

<sup>412</sup> Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 182.

<sup>413</sup> Ishikawa, *Joshiyô ôraimono bunrui mokuroku*, pp. 1-10.

<sup>414</sup> Jorge Ardití, *A Genealogy of Manners: Transformations of Social Relations, in France and England from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 15.

<sup>415</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: The History of Manners and State Formation and Civilization*, trans. Edmund Jephcott, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p. 82.

gifts for a wedding and how to present them. It gives advice on how to blacken your teeth. There is a table on *yamato kotoba*, giving examples of classical and elegant words for everyday things such as water, miso, tofu, walking, children and money. It explains how to participate in a range of artistic and cultural pursuits, such as how to compose *waka* poetry, as well as several pages of explanation and illustrations on tea.

The range of subjects clearly indicates that this was a handbook for the *nouveaux riches*. Elite women would have learnt a classical vocabulary, how to blacken their teeth and wedding protocol as part of their upbringing. This was a guide for women aspiring to be, or at least appear to be, part of the elite. They were perhaps the type of person whom Ogyū Sorai condemned for living above their station.

As an example of what I mean when I speak of articles of high quality being consumed by those of inferior status, take the fact that common people in Edo originally lived in the country where they ate inferior grains such as barley, millet and barnyard grass, drank inferior sake ("dirty sake" *dakushū* 濁酒), ate no *miso* bean paste, used brushwood as fuel, wore clothes made of hemp or cotton cloth of their own weaving and took their rest on mats of straw. Having assembled as they wish in Edo, they now eat rice and *miso*, use wood and charcoal fire, buy clothes to wear, drink fine sake and furnish their houses with *shoji* screens, ceilings, *karakami* partitions, *tatami* mats and mosquito nets none of which they had in the country.<sup>416</sup>

Women who read a guide like *Joyō fuku judai* were being encouraged to be like the young woman depicted by Suzuki Harunobu in *Beauty Playing the Koto* (Figure 4). In this image, the *koto* which the young woman is playing, along with the books and tea utensils in the background (a brazier, kettle and cold water jar), are used to symbolise her level of accomplishment.

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<sup>416</sup> Ogyū, *Seidan*, p. 166.



Figure 30: *Beauty Playing the Koto*.  
 Suzuki Harunobu, (c. 1767-1768). Woodblock-print, 29.2 x 21.7 cm.  
 Honolulu Academy of Arts.<sup>417</sup>

<sup>417</sup> Image source: Stephen Addiss, Gerald Groemer and J. Thomas Rimer (ed), *Traditional Japanese Arts and Culture: An Illustrated Sourcebook* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), plate 56.

The section on tea in *Joyō fuku judai* begins with an introduction covering the seasons and types of tea procedures and encourages the study of tea through practice rather than from books alone. We get a sense of the popularity that tea had gained by the late eighteenth century when the author says that 'these days everyone is enjoying tea so it is good to learn at least how to drink it', a statement which is echoed in later guides.<sup>418</sup> The text then goes on to describe briefly the manner for drinking thick tea before commenting that it is necessary for both host and guest to know about the procedures for making tea. The following pages have extensive illustrations of tea utensils, 'for the benefit of beginners', showing different varieties and listing the name and material each item is made from (Figures 5, 6 and 7).<sup>419</sup> The upper sections of the pages have brief explanations of general etiquette related to tea, such as manners for washing hands, how to open and close the sliding doors (障子 *shōji*), how to drink thick tea, how to return the bowl to the host, incense appreciation (which can be part of a tea gathering) and letter writing (for invitations and letters of thanks). The reader could thus get a sense of what tea culture involved, before possibly going on to study it in greater depth. The illustrations, meanwhile, gave readers who did not have access to the actual objects used in tea or the means to acquire them the chance to imagine what such items looked like and have basic knowledge about them. Should they ever be in a position to view, use, or even purchase tea utensils, this information would be of great help.

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<sup>418</sup> Takada, *Joyō fuku judai*, p. 18. See the similarities with Kimura, *Shinzō onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 18.

<sup>419</sup> Takada, *Joyō fuku judai*, p. 19.

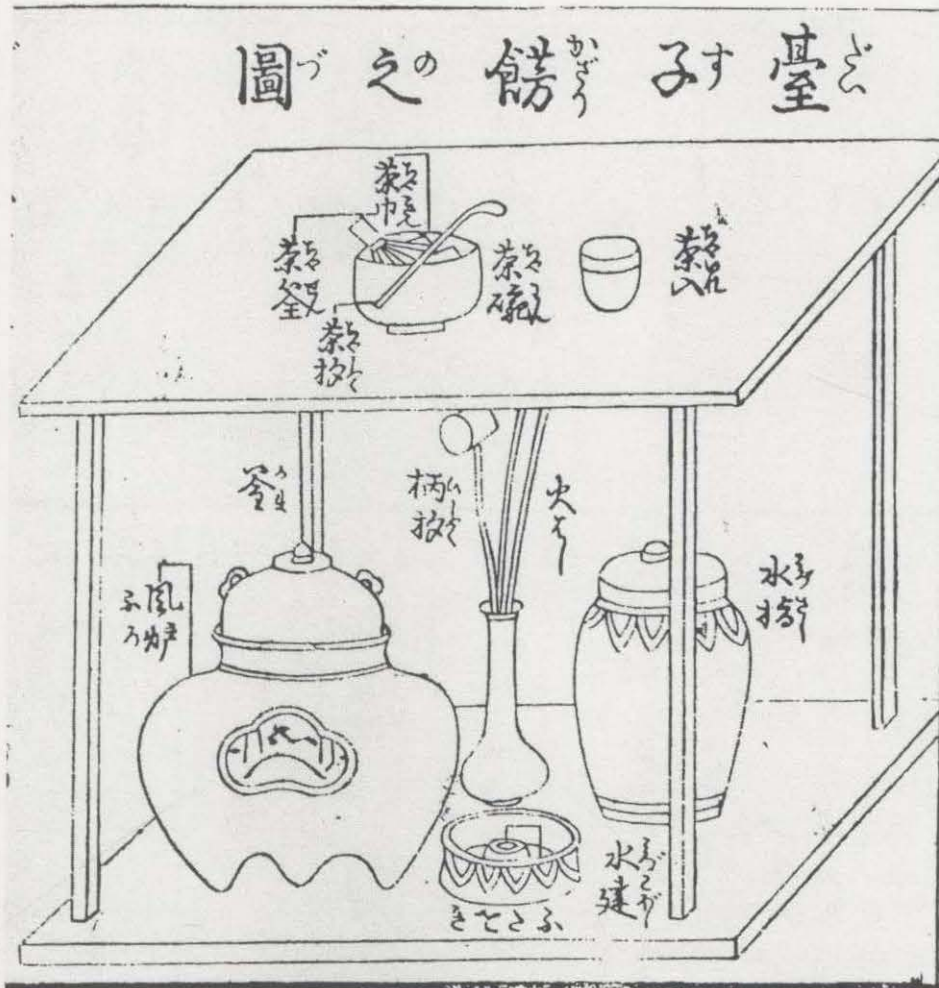


Figure 31: Illustration of how the utensils are arranged on a stand  
(台子飾之図 *daisu kazari no zu*).

*Joyô fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity, 1774, 1785).<sup>420</sup>

<sup>420</sup> Image source: Takada, *Joyô fuku judai*, p. 19.

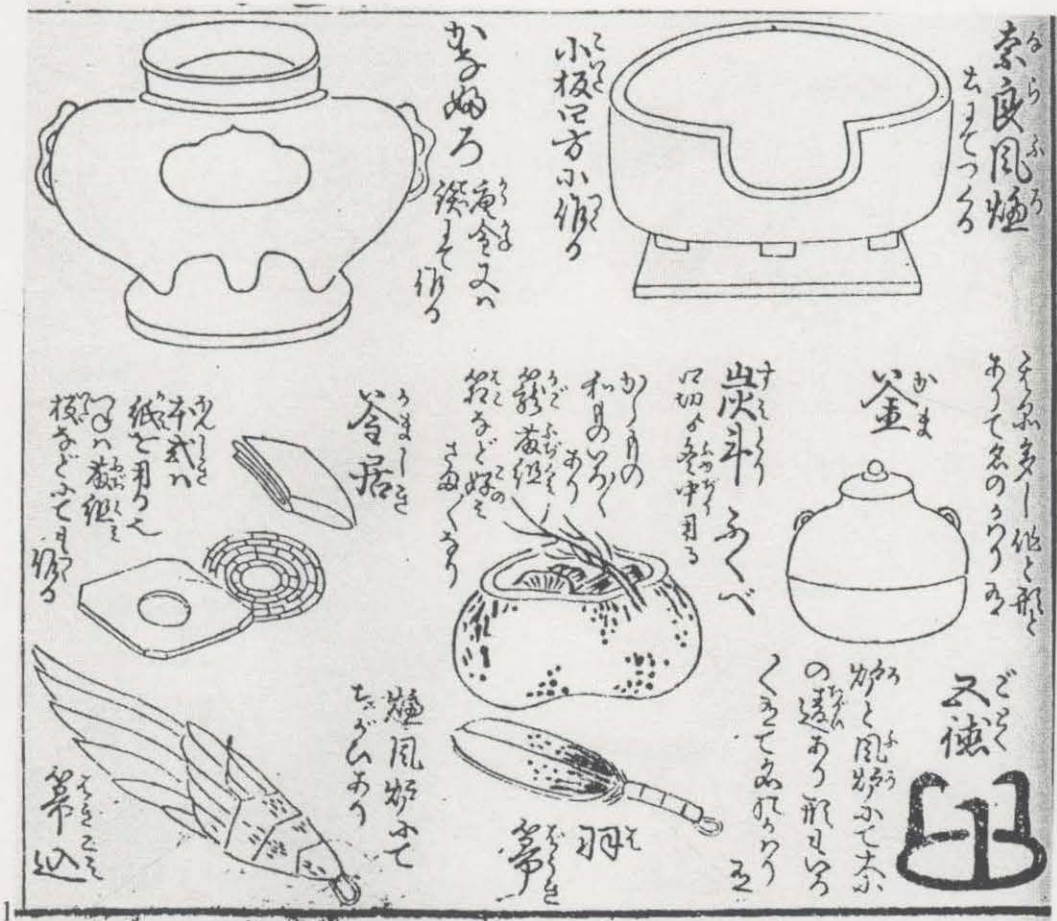


Figure 32: Illustrations of tea utensils, including (from top to bottom, starting from the right) brazier, kettle, tripod for the kettle (五徳 *gotoku*), and implements for laying the charcoal and ash.

*Joyō fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity, 1774, 1785).<sup>421</sup>

<sup>421</sup> Image source: Takada, *Joyō fuku judai*, p. 19



Figure 33: Illustrations of tea utensils, including (from top to bottom, starting from the right) cold water jar, ladle (柄杓 *hishaku*), whisk, tea bowls, tea scoop, ceramic tea caddy, stand for the *tenmoku* tea bowl, water filter (水漉し *mizukoshi*), linen cloth and a lacquer-ware tea caddy.

*Joyô fuku judai* (女要福寿台 Essential Knowledge for Women's Prosperity and Longevity, 1774, 1785).<sup>422</sup>

<sup>422</sup> Image source: Takada, p. 20.



Once again, we see that utensil stands are front and center for women's tea practice, in this case the first page of the illustrations of utensils being a diagram of how the utensils are arranged on a stand (台子飾之図 *daisu kazari no zu*) (Figure 5).<sup>423</sup> The text running alongside this image instructs readers that 'if a woman is going to place a utensil stand in her room, there are black lacquer (*shinnuri*) or vermilion lacquer (*tsumakurenai*) varieties [which should be used]'.<sup>424</sup> This further reinforces the association between utensil stands and women's tea practice, as seen in *Toji no tamoto*, as do visual depictions of cultured young women with utensil stands set up in their rooms (Figures 8 and 9). One of the varieties of lacquer recommended in *Joyô fuku judai*, vermilion, is the type which was designed for the Empress Tôfukumon'in by the tea master Sen Sôtan, as discussed in Chapter Two. An elite female tea practitioner like Tôfukumon'in was being held up as a model for others to emulate, with the vermilion utensil stand, in particular, being associated with her.

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<sup>423</sup> The guide *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, which will be discussed below, also had a diagram of how the utensils are arranged on a stand as its first illustration in the section on utensils. Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 24.

<sup>424</sup> Takada, *Joyô fuku judai*, p. 19.



Figure 34: 'Night Rain on Stand' (台子の夜雨 *Daisu no yau*),  
 from the series 'Eight Views of a Parlour' (座敷八景 *Zashiki hakkei*).  
 Suzuki Harunobu, 18<sup>th</sup> century.  
 Chu-ban size.<sup>425</sup>

<sup>425</sup> Image source: Jack Hillier, *Japanese Prints and Drawings from the Vever Collection*, volume 1 (New York: Rizzoli International 1976), plate 101.



Figure 35: 'Night Rain on Stand' (台子夜雨 *Daisu no yau*),  
from the series 'Eight Views of a Parlour' (座敷八景の内 *Zashiki hachi kei no nai*).

Torii Kiyonaga, 18th century.

*Ôban* size *Nishiki-e* wood-block print.

Clarence Buckingham Collection, The Art Institute of Chicago.<sup>426</sup>

<sup>426</sup> Image source: Akai, *Chanoyu kaiga shiryô shûsei*, plate 111.

It is clear that with the growing popularity of tea there was a desire for this kind of basic information to be available in printed form. By the 1840s it was commented in another guide, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* (新增女諸礼綾錦 New Enlarged Edition of The Brocade of Women's Manners, 1841),<sup>427</sup> that, 'recently, many detailed books about customs, such as tea etiquette [茶礼 *charei*], are being published'.<sup>428</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, both popular tea texts and private tea texts produced by tea masters, had been available since the seventeenth century. However, they were aimed at a different market than these guides for women's edification. The target audience for these sections on tea were women who had little or no training in tea but who desired some knowledge of it. Perhaps they wanted to have a sense of what was entailed before beginning formal study under a teacher, which as *Joyô fuku judai* suggested was really the best way to learn. The author of *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* claimed that the information it contained, which was very similar to that in *Joyô fuku judai*, would be enough basic information for a woman who had not learnt tea.<sup>429</sup> Readers may not have been interested in devoting themselves to tea practice but simply may have wanted to have a sufficient grasp of the procedures and utensils involved so as to be able to participate should they be invited to a tea gathering. It was also stated that this information was being presented 'because tea has become extremely popular'.<sup>430</sup>

As tea became an increasingly popular activity, a basic understanding of the rules of conduct became part of the canon of essential knowledge for women. It also became essential knowledge for those wishing to be up to date with the latest social customs and trends. For example, in *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* the author describes a recent change in the rules of serving thick tea, from the 'orthodox way of one bowl per person' to 'one bowl for everyone'. Though the author himself disapproves of this new way, he acknowledges that, 'this is the latest fashion so it is also accepted as one of the proper

<sup>427</sup> This was a new enlarged edition of an earlier guide, Kitao Tokinobu, *Nichiyô chôhō onna shorei ayanishiki* (Osaka, 1772). Reprinted in full in Aikawa Jindô (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 40 (Tokyo: Ōzorasha, 1995).

<sup>428</sup> Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 22. Presumably the term 'tea etiquette' covered the basic manners and rules followed in tea practice.

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 18.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 19.

ways'.<sup>431</sup> Such explanations of new developments in tea procedures would be useful for the novice and more experienced practitioner alike.

Tea, as an art of interaction among people, requires the participant to possess 'cultural competence' in order to derive meaning from the experience. According to Bourdieu,

A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded...A beholder who lacks the specific code feels lost in a chaos of sounds and rhythms, colours and lines, without rhyme or reason.<sup>432</sup>

Similarly, in tea, the participant who does not have this competence, in other words who does not know the rules or the 'code', will 'feel lost' and will therefore be unable to interact with the other participants in a meaningful way. According to *Toji no tamoto*, a lack of experience in tea may lead to an uncomfortable situation if one were invited to a tea gathering at which experienced practitioners were also to be guests, in such cases people may actually pretend to be sick because they feel embarrassed.<sup>433</sup> By the mid-nineteenth century the situation was such that the author of *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* stated, 'tea has become very popular, so if you don't know the rules you cannot interact with people' (*cha no michi amaneku ryûkoshite charei wo wakimaetzareba hito ni majiwari mo dekitakiteinareba [sic]*).<sup>434</sup> Tea was a vehicle for social interaction, and women were being warned not to let an opportunity pass them by due to lack of appropriate knowledge.

Eiko Ikegami has said of the broad category of 'how-to books and manuals' that, 'their tone of repetitive conventionalism...suggests the emergence of standardized accounts that represented the common cultural "database" of the literate population of Tokugawa Japan'.<sup>435</sup> The sections on tea in guides for women's edification certainly exhibit these features of 'repetitive conventionalism'. Knowledge of tea had become part of 'the common cultural "database"' of the general population, including women. Having a basic understanding of tea culture was necessary for participating in social life,

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 20.

<sup>432</sup> Bourdieu, *Distinction*, p. 2.

<sup>433</sup> Ôguchi, *Toji no tamoto*, in Nomura, *Teihon Sekishû ryû*, p. 202.

<sup>434</sup> Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 18.

<sup>435</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 329.

and the guides provided precisely this. Of course, when what was once a socially exclusive practice becomes ubiquitous, and open to all classes and genders, it loses some of its appeal.<sup>436</sup> A member of the village elite knew this only too well when he turned his back on *haikai* poetry in favour of the more aristocratic *waka* form, once it became so popular that 'even women, children and lowlives' became involved.<sup>437</sup> Opting out for a less popular pastime may have been an option for those who were firmly entrenched in the elite and familiar with the activity in question. However, for those aspiring to become part of the elite, it was not a matter of choice. Once something becomes so popular that 'everyone' is doing it, those who do not become conspicuous by their absence. This was likely the case with tea culture in the latter part of the Edo period, hence, its popularity continued to grow, whilst at the same time it lost some of its aura of exclusivity. By the late eighteenth century, knowledge of tea culture had become indispensable for any woman wanting to present herself as cultured, well-bred and up-to-date.

Knowledge of tea was essential not just because it taught one how to prepare, receive and drink tea in the formal style of *chanoyu*. As stated in the previous chapter, tea was also a vehicle for learning manners and etiquette in general, because tea culture encompasses far more than just drinking a beverage. Commoner women were being swept up in the civilizing process, with guides for women's edification and tea providing them with the tools to conduct themselves in a 'civilized' manner. Thus, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* explains how to use a fan, how to bow when sitting, and how to open and close the sliding doors and screens (襖 *fusuma*).<sup>438</sup> On this last subject *Joyô fuku judai* explains that, 'the manner for opening and closing the sliding doors' is: 'putting your left knee on the floor, with your right knee raised up, place your hands on the wood at the base of the door and slide'.<sup>439</sup>

Civilised standards for eating were also outlined in these guides, as they had been in *Toji no tamoto*. *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, for example, explains how to drink the hot water served during the *kaiseki* meal: 'holding the chopsticks in your right hand,

<sup>436</sup> Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, p. 82.

<sup>437</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p.151.

<sup>438</sup> Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, pp. 13 – 14.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 19.

place that hand on your knee, then drink'.<sup>440</sup> The reader also learns the correct way for eating rice softened with hot water (湯漬 *yuzuke*) and rice gruel (お粥 *okayu*): 'first drink your soup, it is best not to pour the soup over the rice gruel. You should not leave of any of this unfinished'.<sup>441</sup> *Joyô fuku judai* explains manners for washing your hands, how to ask for seconds of soup, how to cut fish and how to serve steamed buns with filling (まんじゅう *manjû*) to children: 'put some paper down, cut it into three pieces, give them one piece, then a second, and leave the last piece as it is'.<sup>442</sup> Actions like opening and closing a door, washing one's hands and eating can be done without reading how to do so, yet there is a correct way, and an elegant way to perform these quotidian actions which marks one as refined and genteel. This is what the guides presented to commoner women, and what studying tea could teach them.

Knowledge of, and familiarity with, tea culture was not, of course, essential only for women but also men in the early modern period. As *Joyô fuku judai* put it, 'both men and women should have knowledge of tea' (*mottomo danjo tomo ni chadô o shirazunba arubekarazu*).<sup>443</sup> We do find, however, that in the discourse on women's tea in these guides, there were specific reasons given for why women should study tea. These were outlined in the section on 'women's arts' (女中遊芸之図 *jochû yûgei no zu*) in *Onna rôei kyôkunka* (女郎詠教訓歌 Poetry Recitation for Women's Learning, 1753).<sup>444</sup>

<sup>440</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 17.

<sup>441</sup> *Ibid*, part 2, p. 17.

<sup>442</sup> Takada, *Joyô fuku judai*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid*, p. 18.

<sup>444</sup> Though in the original text the hiragana うた is written alongside the character 歌 in most reference books, such as the *Kokusho sômokuroku*, it is written as か.



Figure 36: Tea, one of the 'women's arts' (女中遊芸之図 *jochû yûgei no zu*) in *Onna rôei kyôkunka* (女郎詠教訓歌 *Poetry Recitation for Women's Learning*, 1753).<sup>445</sup>

The text above an image of a woman making tea for two female guests (Figure 10) states that

There are many schools of tea and it seems to be difficult but women should learn at least how to do the procedures for making thin tea. They should also understand the greetings and method for the thick tea service. Even so-called 'lowliest of the low' women [*shita-jita joshi to iu tomo*] who may enter into service [in an elite household] should study tea; if you have some knowledge of tea your movements will become graceful (*cha no kokoro sukoshi areba tachi furumai shitoyaka ni shite*).<sup>446</sup>

This text outlines three core aspects of the popular discourse on women's tea practice. Firstly, women are being encouraged to learn only a small portion of tea procedures, those which are of the most basic and informal type known as *usucha*. Another significant detail in this text is the implication that women who want to be part

<sup>445</sup> Image source: Naitô Gyokushi (ed), *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka* (1753). Reprinted in Aikawa Jindô (ed), *Edo jidai josei bunko*, volume 100 (Tokyo: Ôzorosha, 1998).

<sup>446</sup> Naitô, *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka*.



of 'proper' society should learn tea; it is promoted as an activity through which women learn to be graceful. These two aspects of the discourse will be discussed below. *Onna rôei kyôkunka* also links learning tea with the potential for women to enter into service in an elite household, a notion that is found in other guides.<sup>447</sup> This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Suffice to say here that daughters of lower ranking samurai families and, increasingly, daughters from wealthy commoner families entered into service in elite households as a form of marriage preparation in the latter part of the Edo period. In alluding to this possibility, the text is appealing to women's aspirations to better themselves and improve their social standing through service in an elite household. It implies that tea was an activity through which a woman could display that she was cultured and accomplished, and thereby equipped to serve in an elite household.

Our concern here is with the discourse on women's tea practice itself, not in with the degree to which women were actually practicing tea. To become a tea practitioner able to perform *temae* requires more than just reading about tea in a book and seeing images of tea utensils; it requires face-to-face lessons with a teacher. Morgan Pitelka has suggested that

Books on the practice of tea, incense connoisseurship, and other arts provided a certain amount of guidance to the aspiring student. These volumes ultimately only increased the attraction of joining a school, however, which would bring the recognition of being an official practitioner of an art rather than a dilettante.<sup>448</sup>

Whether or not women went on to practice tea from reading the texts is not something we can say on the basis of available evidence. Certainly, from what evidence is available, it seems that the numbers of women who were officially enrolled in tea schools was quite low throughout the Edo period.<sup>449</sup> It is more likely that women's tea practice was conducted informally, at temple schools and in the homes of local women who were proficient enough in tea to be teachers but who were not licensed as such. As the next chapter will discuss, women may also have studied tea privately within the home. Of more significance is how women's tea practice was conceived of and what reasons were given for why women should study tea. These guides should be taken as a reflection of

<sup>447</sup> See, for example, Ikeda Tôri, *Shûgyoku hyakunin isshu ogura shiori* (1836). Reprinted in Emori Ichiro (ed), *Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten* volume 4 (Tokyo: Ôzorasha, 1993), p. 290.

<sup>448</sup> Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, p. 93.

<sup>449</sup> See discussion in Chapter Two.

the information presented to women, and of the aspirations women held. As William R. Lindsey has said in reference to recommendations for betrothal presents, wedding kimono and makeup in such guides, 'the details...acted less as fixed forms to be replicated whole and more as idealized guidelines meant for each home to adapt as necessary to its own customs, needs, and income'.<sup>450</sup> Likewise, the information about tea presented an ideal. Women would have interpreted and adapted it to suit their own situation. A woman who read these guides may never have got the chance to participate physically in tea culture, yet she may have internalised the attitudes and values inherent in the text.

### Learning the Basics

The majority of the guides concur with *Onna rôei kyôkunka* that women need only learn the basics of tea: the procedures for making thin tea, and how to be a guest for the thick tea service. *Shûgyoku hyakunin issu ogura shiori* (秀玉百人一首小倉栞 Bookmark of One Hundred Beautiful Poems by One Hundred Poets, 1836), for example, agrees with *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka*:

Women, many of whom may enter into service, should at least study a little and, even without knowing the inmost secret teachings, learn up to the level of the procedures for making thin tea. They should have general knowledge of the methods for greetings in the thick tea service.<sup>451</sup>

The sentiment that women must know the basics but not a lot beyond that is most strongly expressed in *Onna kuku no koe* (女九九の声 Women's Multiplication Voices, 1787), which states that, whilst

It can be said that it is not improper for men to enter the path of tea, the same cannot be said for women. Yet, for women to know nothing is not to be recommended; they should at least know a little ... When you have free time, study *chanoyu*, but women should not become immersed in it (*onna no koru wa yokarazu*).<sup>452</sup>

<sup>450</sup> Lindsey, *Fertility and Pleasure*, p. 141.

<sup>451</sup> Ikeda, *Shûgyoku hyakunin issu ogura shiori*, p. 290.

<sup>452</sup> Shimokôbe Jûsui, *Onna kuku no koe* (1787). Reprinted in *Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten*, volume 4, pp. 296-297.

Along with this, we see two sets of women engaging in tea practice. In the top left, a woman prepares tea for two female guests in the winter style. In the main part of the page, a woman prepares tea for one female guest using a utensil stand (Figure 11). Incidentally, this 'information on tea' (茶の湯心得の事 *chanoyu kokoroe no koto*) is attached to the multiplication '3 x 7 = 21'. This unusual combination of subjects indicates that essential knowledge for women also included mathematics, this would particularly have been the case for commoners from merchant households who may have had to help run the family business.<sup>453</sup>

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<sup>453</sup> Gary Leupp discusses the example of the wife of Numano Rokubei, a pawn shop operator, who kept a record on the employment of maidservants from 1838 to 1858 which listed yearly and daily wages, among other information. As Leupp suggests, 'clearly the woman maintaining this record was not only numerate; she aimed for precision in remunerating her employees'. Leupp, 'Population Registers in Tokugawa Japan', p. 75.



Figure 37: 'Information on tea' (茶の湯心得の事 *Chanoyu shinnan no koto*) and '3 x 7 = 21' in *Onna kuku no koe* (女九九の声 *Women's Multiplication Voices*, 1787).<sup>454</sup>

<sup>454</sup> Image source: Shimokôbe, *Onna kuku no koe*, p. 296.

The authors of these guides all agree then that women should learn tea, but only at a basic level. This indicates that the intention behind women's study of tea, at least in the eyes of those writing about it, was to learn etiquette and deportment. There was no need for women to go further into the study of tea, by learning the thick tea procedures for example, because these aspects could be learnt without doing so. In these guides, there is no spiritual or religious motivation conceived of for women's tea; this would require a deeper level of practice. Rather, the main reasons presented for why women should study tea are that they will become graceful, which in turn will be useful preparation for going into service in an elite household.

This somewhat ambivalent attitude to women's tea practice, that they should study it but only in a limited way, may suggest that the authors were trying to come to grips with a new social phenomenon of increasing participation in tea by women. The didactic tone of the phrase 'when you have free time, study *chanoyu*, but women should not become immersed in it' suggests that there may well have been women who were becoming too immersed in the world of tea, at least for the author's liking. In a similar vein, the 'guide to women's tea' (女茶の湯指南 *Onna chanoyu shinan*) in *Jokyô taizen himebunkô* (女教大全姫文庫 *Compendium of a Small Library for Women's Education*, late Edo) begins by saying that, '*chanoyu* is a path of correct customs in human relations. Women's tea should not appear to be too detailed, it should not be sharp or rough' (*onna no chanoyu wa shisairashikarazu, kadodatanu yô ni subeshi*).<sup>455</sup> That is to say, women's tea should be smooth and simple, with the implication that their knowledge should be general, not deep and thorough; a very similar sentiment to that expressed in *Toji no tamoto*. The authors of both *Joyô fuku judai* and *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* also caution against women going too far into the study of tea of their own accord, stating that a married woman should not learn that which her husband does not learn or enjoy.<sup>456</sup> Indeed, according to the author of *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, a woman should always put her duties as a daughter and wife before enjoyment of arts such as tea.<sup>457</sup> All of this may simply have been empty rhetoric, designed to placate voices of opposition who held

<sup>455</sup> Ume, Kunitake, *Jokyô taizen himebunko*, in *Hyakunin isshu onna yô bunkô* (late Edo). Reprinted in Emori Ichiro (ed), *Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten*, volume 4 (Tokyo: Ôzorasha, 1993), p. 291.

<sup>456</sup> Takada, *Joyô fuku judai* p. 18 and *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2 p. 19.

<sup>457</sup> Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2 p. 19.

a more conservative view. The similarities with the position Ôguchi Shôh found himself in are apparent, wanting to encourage women's tea practice on the one hand, but not wanting to be seen as inciting immoral or socially disruptive behaviour on the other. Or, it may have been a widely held opinion that women's tea practice should be limited in scope and content.

Encouraging women to learn tea within limits may also be a reflection of the regulatory nature of the Tokugawa government, which sporadically sought to reduce via sumptuary regulations what it deemed to be extravagance and the frivolous pursuit of enjoyment through leisure activities. For example, in the 1830s the daimyô of Mito domain, Tokugawa Nariaki (徳川斉昭 1800-1860), banned samurai girls from engaging in the practice of tea, as well as flower arrangement and playing the koto.<sup>458</sup> This prohibition was part of a wide-ranging reform program, which was aimed at restoring the spirit and morale of the domain's samurai. Tea was targeted along with other activities regarded as 'frivolous or extravagant'.<sup>459</sup> Furthermore, arts such as tea had a reputation among commoners as a way in which an individual or even a family's reputation and finances could be destroyed. The works of Saikaku and other popular early modern authors are filled with stories, true and fictional, of wealthy men who became ruined by devoting too much time and money on leisurely pursuits.<sup>460</sup>

The wider intellectual climate also discouraged women from becoming too deeply involved in specific activities. The female writer Tadano Makuzu's thoughts reflect such an ideology when 'she advises a 'weak-minded woman' not to focus her attention on one thing because 'she will neglect others, and the housework will suffer', or when she declares, 'it is better for a woman who will become a wife not to study things too deeply'.<sup>461</sup> In such a climate the authors of these guides may well have felt that they could not wholeheartedly encourage women to pursue the study of tea, lest they be considered to be encouraging women to neglect their duties as wives and daughters and indulge in frivolity instead. The author of *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* seems to have

<sup>458</sup> Yamakawa Kikue, *Women of the Mito Domain: Recollections of Samurai Family Life* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1992), trans. Kate Wildman Nakai, p. 19.

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xiv-xv.

<sup>460</sup> See Ihara Saikaku, *Nippon Eitaijû* (1688), trans. G.W.Sargent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); and Mitsui Takafusa, *Chônin kôkenroku* (1728), in Nakamura Yukihiko (ed), *Kinsei chônin shisô* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1975).

<sup>461</sup> Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking Like a Man*, p. 197.

been particularly wary of attracting such criticism, warning women that if they neglect their duty as a daughter (不孝 *fukō*) or wife (不貞節 *futeisetsu*) in favour of learning arts, 'it would be as if you had learned no arts'. Conversely, he claims that a woman who has learnt no arts and has no special talents but who is respectful to her parents and faithful to her husband cannot be called inferior to the woman who has learnt many arts. Only then, and only because it is so popular (*cha o moppara mochi atsukae yō nareba*), does the author give instructions on how to drink tea.<sup>462</sup>

The categorization of tea as a frivolous activity may seem at odds with the claim that it was a skill associated with a well-bred woman. Yet, the popularisation of arts such as tea, which occurred because of its association with elite culture, gradually led to the debasement of its image. In regards to this Kumakura Isao states that

As the entertainments of people during the Edo period there are aspects of the so-called 'genteel pastimes (*yūgei*) which rightly deserve praise. However, with the waning of the Edo period these pursuits were vulgarized, and degenerated into self-righteous decadence. Chanoyu was no exception, and from the mid-Edo period onward the illiteracy and bufoonery of chanoyu practioners was of such an extent that it was even reviled with derisive laughter in published materials.<sup>463</sup>

Thus, in some circles – most likely the old elite who rejected the acquisition of their culture by a new elite – tea had come to be regarded as a frivolous and extravagant activity. Similarly, other art forms also suffered an image crisis as a result of popularisation. As discussed in Chapter One, tea was also associated with the women of the pleasure quarter and they too suffered an image crisis in the late Edo period, with the reputation of the courtesans there falling from that of artists to prostitutes.<sup>464</sup> It may be that this image of a 'vulgarized' chanoyu was also partly the result of women's participation. Recalling the comments of the village elite on women's involvement in *haikai*, we may imagine that this attitude was not unique to him or the art of *haikai*.

Whilst most of the guides suggested that women should focus on learning thin tea procedures, several of them did include significant discussion of the thick tea procedures. Those with the most lengthy discussion of tea, *Joyō fuku judai* and *Shinzō onna shorei*

<sup>462</sup> Kimura, *Shinzō onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 19.

<sup>463</sup> Kumakura Isao, 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan', trans Zane Ferry, *Chanoyu Quaterly*, 75, (1994), p. 8.

<sup>464</sup> Yasutaka, 'The Pleasure Quarters and Tokugawa Culture, pp. 24-27.

*ayanishiki*, both include extensive illustrations of tea utensils including those used for thick tea. *Joyô fuku judai* also explains the thick tea procedures.<sup>465</sup> So does *Jokyô taizen himebunkô*, which gives a detailed, step-by-step description of a winter style (炉 *ro*) thick tea procedure under the heading 'guide to women's tea' (女茶の湯指南 *Onna chanoyu shinan*).<sup>466</sup> *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki* also presents information on aspects of tea culture which goes beyond that required to perform the thin tea procedures and be a guest for the thick tea service, from how to lay the charcoal, to how to roll up and tie a knot on the hanging scroll.<sup>467</sup> This information would still have been relevant for women learning to be a guest and does not necessarily indicate encouragement of women being able to perform the thick tea procedures or become deeply involved in tea culture. However, it may also indicate that, despite what the guides advocated, there was a demand among women for information about all aspects of tea, including the thick tea procedures and the various aspects of hosting a gathering.

### Becoming Graceful

It is clearly stated in *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka* that a primary reason for women to study tea is that they will learn to be graceful. This is a recurring theme in guides for women's edification. It was also an important theme in *Toji no tamoto*, as noted in the previous chapter. In another guide, *Shûgyoku hyakunin isshu ogura shiori*, readers are told that, 'studying this path [of tea], how to stand and sit and how to use all of the utensils gracefully (*shitoyaka ni*), you may become not vulgar (*iyashikarazu*) in appearance'.<sup>468</sup> The focus, then, is on having enough knowledge of tea so that a woman's 'movements will become graceful'.<sup>469</sup> As discussed above, given that this was a primary reason presented for why women should learn tea, studying the thin tea procedures alone would suffice, because all of the basic body movements can be learnt through the handling of utensils in these procedures.

<sup>465</sup> Takada, *Joyô fuku judai*, p. 18.

<sup>466</sup> 'Onna chanoyu shinan', in Ume, *Jokyô taizen himebunko*, pp. 291-294.

<sup>467</sup> Kimura, *Shinzô onna shorei ayanishiki*, part 2, p. 13 and 16.

<sup>468</sup> Ikeda, *Shûgyoku hyakunin isshu ogura shiori*, p. 290.

<sup>469</sup> Naitô, *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka* (1753).



The purpose of learning to be graceful was not primarily to perform an attractive *temae*. Rather, the implication in the statement ‘if you have some knowledge of tea your movements will become graceful’ is that learning tea was a way of learning to control the body so as to move gracefully with ease in both the tearoom and beyond. The process of constant repetition of specific physical movements was common to many arts in early modern Japan. Its ultimate purpose was ‘internalization of the technique in question as second nature’.<sup>470</sup> In reference to female role specialists in early modern Japanese theatre, Maki Morinaga has noted that

Cultivation seeks the way to make what is quasi-immediate out of what is mediated [*sic*]. For *onnagata* as practitioners of cultivation, therefore, “sheer mimicry” of a somatic motion, such as how to raise a hand, leads them to femininity in the spiritual sense if repeated sufficiently.<sup>471</sup>

The same process is at work in tea, hence the connection made between handling of utensils and graceful appearance in *Shūgyoku hyakunin issu ogura shiori*. Through learning tea, a woman could be confident that she would be able to behave appropriately in all social situations which required her to be graceful, especially interactions with social superiors. Once internalised, the repetition of these movements and acts ceases to become a conscious performance, it becomes a natural part of one’s identity. It is in this respect that the explanations of opening and closing doors and eating in a polite, refined way, took on particular importance. Women’s bodies were being trained, through the study of tea, to be graceful at all times. This links the discourse on women’s tea in these early modern guides to the ‘*temae* as *sahō*’ discourse – that is a discourse in which learning the procedures for making tea (*temae*) is a way of learning etiquette (作法 *sahō*) – which Etsuko Kato has identified as a major trend in modern Japan.<sup>472</sup>

As discussed previously, appearance, in the form of clothing, manners, etiquette and deportment, was a very public indicator of social status in the Edo period.<sup>473</sup> The importance placed on a woman’s appearance is evident in the actor Yoshizawa’s description of how a female role specialist should portray an ideal samurai woman when

<sup>470</sup> Maki Morinaga, ‘The Gender of *Onnagata* As the Imitating Imitated: Its Historicity, Performativity, and Involvement in the Circulation of Femininity’, *Positions* 10: 2 (2002), p. 268.

<sup>471</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 268.

<sup>472</sup> Kato, *Tea Ceremony and Women’s Empowerment*, p. 67.

<sup>473</sup> See Ogyū Sorai’s comments on this in *Seidan*, pp. 148-149

he commented that, 'it is unbecoming for the wife of a samurai, for example, to be stiff and awkward'.<sup>474</sup> That is to say, a samurai wife should be graceful in her movements, and therefore not appear vulgar, or of commoner status. On the one hand, samurai women had to ensure that they maintained the appearance of elite status, even if their family's wealth was being outstripped by that of commoner families. Wealthy commoner women, on the other hand, substituted the appearance of being elite, through their clothing and carriage, in lieu of having the official status.

In presenting tea as a way of learning to be graceful, the guides were appealing to commoner women's aspirations to acquire genteel femininity. Femininity was understood in early modern Japan, as in many societies, not as something which a woman naturally possessed by the mere fact of inhabiting a female body. Rather, it was something which needed to be cultivated. Moreover, there was no single, monolithic concept of femininity. Instead it was tied to status, resulting in different types, as well as degrees of femininity existing,<sup>475</sup> such as that of the courtesan and that of the respectable wife as discussed in Chapter One. Genteel femininity was one particular type of femininity in early modern Japan. Though it was once cultivated exclusively by women of elite status, it gradually came to be the model to which wealthy commoner women also aspired. As Beverly Skeggs has argued, gender, when symbolically legitimated via class, can become a form of cultural capital.<sup>476</sup> In this way, genteel femininity became a form of symbolic-cultural capital in itself in early modern Japan. This was promoted to commoner women through guides for women's edification.

In relation to women, in particular, Bourdieu has noted that they play the role of capital-bearing objects; they are repositories of the value and capital accrued by men.<sup>477</sup> In Bourdieu's analysis, 'women are able to convert economic capital into symbolic capital for their families through the display of cultural taste'.<sup>478</sup> In considering the

<sup>474</sup> Fukuoka Yagoshirô, *Yakusha rongo* (1776). Reprinted in *Nihon koten bungaku taikai 59: Kibyôshi, sharebon shû*, (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958), pp. 318-319. Translated in Susan Griswold, 'Sexuality, Textuality and the Definition of the "Feminine" in Late Eighteenth-Century Japan', *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal*: 9 (1995), p. 72.

<sup>475</sup> Morinaga discusses the idea of 'degrees' of femininity in 'The Gender of *Onnagata* As the Imitating Imitated', p. 262.

<sup>476</sup> Beverly Skeggs, 'Context and Background: Pierre Bourdieu's analysis of class, gender and sexuality', in Lisa Adkins and Beverley Skeggs (ed), *Feminism after Bourdieu* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 5-6.

<sup>477</sup> Terry Lovell, 'Thinking feminism with and against Bourdieu' in *Feminist Theory* (2000: 1:1), pp. 20-21; and Skeggs, 'Context and Background', pp.10-11.

<sup>478</sup> Lovell, 'Thinking feminism with and against Bourdieu', p 23.

lavish displays of fashion by wealthy commoner women in what often amounted to 'fashion contests' (伊達競べ *date kurabe*) in late seventeenth and early eighteenth century Japan, we can see an example of women serving as capital-bearing objects.<sup>479</sup> Wealthy commoner women were able to convert their family's unrecognised economic capital into symbolic-cultural capital. An extreme example of this was the wife of the wealthy Edo merchant, Ishikawa Rokubei, who in 1681 watched the shogun's procession from a room overlooking the street, dressed elaborately and accompanied by attendants, as if 'showing off her tasteful dress to the shogun'.<sup>480</sup> The shogun subsequently confiscated the family's property as punishment for the crimes of pride and extravagance.<sup>481</sup> Ishikawa's wife was clearly displaying the economic capital of her husband through her actions and dress. The shogun was so offended precisely because this display by Ishikawa's wife showed the extent of the capital accumulation of merchants, with which many daimyô, not least lesser samurai, could not compete. Similarly, women's bodies themselves could serve as capital-bearing objects. When a commoner woman moved with the grace and refinement usually associated with a samurai or court woman, she displayed her cultivation of genteel femininity. Tea, with its focus on the physical movements of walking, sitting, bowing, and handling of utensils, was a particularly suitable method of cultivation. Whether or not a woman could actually climb the social ladder through marriage, she could at the very least assume the appearance of higher status.

Though we can see the relevance of Bourdieu's recognition of women's role as capital-bearing objects to early modern Japan, it is important to note that his work has been criticised by feminist scholars for seeing women only as capital-bearing objects and not as subjects who could accumulate capital in their own right.<sup>482</sup> At the same time, these scholars acknowledge that 'it is not always easy to distinguish the difference between women's 'capital accumulating strategies' and the use of women by others as bearers of capital value for their families and kin'.<sup>483</sup> In the case of eighteenth and

<sup>479</sup> For examples of such contests see Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 273.

<sup>480</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 273-274.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274. Whilst this was the ostensible reason, there may in fact have been other motivations behind the confiscation of the family's property.

<sup>482</sup> Lovell, 'Thinking feminism with and against Bourdieu', pp. 20-21.

<sup>483</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

nineteenth century Japan, it is difficult to determine whether women were choosing to study tea of their own accord, for their own benefit, or whether they were encouraged to do so by their family for the benefit of others, particularly male family members. Most likely it was never one or the other but a combination of both, although the extent to which an individual woman could exercise free choice is questionable. Nonetheless, the possibility cannot be entirely discounted. In any case, female tea practitioners were accruing symbolic and cultural capital through their study of this art. That this served to enhance both their prestige and that of their families can be of no doubt.<sup>484</sup> However, unlike women in post-war Japan who, according to Kato, have used the symbolic-cultural capital accrued through their study of tea 'as a means of equilibrating themselves with, and at once defying, the economic and cultural (-educational) capital unequally distributed to men – especially to their male family members',<sup>485</sup> women in early modern Japan do not appear to have been elevating themselves in relation to men through their acquisition of this symbolic-cultural capital but in relation to other women who were their social superiors. It was a capital accumulation strategy aimed at bridging a status gap rather than a gender one.

With the spread of elite culture to the broader population, in a process which could be described as 'samuraization',<sup>486</sup> the education of an aristocratic or samurai woman was available even to a commoner from the provinces if her family was wealthy enough. Yoshida Ito (吉田いと 1824-?), daughter of a provincial artisan family, began her formal education at a local school from age eight, among other students ranging from age eight through to fourteen, both boys and girls.<sup>487</sup> At this school she studied subjects such as etiquette, manners and poetry and practiced reading the *iroha* poem, a range of textbooks and the *Kokinshū* poetry anthology. Ito's education in her youth was filled with learning etiquette and deportment (which may well have included learning tea), as

<sup>484</sup> From a contemporary feminist perspective, it is tempting to read this process of training of the body as potentially constraining for women. In presenting a positive evaluation of this process, I do not mean to discount the possibility of such an interpretation. Rather, I mean to show that for women at that time, and their families, it was regarded positively.

<sup>485</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 5.

<sup>486</sup> Susan B. Hanley, 'Tokugawa Society: Material Culture, Standard of Living, and Life-styles', in John W. Hall (ed) *The Cambridge History of Japan* volume 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 704.

<sup>487</sup> Takai Hiroshi, 'Tenpōki no aru shōnen to shōjo no kyōiku keisei katei no kenkyū: part 1', in *Gunma Daigaku kyōiku gakubu kiyō: Jimbun kagaku hen* 13 (1964), p. 147; and *Tenpōki shōnen shōjo kyōyo keisei katei no kenkyū*, (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, 1991), pp. 20-21. See also, Tocco, 'Norms and Texts for Women's Education in Tokugawa Japan', pp. 207-208.

well as poetry and writing Japanese characters. Her's paralleled the solemn education and lifestyle of the women's quarters at the shogun's palace in Edo.<sup>488</sup> Then, in 1838, the fifteen-year old Ito went to Edo to further her learning of, among other things, women's arts, studying under the National Learning scholar Tachibana Moribe (橘守部 1781-1849).<sup>489</sup> Her education under Moribe included keeping a journal and studying poetry, arts such as *koto*, *shamisen*, calligraphy and flower arrangement, and practical skills such as sewing and housekeeping. We know from her letters that she studied tea diligently with the wife of a temple priest,<sup>490</sup> and that Ito was an enthusiastic student who enjoyed her lessons thoroughly.<sup>491</sup> We can assume that tea's role in this education/self-improvement program was that it inculcated the attributes of a well-bred woman, such as how to move gracefully. Ito may have been a provincial commoner but that did not stop her learning the accomplishments of an aristocratic or samurai woman raised in the imperial palace in Kyoto or the shogun's palace in Edo.

In addition to acquiring gracefulness, another, more practical, reason why a woman in the early modern period would have studied tea is outlined in *Onna shisho geibun zue* (女四書芸分図絵 Pictorial Four Books for Women, 1835). This stated that a wife must always be ready to receive a guest of her husband and first serve them tea, then watching and anticipating what they may need, serve them a meal.<sup>492</sup> The implication, like in the story of Keikyô in *Toji no tamoto*, is that a good wife should have knowledge of tea and always be prepared to put it to use when necessary. The picture accompanying the text shows a woman in a back room making tea according to the *chanoyu* procedures, while her husband and his guest are having a discussion in the front room (Figure 12). In this case the household concerned is of samurai status, though we can assume that in wealthy commoner households the same etiquette may have been followed. One area outside of the tearoom in which women could display their skills was in the home, assisting their husbands by playing an integral behind the scenes role in hosting guests.

<sup>488</sup> Takai, 'Tenpôki no aru shônen to shôjo no kyôiku keisei katei no kenkyû: part 1', p. 149.

<sup>489</sup> Takai, *Tenpôki shônen shôjo kyôyo keisei katei no kenkyû*, p. 27.

<sup>490</sup> Though there is very little evidence to show that women were engaged in the teaching of tea this was not an isolated case of woman to woman dissemination of the art. As discussed in Chapter Five, the wife of the tea master Katagiri Sôen was also a tea teacher in her own right and taught the women of the li household.

<sup>491</sup> Takai, *Tenpôki shônen shôjo kyôyo keisei katei no kenkyû*, pp. 37-38, p. 41.

<sup>492</sup> *Onna shisho geibun zue* [Pictorial Four Books for Women] (1835). Reprinted in Ishikawa Matsutarô (ed), *Ôraimono taikêi*, vol. 85 (Tokyo: Ôzorasha, 1994).

Through the wife's physical act of *temae*, symbolising her acquisition of cultural-symbolic capital, the household's accumulation of economic capital could thus be displayed – perhaps not to the husband's guest in the next room, but certainly to the viewer of the picture.



Figure 38: Wife making tea for her husband and his guest.  
*Onna shisho geibun zue* (女四書芸分図絵 Pictorial Four Books for Women,  
 1835).<sup>493</sup>

Another type of text within the category of guides for women's edification were catalogues of bridal trousseaus. An example of this type of text is *Konrei dōgu zushū* (婚禮道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>494</sup> As described in Chapter One, the bridal trousseaus of elite women, as well as those for the debut of a courtesan, often included tea utensils. In a guide like *Konrei dōgu zushū*, commoner women could see extensive illustrations of these items. For the category of tea utensils

<sup>493</sup> *Onna shisho geibun zue* (1835). Reprinted in *Edo jidai josei seikatsu ezu daijiten*, volume 4, p. 298.

<sup>494</sup> Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dōgu zushū* (c. 1790). The note at the end of the text by Saito Gyokuzan indicates that a reprint was made in Kansei 5 (1793), therefore the original text by Okada Gyokuzan (1738-1812) was written before this date. It was reprinted in 1978 by Gendai Shichōsha, following a 1937 edition by Nihon Koten Zenshū Kankōkai.

alone, some 45 pages cover items ranging from utensil stands, to tea bowls, fresh water jars and tea caddies (Figures 13-18).<sup>495</sup>

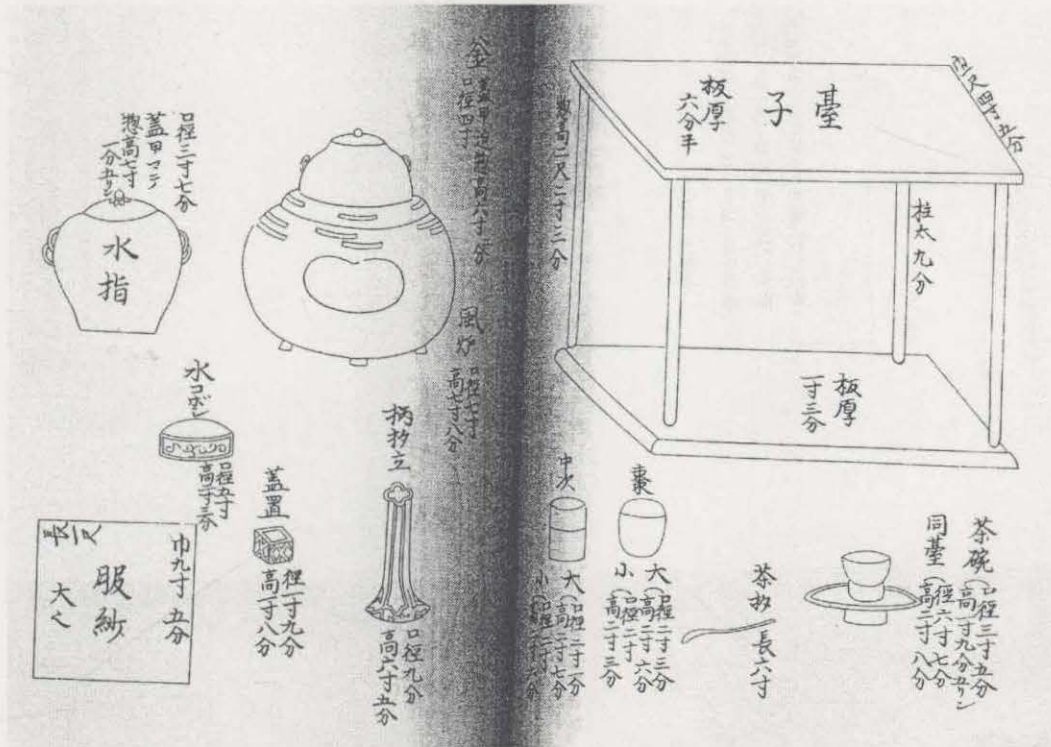


Figure 39: Illustrations of tea utensils, including (from right) utensil stand, tea bowl, tea scoop, brazier, kettle, cold water jar, and water filter.

*Konrei dôgu zushû* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>496</sup>

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 60-105.

<sup>496</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dôgu zushû*, pp. 60-61.

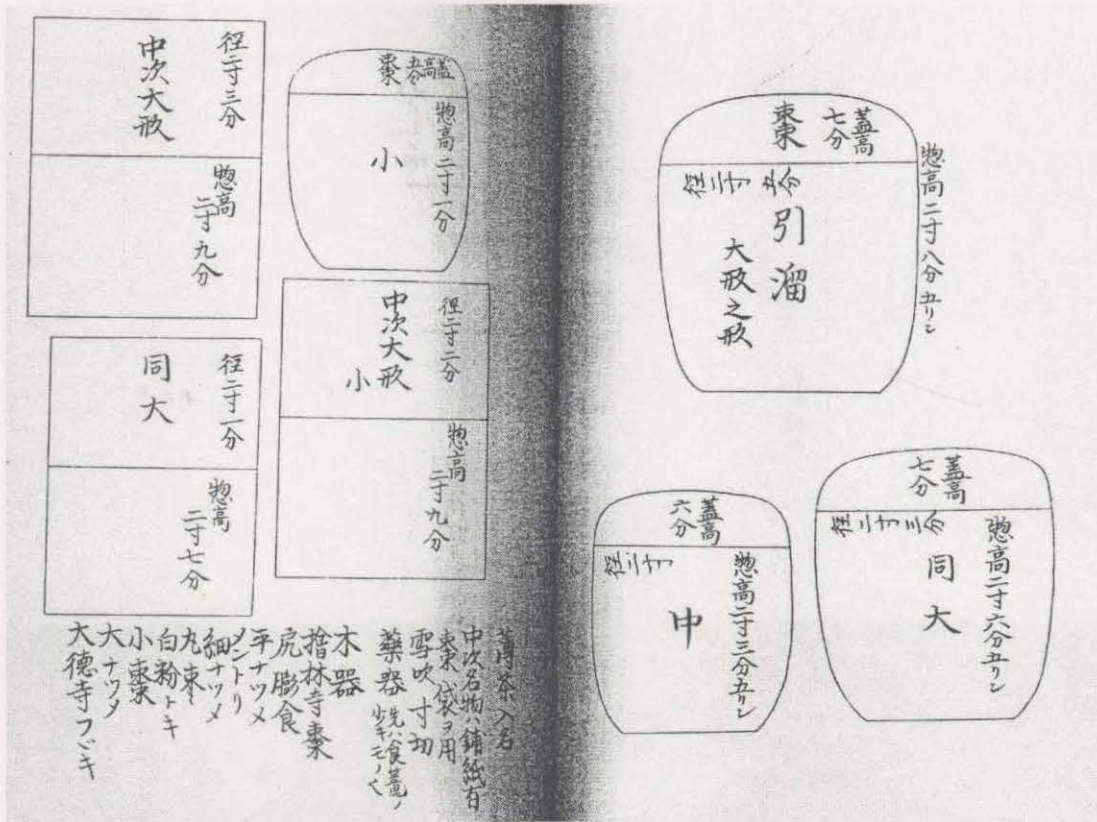


Figure 40: Illustrations of various sizes and shapes of lacquer-ware tea caddies. *Konrei dôgu zushû* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>497</sup>

<sup>497</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dôgu zushû*, pp. 62-63.



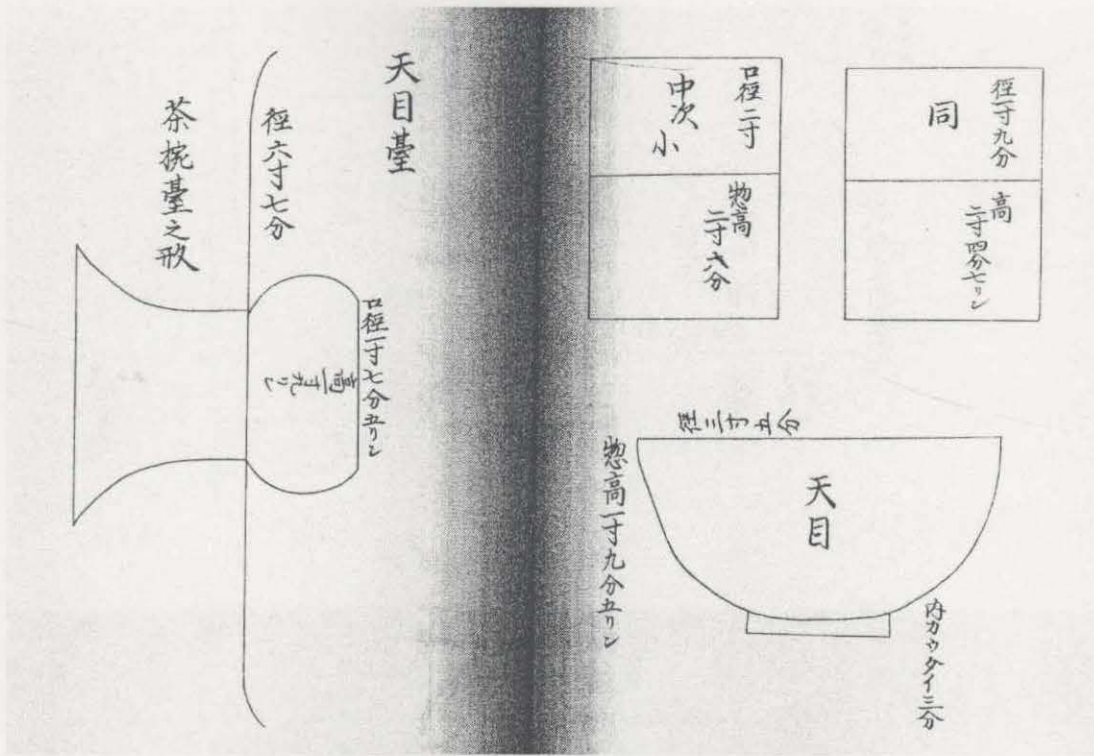


Figure 41: Illustrations of a *tenmoku* tea bowl (right) and (left) stand for a *tenmoku* tea bowl.

*Konrei dōgu zushū* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>498</sup>

<sup>498</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dōgu zushū*, pp. 64-65.

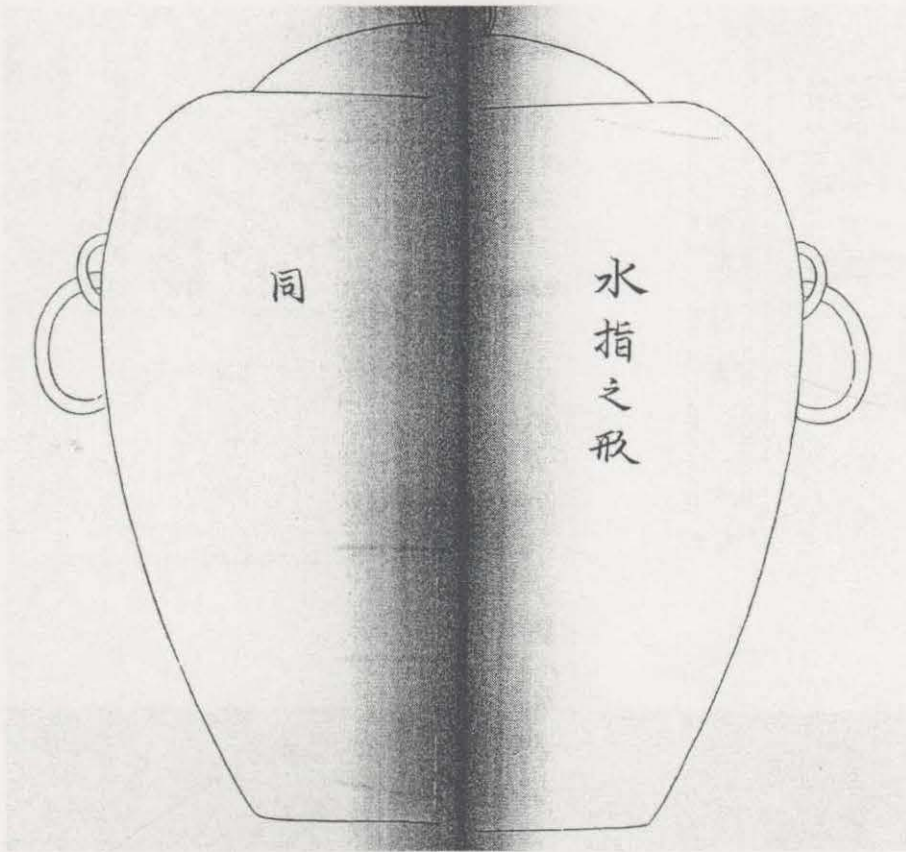


Figure 42: Illustration of a cold water jar.

*Konrei dōgu zushū* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>499</sup>

<sup>499</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dōgu zushū*, pp. 68-69.

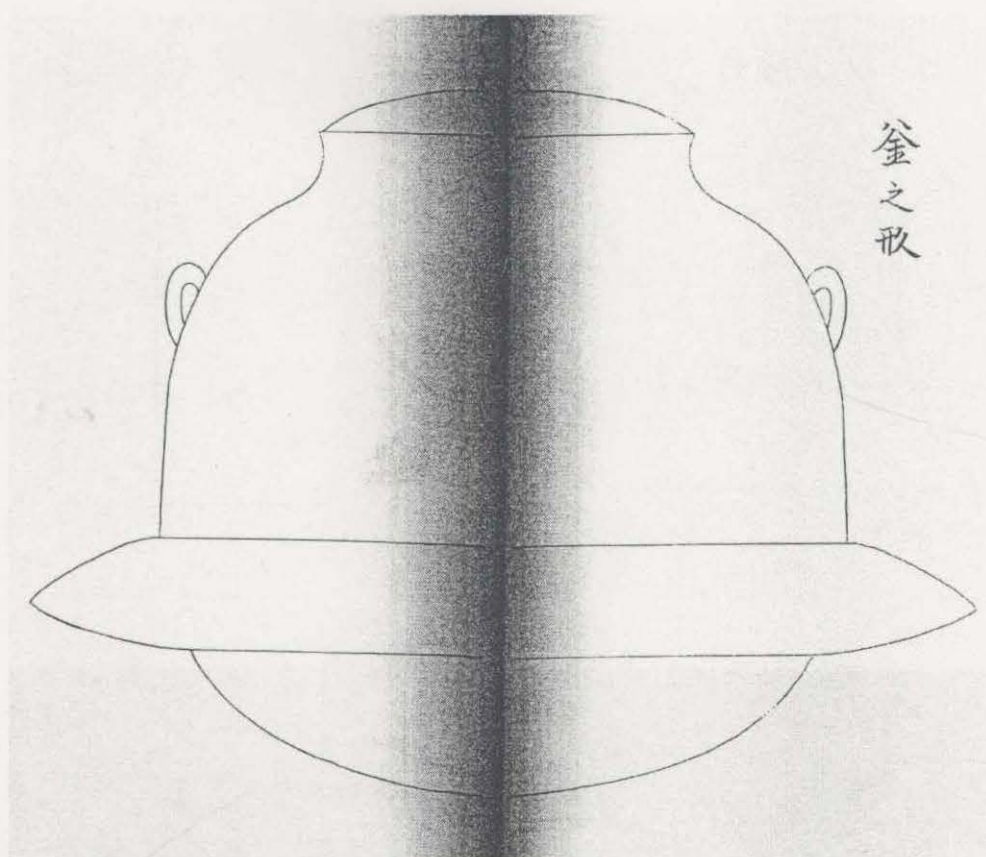


Figure 43: Illustration of a kettle.

*Konrei dōgu zushū* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>500</sup>

<sup>500</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dōgu zushū*, pp. 70-71.

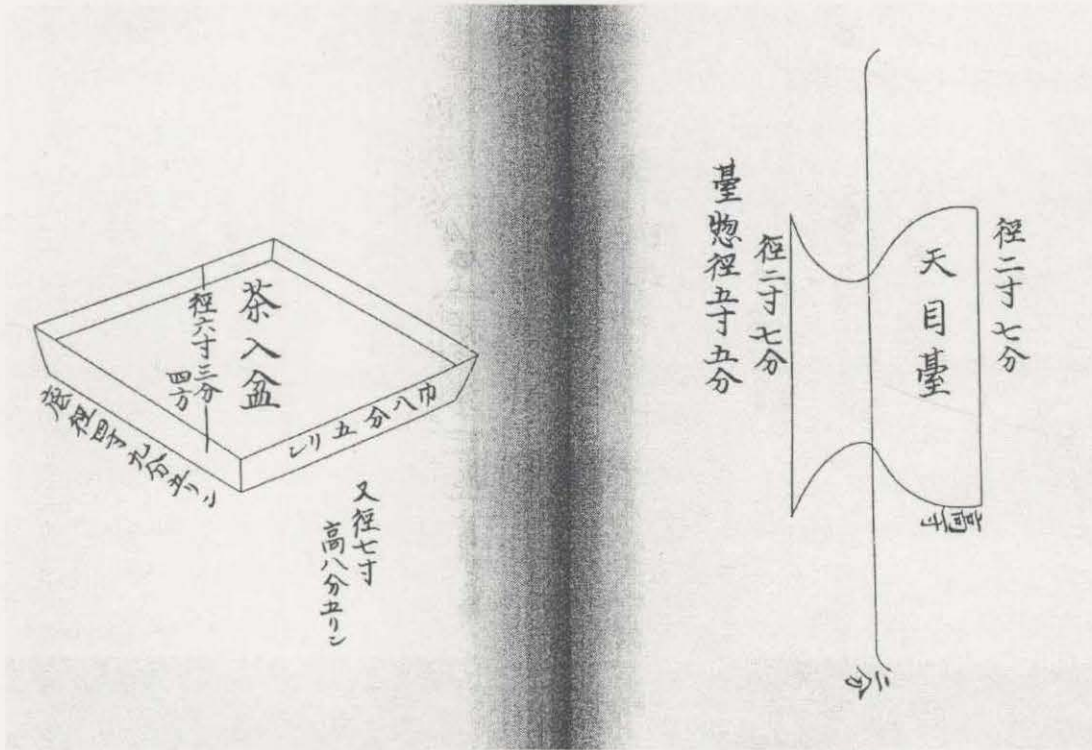


Figure 44: Illustrations of stand for a *tenmoku* tea bowl (right) and (left) a tray for a ceramic tea caddy (茶入盆 *chaire bon*).

*Konrei dôgu zushû* (婚礼道具図集 Illustrated Collection of Bridal Trousseau Items, c. 1790).<sup>501</sup>

This guide, then, was a reference book for commoner women that informed them of what to aspire to in terms of material possessions, whereas the other guides also included this information but focused more specifically on cultivating physical appearance. Combined with written information and the illustrations in other guides, *Konrei dôgu zushû* gave a commoner woman all the information she would need to equip herself, or possibly her daughter/s,<sup>502</sup> with the accoutrements of genteel femininity.

<sup>501</sup> Image source: Okada Gyokuzan, *Konrei dôgu zushû*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>502</sup> In her analysis of readers' letters to popular women's magazines in the interwar period, Barbara Sato found that many of the women had aspirations for upward mobility that could have been realised through marriage to a man of higher socio-economic status. Yet, even if they could not realise this aspiration for themselves, they often held it as a hope for their daughters. It may well be the case that women in early modern Japan similarly held aspirations of upward mobility for their daughters rather than for themselves. Barbara Sato, 'The Spirit of Modernity: Working-Class Women and Consumer Culture in Interwar Japan' (paper delivered at the Japanese History Workshop, The University of Sydney, December 7, 2007).

## Conclusion

According to Martha Tocco,

Because education did not transgress the boundaries of their gender, most girls and women educated in the Tokugawa period did not have to study in secret. The content of their education was publicly acknowledged, and women with higher levels of education taught others without stigma.<sup>503</sup>

The same could be said of Edo period women's tea practice. Despite what many historians claim, there is in fact evidence for the widespread study of tea by women. We see in the inclusion of basic, introductory information on tea in guides for women's edification that tea was a publicly acknowledged aspect of women's education. Women who practised tea in the Edo period were not doing so in secret, going against the rules of a tea-master like Sugiki Fusai. Rather, they were encouraged to do so. However, this encouragement came not just from tea masters like Ôguchi Shôô. It came in the form of a popular discourse on women's tea, which was produced in the context of a thriving commercial publishing industry, and must be taken as representative of popular attitudes to a large extent. Importantly, we see that in engaging in the practice of tea, women were not transgressing gender boundaries in a deliberate or threatening way.

Rather than gender boundaries, it was status boundaries which were being blurred and crossed. Economic growth led to an increasing number of women having access to education and leisure time, pre-requisites for engaging in the study of tea. The discourse on tea in guides for women's edification evidences the popularisation and commercialisation of tea, as a 'refined' cultural practice spread beyond a small elite to new social groups, including commoner women.<sup>504</sup> At the same time, genteel femininity became a form of symbolic-cultural capital in itself and knowledge of tea was one component of this model of femininity. Through the guides, this model was held up for commoner women to emulate. Tea thus became 'essential knowledge' for all women wanting to insinuate themselves into 'proper' society in eighteenth and nineteenth

<sup>503</sup> Martha Tocco, 'Made in Japan: Meiji Women's Education', in Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (ed), *Gendering Modern Japanese History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), p. 47.

<sup>504</sup> In a process similar to that shown here in regards to tea, Peter Kornicki has discussed how 'the process by which *Genji* and *Ise* gradually came to be accepted as works valuable for women to read intersected with the larger sociological transformation of court culture in the seventeenth century as it passed out of the controlling hands of the aristocracy and ever more into the hands of those of lesser social status'. Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women', p. 179.

century Japan. It was no longer just an accomplishment for courtesans and elite women of the court and military aristocracy.

The reasons presented to women for studying tea, as well as the limited range of tea practice recommended for women, indicate that the purpose of women's tea, as conceived of in these guides, was to learn etiquette and deportment. Thus, what Kato calls the '*temae as sahō*' discourse can actually be seen to have earlier roots than the period 'of Westernization and nationalism in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century' when Kato claims it was developed.<sup>505</sup> In the case of eighteenth and nineteenth century Japan, the 'non-dominant group' using tea 'to obtain symbolic-cultural capital' was not women as a whole, but lower-status women, who were aiming to 'equilibrate' themselves with higher-status women. To reiterate an earlier point, it was a capital accumulation strategy aimed at bridging a status rather than a gender gap. As suggested above, women in the Edo period were not bound by the status system in the same way as men. It was because of the flexibility of status where women were concerned that the guides could appeal to commoner women's aspirations to improve their social standing, both in appearance and in fact.

The development of women's tea practice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is therefore less a reflection of changing gender norms or ideology than it is a reflection of the commercialisation and popularisation of tea. The spread of the discourse on women's tea, from *Toji no tamoto*, which was specifically addressed to women of the imperial and military aristocracy, to the guides for women's edification aimed at wealthy commoners reflects this trend. More broadly, this can be described as part of a 'civilizing process' whereby norms of social behaviour and appearance, particularly comportment and manners, were disseminated from the elite to wealthy commoners, or from the upper-class to the middle-class. 'Civility' became part of 'the equation of common learning'.<sup>506</sup> As Ikegami observes, even if formal status rankings were not altered by this process, 'common standards of aesthetic excellence made social boundaries less significant'.<sup>507</sup> The body was one site for this civilising process, and women's bodies in particular, could

<sup>505</sup> Kato, *Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 67.

<sup>506</sup> Berry, *Japan in Print*, p. 207.

<sup>507</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 158.

serve as capital bearing objects which displayed both their families', and their individual, acquisition of civility.

## Chapter Five: Tea in the Inner Quarters

Evidence from guides for women's edification indicates that, aside from being 'essential knowledge', a significant reason for the increasing popularity of studying tea among commoner women in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that it could help them attain a position in service (宮仕え *miyazukae*) in the inner quarters (奥 *oku*) of a daimyô or elite samurai's household (御殿 *goten*). They could perhaps even gain a position in the inner quarters of the shogun's palace (大奥 *Ô-oku*) in Edo. Tea was particularly suited to the task of preparing a woman to go into service as it taught her how to be graceful.

In Chapter Two, it was suggested that elite women who attended tea gatherings would have wanted some of their serving women to be proficient in tea. This chapter will further expand on this particular aspect of early modern women's tea practice by discussing the role of tea as an art for those aspiring to enter into service and those already in service, that is female attendants (女中 *jochû*).<sup>508</sup> After an overview of how women's service functioned and the motivations for entering service, a detailed example of how women's tea could function in a daimyô household in the late nineteenth century will be given. This should be considered a representative example of women's tea practice in an elite household and not unique, as other scholars have suggested.

There were significant implications for status mobility resulting from women's tea practice and their service in elite households. Both of these social trends were connected to a broader phenomenon of the gradual disintegration of status boundaries between those of samurai and commoner status. Through learning tea and going into service, wealthy commoner women were able to deploy their bodies in the pursuit of status – either heightening their status or, less likely but nonetheless possible, raising their status.

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<sup>508</sup> I am grateful to Anne Walthall for suggesting 'female attendants' as a good general translation for the term *jochû*. Within the category of *jochû* there were numerous levels of women in service, from the highest level, which may be described as 'lady-in-waiting' in English, down to the lowest level of 'maids'. To avoid confusion 'attendants' is used throughout but by no means should it be taken as implying that the position within the household of all of the women so described was the same.



## Women in Service

As a result of the alternate attendance system implemented by the the Tokugawa shogunate, all daimyô maintained residences in Edo where their wives and families lived. These mansions, as well as their castles in their own domains, had in their employ women of various ranks who collectively were known as *jochû*. These female attendants occupied an interior space within the castle or mansion known as the *oku*, or the inner quarters. The largest of these was the *Ô-oku* at Edo castle. According to a record from the 1850s, there were some 1000 women residing in the inner quarters of Edo castle during the time of the 13<sup>th</sup> Shogun Tokugawa Iesada (徳川家定 1824-1858).<sup>509</sup> Of these, approximately 185 would have been attendants in the service of the Shogun.<sup>510</sup> In addition, there were women who served the Shogun's wife and the Shogun's mother, as well as the women these attendants personally employed using their own income. This income came in various forms. Records from Iesada's household indicate that female attendants received income in various forms, including rice, which was paid in two ways: *kirimai* (切米), calculated according to units of rice; and *fuchi* (扶持), calculated according to units of people (ie: the ration of rice deemed necessary to support one person). They also received money (合力金 *kôryoku gane*); fagots (薪 *taki*); coal (炭 *sumi*); firewood (湯の木 *yu no ki*); oil (油 *abura*); and money for incidentals (五菜銀 *gosai gin*).<sup>511</sup> Within the category of *jochû* there was a range of positions, each carrying their own duties and responsibilities, from the top position of ladies-in-waiting (上臈御年寄 *jôrô otoshiyori*), down to maids (御半下 *ohanshita*). Between them were some 24 other positions (see Appendix C). The amount of remuneration received by the women depended on their position within this hierarchy (see Appendix C). Ladies-in-waiting, for example, of whom there were three under Iesada, received 50 *koku* of rice, 60 *ryô* of gold and 10 *fuchi* of rice per annum. At the bottom of the ladder the maids, of whom there

<sup>509</sup> Yujiro Oguchi, 'The Tokugawa *shôgun's* "court" as an economic institution', in Maurice Aymard and Marzio Achille (ed) *La cour comme institution économique* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des science, 1998), p. 214. The numbers had apparently been even greater in the early Tokugawa period, with one record suggesting that over 3700 women were dismissed from the Shoguns inner quarters as an economizing measure in 1651. See Gary Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers in the Cities of Tokugawa Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 38.

<sup>510</sup> Hata Hisako, *Edo oku jochû monogatari*, (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 2001), p. 67. Citing Matsuo Micko, 'Edo bakufu jochû bungenchô ni tsuite', *Gakushûin Joshi Tanki Daigaku kiyô* 30 (1992), pp. 82-129.

<sup>511</sup> Hata, *Oku jochû monogatari*, p. 67. Citing Matsuo, 'Edo bakufu jochû bungenchô ni tsuite', pp. 82-129.

were 35, received only four *koku* of rice, 2 *ryô* of gold and 1 *fuchi* of rice.<sup>512</sup> The income of the women at the lower end was comparable to that of low-ranking samurai men in the position of footmen (仲間 *chûgen*) or a page/secretary (小姓 *koshô*) who received around 2 *ryô* a year.<sup>513</sup>

The pattern at other noble and samurai households was more or less the same as in the Shogun's inner quarters: samurai women served the immediate family members, and lower ranking samurai and commoner women were in the direct service of these women.<sup>514</sup> Even commoner households, particularly the wealthier ones, employed numerous female attendants and servants. However, as evidence for tea practice among female attendants is from elite households, the discussion will be limited to this group.

The benefits of being in service included learning how to run a large household, learning the manners and tastes and gaining practice in the skills and accomplishments of elite women, as well as financial remuneration, lodging and meals. Being in service was a way of gaining 'life experience' before marriage for young women.<sup>515</sup> The chance to experience life in the city was considered particularly attractive. A *bakufu* official, Uezaki Kuhachirô, wrote in 1787 that, 'so far as the girls are concerned, their parents send them out to domestic service in Edo, in order to satisfy their wish to see Edo and life there... All vie with one another in dispatching their daughters to Edo'.<sup>516</sup> Exact numbers are not available, though estimates are that up to 10 percent of the population in Edo were servants of samurai throughout the period. The three Edo mansions of the Kaga daimyô, for example, employed a staff of around 1000 servants.<sup>517</sup> These figures suggest that the number of women who went into service in a noble or samurai household was not insignificant. It has even been suggested that the large number of young women going into service was partly responsible for the rising age of women at marriage in the

<sup>512</sup> Hata, *Edo oku jochû monogatari*, p. 67. Citing Matsuo, 'Edo bakufu jochû bungenchô ni tsuite', pp. 82-129. See Appendix C for the conversions of these currencies.

<sup>513</sup> Ono Takeo, *Edo bukka jiten* (Tokyo: Tenbôsha, 1979), p. 111.

<sup>514</sup> See, for example, the description of Yoshino Michi's duties in the service of noble women who managed the Hitotsubashi household in Anne Walthall, 'From Peasant Daughter to Samurai Wife: The letters of Yoshino Michi', *The Annual Report of the Institute for International Studies, Meiji Gakuin*, no. 8 (December 2005), p. 97.

<sup>515</sup> Anne Walthall, 'Edo bunka ni okeru Ô-oku' (The Shogun's Domestic Quarters in Japanese Popular Culture), *Journal of Gender Studies, Ochanomizu University*, 4 (2001), p. 56.

<sup>516</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 67. Citing Honjô Eijirô, *Social and Economic History of Japan* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 172. See also Oguchi Yujiro, *Josei no iru kinsei* (Tokyo: Keiso Shobô, 1995).

<sup>517</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 29.

latter part of the Edo period.<sup>518</sup> As indicated by Uezaki's comment, many of these women migrated to the city, or to castle-towns, to find a position in service. The age of women who were in service varied greatly, depending on the position as well as the girls' personal circumstances. There are examples from literature and other sources of girls younger than 10 being in service, and of women in their twenties and thirties. Most women entered into service during their teens. Girls from both samurai and commoner families entered into service. Sekiguchi Tôemon (関口藤右衛門 1764-1849), a rural entrepreneur, for example, sent all three of his daughters into service at daimyô mansions, and one even ended up serving in the shogun's quarters.<sup>519</sup> We will see below examples of girls of samurai status who also served in daimyô households.

Ujie Mikito argues that financial reasons, in particular, were behind the trend of going into service, which started with girls from poorer families.<sup>520</sup> It is difficult to say precisely what the income would have been for female attendants in elite households due to a lack of specific data. Nonetheless an estimate can be made on the basis of other available data. Firstly, it would appear that the wages of men and women were not vastly different. Ogyû Sorai, writing in the 1720s, stated that, 'some forty or fifty years ago the wage (*kirimai*) of a *wakatô* retainer was about 2 *ryô*, a *chûgen* footman 1 *ryô*, a seamstress (針妙 *shinmyô*) 1 *ryô*, and a servant girl (婢女 *hashitame*) 1 or 2 *bu*. But now a *wakatô* retainer gets more than 3 or 4 *ryô*, a *chûgen* footman gets 2 *ryô* plus 2 or 3 *bu* or 3 *ryô*, a seamstress 3 to 4 *ryô*, and a servant girl about 2 *ryô*'.<sup>521</sup> That is, in the eighteenth century a seamstress earned a comparable wage to a retainer, as did a servant girl with a footman. Secondly, there was a wide range of income level among female attendants. As discussed above, female attendants in the Shogun's inner quarters in the 1850s could receive as much as 50 *koku* of rice per annum or as little as four *koku*, depending on their position. By comparison, Gary Leupp cites the example of the chambermaids in the Numano household, a commoner family in Wakayama, in the same period, who received the equivalent of 1.3 *koku* of rice in annual wages.<sup>522</sup> Estimates of a woman's minimum

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

<sup>519</sup> Anne Walthall, 'Family Ideology of Rural Entrepreneurs in Nineteenth-Century Japan', *Journal of Social History* 23: 3 (1990), p. 473.

<sup>520</sup> Ujie Mikito, *Edo no shônen* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1989), p. 143.

<sup>521</sup> Ogyû, *Seidan*, pp. 119-120. See Appendix C for the conversions of these currencies.

<sup>522</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 104.

yearly expenses at the time are between 1.1 to 1.4 *koku*, while for men it was 1.8 *koku*.<sup>523</sup> We can place the income of female attendants in elite households as somewhere between the income of Iesada's attendants and the Numano chambermaids. Certainly, they would have been receiving a 'comfortable' income above the minimum living wage of 1.4 *koku*. Yet, as Anne Walthall's discussion of the letters of one commoner girl serving in a daimyō mansion in Edo reveal, the expenses associated with being in service were not always met by her income. She often requested her parents to send money and clothing; 'I'm really short of pocket money' was a constant refrain'.<sup>524</sup> In her case she was also able to substitute her income by selling goods, such as cloth, to the women she worked with.<sup>525</sup>

The potential for earning income and gaining life experience made going into service an attractive option for young women. In guides such as *Oku jochū sode kagami* (奥女中袖鑑 A Pocket Mirror of Female Attendants in Noble Households, 1858), readers could study the attire and hairstyles of female attendants. This guide also listed three reasons why young women should want to go into service in an elite household: young girls from poor families could gain an education; girls from families who were not poor but had many children could feed themselves until marriage (and thereby relieve the burden on their parents); and, they would learn about the world and experience hardship, which would help them to manage a household when they got married. It also listed two reasons why older women should want to go into service: it was a way for married women with a poor husband to support themselves and their husband; and, it was a way for older women to avoid becoming a burden to their children.<sup>526</sup> Ujie sees these various financial, educational and social reasons for going into service as an indication of the desire of commoner women to improve their situation in life and, more broadly, of the spread of service as a social trend. He argues that we should therefore not view samurai and commoner society and culture as vastly different by the latter part of the Edo period. Rather, the examples of commoner girls learning 'refined' arts and serving in elite households evidences interaction between status groups and a merging of elite and

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

<sup>524</sup> Walthall, 'From Peasant Daughter to Samurai Wife: The letters of Yoshino Michi', p. 98.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>526</sup> Cited in Ujie, *Edo no shōnen*, pp. 148-149. It appears then that older, married women could also enter into service, though they were probably in the minority.

popular culture.<sup>527</sup> This interaction was occasionally the focus of *kabuki* plays, itself an area where status groups and cultures merged and clashed.<sup>528</sup> The play *Kagamiyama kokyô no nishiki-e* (鏡山旧錦絵 Mirror Mountain: A Woman's Treasury of Loyalty), for example, centres on the tensions between a female samurai attendant at a daimyô's mansion and another attendant who is a commoner's daughter and does not have the same training in martial arts as the women raised in samurai households.<sup>529</sup> It may also have been a reflection of tension between hereditary servants (譜代者 *fudaimono*) and hired servants (出代者 *dekawarimono*), who did not grow up in the household in which they were to serve.

Despite such occasional conflicts, the positive interplay between elite and popular culture which occurred as a result of the growing number of people going into service has led Leupp, following the lead of European historians, to describe those in service as belonging to a 'bridging class'.<sup>530</sup> That is, 'in their employment careers, they bridged town and village, and...commoner and samurai classes'.<sup>531</sup> The daughters of Sekiguchi Tôemon, mentioned above, provide a clear example of women bridging status and rural/urban divides through their service careers. Several intellectuals of the period, such as Ogyû Sorai and Ishida Baigan (石田梅巖 1685-1744), deplored this social phenomenon.<sup>532</sup> In particular, Sorai advocated a return to the older system of hereditary employment, which had largely been replaced by hiring servants on short-term (for example, one-year) contracts.<sup>533</sup> What Sorai objected to above all was the migration of servants between rural and urban areas, and the lack of loyalty shown by hired as opposed to hereditary servants. Furthermore, he feared that samurai values were being replaced with the 'thinking and attitudes of the townspeople', as those raised outside a samurai house were having increasing contact with those of samurai status. Thus, Sorai

<sup>527</sup> Ujje, *Edo no shônen*, p. 163.

<sup>528</sup> See C. Andrew Gerstle, 'Flowers of Edo: Kabuki and its patrons', in C. Andrew Gerstle (ed), *18<sup>th</sup> Century Japan: Culture and Society*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), pp. 33-50.

<sup>529</sup> See Yô Yôtai, *Kagamiyama kokyô no nishiki-e* (Mirror Mountain: A Woman's Treasury of Loyalty) (1782), trans. Mark Oshima, in James R. Brandon and Samuel L. Leiter (eds), *Kabuki Plays on Stage*, volume 2: *Villainy and Vengeance, 1773-1799*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), pp. 172-213.

<sup>530</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, pp. 120-122.

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>532</sup> For Ishida Baigan's views see Shively, 'Sumptuary Regulation and Status', pp. 157-158. See also Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 121.

<sup>533</sup> Ogyû, *Seidan*, p. 123.

suggested, 'the disappearance of hereditary servants and the resultant ubiquity of hired servants presage the decline of the military way, a trend exceedingly harmful to the military class'.<sup>534</sup> A return to the old system did not occur, and the 'bridging class' of wealthy commoners and lower samurai who served in elite households continued to grow throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The flow of culture was not as one-sided as Sorai suggested, though, with the influence of samurai culture on commoners being as influential as that of commoner culture on samurai.

Being in service allowed women to create a livelihood for themselves, as well as provide support for their families, while increasing their marriageability by gaining new skills, in household management for example. Serving in an elite household has thus been described as akin to attending a finishing school or a women's junior college in contemporary Japan.<sup>535</sup> Doubtless, financial considerations were important, but improving a girls' manners was perhaps also in the back of many parents' minds, as it was for one of the commoner mothers in Shikitei Sanba's (式亭三馬 1776-1822) novel *Ukiyoburo* (浮世風呂 *The Floating Bathhouse* c. 1810), who says that,

Service is a real blessing. They don't call it discipline. But [the experience] improves their manners. At home no matter how often you scold them, you don't really correct their bad habits, but when you get them into a [samurai] mansion, they begin to change completely.<sup>536</sup>

Indeed, while the financial benefits, even if limited to having one less mouth to feed, were attractive to poor families, it appears that the other benefits and social prestige of having a daughter in service were so great that some well-to-do families were paying for the privilege.<sup>537</sup>

<sup>534</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>535</sup> See, for example, Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 155; Walthall, 'Edo bunka ni okeru Ô-oku', p. 56; and Hata, *Edo oku jochû monogatari*, p. 22.

<sup>536</sup> Shikitei Sanba, *Ukiyoburo* (c. 1810) (reprinted Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957), p. 121. Translated in Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 68.

<sup>537</sup> Walthall, 'From Peasant Daughter to Samurai Wife: The letters of Yoshino Michi', p. 97.

### Beyond the Years Spent in Service

Improving a daughter's marriage prospects must have been an aspiration for parents sending their daughters into service and for the daughters themselves. Successful matches to a man of higher status were not infrequent. Yoshino Michi (吉野みち 1808-1883), for example, was the daughter of a rural peasant family who, 'during her years as a maid-in-waiting', first at the Tayasu mansion, then at the Hitotsubashi mansion, 'crafted herself into an altogether appropriate bride for a samurai'.<sup>538</sup> Her husband, Tamura Motonaga, was a low-ranking samurai doctor. It appears that Michi's skills at household management and feminine modesty were what made her an attractive second wife in the eyes of the Tamura family.<sup>539</sup> The author Tadano Makuzu (只野真葛 1763-1825), daughter of a physician scholar (non-samurai), served in two daimyō mansions in Edo, including the Hikone mansion of the Ii family who will be discussed below, over a ten-year period. This was part of her 'task of bringing social capital to the household'.<sup>540</sup> She then fulfilled this task through two marriages to samurai men.<sup>541</sup>

A less likely possibility, though one that surely captured people's imaginations, was marriage 'into the purple'. Susanne Formanek cites the example of Keishōin (桂昌院 1627-1705), 'the daughter of a Kyoto-based greengrocer who, via her getting appointed to the service of a lord who had access to the shogunal residence, managed to enter service in the shogun's palace (*Ô-oku*) itself, became the lesser wife of the third shogun Iemitsu and upon her son Tsunayoshi being appointed to [*sic*] the fifth shogun, became one of the most influential female figures in the realm'.<sup>542</sup> That such rags to riches stories were a rare occurrence probably did little to limit their appeal; dreams of becoming the next Keishōin may well have filled the minds of many a young girl upon entering into service. Another possibility was becoming the concubine of a lord. This too was seen as a possible route to future security.

<sup>538</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 100.

<sup>539</sup> *Ibid.* p. 100.

<sup>540</sup> Bettina Gramlich-Oka, *Thinking Like a Man: Tadano Makuzu (1763-1825)*, (Leiden: Brill, 2006), p. 67.

<sup>541</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

<sup>542</sup> Susanne Formanek, 'The 'Spectacle' of Womanhood: New Types in Texts and Pictures on Pictorial *Sugoroku* Games of the Late Edo Period', in Susanne Formanek and Sepp Linhart (ed), *Written Texts-Visual Texts: Woodblock-printed Media in Early Modern Japan* (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), p. 103.

Formanek's analysis of women's career/success story *sugoroku* shows that these possible outcomes of service in a noble household were part of the popular imagination at the time. *Sugoroku*, or more specifically the *e-sugoroku* (絵双六 pictorial *sugoroku*) which will be discussed here, are a 'genre of printed board-games', which 'consisted of woodblock-printed sheets pasted together', that were popular in the late Edo period. The aim of the game was to reach a 'goal' (上 *agari*) square, and this was done by rolling dice and following the instructions on the squares as to where to proceed next, though there was a great deal of variation in the layout of the boards and the complexity of the routes taken to reach the goal. *Sugoroku* had developed from Buddhist origins to become commercial products in various sub-genres, covering theatre, history and travel to name a few, as well as genres related to 'ideals of womanhood', such as women's 'career' or 'success story' (出世 *shusse*) *sugoroku*. They were often illustrated by celebrated woodblock artists, such as Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) (歌川国貞 [豊国三代] 1786-1865), and featured text by well-known authors, such as Mantei Ôga (万亭応賀 1818-1890).<sup>543</sup>

One such 'text',<sup>544</sup> *Onna kyôkun shusse sugoroku* (女教訓出世双六 *Sugoroku* for Women's Edification: How to Make One's Way in Life 1847-1852), reveals that there was a 'widespread range of possible life courses available to a woman born as a commoner daughter', yet 'there is no secure position' which guarantees you will reach the goal, in this case being a 'retired old lady blessed with fortune and good luck'.<sup>545</sup> Formanek argues that it

suggests a view of society within which the social classes, though by law hermetically closed to each other and arranged in a strict hierarchy, are conceived of as closely intermingling with each other, at least as far as women are concerned. By the same token, such a view allows for extreme upward mobility on the one hand, while at the same time hinting at social insecurity in the sense that no one can ever be sure not to become impoverished at one time in his life.<sup>546</sup>

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-82.

<sup>544</sup> For Formanek *sugoroku* can be read as 'texts' in multiple ways. For example, by looking at what is represented on the squares, and also by looking at the possible moves and where they will take you, ie: closer to the goal or its negative counterpole. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80 and p. 82.

<sup>546</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.



One appealing life course for a commoner daughter was to gain a position as an attendant in an elite household, from where, with any luck, she may become a concubine, which on *Onna kyôkun shusse sugoroku* provided the quickest route to the goal, suggesting that it was viewed as a good route to take in order to secure one's future.<sup>547</sup> Another possibility was to become the lord's wife, which was often the goal on *sugoroku* that focused specifically on the subject of serving in a noble or daimyô household.<sup>548</sup> In either case, *sugoroku* such as *Onna kyôkun shusse sugoroku* 'thus suggests for the young girl the possibility of a career inaccessible to the commoner boy – that of transcending the boundaries of her class and entering the world of the nobility'.<sup>549</sup>

As discussed in Chapter Four, because of the gendered nature of status as male, women were uniquely positioned to take advantage of possibilities for crossing status boundaries. Marriage to a samurai, if not a daimyô or the Shogun, was a highly desirable outcome from the years a girl spent in service. For Yoshino Michi, Tadano Makuzu and Keishôin, this outcome was realised. Another possible life course, aside from marriage, for a female attendant upon retirement was to become a teacher, which by the late Edo period had become an occupation considered suitable for women.<sup>550</sup> Uezaki suggested of those who migrate to the city for service that, 'they soon come to imitate the manners of the Edo people and to detest life in their native provinces', yet this was not always the case.<sup>551</sup> Walthall gives several examples of women who, after perfecting their preferred art/s whilst in service, returned to their hometown to instruct local children, bringing their knowledge of elite and city culture with them, thereby decreasing not only status but also regional differences. For example, Sayo (さよ), a commoner's daughter, learnt reading, writing and shamisen whilst she was employed at a daimyô's mansion. She later returned to her hometown and supported her ailing parents by teaching local girls basic literacy skills.<sup>552</sup> Tamura Kajiko (田村梶子) had gone into service at the Shogun's palace when

<sup>547</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>548</sup> Formanek lists several *sugoroku* of the latter type. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>550</sup> Martha Tocco, 'Made in Japan: Meiji Women's Education', in Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (eds), *Gendering Modern Japanese History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), p. 41.

<sup>551</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers* p. 67. Citing Honjô Eijirô, *Social and Economic History of Japan* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1965), p. 172.

<sup>552</sup> Walthall, 'Edo bunka ni okeru Ô-oku', p. 56.

she was seventeen. At age thirty-one she returned home and began instructing local children in poetry writing, manners and etiquette, and shamisen.<sup>553</sup>

Teaching music and other arts to boys and girls seems to have been a reasonably common occupation for women in the later part of the Edo period. Certainly, there were enough women engaged in teaching shamisen and *jôruri* (浄瑠璃 a form of ballad chanting) for the *bakufu* to include controls on it in the Tempô Reforms of the 1840s.<sup>554</sup> While we do not have as much concrete evidence for women teaching tea to local children, it was certainly an art they could perfect while in service, and certainly something which young women learnt before going into service. There is every likelihood that some former female attendants did teach tea to young girls. As discussed in Chapter Four, the provincial commoner's daughter Yoshida Ito studied tea from the wife of a temple priest whilst under the tutelage of Tachibana Moribe in Edo. We do not know the background of this teacher, but she herself must have studied tea at some point, possibly whilst in service.

#### Learning Tea as Preparation for Going into Service

Because of the potential benefits, including social prestige, of having a daughter in service, both commoner and samurai families invested in their daughter's education, in particular in the arts which would stand them in good stead for gaining a position in a noble or samurai household.<sup>555</sup> Tea was one such art. When Nishimiya Hide (西宮秀), the sixteen-year old daughter of a low-ranking samurai, applied for a position as an attendant to Yoshiko, the wife of Mito domain lord Tokugawa Nariaki (徳川齊昭 1800-1860), she put to use her training in tea. In two interviews Hide's personal appearance, ability to compose a poem and skill at tea were all scrutinised by Yoshiko herself.<sup>556</sup> Yoshiko was the daughter of an imperial prince, as well as the wife of a daimyô, and thus her serving women would have been expected to be refined and graceful. Being an

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>555</sup> In the aforementioned novel *Ukiyoburo* readers come across the equivalent of today's 'kyôiku-mama' who pushes her daughter to study the polite arts from morning until night, though this is of course an exaggerated example for comic effect. Shikitei, *Ukiyoburo*, p. 185.

<sup>556</sup> Nishimiya Hide, 'Ochiba no nikki', unpublished manuscript, pp. 14-15. Summarised in Anne Walthall, 'Nishimiya Hide: Turning Palace Arts into Marketable Skills', in Walthall (ed), *The Human Tradition in Modern Japan*, p. 47.

accomplished tea practitioner demonstrated that Hide possessed these qualities, as we saw it did for the nursemaid Masaoka in Chapter One. Hide 'spent the next nineteen years in service to Yoshiko, refining her social skills and embodying gentility'.<sup>557</sup>

Like Hide, girls often 'had to demonstrate their cultural competence at what amounted to job interviews'.<sup>558</sup> This meant that already having skill at an art such as tea stood a girl in good stead for gaining a position in service. The diaries of the daimyô of Yamato Kôriyama (a small domain of 150 000 *koku*), Yanagisawa Nobutoki (柳沢信鴻 1724-1792), written between 1773 and 1791, attest to the eagerness of girls to serve in a daimyô household. In the course of the diaries approximately 240 girls, ranging in age from the early-teens through to the mid-twenties, presented themselves at the Yanagisawa household, wishing to be employed as an attendant.<sup>559</sup> At these interviews (お目見え *omemie*) the applicants would demonstrate their skill in at least two arts. The most common combinations were *jôruri* and shamisen, and dance and shamisen. Some girls demonstrated ability in three or more arts, such as the seventeen-year old Imo who presented herself for an interview in the twelfth month of 1783 and demonstrated her skills in calligraphy, *gidayû* (義太夫 a form of ballad chanting), koto, tea and sewing. Even with all of these skills, however, Imo was not employed.<sup>560</sup>

It appears that in some cases the applicants were interviewing prospective employers as much as they were being interviewed themselves. Again, the novel *Ukiyoburo* provides an illustrative example of this. One of the mothers, who has so far been unsuccessful in her bid to place her daughter in service, says to the more successful friend, whose daughter has been in service at a samurai household since she was six,

If they're not meant to be, those service opportunities will slip away from you. When I think, 'Let's place her here', the other party thinks she won't quite do. And when they take a liking to her, I have my doubts about *them!* We've gone to interviews [*omemie*] any number of times, but there's always been some hitch. Ha ha ha! What a lot of trouble it is!<sup>561</sup>

<sup>557</sup> Walthall, 'Nishimiya Hide: Turning Palace Arts into Marketable Skills', p. 47.

<sup>558</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 155.

<sup>559</sup> Described in Ujie, *Edo no shônen*, pp. 150-155.

<sup>560</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>561</sup> Shikitei, *Ukiyoburo*, p. 121. Translated in Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 68.

A girl of good background or who was exceptionally talented at certain arts may well have been in a strong position to negotiate a favourable working conditions with an employer of her choice.<sup>562</sup>

If one were to rank the arts girls learnt in order of popularity, or at least the frequency with which they appear in the sources, then shamisen would be near the top. As Ikegami and others have noted, though shamisen was considered an art form more suited to commoners than samurai, 'aesthetic "slumming" was not uncommon' and samurai did enjoy arts associated with commoners such as *shamisen* and kabuki.<sup>563</sup> Tea would probably be somewhere in the middle of the list. Nonetheless, it was recognised as an accomplishment that could help a girl gain a position in service. As the guide *Onna rôei kyôkunka* informed its readers, 'low-status women who will enter into service [in an elite household] should study tea'.<sup>564</sup> Most girls learnt a range of arts, of which tea would just have been one. For example, the Shingaku scholar Shibata Kyûô (柴田鳩翁 1783-1839), 'described how wealthy commoners in Ikeda, a town fifteen kilometres northwest of Osaka, forced their fourteen-year-old daughter to study flower-arranging, painting, tea ceremony, and koto'.<sup>565</sup> Apparently Shibata did not think such an education was practical. Yet, we see the keenness with which even commoner girls, whether of their own accord or at their parents' behest, studied the arts.

Each of these arts would have had their own appealing feature to a young woman. We can imagine that tea, with its focus on elegant carriage, etiquette and manners, would have seemed suited to the task of preparing a girl to enter a noble or samurai household. More than any of the other arts learnt by young women, tea had a specific focus on the body. Through the study of tea a girl learnt not just how to prepare and serve tea as a host and how to receive it as a guest, she learnt how to move and manipulate her body so as to appear elegant at all times. As the guides for women's edification indicate, sitting, standing, walking, bowing and carrying utensils were studied in detail by the student of tea. It was, then, not so much an art learnt for the purpose of specific skills, although

<sup>562</sup> Leupp suggests that conditions such as regular days off, as well as wages, could be negotiated by employees and provides an example of a standard contract from 1693. Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, pp. 100-105.

<sup>563</sup> Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, p. 157. See also Gerstle, 'Flowers of Edo', pp. 33-50.

<sup>564</sup> Nishikawa, *Onna rôei kyôkun-ka*.

<sup>565</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands, and Laborers*, p. 63. Citing Shibata Kyûô, *Kyûô dôwa* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1970), pp. 11-12.

making, serving and receiving tea in the appropriate manner were of course useful skills in their own right. Rather, its significance lay in the repetition of these seemingly automatic acts which, in combination and after a reasonable period of training, could transform the way in which a girl carried herself. Learning tea was a way of learning to be graceful.

Once a woman gained a position in service, her education in the arts of play may have continued, though this naturally depended on her position and on the particular household in which she served. A *sugoroku* of the genre which focused on women's service in noble households, *Oku-bôkô shusse sugoroku* (奥奉公出世双六 *Sugoroku* of Success as an Attendant in Service in the Inner Quarters 1844-1864), shows the types of activities, such as playing the *koto*, and jobs, such as arranging hair, engaged in by female attendants (Figure 1).<sup>566</sup> Tea was one of these activities (Figure 2). The text on this square also reveals the importance of marriage prospects for female attendants: the attendant doing tea is interrupted by a woman telling her to swap her duties for the next day as the matchmaking information has come. In another *sugoroku* of a similar period, *Musume shogei shusse sugoroku* (娘諸芸出世双六 *Sugoroku* of Success in Artistic Accomplishments for Girls 1843-1847), we also find that tea, along with activities such as *koto*, *shamisen*, *ikebana* and incense appreciation, is recommended as an art for girls wishing to be successful, that is, to gain a position in service in an elite household. (Figures 3, 4 and 5). These depictions of tea on women's success story *sugoroku* indicate the important role of this art for female attendants in elite households. Though they were more designed for entertainment than edification, these *sugoroku* reinforced the message found in the guides discussed in the previous chapter that tea was an accomplishment of a successful woman.

<sup>566</sup> For a detailed discussion of this particular *sugoroku* see Iwaki Noriko, 'E-sugoroku' ni miru machi-musume to Ô-oku: Edo josei no akogare', *Rekishi yomihon*, 43: 6 (1998), pp. 248-253.



Figure 45: *Oku-bōkō shusse sugoroku* (奥奉公出世双六 *Sugoroku* of Success as an Attendant in Noble Service).  
Illustrated by Toyokuni III, (c.1844-1864).<sup>567</sup>

<sup>567</sup> Image source: Edo-Tokyo Museum, item number 88208551.



Figure 46: Detail of the square second from the top on far right of *Oku-bôkô shusse sugoroku*.



Figure 47: *Musume shogei shusse sugoroku* (娘諸芸出世双六 *Sugoroku* of Success in Artistic Accomplishments for Girls). Illustrated by Utagawa Hiroshige 1<sup>st</sup>, (c.1843-1847).<sup>568</sup>

<sup>568</sup> Image source: Edo-Tokyo Museum, item number 96201945.





Figure 48: Detail of the third square up from the bottom on far left of *Musume shogei shusse sugoroku*.



Figure 49: Detail of the square second from the top, three rows in from the left (below the goal) of *Musume shogei shusse sugoroku*.

Of course, not all female attendants would have been engaged in tea practice. Far from it, the majority would have been occupied with rudimentary domestic tasks. For the well-bred, high-ranking serving women in elite households, though, arts such as tea could be part of their everyday lives, whether as part of their job or for leisure. It was a reflection of the high status of a household to have women with skill in the arts of play in their employ and to be able to afford them the time to indulge in 'conspicuous leisure'

such as tea practice.<sup>569</sup> Engaging in tea within the inner quarters itself was not a conspicuous activity. However, when female attendants participated in tea gatherings with family members and outsiders, as we saw they did in Chapter Two and as we will again see below, they displayed the learning they had acquired in the *oku*. Such female attendants were 'valued as status symbols reflecting a household's wealth and prestige',<sup>570</sup> for only the wealthiest households could afford to have attendants engaged in conspicuous leisure. As Saikaku indicated in *Life of an Amorous Man*, a master's status could be judged by the appearance and qualities of his attendant.<sup>571</sup> Female attendants who were trained in arts such as tea were a reflection of the even finer breeding of those for whom they worked.

The notion that learning one of the arts represented in the games gave a girl the chance to gain a position in service and secure her future is reflected in the use of the word 'success' (*shusse*) in the titles of *sugoroku*. This success, though, did not stop at being employed in an elite household. Beyond that, there was the possibility of making a good match, or becoming an independent teacher. These *sugoroku* were one way, in addition to the guides for women's edification discussed in the previous chapter, that the importance of learning tea for gaining a position in service was disseminated to women. In particular, as the *sugoroku* had visual appeal and the phonetic *kana* script was used, they could be read and played by almost anyone with a basic education. They were also an easy way for masters of various arts to spread information about the utensils and attire necessary for study.<sup>572</sup> It may be that the potential outcomes of learning an art were thus overstated to heighten the appeal of study, yet the message itself must have had some resonance, even if only in the realm of dreams rather than reality. Learning tea was one rung on the ladder of success, both in the games and, potentially, in life.

### Women and Tea Culture in the Ii Household

In the discussion of records of tea gatherings in Chapter Two, it was shown that female attendants occasionally accompanied their mistresses at tea gatherings. It was

<sup>569</sup> The term 'conspicuous leisure' is taken from Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 28-48. See also Leupp, *Servants, Shophands and Laborers*, p. 55.

<sup>570</sup> Leupp, *Servants, Shophands and Laborers*, p. 54.

<sup>571</sup> Ihara Saikaku, *Life of an Amorous Man*, p.152.

<sup>572</sup> Walthall, 'Edo bunka ni okeru Ô-oku', p. 57.

suggested high-ranking wives who were tea practitioners themselves may have expected their female attendants also to be proficient at the art. We have seen in this chapter that prospective employees may have had to demonstrate their ability to do *temae* at their interview. Perhaps lessons were also given to attendants within the household from a tea master or an experienced female practitioner, as was the case in the Ii household to be discussed here. *Sugoroku* depictions of attendants engaging in tea practice in tea rooms suggest that such private study of tea could be part of the lives of female attendants in elite households.

At tea gatherings the women of a particular household usually sat alongside men, both those from the household as well as outsiders. These tea gatherings were thus a space in which female attendants could interact socially with others from their household. The Ii household in the mid nineteenth century provides a particularly detailed example of how women's tea practice could function in a daimyô household. In the writings of the daimyô Ii Naosuke (井伊直弼 1815-1860) we see how tea practice for such women was conceived of and how these ideas were disseminated. In the records of Naosuke's tea gatherings we find women of the Ii family, as well as a large number of female attendants, regularly attending gatherings in the familial/household context which was described in Chapter Two.

Over one hundred years after Oguchi Shôh wrote his handbook for women's tea, *Toji no tamoto*, it was transcribed by the daimyô of Hikone, Ii Naosuke.<sup>573</sup> The focus here is not on examining Naosuke's philosophy or personal tea practice. Rather, the example of the tea practice among the women of his household provides a case study from which a general understanding of women's tea practice in an elite household may be inferred. However, it is necessary to have some understanding of certain aspects of Naosuke's philosophy of tea, particularly that which relates to gender, in order to understand the context of the tea practice among the women of his household.

Naosuke was born the fourteenth son of Ii Naonaka. As a younger son of a daimyo, he was set up in a separate residence outside Hikone Castle known as *Umoreginoya* (埋木舎 House of Buried Wood) from the age of seventeen, where he lived in relative isolation for fifteen years. In 1846 Naosuke was suddenly declared heir

<sup>573</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Toji no tamoto*, Hikone Castle Museum, document no. 6699, search no. 28223.

apparent and four years later became the daimyô of Hikone. Ii's term as daimyo of Hikone was not spent idly. Serving as *tairô* (大老 chief minister) from 1857, he was a major player in the political turmoil of the late Edo period. In 1858 he signed an international trade treaty with the Americans, despite not having imperial approval. To suppress opposition to his policies he then instigated what is known as the 'Ansei purge', as a result of which he was assassinated in 1860.<sup>574</sup>

During the so-called *Umoreginoya* period Naosuke devoted himself to artistic and intellectual study, including tea. He established his own branch of the Sekishû school towards the end of this period and began writing about his tea philosophy, focusing on how the study of tea contributed to both self-cultivation (修身 *shûshin*) and to state governance (治国平天下 *chikoku hei tenka*).<sup>575</sup> In tea, Naosuke saw the answer to what he perceived to be the ills of his day, namely, 'the collapse of warrior-class tea and...the disintegration of the warrior spirit in general'.<sup>576</sup> His later writings on tea, such as the well-known *Chanoyu ichie shû*, were his response to this perceived crisis.<sup>577</sup> In *Chanoyu ichie shû* Naosuke outlined the two most famous aspects of his tea philosophy: 'one time, one meeting' (一期一会 *ichigo, ichie*) and 'the importance of sitting alone in meditation (独座観念 *dokuza kannen*)'.<sup>578</sup> It is these aspects of the text that most historians have focused on.<sup>579</sup> However, as Reiko Tanimura has shown, there is much more to this text than just an explanation of Naosuke's philosophy. It is in fact 'a manual of practical manners for the warrior class organised around tea practice'.<sup>580</sup>

In addition, Naosuke describes the proper attire for women when attending tea gatherings.<sup>581</sup> Tanimura has shown that the frequent inclusion of women in his tea gatherings and his writings on women and tea, both in *Chanoyu ichie shû* and his transcription of *Toji no tamoto*, are a distinctive feature of Naosuke's tea practice and

<sup>574</sup> On Ii Naosuke, see Tanimura Reiko 'Tea of the Warrior in the late Tokugawa period' in Pitelka (ed), *Japanese Tea Culture*, pp. 137-150; and *Ii Naosuke: shûyô toshite no chanoyu* (Tokyo: Sôbunsha, 2001).

<sup>575</sup> Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, pp. 58-74.

<sup>576</sup> *Ibid.*, English summary p. 6.

<sup>577</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 112-142

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125..

<sup>579</sup> See, for example, Varley, 'Chanoyu from Genroku to Modern Times', pp. 184-188.

<sup>580</sup> Tanimura, 'Tea of the Warrior', pp. 145-146.

<sup>581</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Chanoyu ichie shû* (c.1856), reprinted in Sen Sôshitsu et al. (ed), *Chadô koten zenshû*, volume 10 (Kyoto: Tankôsha, 1967), p. 340.

philosophy.<sup>582</sup> The tea gatherings involving women of the Ii household can be thought of as a kind of lesson or practice gathering and they were of an intimate, familial nature. This is in contrast to the gatherings involving hereditary daimyô (譜代大名 *fudai daimyô*, ie: those whose ancestors supported Tokugawa Ieyasu before the battle of Sekigahara) and their servants, which were of a political nature. The gatherings involving women conformed more to Naosuke's ideal of tea, while the political gatherings were borne out of necessity.

Naosuke's transcription of *Toji no tamoto* can be assumed to date from around 1850.<sup>583</sup> It is unlikely that Naosuke would have had access to *Toji no tamoto* during his years of relative isolation in the *Umoreginoya*. He probably accessed it after 1846, possibly while he was in Edo on duty as heir apparent or daimyô. One of the female attendants who had served at Hikone castle, Takeuchi Masuo (竹内増尾), later recalled that Naosuke gave the women tea book/s to read, which most likely would have been *Toji no tamoto*, in around 1852.<sup>584</sup> It thus seems probable that Naosuke borrowed *Toji no tamoto* from someone and made a copy of it for his own use, and to use in the instruction of his female family members and attendants, sometime after 1846 and before 1852. Certainly he had read *Toji no tamoto* by the time he wrote *Chanoyu ichie shû* in approximately 1856, as the passage detailing appropriate clothes for women to wear to a tea gathering betrays the influence of *Toji no tamoto*.<sup>585</sup> In any case, it is clear that *Toji no tamoto* was being read and disseminated among Sekishû adherents more than a century after Oguchi penned it. The demand for a handbook on women's tea had not diminished.

In his transcription of *Toji no tamoto* Naosuke did not stick to a faithful rendering of the original. It is rather an abridged reinterpretation. By making numerous omissions, which were clearly intended and are indicated by the use of the symbols O and 略 (*ryaku* omission), and adding annotations, Naosuke re-wrote *Toji no tamoto* to reflect his own

<sup>582</sup> Tanimura Reiko, *Ii Naosuke*, pp. 197-204. Ii Hiroko makes a similar argument in 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', in Kumakura Isao (ed), *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, (Tokyo: Kokushokankôkai, 2007), p. 202 and pp. 217-225.

<sup>583</sup> The following chronology was suggested to me by Reiko Tanimura in a personal correspondence on August 11, 2006.

<sup>584</sup> Nakamura, Katsumaro, *Ii Tairô sadô dan*, (Tokyo: Sôbunsha, 1914; Reprinted Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppanki, 1978), p. 41.

<sup>585</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Chanoyu ichie shû* in Sen *Chadô koten zenshû*, volume 10, p. 340.

ideas.<sup>586</sup> For example, where Shôh had written that the order of seating among guests is determined by a man's social position with women following that of their husband or father, Naosuke disagreed. He wrote 'This is not the Way of Tea, social position has no place in the tearoom, the positions are determined by that day's main guest'.<sup>587</sup> Indeed in *Chanoyu ichie shû* Naosuke indicated that in 'an ideal tea gathering every guest was to be treated impartially regardless of rank'.<sup>588</sup> Yet, because of the political realities of his day he could not always put ideals into practice. Forty-one passages of this same book 'refer to the special treatment to be afforded to high-ranking warriors and nobles in tea gatherings'.<sup>589</sup> As described by Tanimura, Naosuke's philosophy of tea can be separated into two categories, ideal and reality. The conflict between the two was not easily resolved.<sup>590</sup>

Other passages from the original version of *Toji no tamoto* were left out altogether by Naosuke, suggesting he disagreed with their sentiment. For example, the saying that women talking too much, like hen's crying in the morning, will bring bad things to your house and 'she who does not use many words and is amiable is the best woman' are not found in Naosuke's transcription. Nor is the proscription against men and women inviting a member of the opposite sex to a tea gathering on their own. The concluding remarks that women who just enjoy tea as an amusement are leaving themselves open to suspicion and slander are also not found. Even though some of the sentiment did not seem relevant to his day or went against his own philosophy, *Toji no tamoto* must still have been an important and influential work for it to have made its way into Naosuke's hands and for him to transcribe it. One way in which information about women's tea was spread among tea masters was through texts such as *Toji no tamoto*, though it may have been interpreted and adapted along the way.

As will be discussed below, the women of the Ii household often attended tea gatherings at which there were also male guests present, including Naosuke himself, and his vassals. In these mixed-sex gatherings men usually filled the most important position

<sup>586</sup> Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, pp. 198-200; Ii, 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', pp. 219-223; and Tanihata, 'Toji no tamoto ni miru josei to chanoyu', p. 26.

<sup>587</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Toji no tamoto*, Hikone Castle Museum, document no. 6699, search no. 28223, page no. 450319; and Tanihata, 'Toji no tamoto ni miru josei to chanoyu', p. 26.

<sup>588</sup> Tanimura, 'Tea of the Warrior', p. 146.

<sup>589</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>590</sup> Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, p. 143.

of the first, or main, guest. Most often it was Naosuke himself taking this role, but on three occasions the first guest was one of his retainers. There were two occasions on which women acted as the main guest, they were his wife, Masako (昌子), and his adoptive mother, Yôkyô'in (燿鏡院).<sup>591</sup> Their high position within the household would likely have outweighed any gender considerations. The remaining guest positions do not seem to have been filled with any particular reference to gender, with occasions when women were seated both above and below men. Naosuke saw no problem in having men and women seated side by side in the small space of a tearoom, sharing a bowl of tea. Thus, we can assume that in his comments in *Toji no tamoto* that, 'social position has no place in the tearoom' in response to Oguchi Shôô's instruction that women's seating order should be determined by their husband's court rank, he was specifically referring to the issue of status and not gender. That is, it was not the notion of women *following* their husband's rank that Naosuke took issue with, but the notion of rank being a guide to seating order.

The guidelines for women's tea found in *Toji no tamoto* were put into practice in the Ii household under Naosuke's leadership. The women of the household, both members of the Ii family and attendants, studied tea and participated in tea gatherings. This text alone, though, was not Naosuke's sole influence. His own teacher, Katagiri Sôen (片桐宗猿 1774-1864), held tea gatherings in which women participated. In seven gatherings held in 1847 and 1848 there were female participants.<sup>592</sup> Seventeen women altogether are listed, two of whom were members of the Katagiri family. In all but one gathering there were two or three women in attendance together, and there were male guests at the same gatherings. These gatherings thus follow the familiar pattern of women's participation in tea gatherings discussed in Chapter Two. Naosuke, then, had a direct example from his own teacher of inclusion of women alongside men at tea gatherings, as well as being part of a school which had a tradition of encouraging women's tea dating back at least to Oguchi Shôô.

<sup>591</sup> Gatherings on 1857/11/7 and 1857/12/7, *Tôto Mizuya-chô*, reprinted in full in Tanihata, 'Ii Naosuke chakai-ki', *Chanoyu: kenkyû to shiryô*, number 16 (1979), p. 64 and p. 67.

<sup>592</sup> Personal correspondence from Tani Akira, Nomura Museum, Kyoto.



In the Ii household the women had lessons in tea from 1852. The former attendant Masuo recalled after Naosuke's death that she and other female attendants were taught tea by Katagiri Sôtetsu (片桐宗鐵).<sup>593</sup> Sôtetsu was called upon to instruct the women due to the interest shown in tea by Naosuke's adoptive mother, Yôkyô'in. Sôtetsu was, according to Masuo, asked to teach them because she was accomplished in the style of tea associated with her husband, Katagiri Sôen. Indeed, she was probably the tea master Sôgyû (宗牛) who appears in the records of Naosuke's tea gatherings.<sup>594</sup> This kind of concrete example of female to female transmission is rare. However, given that we have very few records related to actual tea classes for women, we can infer that women may often have learnt tea from other more experienced women, particularly in the case of a large daimyô household such as this. Just as the general education of women was often taken care of by other women, be they their mothers, attendants, hired tutors or teachers at private schools, so too may have women's education in tea. The Ii women were also occasionally instructed by Naosuke, who would join in their lessons when he was in 'good humour'. He would 'kindly correct their mistakes', with the agreement of Sôtetsu, and also talk intimately with Yôkyô'in. When he attended their lessons he came on a palanquin and, aside from the official presents, brought sweets and cooked dishes, presented in a nest of lacquered boxes.<sup>595</sup>

The women also used texts such as *Toji no tamoto* as part of their study of tea. As mentioned, Masuo recalled that Naosuke gave her and the other women in the inner quarters tea book/s to read at the same time that they were taking lessons from Sôtetsu.<sup>596</sup> We can assume that *Toji no tamoto* was among the books. It is likely that Naosuke's motivation for transcribing the text was as much for the edification of the women of his household as for his own education. The extant copy of Naosuke's *Toji no tamoto* is written in the standard Japanese of the time (和文 *wabun*), with a mixture of Chinese

<sup>593</sup> Nakamura, *Ii Tairô Sadô Dan*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>594</sup> On the issue of whether Sôgyû and Sôtetsu were the same person see Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, p. 197; Ii, 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', p. 213 and p. 227; and Rai Aki, 'Ii Naosuke no chanoyu no shishô, in Kumakura (ed), *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, p. 248. The assumption is based on the fact that a tea master by the name of Sôgyû often appears in the records at the same gatherings as the women of the Ii household, that no record can be found giving the actual name of the tea master Sôgyû, and that, as Sôtetsu was evidently accomplished enough in tea to teach, she most likely would have had a tea name.

<sup>595</sup> Nakamura, *Ii Tairô Sadô Dan*, p. 41.

<sup>596</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

characters and both the phonetic *katakana* and *furigana* scripts (仮名混じり文 *kanamajiribun*) and no phonetic glossing for the Chinese characters. Whereas the original *Toji no tamoto* was written more in the style of the phonetic, cursive script (変体仮名 *hentaigana*) often used for and by women, Naosuke's copy has a greater use of Chinese characters. It must be assumed that what the women read was Naosuke's transcribed version of *Toji no tamoto*, for it would be unlikely that he would give them the original when he clearly disagreed with sections of it. Therefore, the women could read standard Japanese, including Chinese characters, indicating a high level of literacy among the female attendants.

Masuo and the other attendants not only read but made transcriptions of these tea books for themselves, keeping them at hand to learn from.<sup>597</sup> They could probably therefore also write Chinese characters as well as Japanese script, though of course they may not have copied it out exactly as Naosuke wrote it. There were also written instructions about tea gatherings prepared by Naosuke which the women followed in their lessons. From Masuo's account a picture emerges of an intimate circle of female tea practitioners, led by Yôkyô'in, under the tutelage of Sôtetsu. Naosuke too participated in their study circle, acting as a sort of patron. The women's involvement in tea, however, was not limited to private study in the inner quarters. They also attended tea gatherings with Naosuke and a wide circle of participants. Masuo herself attended a gathering on the seventh day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, 1857 in Edo along with Yôkyô'in, Sôgyû and two other female attendants, Mutsu (むつ) and Kuni (<に).<sup>598</sup> Their host on this occasion was most likely Naosuke himself.

### Putting Theory into Practice

The tea gatherings involving women of the Ii household are recorded in five separate records. The largest record is *Kaiseki-fu* (懐石附) (author unknown), which lists 78 gatherings held in both Hikone and Edo from the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the second month, 1852

<sup>597</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>598</sup> Gathering on 1857/12/7, in Ii Naosuke, *Tôto Mizuya-chô*. Reprinted in full in Tanihata, 'Ii Naosuke chakai-ki', *Chanoyu: kenkyû to shiryô*, p. 67.

to the 28<sup>th</sup> day of the second month, 1858.<sup>599</sup> The other records, *Ansei 6 Mizuya-chô* (安政六年水屋帳) (written by Naosuke),<sup>600</sup> *Ansei Manen Mizuya-chô* (安政万延年水屋長) (author unknown),<sup>601</sup> *Tôto Mizuya-chô* (東都水屋長) (written by Naosuke),<sup>602</sup> and *Maikai Mizuya-cho* (毎会水屋長) (written by Naosuke),<sup>603</sup> list gatherings ranging in date from 1852 to 1860, also held in both Hikone and Edo. Like the records discussed in Chapter Two, these detail who the host and guest were at each gathering, where it was held and what utensils were used. They therefore provide us with a clear picture of the context of women's tea practice in a daimyô household. At the majority of the gatherings, Naosuke was the first guest and the host and other guests were drawn from among his private circle of family and friends, including priests of temples in Hikone, retainers and female attendants.

In all, there were some 30 women of the Ii household who attended Naosuke's tea gatherings. These included his daughter, Yachiyo; his wife, Masako; his mother, Yôkyô'in; and the tea master Sôgyû. In addition, Naosuke's concubines were regular participants: Shizu (志津/静江/お賤), who was Yachiyo's mother; and Sato (佐登/お里/里和), the mother of his son Yoshimaro (愛麿). The majority of women who participated in the gatherings were attendants, such as Tase (多世/多勢) and Makio (榎尾/万喜尾). These attendants were not merely studying tea and attending gatherings as companions to the women they served, they were listed as guests in their own right, some were even hosts on occasion. Thus, they sat alongside the lord and his retainers (some of whom were accomplished practitioners with tea names)<sup>604</sup> as equal participants in the social network. The tea gatherings were both spaces in which to put into practice what had been learnt in lessons, spaces to affirm the participants status as tea practitioners, and

<sup>599</sup> Author unknown, *Kaiseki-fu* (1852/02/20-1858/02/28). Reprinted in full in Tanihata Akio, 'Ii Naosuke no chakai-ki', *Chanoyu bunka gaku*, pp. 121-174.

<sup>600</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Ansei 6 Mizuya-chô* (1859/08/24-1859/10/07). Reprinted in full in Tanihata, 'Ii Naosuke no chakai-ki', *Chanoyu bunka gaku*, pp. 174-177.

<sup>601</sup> Author unknown, *Ansei Manen Mizuya-chô* (1859/02/19-1860/02/19). Reprinted in full in Tanihata, 'Ii Naosuke no chakai-ki', *Chanoyu bunka gaku*, pp. 177-183.

<sup>602</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Tôto Mizuya-chô* (1852/11/21-1860/01/19). Reprinted in full in Tanihata Akio, 'Ii Naosuke chakai-ki', *Chanoyu: kenkyû to shiryô*, pp. 46-75.

<sup>603</sup> Ii Naosuke, *Maikai Mizuya-chô* (1857/11/1-1859/2/13). Reprinted in full in Tanihata, 'Ii Naosuke no chakai-ki', *Chanoyu bunka gaku*, pp. 97-112.

<sup>604</sup> A tea name is one type of artistic name, given to a highly accomplished practitioner by their teacher or the *iemoto* depending on the school.

an opportunity to forge and cement social and political ties. There would have been many more women employed as attendants in the Ii household than those who participated in tea. It was a select group of women who were part of this circle.

Using the records of Naosuke's tea gatherings we can get a glimpse at the involvement of some of these women of the Ii household in tea within a familial/household context. Yachiyo, Naosuke's daughter, for example, was a frequent participant in his tea gatherings. She was born in 1846 and must have studied tea from a very young age, for the first record we come across of her in the *Kaiseki-fu* is from the 19<sup>th</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1855, when she was just nine years old. On this occasion she acted as host for a gathering at which Nishimura Magozaemon (西村孫左衛門), Head Purveyor to the *oku* (奥御内用達役 *oku gonai yôtatsu yaku*), was the main guest.<sup>605</sup> Among the guests were also three female attendants, Tatsuo (瀧尾), Maki (万喜) and Makio. The gathering was held in the Tenkô tea room, within the upper mansion at Hikone castle.<sup>606</sup> Perhaps this was a sort of debut for Yachiyo into the world of tea.

Over the next three years Yachiyo acted as a host on two more occasions and she appears as a guest twelve times in the records. On the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 11<sup>th</sup> month, 1857, she acted as host for a gathering held in Edo at which Naosuke's wife Masako was the main guest and Sôgyû the last guest.<sup>607</sup> She then acted as a host for five men at a gathering in Edo on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month, 1858.<sup>608</sup> These men were a group of retainers who studied tea with Naosuke.<sup>609</sup> They all had tea names, which had probably been given to them by Naosuke. Between them they took turns at hosting and being guests at all of the gatherings in the *Maikai Mizuya-cho*. At this particular gathering the main guest was Miura Naizen (三浦内膳), who was a House Elder (家老 *karo*); followed by Kashiwabara Yohei (柏原与兵衛), a Chamberlain (側役 *sobayaku*); Utsugi Rokunojô (宇津木六之丞), also a Chamberlain as well as Steward to the Lord (公用人 *kôyônin*); Utsugi Mikinoshin (宇津木幹之進), a Secretary to the Lord (小姓 *koshô*) as well as a

<sup>605</sup> The following information on the positions of the various vassals is from Kumakura Isao (ed), *Shiryô: Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, volume 2 (Hikone: Hikone Castle Museum, 2007), pp. 291-293.

<sup>606</sup> Gathering on 1855/2/19, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 124.

<sup>607</sup> Gathering on 1857/11/7, *Tôto Mizuya-chô*, p. 64.

<sup>608</sup> Gathering on 1858/3/1, *Maikai Mizuya-chô*, p. 105.

<sup>609</sup> Tanihata Akio, 'Ii Naosuke no chakai-ki', *Chanoyu bunka gaku*, volume 3, (March 1996), p. 84.

Valet, or personal attendant, to the Lord (小納戸 *konando*); and Mukuhara Shume (棕原主馬), a Steward (用人 *yōnin*).<sup>610</sup> This gathering was just over one month before Yachiyo's marriage took place. Just as the gathering three years earlier can be thought of as her debut into the tea world, this last gathering may have been a sort of farewell to the li tea network for Yachiyo. It was a culmination of her years of study to host a gathering for five accomplished practitioners, who were also important political associates and retainers of her father.

At the other gatherings Yachiyo attended during these three years she was generally the second guest, seated after Naosuke as the main guest. They were joined by a range of people, such as her mother, female attendants and various retainers. On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month, 1855, for example, the guests, in order of seating, were Naosuke, Yachiyo, Shizu and Nakamura Kyūji (中村久次), a Purveyor (内用達役 *nai yōtatsu yaku*). The host was Ogata Seian (小島清庵), a Physician.<sup>611</sup> The following month she again sat alongside her father at a gathering in the Tenkō tea room at Hikone castle. The other guests were Makio, Okuno Tōbei (奥野藤兵衛), an attendant (櫛役 *kushiyaku*) of li Naosuke, and Hashimoto Taemon (橋本太右衛門), a Steward in the *oku* (奥御用作使役 *oku go yō shiyaku*). Their host was Usui Yasunōjō (臼居安之丞), another vassal of Naosuke.<sup>612</sup>

From 1856 Naosuke and Yachiyo were joined by his son Yoshimaro at several gatherings. On the 27<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month, 1856, he was the third guest, after Naosuke and Yachiyo, followed by Shizu and Sato. This was very much a family gathering. Their host in the Tenkō tea room was Aoyama Yogozaemon (青山与五左衛門), Head Steward of the *oku* (奥御用役 *oku go yōyaku*).<sup>613</sup> Naosuke, Yachiyo and Yoshimaro were also guests on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 9<sup>th</sup> month, 1856, along with Makio and Usui Yasunōjō. They were hosted by Murata Daisuke (村田大輔), an attendant of li Naosuke.<sup>614</sup> On the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, 1856, Yoshimaro took the role of second guest, with Yachiyo

<sup>610</sup> Translations of the vassals positions are based on those in Mark Ravina, *Land and Lordship in Early Modern Japan*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

<sup>611</sup> Gathering on 1855/5/10, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 128.

<sup>612</sup> Gathering on 1855/6/?, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 128.

<sup>613</sup> Gathering on 1856/8/27, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 143.

<sup>614</sup> Gathering on 1856/9/10, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 145.

moving to the third guest spot and Shizu and Sato joining them again. Their host was Mukuhara Shume, whom Yachiyo would be a host for two years later.<sup>615</sup> Naosuke, Yoshimaro and Yachiyo again sat together at a gathering on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1857, along with Tase and Makio. They were hosted by Iijima Sandayû (飯島三太夫), physician to the *oku* (奥医師 *oku ishi*).<sup>616</sup> On the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month, 1857, Yachiyo and her father were joined by Shizu, Tase and Makio. Their host was Murata Daisuke.<sup>617</sup> On the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month, 1857, Shizu and Tase again joined Naosuke and Yachiyo. Also in attendance was Hashimoto Taemon. They were hosted by Miura Gorôemon (三浦五郎右衛門), a Steward.<sup>618</sup> On the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 8<sup>th</sup> month, 1857, Naosuke, Yachiyo, Yoshimaro, Makio and Sato were the guests for Okuno Tobei. This was the last gathering Yachiyo attended at Hikone castle.

The following month Naosuke and Yachiyo were again joined by Makio and another female attendant, Moto (も登), as well as Aoyama Yogozaemon but this time the gathering took place in the Shingoseki tea-room in Edo. Their host was Tsurumi Kôhei (鶴見甲平).<sup>619</sup> Aoyama, as well as several other retainers who attended gatherings with the women in Hikone, such as Murata Daisuke, Nakamura Kyûji and Iijima Sandayû, had accompanied the women when they went to Edo in 1855.<sup>620</sup> Aoyama joined Naosuke and Yachiyo again for a gathering on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month, 1858. The other guests were Kishi (きし), a female attendant, and Hasema Zenemon (長谷馬善右衛門), Head Purveyor to the *oku* (奥御内用達役 *oku gonai yôtatsu yaku*).<sup>621</sup> Finally, Yachiyo was the second guest at a gathering on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month, 1858. Her father was again the first guest, Kishi the third, followed by another female attendant Sono (楚の), with Ogata Seian as the last guest. This gathering, like the previous one, took place

<sup>615</sup> Gathering on 1856/12/16, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 148.

<sup>616</sup> Gathering on 1857/2/9, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 152.

<sup>617</sup> Gathering on 1857/3/24, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 156.

<sup>618</sup> Gathering on 1857/4/29, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 163.

<sup>619</sup> Gathering on 1857/11/24, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 169.

<sup>620</sup> Ii, 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', p. 214.

<sup>621</sup> Gathering on 1858/1/29, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 171.

in the four and a half mat room in the Edo mansion. The host was Imamura Tamonji (今村他門次), an attendant of Ii Naosuke.<sup>622</sup>

For Naosuke it must have been with a great sense of pride that he was able to show off his young daughter's accomplishments in tea to his family and retainers. For those who participated in these gatherings with Yachiyo, it would have been a great honour and a symbol of their connection to the family to sit together with the young daughter of the daimyô, sharing the experience of a tea gathering with her and Naosuke himself. Yachiyo, at age twelve, married Matsudaira Yoritoshi (松平頼聡 1834-1903), heir of Takamatsu domain, on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month, 1858. Though the records of Yachiyo's participation in tea gatherings end with her marriage, her tea practice did not. The items in her bridal trousseau, preserved in the form of miniatures as 'doll's utensils' in the Hikone Castle Museum collection, include a black lacquer utensil stand with a set of utensils including a kettle, cold water jar, lid rest, tea caddy, tea bowl and tea scoop (Figures 6 and 7). As with all of the other items in her trousseau, such as clothing stands, dishes and trays, these tea utensils were intended to be items for use by Yachiyo in her life as a high-ranking samurai's wife. With her training in tea she surely put them to good use.

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<sup>622</sup> Gathering on 1858/2/18, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 173.



Figure 50: Doll's utensils of Yachiyo, Ii Naosuke's daughter.  
Black lacquer ware.<sup>623</sup>

<sup>623</sup> Image source: *Hina to Hina-dôgu* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1979), plate 50.





Figure 51: Detail of utensil stand with tea utensils from the doll's utensils of Ii Yachiyo.

At every gathering Yachiyo attended as a guest she was joined by at least one other woman; often her mother Shizu, otherwise the attendant Makio, while Sato and Tase often joined in the gatherings too. In addition to participating in gatherings with Yachiyo, female attendants such as Tase and Makio also participated in other gatherings where no female member of the Ii family was present. These two female attendants were clearly regarded as accomplished tea practitioners by Naosuke. Tase, for example, hosted two tea gatherings. The first was on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month, 1856 in a 3 mat room in Edo.<sup>624</sup> The second occasion was on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month the same year, in the same room.<sup>625</sup> There are no guests listed for either gathering, though we can presume that Naosuke was the main guest as he was for most gatherings recorded in *Kaiseki-fu*. Tase was herself a guest at a gathering held six days earlier, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month. Naosuke was the main guest, Shizu the second guest, Tase the third and Nakamura Kyûji and Ueda Fuminobu (上田文のぶ), a Physician, were the final two guests. The gathering was held in the Ichiroken tea-room in Edo, the host was Ogata

<sup>624</sup> Gathering on 1856/1/26, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 130.

<sup>625</sup> Gathering on 1856/3/19, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 136.

Seian.<sup>626</sup> On the 4<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month, 1856, Tase and Makio were guests at a gathering held in the same room, along with Naosuke and another attendant Kusu (久須).<sup>627</sup>

Makio was the most active of all the female attendants, participating in thirteen gatherings altogether. One of these was as a host for Naosuke, Sato, two female attendants, Mutsu and Kishi, and ?, in 1859.<sup>628</sup> At the other twelve gatherings, held in both Hikone and Edo beginning in 1856 and continuing through until 1860 (the year of Naosuke's assassination), Makio was a guest. Naosuke was of course present at most of these gatherings, as were Yachiyo, Yoshimaro, Shizu, Sato, numerous female attendants and many of the retainers previously mentioned.<sup>629</sup>

The activities of Tase and Makio indicate that they were part of a large social network centered on tea practice which included the lord, his daughter, son, wife, concubines, other female attendants, and male retainers of varying occupations connected to the household. While the network was broad in the number, gender and rank of participants, it was also quite intimate. For example, the retainers who participated in this network held positions connected to the *oku* or to Naosuke directly. The women were not therefore participating in tea gatherings with men to whom they had little or no connection. Rather, a picture emerges of a social network involving women and men in the employ of the Ii household, centred on tea culture. In this respect, the tea practice among women of the Ii household mirrors that of other elite women and their attendants.

## Conclusion

Naosuke's writings and the records of his tea gatherings are an example of how women's tea practice in a daimyō household functioned in the Edo period. Samurai women and their attendants, who may have been of either samurai or commoner status, studied tea privately within the household. Their study was in the form of reading and transcribing texts on tea, such as *Toji no tamoto*, which in this case had been copied and adapted for them by the head of the household. They also took lessons with a female

<sup>626</sup> Gathering on 1856/3/13, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 134.

<sup>627</sup> Gathering on 1856/4/4, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 139.

<sup>628</sup> Gathering on 1859/?/27, *Ansei 6 Mizuyū-chō*, p. 175.

<sup>629</sup> Gatherings on 1856/3/16, 1856/4/4, 1856/9/10, 1857/2/9, 1857/8/10, 1857/11/24, *Kaiseki-fu*, p. 133, 139, 145, 152, 168 and 169; gatherings on 1859/10/10, 1859/12/24 and 1860/1/26, *Ansei Manen Mizuyū-chō*, p. 178, 181 and 182.

teacher who was the wife of a tea master close to the family. Finally, they participated in tea gatherings, both as hosts and guests, in a familial/household context at both the domain castle and the Edo mansion.

Returning to the topic of Naosuke's tea philosophy, several scholars have seen the participation of the women of the Ii household in tea culture as unique and attributed it to the particulars of Naosuke's philosophy and personal character.<sup>630</sup> Involving the women of his household in tea may have been an extension of Naosuke's philosophical ideals, but this was not an isolated instance. As discussed in Chapter Two, records indicate there was female participation in tea gatherings throughout the Edo period. Like the gatherings of the Ii household, women of the family participated alongside male family members, often with female attendants also joining in. Many of these records are also connected to men who were prominent tea practitioners, like Naosuke. In these records, though, there are no other examples of women acting as hosts. However, this should not lead us to the presumption that women never acted as hosts outside of the few specific examples we know of.<sup>631</sup> Rather, it is far more likely that there were elite women who hosted tea gatherings, for members of their family/household, and these gatherings were simply not recorded. It also seems highly probable, from the depictions on *sugoroku*, that tea was practiced among female attendants in elite households, both in the form of lessons and also gatherings, even if only informally.

What is distinct about the involvement of the women of the Ii household in tea is that we have such detailed records of it. Instead of being taken then as a unique or rare example of early modern women's tea practice, it should serve as an example of how women in noble and samurai households, both the immediate family members and their attendants, could and did learn, study about and participate in tea culture. We know that the general patterns of women's participation in tea were similar to that found in this example. Learning tea was considered to be an accomplishment that would prepare young women for going into service in such a household. Once in service, female attendants did practice tea privately within the inner quarters in other households, and

<sup>630</sup> Ii, 'Oku jochû no chanoyu', p. 202 and p. 214-225; and Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, pp. 202-204.

<sup>631</sup> Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, p. 203 raises this issue. Of course, as discussed in previous chapters, there were other types of women who hosted tea gatherings, such as courtesans and nuns, but here the discussion is being limited to the context of tea in elite households.

female attendants accompanied members of the families they served at tea gatherings. The example of tea practice among women of the Ii household should thus be taken as representative of something which may well have been much more widespread.

This chapter has looked in detail at one reason why women, especially lower ranking samurai and wealthy commoners, studied tea with increasing enthusiasm in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was useful preparation for going into service in an elite household for two reasons: because a woman learnt to be graceful and embody an ideal of genteel femininity; and because elite women who were tea practitioners themselves would also have wanted some of their attendants to be proficient, so they could accompany them at tea gatherings. In addition to learning tea as preparation for going into service, women may also have learnt tea whilst in service, as we saw occurred in the Ii household. Learning tea and serving in an elite household were both ways in which women could heighten, and potentially raise, their status. Their aspirations to do so were targeted in both the guides to women's edification, discussed in the previous chapter, and in *sugoroku*, discussed here. The perceptible increase in both the numbers of women learning tea and the numbers of women going into service, which were both outcomes of the long-term economic growth of the Edo period, point to the gradual breakdown of a rigid status system. Women played a significant role in this process in two ways: they were able cross status boundaries through marriage, or entering into other relationships with men such as concubinage; and they played a role as capital-bearing objects, for both themselves and their families/households.

## Chapter Six: Meiji: A New Beginning or a Continuation?

In studies of tea history it has widely been said that the number of female tea practitioners greatly increased during the modern period and that this is largely the result of the inclusion of tea in the curriculum of girls' schools from the Meiji period (1868-1912) onwards.<sup>632</sup> Yet, as Kumakura Isao has observed, 'it is not likely that this degree of sudden popularisation of chanoyu was due merely to its incorporation into women's education'.<sup>633</sup> He proposes other background reasons for this, such as the 'high evaluation of *chanoyu* as traditional Japanese culture' and the acceptance it gained among intellectuals during the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>634</sup> Etsuko Kato, meanwhile, has argued that the 'association of the tea ceremony with women's manners' emerged in the Meiji period, as a discourse promoted by female educators, in contrast to 'the discourse in which the nationalistic male intellectual elite engaged in...viewing the tea ceremony as 'art' equivalent to Western art'.<sup>635</sup>

However, as is evident from the previous chapters, the Meiji period discourse on women's tea as a means of training in etiquette and manners was not a new development at all, but rather, a continuation of the Edo period discourse on women's tea. At the same time, an overview of the major developments in tea culture during this period will show that in the course of Japan's modernisation some significant changes occurred within the tea world. Tea became re-invented as traditional, Japanese and feminine, and entirely compatible with modern life. This is reflected in the guides for women's edification that were produced in the Meiji period.

Though they shared many similarities with the Edo period guides, in this new social context of modernisation and national identity making, the discourse on women's tea expanded in the Meiji guides. Women's tea practice was related to modern life, with tea being promoted as a way of creating a harmonious home, a form of self-cultivation and an occupation. While there was thus continuity between women's tea in the Edo and Meiji periods, there was also change brought about by the

<sup>632</sup> See the discussion in the Introduction.

<sup>633</sup> Kumakura Isao, 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan' *Chanoyu Quarterly*, 75 (1994), trans. Zane Ferry, p. 20.

<sup>634</sup> Kumakura Isao, *Kindai chadō shi no kenkyū* (Tokyo: Nihon Hōsō Shuppanki, 1980), p. 304; and 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan', p. 20.

<sup>635</sup> Kato, 'Art for Men, 'Manners for Women: How Women Transformed the Tea Ceremony in Modern Japan', in Susan Shifrin (ed), *Women as Sites of Culture: Women's roles in cultural formation from the Renaissance to the twentieth century*, (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2002), p. 139-140.

new social context. The most significant of these changes was the re-invention of tea as representative of traditional Japanese culture and as feminine during the course of the Meiji period.

### Modernisation of the Tea World

Following the momentous changes, both political and social, ushered in by the Meiji Restoration (1868), the tea world suffered greatly. The schools of tea lost the daimyō patronage that had previously supported them, and society in general was more interested in new forms of culture and leisure being borrowed from the West than Japanese pastimes. Within a few decades of the Meiji Restoration, however, the tea world began to revive, partly because of the interest shown by the 'new daimyō', that is, wealthy businessmen, such as Masuda Takashi (増田孝 1848-1938), in studying tea and collecting tea utensils.<sup>636</sup> Even so, in the new environment only some schools found success.

The Sen schools, particularly Urasenke, were the most successful in adapting to the new socio-political climate. The *iemoto* of Urasenke, Gengensai, led their initial revival, petitioning against the categorisation of tea masters as 'genteel entertainers' (遊芸稼ぎ人 *yūgei kaseginin*) by the Kyoto Prefectural government in 1872.<sup>637</sup> In his letter, known as 'The Basic Idea of the Way of Tea', Gengensai rejected the notion that tea was an entertainment and instead advocated its Neo-Confucian credentials: 'The original meaning of the way of tea lies in diligent pursuit of the five virtues, filial conduct and loyalty (*chūkō gojō*)'.<sup>638</sup> Gengensai also seized the opportunity to open tea up to new markets, by creating a tea procedure which could be done using tables and chairs (立礼式 *ryūrei shiki*), to appeal both to Westerners and to the Japanese among whom Western things were in vogue, for an International Exposition held in Kyoto in 1872.<sup>639</sup>

The international promotion of tea continued throughout the Meiji period, with tea featuring at Japanese exhibits in numerous world's fairs and international exhibitions, such as the Philadelphia fair of 1876, the World's Columbian Exposition

<sup>636</sup> See Christine Guth, *Art, Tea, and Industry: Masuda Takashi and the Mitsui Circle* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).

<sup>637</sup> Kumakura, *Kindai chadō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 115-116.

<sup>638</sup> Translated in Robert Kramer, 'The Tea Cult in History', p. 145.

<sup>639</sup> Kumakura, *Kindai chadō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 116-117.

held in Chicago in 1893 and the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904.<sup>640</sup> The publication of Okakura Kakuzo's *The Book of Tea* in 1906 was also instrumental in introducing tea to an English audience.<sup>641</sup> In addition, it gave the Japanese a guide on how to explain tea to Westerners, and inspired later English language publications such as Fukukita Yasunosuke's *Chanoyu: Tea Cult of Japan* and Arthur Sadler's *Chanoyu: The Japanese Tea Ceremony* which were published in the 1930s.<sup>642</sup> Incorporating tea into the curriculum of girls' schools was another avenue for recruiting new students, and this also began under Gengensai's watch. Large-scale tea gatherings and ceremonial tea offerings at shrines were also a new format which attracted a large number of participant observers and gave the schools wide exposure.<sup>643</sup> Later, in the 1920s, the schools of tea used new media, such as radio and print, to popularise the art.<sup>644</sup> By the 1920s the efforts of various tea schools, and Urasenke in particular, to adapt to modern society had seen the culture of tea and its institutions weather the storm of the immediate post-Restoration period and come out the other end with domestic and international recognition of its new found image as representative of the essence of Japanese culture.

### Tea and Women's Education

The inclusion of tea in the curriculum of girls' schools during the Meiji period is one of the few well documented and discussed aspects of the history of women and tea and so will not be dealt with in any great detail here.<sup>645</sup> Suffice to say that schools such as Atomi Kakei's (跡見花蹊 1840-1926) Girls' School in Tokyo, Atomi Gakuen, and what would become the Kyoto Prefectural Girls School included the study of tea as an addition to, and sometimes replacement of, general etiquette courses from the

<sup>640</sup> Neil Harris, 'All the World a Melting Pot? Japan at American Fairs, 1876-1904', in Akira Iriye (ed), *Mutual Images: Essays in American-Japanese Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), p. 29, 43 and 49.

<sup>641</sup> Okakura Kakuzo, *The Book of Tea* (Rutland, Vermont: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1906; reprinted 1956).

<sup>642</sup> Fukukita Yasunosuke, *Chanoyu: Tea Cult of Japan* (Tokyo: Marusen, 1932); and Arthur L. Sadler, *Chanoyu: The Japanese Tea Ceremony* (Tokyo and London: J.L. Thompson and Co. and Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. 1933 and 1934). Both authors indicate that they were inspired by Okakura to write about tea for a Western audience.

<sup>643</sup> Kumakura, *Kindai chadô shi no kenkyû*, pp. 164-165.

<sup>644</sup> Kumakura Isao (ed) *Chadô shokin 6: Kindai no chanoyu* (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 1985), pp. 248-251.

<sup>645</sup> See, for example, Kumakura Isao, *Kindai chadô shi no kenkyû*, pp. 296-304; 'Josei to chanoyu', p. 246; 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan', p. 20; Kagotani Machiko, 'Josei to chanoyu' in Kumakura (ed) *Kindai no chanoyu*, pp. 253-259; Kobayashi Yoshiho 'Kôtô jogakkô ni okeru 'hana/cha' no juyô: kôtô jogakkô reishikogô, taishôki o chûshin ni', *Joseishigaku*, 12, 2002, pp. 45-59; 'Meiji sho/chûki, joshi chûtô kyôiku ni okeru 'hana/cha' no juyô - Kyôto fu joshi gakkô o chûshin ni', *Nomura Bijutsukan kenkyû kiyô*, 11, 2002, pp. 12-22; Yokota Yaemi, 'Josei to chadô kyôiku', *Tanko: Chanoyu kono hyakunen*, 55:1, (2001), pp. 84-86; Etsuko Kato, 'Art' for Men, 'Manners' for Women', p. 142; and *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, pp. 63-64.

1870s.<sup>646</sup> Several of the Meiji period guides to be discussed below also refer to the fact that tea was offered as a subject at girls' schools.

Education for girls by the late the Meiji period had as its primary aim the cultivation of 'good wives and wise mothers' (良妻賢母 *ryōsai kenbo*), as articulated in the Directive of Girls' High Schools issued in 1899.<sup>647</sup> In reality, this was an ideal only for middle and upper class women, as women's education and roles were defined according to class. For the aspirational middle-class, no longer bound by an official status system, 'good wife, wise mother' became the new model of genteel femininity to be emulated. A typical example of this ideology put into practice can be found in the aims stated by Chiba Prefectural Girls' High School in 1900:

Training in the qualities of grace and nobility together with the knowledge in the skills of arts and sciences necessary for life, as well as the cultivation of the virtues of gentleness and feminine modesty and imparting the good customs of diligence and economy in order to one day become good wives and wise mothers.<sup>648</sup>

With its ability to impart knowledge of etiquette, manners and deportment, tea was a subject which was compatible with this educational ideology, and it easily found a place within the Meiji women's education system.

The growth of women's tea in modern times is often traced back to this development. Yet, as has been discussed previously, tea was being taught to girls in the home and possibly at temple schools in the Edo period. Meiji educators' decision to include tea in their curriculum for girls was not a radical departure from the past but a continuation of earlier philosophy and practice. Indeed, Atomi Kakei was qualified to establish a girl's school because she had received a good education herself, in tea among other things, and had taught at her father's school in Osaka from 1859.<sup>649</sup> Meiji schools and the contents of their curriculum were, however, more

<sup>646</sup> Kumakura, *Kindai chadō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 296-304. On Atomi Gakuen see Kagotani, *Josei to chanoyu*, pp. 209-210; and Margaret Mehl, 'Women Educators and the Confucian Tradition in Meiji Japan (1868-1912): Miwada Masako and Atomi Kakei', *Women's History Review* 10:4 (2001), pp. 587-593. On the Kyoto Prefectural Girls School see Kobayashi 'Meiji sho/chūki, joshi chūtō kyōiku ni okeru 'hana/cha' no juyō', pp. 12-13; and Yokota, 'Josei to chadō kyoiku', p. 86.

<sup>647</sup> Sharon H. Nolte and Sally Ann Hastings, 'The Meiji State's Policy Toward Women, 1890-1910' in Gail Lee Bernstein (ed), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), p. 158; and Katherleen Uno, 'The Death of Good Wife, Wise Mother?', in Andrew Gordon (ed), *Postwar Japan as History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 298-299.

<sup>648</sup> Kokuritsu kyōiku kenkyūjo (ed), *Nihon kindai kyōiku hyakumenshi*, (Tokyo: Kokuritsu Kyōiku Kenkyūjo, 1973-1974), p. 1112. Translated in Susan Newell, 'The Emergence of Women Primary School Teachers in Taishō Japan', M.A Thesis, The University of Sydney (1992), p. 25.

<sup>649</sup> Kagotani, 'Josei to chanoyu', p. 257; and Mehl, 'Women Educators and the Confucian Tradition in Meiji Japan', pp. 587-588.



formally constituted than their Edo precedents. Martha Tocco has noted in relation to women's education in general that

Because a nationwide system of public institutions for women's education developed in Japan in the late nineteenth century, after the Meiji Restoration, many historians have focussed discussions of the development of women's education on the Meiji period (1868-1912). But Japanese women's education did not begin then...by the end of the Tokugawa period, the education of both samurai and affluent commoner women was a regular feature of the Tokugawa educational landscape.<sup>650</sup>

Likewise, in regards to tea, the focus of historians has been on its inclusion in formal institutions of women's education in the Meiji period. Yet, it had already been a part of women's education, for those of both samurai and commoner status, for some time. It was natural for Meiji educators to include the study of tea in girls' school curriculum as a form of training in etiquette and manners, for its use in this way was already well established. As was the case with women's education in general, it was because women's study of tea had already become widespread and acceptable, that it was so readily assimilated into the Meiji women's education system.

Tea was also readily assimilated into the Meiji women's education system because it was compatible with a chief government goal of the period: cultivating good wives and wise mothers. With its focus on behaviour, manners and how to serve others, tea could teach women how to carry out their proper role in the home. We will see in the discussion of tea in guides for women's edification below, that the ability to create a harmonious home (one of the duties of a good wife and wise mother) was promoted as an outcome of tea practice. Furthermore, the mid-Meiji period of the 1880s and 1890s saw what Donald Shively has called a 'Japanization' of culture.<sup>651</sup> That is, as a reaction against perceived rampant and indiscriminating Westernisation, there was a movement to 'return' to native Japanese culture and practices. Tea was one such practice and the schools of tea had by this time begun efforts to turn around their declining fortunes, as described above. A 1906 guide referred to the recent popularity of tea culture, which it attributed to 'a reaction against the fashion for European things and political reform, as a result of the temporary lull

<sup>650</sup> Martha Tocco, 'Made in Japan: Meiji Women's Education', in Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (eds), *Gendering Modern Japanese History* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), p. 39.

<sup>651</sup> Donald H. Shively 'The Japanization of the Middle Meiji', in Donald H. Shively (ed), *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971). See also, Kenneth Pyle, *The New Generation of Meiji Japan: Problems of Cultural Identity, 1885-1895* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969); and Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 23-26.

after the war [the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905].<sup>652</sup> It was also around this time of Japanization that tea began to be incorporated into formal school curricula for both public and private girls' schools, as was the 'good wife, wise mother' oriented curriculum more broadly. Thus, within a context of national identity making centred on a return to native practices and of gender identity making focused on women's proper behaviour and role, tea was well positioned to play a role in Meiji girls' education.

### A Written Discourse on Tea for Women

Another area in which the continuity between women's tea in the Edo and Meiji periods can be seen, yet which is far less discussed than formal education, is the written discourse on tea for women. A popular discourse on women's tea had emerged in the Edo period, though only a limited sphere of study was advocated for women. Tea had been promoted in guides for women's edification alongside other topics related to elite women's education and upbringing, such as playing the koto and shamisen, incense appreciation, *waka* poetry composition and teeth blackening. In the Meiji period this type of publication continued to find a market, though now in the new 'modern' climate topics like teeth blackening, which quickly fell out of favour after Westerners commented negatively on it, were gone.<sup>653</sup> In their place were sections on Western cooking, Western clothing or Western manners. Many of the subjects in the Edo guides still had a place in their Meiji counterparts, only now they were categorised as Japanese cooking, Japanese clothing and Japanese manners. One topic that smoothly made the transition from Edo to Meiji guides was tea, which continued to be included alongside other traditional subjects such as *waka* poetry composition, flower arrangement and incense appreciation. In their visual style as well as content, many of the Meiji guides reflected their debt to the Edo period publishing industry. The practice of dividing the pages into a narrow upper section and larger lower section was still widely used, for example. The majority of the guides also continued to provide phonetic glossing for Chinese characters.

<sup>652</sup> Kondō Shōichi, *Katei hōten* (Tokyo: Tōyōsha, 1906), p. 101.

<sup>653</sup> For example, see Fukuzawa Yukichi's satirical fable criticising the practices of eye-brow shaving and teeth blackening among Japanese women. Fukuzawa Yukichi, '*Katawa musume*', (1872). Reprinted in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshū*, volume 3 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958-1971), pp. 317-319. Translated into English as 'A Fable of a Deformed Girl', in Eiichi Kiyōka, *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1988), pp. 3-5.

As discussed above, tea and many other aspects of traditional Japanese culture suffered an initial decline after the Meiji Restoration. It is thus not surprising that guides aimed at a female audience which featured sections on tea begin to appear from the late 1880s onwards, as this coincides with the revival in fortunes of the tea world and of a widespread renewal of interest in Japanese culture. The firm Hakubunkan was therefore tapping into an eager market when it published guides such as *Nihon joreishiki* (日本女礼式 Japanese Women's Etiquette) in 1891 and then *Nihon joreishiki taizen* (日本女礼式大全 Compendium of Japanese Women's Etiquette) in 1897.<sup>654</sup> In the earlier work tea is included in a chapter on 'The Arts', which also included information on *waka* poetry composition, playing the *koto* and incense appreciation. Other topics covered include: 'Marriage', which was divided into three sections on 'Japanese marriage customs', 'Western marriage customs' and 'Chinese marriage customs'; 'Childbirth'; 'Education'; 'Cooking', both Japanese and Western; and 'Business/Finance'. This guide thus included an eclectic mix of modern and more traditional topics, and Japanese customs were contrasted with both Western and Chinese. The section on tea, entitled 'Learning about the Way of Tea' (茶道の嗜なみ *chadô no tashinami*), begins with some basic information about the 'founder' of tea, Sen no Rikyû, and the two seasons in tea, winter (*ro*) and summer (*furo*). It then has three pages of illustrations of all the main utensils used in tea (Figure 1). Following this are detailed, step-by-step instructions for how to do various tea procedures, such as: laying the charcoal and ash; the basic procedures for the summer and winter seasons; and the procedure for making thick tea in a four-and-a-half mat room. With 37 pages of information on tea, much of which is taken up with the minutiae of specific tea procedures, this was surely intended to be a practical hands-on guide to tea practice for the readers of *Nihon joreishiki*.<sup>655</sup>

<sup>654</sup> Tsuboya Zenshirô, *Nihon joreishiki* (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1891); and Tsuboya Zenshirô, *Nihon joreishiki taizen* (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1897).

<sup>655</sup> The section on tea covers pp. 347-384 of Tsuboya, *Nihon joreishiki*.



Figure 52: Illustrations of tea utensils.

*Nihon joreishiki taizen* (日本女礼式 Japanese Women's Etiquette, 1891),  
p. 348-349.

*Nihon joreishiki taizen* is divided into two volumes but has fewer pages than the first book and has some variations in content and organization of the material. The section on tea, entitled 'Information about the Way of Tea' (茶道の心得 *chadō no kokoroe*), is slightly longer and goes into even greater detail about aspects of tea culture not covered in the earlier book, such as: the order for a tea gathering; information on how to conduct and attend a tea gathering; an explanation of tearoom layouts; and some of the same step-by-step instructions of procedures.<sup>656</sup>

As well as new texts on tea for women being printed in the mid-Meiji period, there were also reprints of Edo period texts. Okamoto Katei's *Johō* (女宝 Woman's Treasury), for example, was published by the firm Kinōdō in 1891, some forty-one years after the author had died in 1850.<sup>657</sup> The publisher must have felt that an early nineteenth century guide for women was still relevant at the close of the century, despite the monumental changes in social life which had occurred in the intervening decades. This work has information on child-rearing practices, sewing clothes,

<sup>656</sup> The section on tea covers pp. 36-84 of Tsuboya, *Nihon joreishiki taizen*.

<sup>657</sup> Okamoto Katei, *Johō*, (Tokyo: Kinōdō, 1891).

knitting with wool, gifts for the four seasons, women's etiquette, playing the shamisen, and flower arrangement, as well as tea culture. The section on tea, which covers some 56 pages, is divided into twelve sub-sections where explanations are given on how to make a garden for a teahouse; the wood used for a teahouse arbor; the walls and fittings used in a teahouse; the *tatami* mats; the size and layout of tearooms; as well as specific aspects of a tea gathering such as the *kaiseki* meal and the host's and guests' role.<sup>658</sup> Finally there are instructions on how to prepare both thin and thick tea and how to lay the charcoal. Much of the information in this guide is similar to that found in Meiji period texts, even though it was written approximately half a century before. This suggests not only continuity in the content and style of presentation, but the enduring popularity of such works.

Whereas the Edo period guides tended towards general information about tea and often stated that it was enough for women to learn how to make thin tea and be a guest for thick tea, the Meiji guides are extremely detailed and give step-by-step instructions on each particular aspect of tea culture. They do not limit the information women should know to making thin tea but include making thick tea, the *kaiseki* meal, laying the charcoal, and the tearoom and garden layout. In some cases, the texts are so detailed they amount to teaching manuals. They continue to advocate the importance, even necessity of studying tea for women, with statements such as 'The Way of Tea is particularly something that women must have knowledge of.'<sup>659</sup> As the picture accompanying the text indicates, this extends to all women, both young and old (Figure 2).

<sup>658</sup> The section on tea is chapter 11, pp. 1-56 of Okamoto, *Johō*.

<sup>659</sup> Kokubu Misako, *Katei nichiyō fujo hōkan* (Tokyo: Ōkura Shoten, 1912), p. 1248. A similar statement is found in *Imperial Women's Association, Fujoshi no honbun* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1905), p. 138.



Figure 53: Elderly woman instructing three young women in tea.  
*Katei nichiyô fujo hôkan* (家庭日用婦女宝鑑 A Precious Mirror for Women's  
 Daily Use in the Home, 1912), p. 1248.

In another guide, readers were told that the skills learnt in tea were applicable to the lives of all women, regardless of class. For lower-class women who spent much of their time in the kitchen, even having a little knowledge of *temae* would help them to better organise their kitchen.<sup>660</sup> The famous educator Fukuzawa Yukichi (福沢諭吉 1835-1901), by contrast, wrote that, 'one cannot apply the elegance of music, tea ceremony, and flower arrangement to the kitchen' and therefore 'to indulge in them, after all, is a kind of pleasurable pastime, since these arts are not of actual use in everyday living or in the actual management of the home'.<sup>661</sup> According to the author of our guide, though, not only would learning tea be beneficial for management of the kitchen, even women who did not spend time in the kitchen cooking (presumably referring to those of the upper class) would benefit from learning how to lay charcoal, boil water and make tea.<sup>662</sup> The author does not elaborate on why, though we may assume that tea's usefulness to upper-class women was, as in the Edo period, connected to status. In her 1905 book on *Japanese Girls*

<sup>660</sup> Ikeda Tsunetarô, *Joshi no ôkoku* (Tokyo: Nanpûsha, 1903), pp. 102-103.

<sup>661</sup> Fukuzawa Yukichi, 'Shin Onna Daigaku', *Jijishimpô* (June 1-July 23, 1899), reprinted in *Fukuzawa Yukichi zenshû*, volume 6 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1958-1971), pp. 505-524. Translated in Eiichi Kiyôka, *Fukuzawa Yukichi on Japanese Women* (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1980), p. 224.

<sup>662</sup> Ikeda, *Joshi no ôkoku*, pp. 102-103.

and *Women*, Alice Bacon noted that, 'it is said by Japanese versed in the most refined ways that a woman who has learned the tea ceremony thoroughly is easily known by her superior bearing and manner on all occasions'.<sup>663</sup> Such an argument had been put forward for some time by authors of guides for women's edification. It seems it still had resonance in the Meiji period.

In the previous chapters we have seen that heightening or raising one's status was a desired outcome of learning tea for women of lower samurai and commoner status in the Edo period. In the Meiji period, the status issue took on a new meaning, as the officially prescribed status system was abolished, and as new values ascribed even more importance to the accumulation of wealth through entrepreneurial activity. There was thus, in the Meiji period, a new and growing middle-class who were upwardly mobile and aspired to acquire some of the values, tastes, and modes of behaviour of the classical elite (the court aristocracy) and the military elite (the samurai), whilst at the same time combining them with new, modern, values and tastes. Guides for women's edification continued to play to women's aspirations to acquire genteel femininity. They also, as indicated by the connection of learning tea with efficient household management above, linked learning tea with modern, rational values, particularly for women of the lower classes.

As with the Edo period guides, these Meiji period guides were not produced by the tea schools, nor are they stand alone texts on tea; they are general manuals on various subjects thought to be of interest to women. *Wafuku saihô tehodoki* (和服裁縫手ほどき Handy Manual for Sewing Japanese Clothes, 1907), for example, has 70 pages of information on tea culture detailing every aspect of a tea gathering, from the arrangements beforehand to the farewells at the end.<sup>664</sup> Probably because they were produced by educators, special interest associations and commercial publishing firms, rather than the tea schools, very few of them advocate one school of tea over another. The majority list the names of numerous schools. However, some do note that the Sen-ke schools were the most popular at the time. *Katei nichiyô fujo hôkan* (家庭日用婦女宝鑑 A Precious Mirror for Women's Daily Use in the Home, 1912), for example, mentions twelve different schools of tea but notes that Edosenke is

<sup>663</sup> Alice Mabel Bacon, *Japanese Girls and Women* (London: Gay and Bird, 1905), p. 432.

<sup>664</sup> Harada, *Wafuku saihô tehodoki*, chapter 4, pp. 1-70.

particularly popular, as it does not follow the complicated styles of old but is simple and therefore suits the current mood.<sup>665</sup>

In addition to the continued publication of guides for women's edification, a new type of publication for women emerged in the Meiji period – magazines. The magazine industry was diverse, but some of the same companies which produced the guides were also involved in the publication of women's magazines, such as Hakubunkan. *Jogaku sekai* (女学世界 Schoolgirls' World) was one of its top selling magazines from 1900-1925.<sup>666</sup> At a cost of twenty *sen* per issue (approximately 400 yen in today's currency), *Jogaku sekai* was 'not suited to the average young woman's pocketbook'.<sup>667</sup> Its audience would largely have been comprised of girls' higher school students, who were a small elite.<sup>668</sup> Less than two percent of all girls were enrolled in higher education in 1898.<sup>669</sup> In its aim and contents it shared many similarities with guides for women's edification. In the second issue of the magazine the editor stated that its purpose was to

supplement those areas that are lacking in women's education today. By soliciting articles from authorities in the field of education, we will cover all facets of knowledge that a woman needs in order to become enlightened and knowledgeable in the necessary techniques required for understanding her household work. We hope to help form wise mothers and good wives.<sup>670</sup>

In line with this aim, *Jogaku sekai* featured articles on 'traditional' subjects, like tea. In 1901, it carried a series of four articles entitled '*Chanoyu tebiki*' (茶の湯手びき *Tea Manual*), for example.<sup>671</sup> These articles, written by the head of a relatively small tea school, the Rikyū school, presented similar information to that covered in guides such as *Nihon joreishiki*. The first article covers the times of day, seasons and rooms for tea gatherings, the greetings between host and guest, and how

<sup>665</sup> Kokubu, *Katei nichiyō fujo hōkan*, pp. 1247-1248.

<sup>666</sup> Barbara Stao, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 91.

<sup>667</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92.

<sup>668</sup> On girls' higher school students see Hiraishi Noriko, 'Jogakusei shinwa' no tanjō o megutte', *Jinbunronso: Mie Daigaku Jinbun-gakubu Bunka-gakka* 18 (2001), pp. 33-50.

<sup>669</sup> Barbara Sato, 'An Alternate Informant: Middle-Class Women and Mass Magazines in 1920s Japan', in Elise K. Tipton and John Clark (eds), *Being Modern in Japan: Culture and Society from the 1910s to the 1930s* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000), p. 140.

<sup>670</sup> *Jogaku Sekai*, 1:2 (1901). Translated in Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, p. 91.

<sup>671</sup> Rikyū-ryū Iemoto, 'Chanoyu tebiki', *Jogaku sekai*, 1:9 (1901), pp. 88-91; 'Chanoyu tebiki', *Jogaku sekai*, 1:10 (1901), pp. 88-93; 'Chanoyu tebiki', *Jogaku sekai*, 1:11 (1901), pp. 85-89; and 'Chanoyu tebiki', *Jogaku sekai*, 1:14 (1901), pp. 87-90.



to enter and sit in a tearoom. This information, the author tells us, is enough to hold a regular tea gathering.<sup>672</sup> The following month's article covers the placement of the utensils, the procedures for laying charcoal, and the *kaiseki* meal. In the third instalment the basic procedure for making thick tea is explained, and in the final issue the subject is the procedure for making thin tea. *Jogaku zasshi* (女学雑誌 Women's Education Magazine) was a magazine with a middle and upper-class audience of 'enlightened Meiji youth'.<sup>673</sup> It aimed 'to improve women's condition by combining Western ideals of the emancipated woman with native ideals of feminine grace'.<sup>674</sup> As part of these efforts, the magazine featured articles on subjects such as tea culture, flower arrangement and *waka* poetry composition, particularly in the early years of its publication, that is 1885 and 1886.<sup>675</sup> The articles on tea are briefer but similar in tone and content to those found in *Jogaku sekai*.<sup>676</sup> Whether in guides aimed at a wide audience, or in magazines targeted at a small elite, basic information on tea culture – its history, the utensils, tea gatherings and procedures – was disseminated to women through commercial publications in the mid-late Meiji period.

*Sugoroku* also continued to provide a visual counterpart to the information discussed in guides. As in the Edo period, we find *sugoroku* which depict women engaged in activities such as playing the *koto* and making tea. *Matsu toku aoi nigi ô-oku sugoroku* (松徳葵賑大奥双六 *Sugoroku of the Shogun's Inner Quarters*, 1895) (Figures 3 and 4) reflects the interest in native Japanese activities, particularly those associated with elite women of leisure, and a certain level of nostalgia for the past. *Fujin te-shigoto sugoroku* (婦人手仕事双六 *Sugoroku of Women Using Their Hands*, early Meiji) (Figures 5 and 6) suggests that tea was a leisure activity engaged in by ordinary women in their daily lives, along with other leisure activities like the *kai-awase* shell-matching game and types of work such as sewing and weaving.

<sup>672</sup> Rikyû-ryû Iemoto, 'Chanoyu tebiki', 1:9, p. 88.

<sup>673</sup> Rebecca Copeland, *Lost Leaves: Women Writers of Meiji Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 2000), p. 8.

<sup>674</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>675</sup> See Yoko Iwahori, 'Jogaku Zasshi (The Women's Magazine) and the Construction of the Ideal Wife in the Mid-Meiji Era', trans. Richard V. Saberton, in Wakita Haruko, Anne Bouchy and Ueno Chizuko (eds), *Gender and Japanese History*, volume 2 (Osaka: Osaka University Press, 1999), pp. 401-402.

<sup>676</sup> For example, see 'Chanoyu no koto', *Jogaku zasshi* 8 (November 10, 1885), p. 157; and 'Chanoyu no haisubeshi', *Jogaku zasshi* 13 (January 25, 1886), p. 24.



Figure 54: *Matsu toku aoi nigi ô-oku sugoroku* (松徳葵賑大奥双六 Sugoroku of the Shogun's Inner Quarters, 1896).<sup>677</sup>

<sup>677</sup> Image source: Edo-Tokyo Museum, item number 96201764.



Figure 55: Detail of the centre square, two lines up from the bottom of *Matsu toku aoi nigi ô-oku sugoroku*.



Figure 56: *Fujin te-shigoto sugoroku* (婦人手仕事双六 *Sugoroku of Women Working with Their Hands*, early Meiji).<sup>678</sup>

<sup>678</sup> Image source: Edo-Tokyo Museum, item number 90207340.



Figure 57: Detail of the square on the far right, two lines up from the bottom of *Fujin te-shigoto sugoroku*.

### Tea and Modern Life

In the first decade of the twentieth century there continued to be a demand among women for guides featuring information on tea culture, flower arrangement, *waka* poetry composition, cooking and manners. In the case of tea specifically, the basic information continued to be presented in much the same way, but there was also more commentary on the relationship between tea and contemporary society than previously.<sup>679</sup> One guide specifically referred to the growth in women's tea, noting that tea used to be practised by samurai men as a way of learning to move gently and to cultivate a calm heart, but 'in recent times many women have attained mastery [of

<sup>679</sup> Guides from the first decade of the twentieth century which have basic information on tea, including instructions on the procedures to make, serve and drink tea, but no specific discussion of tea's place in society include Matsui Senpu, *Fujo no shiori* (Tokyo: Miwashinichi, 1901), pp. 204-206; Kaneko Aiichirō, *Joshi no tomo* (Ueno Village, Tochigi Prefecture: Kaneko Aiichirō, 1906), pp. 130-139; Japan Household Economy Association, *Katei hōten* (Tokyo: Maekawa Buneikaku, 1906), volume 1, pp. 459-615; Harada Yasuko, *Wafuku saihō tehodoki* (Tokyo: Kokkadō, 1907), chapter 4, pp. 1-70; Uno Chōji, *Katei no takara* (Tokyo: Nihon Genkoku Kyōkai, 1909), pp. 856-880; Kotani Masayuki, *Katei jitsuyō hyakka daien* (Tokyo: Dai Nihon Katei Gakkai, 1910), pp. 343-410; and Senior Institute for Girls' Sewing, *Katei setsuyō* (Tokyo: Senior Institute for Girls' Sewing Publishing Division, 1910), pp. 173-179.

tea], it must be because it is well suited to their naturally graceful disposition'.<sup>680</sup> Thus, the connection between women's tea and gracefulness, which as we have seen was a feature of the eighteenth and nineteenth century popular discourse on women's tea, continued into the twentieth century. There was also an awareness that the gender demographics of tea were changing.

New areas of discussion also opened up with the changing social context. 'Katei' (家庭 home), for example, was a term that emerged in the popular media in the late 1880s and 1890s.<sup>681</sup> In contrast with the term *ie* (家 household), *katei* had connotations of Westernisation and industrialisation, as 'the home became the symbol of an affective union of family members and at the same time was considered to be the foundation for the development of the Japanese nation state'.<sup>682</sup> As an example of the 'high value attached to the home', Muta Kazue cites the following quote from a magazine issued in 1908: 'The home is a place where private individuals gather together and live...That which brings harmony to the home is the entire purpose of life, and [politics, education, etc.] represent expedients through which happiness is created'.<sup>683</sup> In addition, the home became 'feminized and privatized' and it was 'linked intimately to the national interest'.<sup>684</sup> Thus, magazines featured statements such as 'women must strive to make the family pleasant and harmonious so as to create a place to educate a fine national citizenry',<sup>685</sup> and, 'our aim is to teach the methods by which to achieve a harmonious home, thereby promoting the development of the dignity and morality of the national citizenry'.<sup>686</sup>

The popularity of *katei* was such that it was purportedly used in magazine and book titles to boost sales, with one observer commenting that, 'soon even *onna gidayū*

<sup>680</sup> Miwata Masako, *Joshi kajikun*, volume 1 (Tokyo: Shōeido, 1901; 1903), p. 26.

<sup>681</sup> David R. Ambaras, 'Social Knowledge, Cultural Capital, and the New Middle Class in Japan, 1895-1912', *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 24:1 (1998), p. 25; Muta Kazue, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals: The Paradox Underlying the Emergence of the "Home"', trans. Marcella S. Gregory, *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal English Supplement* 7 (1994), p. 54; and Nishikawa Yūko, 'The Changing Form of Dwellings and the Establishment of the *Katei* (Home) in Modern Japan', trans. Mariko Muro Yokokawa, *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal English Supplement* 8 (1995), p. 21.

<sup>682</sup> Muta, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals', p. 54.

<sup>683</sup> Saiji Jitsunen, 'Katei seikatsu no risō', *Rikugō zasshi*, 327 (1908), p. 183. Cited in Muta, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals', p. 57.

<sup>684</sup> Muta, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals', p. 54. See also Jordan Sand, 'At Home in the Meiji Period: Inventing Japanese Domesticity', in Stephen Vlastos (ed), *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 191-195. On the issue of how women's contribution to the home fitted in with the state's 'good wife, wise mother' ideology, see Uno, 'The Death of Good Wife, Wise Mother?', pp. 296-298.

<sup>685</sup> Kanai En, 'Fujin to keizai', *Rikuo zasshi*, 144 (1892), p. 578. Translated in Muta, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals', p. 63.

<sup>686</sup> This slogan was affixed to the 'home' column in each issue of *Taiyō*. Translated in Muta, 'Images of the Family in Meiji Periodicals', p. 64.

[女義太夫 women's ballad chanting] and *rakugo* [落語 comic storytelling] will be crowned by the word *katei*.<sup>687</sup> He wasn't far off; tea, for one, was included as a *katei*-related topic in several late Meiji guides.<sup>688</sup> These guides were put out by publishing companies as well as associations, such as the 'Japan Association for Household Economy' (日本家政学会 *Nihon kasei gakkai*), the 'Greater Japan Home Association' (大日本家庭学会 *Dai Nihon katei gakkai*) and the 'Japan Wartime Society' (二本軍国協会 *Nihon gunkoku kyôkai*), and even schools like the Senior Institute for Girls' Sewing (女子裁縫高等学院 *Joshi saihô kôtô gakuin*) in Tokyo. The tea schools were not appropriating a popular term or idea in order to spread tea. Rather, these associations were spreading their message through dissemination of subjects such as tea.

The connection between tea and the home was explained as such in the guide *Fujin shûyô to jissai* (婦人修養と實際 Women's Self-Improvement and Practicality, 1911):

If you incorporate the spirit of the manners and etiquette of the tearoom into the home, and apply this to the family's day-to-day behaviour and movement/deportment, the organization of the home will be put in perfect order. You will naturally acquire manners towards your superiors, the husband and wife will grow closer together and siblings will not fight; the pleasure of a happy family will be made all the more splendid.<sup>689</sup>

Tea was thus described as one way to bring happiness and harmony to the home, which according to the magazine quoted earlier was 'the entire purpose of life'. And, as the home was the foundation of the state, this harmony would also extend to the nation.

This guide also connected tea with another modern idea, '*shûyô*' (修養 self-improvement). This term came into vogue in the early twentieth century and 'encompassed a variety of different meanings, evoking connotations of "character building", "moral training", and "spiritual and cultural growth".<sup>690</sup> In this particular

<sup>687</sup> 'Katei mono ryûkô', *Chûô kôron*, 193 (April 1905), p. 69. Cited in Ambaras, 'Social Knowledge, Cultural Capital, and the New Middle Class in Japan', p. 25.

<sup>688</sup> For example, Japan Household Economy Association, *Katei hôten*, volume 1, pp. 459-615; Kondô, *Katei hôten*, pp. 101-155; Uno, *Katei no takara*, pp. 856-880; Kotani, *Katei jitsuyô hyakka daien*, pp. 343-410; Senior Institute for Girls' Sewing, *Katei setsuyô*, pp. 173-179; and Kokubu, *Katei nichiyô fujo hôkan*, pp. 1246-1280.

<sup>689</sup> Kobayashi Hikogorô and Harada Tenrai, *Fujin shûyô to jissai* (Tokyo: Isseisha, 1911), p. 107.

<sup>690</sup> Barbara Sato, *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media, and Women in Interwar Japan* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), p. 134.

case the meaning of *shūyō* is best described as 'spiritual and cultural growth', which women can achieve through the study of tea according to *Fujin shūyō to jissai*.

The Way of Tea is an excellent form of etiquette that women should certainly study. There are a wide range of things connected to it; the three philosophies of Shinto, Confucianism and Buddhism are found within it. It also embraces the inner secrets of poetry. Essentially, what is called *chanoyu* has as its true aim the cultivation of the spirit. Though there is a performance accompanying it, it is a type of philosophy and also *Shingaku*. It is a mistake to think that it is a tool of etiquette or a tool of society.<sup>691</sup>

We see here that some of the same arguments put forward in the early eighteenth century text *Toji no tamoto* were still being applied in the early twentieth century. But, there has been a dramatic shift in the gender demographics of the tea world, from the time when the author of *Toji no tamoto* had to justify writing about women's tea practice. According to the twentieth century author,

Today, the Way of Tea has become a woman's accomplishment. In the past those who mastered its esoteric mysteries were on the whole men, at its most popular time it was something learnt by many samurai. The reason why they mastered it is that it is absolutely training for the soul and training in courage and nothing aside from this.<sup>692</sup>

The text then goes on to make explicit connections between studying tea and improving one's day-to-day manners and behaviour.

The Way of Tea is not simply limited to etiquette but always the principles are displayed through behaviour. There is no contradiction [in tea] such as when children who have learnt morals at school, return home and stretch out their legs, lying down in front of their parents [that is, not putting into practise what they have learnt at school]. Even when someone makes and serves you tea, when you do not know *chanoyu*, you usually drink with one hand. If you master *chanoyu*, you will naturally come to drink it with both hands. Also, on occasions when you receive an invitation from someone as a rule you must reply, whether you will go or not. [As regards] the master of the house's manners towards a visitor, when the time comes for the guest to leave it is customary to take them to the entrance, and the guest will return the favour. If you can not do these tasks it will be done with a letter of thanks. Therefore, between those friends mutual respect will arise.

To master tea thoroughly is difficult, but even with a little knowledge [of it] you will be possessed with natural manners, and because your behaviour will become elegant, without any effort your heart will become gentle. Manners towards your superiors and loving benevolence as well, these I think, will surely develop through the Way of Tea. Sitting in one tearoom and participating together in tea with pure and innocent hearts, you will be

<sup>691</sup> Kobayashi and Harada, *Fujin shūyō to jissai*, p. 102.

<sup>692</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.



mastering the same path together. Needless to say, there will be no distinction between male or female, young or old, high or low, rich or poor. As everyone's hearts will come to understand each other, it is a self-evident truth that mutual love and affection will develop.<sup>693</sup>

A strong argument in favour of learning tea for the purposes of self-cultivation is thus put forward. Learning tea will improve your manners and etiquette but, more importantly, it will cultivate your soul and give you tools for life. Yet, the image of tea in society was not entirely positive at this time.

However, in society there are those people for whom the Way of Tea is associated with the need for high priced utensils, so it is thought to be very elegant and difficult to learn, and not applicable to ordinary families. This is an absolute misunderstanding of the true aim of the Way of Tea. Indeed, tea utensils are the same as school teaching materials. There are essential things but, even if you do not have utensils, by no means can you not communicate the spirit of tea ... People who say that you cannot master the Way of Tea without utensils are completely mistaken. ...

... There is no impediment if you have five guests or ten guests, and it is of no concern if men and women are together. With formality and so on, there are no restrictions. With the tearoom it does not matter ... if it has eight mats or six mats. In short, for the spirit of tea to be achieved it is essential to attempt modesty.<sup>694</sup>

Despite some of the criticisms which could be levelled at the tea world, it is argued that it is still beneficial for women to study tea. The emphasis on modesty and not needing expensive utensils, for example, would help women to cultivate the virtue of frugality, which was one of the feminine virtues identified by the state and educators.<sup>695</sup>

Whereas Edo period guides had given women very practical reasons to study tea – because it was popular, you would become graceful, and it could help you gain a position in service – there was, in some late Meiji guides, a more philosophical and spiritual reasoning promoted to women. They suggested that etiquette and deportment were not the sole purpose of study, though they were, to be sure, part of tea. Cultural and spiritual cultivation was the primary goal, for the individual woman, for her family and for the nation. In addition, in the Edo period guides, tea had been described as a hobby that a woman could take up if she had spare time, and if she

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 103-104.

<sup>694</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>695</sup> Nolte and Hastings, 'The Meiji State's Policy Toward Women', p. 172.

ensured she put her duty as a wife and mother first. Now, in the late Meiji period, studying tea was part of a woman's role as a wife and mother; studying tea would help her to fulfil her obligations to her family and the nation. These ideas were expressed through the modern concepts of *katei* and *shûyô*. Whilst the mid-Meiji guides had thus followed on directly from their Edo period precedents in content, we see in the late Meiji period, with a new generation of readers, the penetration of new ideas into the discourse on women's tea. In particular, tea was now associated with a gendered form of cultural nationalism in which women's identity was bound up with the preservation of traditional Japanese culture.

### Women as Tea Teachers

Another topic which emerged in the Meiji discourse on women's tea was women becoming teachers. While it is highly likely that there were female tea teachers in the Edo period, there does not appear to have been any literature which promoted it as a suitable occupation for women. In 1908 the guide *Joshi shokugyô annai* (女子職業案内 Guide to Occupations for Women) carried a section on being a tea teacher (茶道教師 *sadô kyôshi*).<sup>696</sup> It was published by Hakubunkan and written by Kondô Shôichi (近藤正一), an educator and the author of numerous works for women on subjects such as the home and education, including at least one other which featured tea, *Katei hôten* (家庭宝典 Handbook for the Home, 1906).<sup>697</sup> Other occupations discussed include being a school-teacher, a musician, a flower arrangement teacher, a photographer, a midwife, a post office clerk, a telephone operator, an instructor of *nô* music for women, a seamstress and sewing teacher, and a factory worker. That is, it was a mixture of modern and more traditional occupations for women that were presented.

With respect to being a tea teacher the author says that

From the time of the Restoration until Meiji 14 or 15 [1881/1882] such things as tea were perceived by society to be useless jobs done purely by men of leisure, there was no one who would talk about tea. Also, so called tea people (*chajin*) have from long ago had biases of many kinds, such as towards utensils which look dirty or sooty, as well as rejoicing in types of utensils which are excessive, sparing no expense [on them].<sup>698</sup>

<sup>696</sup> Kondô Shôichi, *Joshi shokugyô annai* (Tokyo: Hakubunkan, 1906), pp. 193-201.

<sup>697</sup> Kondô, *Katei hôten*, pp. 101-155.

<sup>698</sup> Kondô, *Joshi shokugyô annai*, pp. 193.

Thus, the author concludes, there was a low opinion of tea culture in the early Meiji period. It would appear then that despite the efforts of the tea schools, a negative image of tea still persisted in society at least into the 1880s, which may have been exacerbated by the art collecting activities of the new industrial elite.<sup>699</sup> However, women do not seem to be included in this image of tea. Rather, the text goes on to say that for women,

When making inquiries about marriage and so forth, if you can say that you can do tea, it is said that your value as a very fine bride will increase, so nowadays optional course of study or elective courses are being included as subjects in girls' schools...especially for school girls, for learning deportment, tea is all the more necessary.<sup>700</sup>

This contradicts Kato's argument that 'popularization of the tea ceremony as an essential part of bridal training is not a Meiji-born but a postwar-born phenomenon' and that 'women who received official *sahô* education at school in the prewar period learned the tea ceremony not as necessary bridal training, but rather as a 'preferable' hobby'.<sup>701</sup> This guide, on the other hand, squarely places the inclusion of tea in the curriculum of Meiji girls' schools within the sphere of bridal training.

Turning to the specific topic of the book, women's occupations, readers were told

*Chanoyu*, that is making tea, is in an extremely popular period, so upper-class women first of all, down to women of the middle-class and below, are learning it. So, we are in a state where those teachers [of tea] are flourishing innumerable with great prosperity these [past] three years. This is the situation, so it is becoming all the more fashionable, no matter which school. [Even though] there is absolutely no selection of good and bad masters, there is a mixture of good and bad so to speak. All the more so then it can be one job which is given to women, rather, it can be rightly said that it is a fine thing [for women to do].<sup>702</sup>

Following this, the reader gets a brief outline of tea, focusing on the different schools in particular. There is then criticism of those who simply buy and sell tea certificates without regard for the practitioner's skill level. Next, the following advice is given to women considering becoming a tea teacher:

<sup>699</sup> Another manual gives a scathing criticism of contemporary tea masters as 'professional entertainers' who simply use tea to make money, going against the true spirit of tea. See Ikeda, *Joshi no ôkoku*, pp. 103-105.

<sup>700</sup> Kondô, *Joshi shokugyô annai*, p.194.

<sup>701</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 97.

<sup>702</sup> Kondô, *Joshi shokugyô annai*, pp.194-195.

Now, to become a regular tea teacher at a girls' school or to be able to put up a sign outside your house for teaching tea to neighbourhood girls, it is enough to know the information on the basic tea making procedure [平点前 *hiradema*], using the sunken hearth and brazier and how to put out the *kaiseki* meal. It can be said that it is not necessary to have learnt up to the level of the thick tea procedures. But, it is also fine to have an understanding of thick tea procedures, this is enough to be counted among those within the category of extremely good master. Nowadays, those who instruct in the Way of Tea who have knowledge of [higher level] *daitenmoku* or *shin no daisu* procedures... are few, as there are not many people taking lessons in these procedures. So, while calling yourself a teacher it is not necessary to know these things. In order to be able to teach people the regular procedures for making thin tea, of course it depends on each persons' skill or lack of skill, if you have fairly frequent classes, with one or one and a half years' learning you can generally become a teacher and hang up a sign. In saying this, though, there are people who think it is difficult to become a very good teacher and will say months and years of learning are not enough, five or ten years of tea lessons are vital, but this is an old-fashioned way of thinking. In this busy time ... [*sic*], when it is possible to graduate from university in four or five years, there is no fool who would waste time studying the Way of Tea for a long period of time. Even if you do not do this, you can study very well.<sup>703</sup>

Becoming a tea teacher thus appears to be an attractive choice; you can reach the necessary level of knowledge within a short time frame and choose to work either from home or at a school. The text then goes on to cover the practical matter of income.

Usually the monthly fee for one class per week is 50 sen. There is also a separate fee for 'outside classes', that is, when the teacher goes out from their home to teach. If it is a class within the teacher's home, the monthly fee is 1 yen, or 2 yen for an outside class, at the lower end of the scale. Over that, if you are asked out to a wealthy person's house there may be no limit, [you may receive] 1 yen per time or at an even better house around 2 yen plus money to cover the sweets and transport...If you have 10 students coming to classes in your home, you can live a good lifestyle... You cannot say so simply how much a tea teacher earns in a month, as it depends on the number of students, and on the type of students, but at the least it will be 10 yen or more, up to 11 or 12 yen, the middle ground would be 20 yen. Contrary to one's expectations, the income is not much. A teacher of tea alone may have a difficult lifestyle, so many are teachers of flower arrangement or etiquette at the same time... Then there are those people who have regular lessons once or twice a week at a girls' school who will receive at least 10 yen, if not up to 12 yen....and on other days they can also teach lessons in their home... Those who are teachers at one or two schools have a regular monthly income, so it stands to reason that there some tea teachers who eagerly work at a school.<sup>704</sup>

<sup>703</sup> *Ibid*, pp.196-199.

<sup>704</sup> *Ibid*, pp.199-201.

So, whilst some promoters of tea focused on more idealistic goals, others still advocated pragmatic reasons for women to study. In this case, beyond just learning manners, etiquette and deportment and thereby becoming an attractive catch in the marriage market, study of tea could also lead to a financially comfortable lifestyle through teaching, though teaching tea alone may not have been enough.<sup>705</sup> By comparison with a tea teachers' income, according to the figures given for other occupations in *Joshi shokugyô annai*, a primary school teacher could receive on average 35 to 40 yen a month, though it could be as little as 10 yen or as high as 75 yen a month depending on their level;<sup>706</sup> a photographer could earn on average 15 to 17 yen a month, but as much as 45 yen a month if they were particularly talented;<sup>707</sup> a post office clerk's daily wages could be between 15 and 45 *sen* (100 *sen* = 1 yen);<sup>708</sup> and a factory worker's daily wages could be between 17 and 25 *sen*, even up to 50 or 60 *sen* a day for a highly skilled worker.<sup>709</sup> A tea teacher's average income of between 12 and 20 yen a month was thus in the middle range for women, and towards the higher end if she supplemented this with teaching other subjects.

Even limited knowledge was apparently enough to become a tea teacher, suggesting that there must have been a proliferation of teachers and a high demand for their services. According to one estimate, the 'typical middle-class family had a monthly income of 100 yen or more' in 1900, whilst for the 'new middle class, composed of government officials and company employees' it was about 50 to 100 yen, with real expenses totalling around 47 yen.<sup>710</sup> Thus, a student's average monthly fee for tea classes of 50 *sen* given in *Joshi shokugyô annai* would have been affordable for a woman of an established middle class family or above. For the new middle class and lower, studying tea may have been more of an aspiration than a reality.<sup>711</sup> Yet, for those who could afford to study for a few years, the chance to

<sup>705</sup> There is, however, no mention of tea teaching being a suitable occupation for widows, which is sometimes suggested as a reason why women went into teaching. See, Nishiyama Matsunosuke, *Iemoto no kenkyû* (Tokyo: Kôshô shobô, 1959), p. 146; Sumiko Iwao, *The Japanese Woman: Traditional Image and Changing Reality* (New York: Free Press, 1993), p. 35; and Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 67.

<sup>706</sup> Kondô, *Joshi shokugyô annai*, p. 43.

<sup>707</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>708</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>709</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 455.

<sup>710</sup> Chimoto Akio, 'The Birth of the Full-Time Housewife in the Japanese Worker's Household As Seen Through Family Budget Surveys', trans. Diana Lynn Bethel, *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal English Supplement* 8 (1995), p. 55. As there was no national census conducted at the time these figures are not entirely accurate.

<sup>711</sup> The average monthly income of a working class household in 1910 was 16-20 yen. Chimoto, 'The Birth of the Full-Time Housewife', p. 48.

become a teacher and supplement the family income with up to 20 yen a month was perhaps an attractive option.

### The Growth of Women's Tea

It has been suggested by historians that the dominance of women in the tea world, in terms of actual numbers of practitioners but not in terms of power or control within the culture, began occurring from the early decades of the twentieth century. Without official records from the tea schools available to researchers this is difficult to assess. Nonetheless, it is widely accepted among tea scholars and practitioners alike that this period was a watershed for women's participation in tea.<sup>712</sup> Kumakura Isao, for example, has said that, 'from the end of the Taishō period through the beginning of the Shōwa period (ca. 1920-1930), the ratio of men to women involved in chanoyu virtually reversed itself, transforming the world of chadō into a female-dominated society'.<sup>713</sup> To what extent the numbers of female tea practitioners increased in relation to male practitioners at this time must be questioned, though, for scholars making claims about the growth of women's tea in the modern period start from a base of virtually zero at the time of the Meiji Restoration, which has been shown to be an erroneous assumption.

As the above discussion on Meiji period guides showed, there was recognition at the time of a change occurring in the tea world, with references to the increasing numbers of women studying tea. However, it is also clear from the previous chapters that the numbers of women practising tea had been on the increase for some time. Since the late eighteenth century there had been recognition that tea was popular among both men and women, as seen in *Joyō fuku judai*'s claims that, 'these days everyone is enjoying tea so it is good to learn at least how to drink it' and 'both men and women should have knowledge of tea'.<sup>714</sup> In identifying a growth in female tea practitioners, Meiji authors may have well been referring to a time frame which covered most, if not all, of the nineteenth century. That is, they may have been including the latter part of the Edo period in their discussion. It is also possible that there was a noticeable increase in the number of female tea practitioners in the course

<sup>712</sup> For an example of a contemporary female practitioner's view see Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan*, p. 148.

<sup>713</sup> Kumakura, *Kindai chadō shi no kenkyū*, pp. 303-304. Translated in Kumakura, 'The History of Chanoyu in Early-Modern Japan', p. 20.

<sup>714</sup> Takada, *Joyō fuku judai* (1785), p. 18.

of the Meiji period. Still another possibility, though, is that the changing gender demographics in the tea world were the result of a decrease in the number of male practitioners, rather than the number of female tea practitioners increasing.

Rather than trying to make judgements about the growth, in real terms, of women's tea in this period, since the lack of evidence makes any attempt to do so problematic, the concern here will be with the changing image of tea. That is, the discussion will be focused on the feminisation of tea, whereby what was once both masculine and feminine came to have a distinctly feminine image.

Scholars in a variety of fields have found that in the process of modernisation in non-Western countries, a split occurs between that which is considered modern, Western and male and that which is traditional, native and female. As Nira Yuval-Davis sums it up, 'rather than being seen as the symbols of change, women are constructed in the role of the 'carriers of tradition'.<sup>715</sup> This has been found to be particularly applicable to post-colonial societies. In the case of India, for example, Partha Chatterjee has argued that in order to overcome the domination of the West, the 'domain of culture' was separated 'into two spheres – the material and the spiritual', which was further condensed into a distinction between 'inner' and 'outer', and applied to daily life this was expressed as a separation of 'social space' into 'the home and the world'.<sup>716</sup> This separation also occurred along gender lines, so that the world, associated with 'material interests', becomes 'the domain of the male', and the home, which 'represents one's inner spiritual self, one's true identity', has woman as 'its representation'.<sup>717</sup>

In the case of Japan, questions emerged about national identity during the rapid modernisation of the Meiji period. The nativist reaction of the mid-Meiji period was an attempt to quell the tide of Westernisation and to construct a modern but distinctive Japanese identity. As discussed above in relation to the discourse on *katei*, the home did indeed become nationalised and feminised, paralleling what Chatterjee observes in the Indian context. Pictures from the Meiji period and beyond provide striking visual evidence of this dichotomy, showing, for example, a woman dressed in kimono and kneeling on *tatami* flooring, while a man in Western suit is standing in

<sup>715</sup> Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation* (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1997), p. 61.

<sup>716</sup> Partha Chatterjee, 'Colonialism, Nationalism, and Colonized Women: The Contest in India', *American Ethnologist*, 16:4 (1989), pp. 623-624.

<sup>717</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 624.

the doorway preparing to enter the world.<sup>718</sup> It was not just the home which became nationalised and feminised. As Liza Dalby and Mikiko Ashikari have shown, kimono and white make-up also became representative of a native Japanese essence and the preserve of women during the Meiji period.<sup>719</sup> In many areas, what had once been for both men and women came to be almost exclusively a women's practice with a distinctively feminine image. So too, did tea become nationalised and feminised during the process of modernisation.

The representation of tea as the essence of a traditional Japanese culture, standing in direct contrast with the modern Western culture being absorbed in Japan, became established during the Meiji period, as a result of the developments discussed earlier in relation to the modernisation of tea. At the same time, women took on the role in society of preservers of tradition. Therefore, tea became not just an activity through which women could cultivate gracefulness or femininity, which had been in the case in the Edo period, it now also became a way to cultivate their Japaneseness. At times when the accepted national or gender identity was perceived to be threatened, from the rapid Westernisation of the Meiji period, for example, the identity of a traditional Japanese woman took on even more potency. The enduring popularity of tea among women can be traced back to this Meiji period re-invention of tea as a traditional, Japanese and feminine activity.<sup>720</sup>

Why did tea become so popular among women in the Meiji period? In her study of contemporary female tea practitioners, Etsuko Kato discusses several reasons for this. Firstly, she posits that there was a 'rediscovery of *temae* as *sahô*' for women, whereby the concept of learning tea to discipline the body was applied to women, rather than male commoners as in the Edo period.<sup>721</sup> However, it has been shown that the discourse on learning tea as a form of etiquette and deportment training for women was developed during the Edo period and was continued into the Meiji period, rather than having begun then. Furthermore, this was not the only discourse on women's tea in the Meiji period. Whilst still making the case that learning tea was a

<sup>718</sup> See Liza Dalby, *Kimono: Fashioning Culture* (London: Vintage Pres, 2001), p. 70; Kato, 'Art' for Men, 'Manners' for Women', p. 144; and *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 66.

<sup>719</sup> See Dalby, *Kimono*, pp. 65-121; and Mikiko Ashikari, 'The Memory of the Women's White Faces: Japaneseness and the Making of Tradition', *Japan Forum*, 15:1 (2003), pp. 55-79.

<sup>720</sup> Studies of tea in contemporary Japan and the U.S. suggest that these associations are still motivating factors in women's decisions to take up the study of tea. For example, see Barbara Lynn Rowland Mori, 'The Traditional Arts as Leisure Activities for Contemporary Japanese Women', in Anne E. Imamura (ed), *Re-imagining Japanese Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 117-134; and Kristin Surak, 'Ethnic Practices' in Translation: Tea in Japan and the US', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29:5 (2006), pp. 828-855.

<sup>721</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, pp. 61-64.



way of learning etiquette, some Meiji educators went beyond this, presenting more complex and philosophical visions of the role of tea in women's lives.

The second Meiji period development which Kato proposes is the emergence of two opposing discourses: 'art' for men, 'manners' for women'.<sup>722</sup> She argues that tea and tea utensils became evaluated as 'art', in line with a newly imported concept of art from the West, by and for men. Women's tea practice, on the other hand, was centred on the acquisition of manners. These two discourses were accepted, according to Kato, for three reasons: only men had the economic power to purchase tea utensils; the development of a 'gender-based dichotomy...between the 'public/Western/masculine' and the 'domestic'/Japanese/feminine' on both the national and international level; and 'the dichotomy between 'mind', associated with men, and 'body', associated with women'.<sup>723</sup>

As Christine Guth has shown, there was a high evaluation of tea utensils as art objects by wealthy industrialists in the Meiji period.<sup>724</sup> Certainly, this was a male dominated sphere of tea culture, which showed that an appreciation of tea could be combined with a successful career in business and politics. Yet, this focus on utensil acquisition was not evaluated positively by all those connected to the tea world. Several of the guides discussed above explicitly reject this style of tea practice. *Fujin shūyō to jissai*, for example, criticises the association of tea with 'the need for high priced utensils' and argues that this is a 'misunderstanding of the true aim of tea'.<sup>725</sup> This sentiment was echoed in *Joshi shokugyō annai*.<sup>726</sup> Both of these guides indicate that women were not associated with this sphere of tea activity, in line with what Kato proposes.

However, Kato's argument implies that women's dissociation with the 'tea as art' discourse relegated them to a lesser status within the tea world. The discussions in the guides, however, put women in a position in which they were able to preserve the true essence of tea culture and are therefore valued higher than those male practitioners who amass large collections of expensive utensils, at least from the author's point of view. It was because of the association of women with the domestic

<sup>722</sup> Kato, 'Art' for Men, 'Manners' for Women', pp. 139-149; and *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 64-67.

<sup>723</sup> Kato, 'Art' for Men, 'Manners' for Women', pp. 143-145; and *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 64-67.

<sup>724</sup> See Guth, *Art, Tea and Industry*.

<sup>725</sup> Kobayashi and Harada, *Fujin shūyō to jissai*, p. 104.

<sup>726</sup> Kondo, *Joshi shokugyō annai*, pp. 193-194.

sphere, meaning both the home and the nation, as identified by Kato and outlined above, that women took on, or were given, this role of preservers of the true spirit of tea. Women also became the preservers of the nation's essence, as represented by activities such as tea, and the wearing of kimono and white make-up, all newly re-invented as both Japanese and feminine.

Kato's third reason for the association of women's tea with the acquisition of manners is that it was 'believed', by both male and female educators and women themselves, 'that women could not, need not, and should not rationally or metaphysically understand the tea ceremony because reason was designated a male domain'.<sup>727</sup> Connected to this, she argues that a new feature of women's tea in the post-Second World War period was the incorporation of the 'myths of glorious ancestors and metaphysics', which had not be associated with women's tea previously.<sup>728</sup> Explanations of tea in Meiji period guides for women's edification indicate that it is misleading to say that women's tea lacked any historical or metaphysical basis at this time. On the historical front, many of the guides begin their sections on tea with an outline of tea history, mostly focusing on developments up to and around the time of Sen no Rikyû, though some also cover Edo period tea masters. There is also a large portion of the texts devoted to explanations of tea seasons, teahouses, rooms, gardens and utensils. That is, information which is not explicitly connected to manners or etiquette but is about a general, perhaps even 'rational', understanding of tea and its historical development was presented to women. On the metaphysical level, there are guides that emphasize the spiritual and philosophical basis of tea in Zen and relate it to Confucianism. The discussion in *Fujin shûyô to jissai*, in particular, presented tea as a form of training for the mind and soul, not just the body, and criticises those who see tea merely as a way of learning etiquette. To say that the discourse on women's tea in the Meiji period was limited exclusively to learning manners, etiquette and deportment, is too narrow, even though this idea was prevalent.

<sup>727</sup> Kato, 'Art' for Men, 'Manners' for Women', p. 145; and *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 67.

<sup>728</sup> Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*, p. 68.

### Beyond the Meiji Period

By the end of the Meiji period, the connection between tea, femininity and Japaneseness had become established. This laid the basis for the continued growth in women's tea into the future. As in the Edo and Meiji periods, women's tea has continued to be linked to popular social themes. Where once capital accumulation had been a reason behind women's tea practice, in the modern context of interwar Japan (the period between the First and Second World Wars) the concern was not so much with one's outward appearance or how the skills learnt in tea could positively impact a woman's relationships with others, but with the inner self of each individual woman. In the late Meiji period tea had been linked to the idea of 'self cultivation', this idea became particularly popular among women during the Taishô period (1912-1926). While self-cultivation increasingly came to entail 'modern' activities, such as reading novels and working outside the home, 'traditional' pursuits like tea still had a place, depending on the individual woman's interpretation of the term. A female office worker surveyed in 1922 explained, 'for me, self-cultivation entails attending a nightly sewing class and taking lessons in tea ceremony and flower arrangement on the weekends'.<sup>729</sup>

An article which appeared in the magazine *Jogaku sekai* in 1916 made explicit the relationship between tea and self-cultivation. In 'Chadô to seishin shûyô' (茶道と精神修養 *Cultivation of the Mind and Spirit through Tea*) a tea master of the Tahogawa Enshû-gonomi school connected learning practical skills and etiquette with the attainment of spiritual enlightenment.

The point of the Way of Tea is to reform women's behaviour and cultivate the mind, especially to master the essence of Zen, so that they become accomplished in etiquette... The meaning of tea, namely this beautiful grace is to create ladylike brightness, which is one kind of cultivation of the mind... While it is necessary to brush up the techniques for being the housewife of the family, it should not be forgotten that the most important thing for a housewife is to achieve a calm heart and compassion.<sup>730</sup>

The female educator Miwata Masako (三輪田真佐子 1843-1927), founder of Miwata Women's Higher School and contributor of articles to magazines such as *Jogaku sekai* and author of several books on women's education, also connected the learning of tea as a form of self-cultivation with Zen. In a chapter on women's

<sup>729</sup> Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, p. 134.

<sup>730</sup> Hoshi no Sôetsu, 'Chadô to seishin shûyô', *Jogaku sekai*, 15:8 (1916), p. 68.

amusements in a book on self-cultivation before marriage, she wrote that tea, 'having a trace of the flavour of Zen, is a place in which it said that, in the midst of silence, comes peacefulness for the body and mind'.<sup>731</sup> While we tend to associate studying tea as a form of self-cultivation for middle and upper-class women, it appears that working-class women also shared similar aspirations: 'a recruitment flyer for Tokyo Muslin [a cloth making factory] boasted that the moral benefits of employment included "becoming a magnificent person" because they would receive training in 'sewing, flower arranging, tea ceremony, etiquette and manners'.<sup>732</sup>

The interwar years were a time when the national and gender identity were again perceived to be under threat, from the apparently corrupting influence of the modern girl. The modern girl, economically and emotionally independent, represented mainstream society's fears and anxieties about social change.<sup>733</sup> In this context, the image of the traditional Japanese woman was juxtaposed with the modern girl, while in reality many women's lives lay somewhere in between. For those who went out to work, as increasing numbers of middle-class women did, it became important for them to cultivate the feminine and Japanese part of themselves.<sup>734</sup> As one tea master put it, 'the young ladies of today, if they are looked at from the point of view of women of the past, are living vigorous and wise lives, but they should also have some beautiful and feminine part of themselves'.<sup>735</sup> And tea, as Miwata Masako reminded her readers, 'is not found in the West; it is, of course, a Japanese pastime'.<sup>736</sup> From the clothing she wore, to her style of make-up, the working woman (職業婦人 *shokugyô fujin*) was advised not to stray too far into the territory of a modern girl.<sup>737</sup> One magazine stated, 'only if the working women do not look like

<sup>731</sup> Miwata Masako, 'Shinsan o home tsukushite shingane no gotoshi', in Tanaka Hisashi (ed), *Kekkon zengo no shûyô* (Tokyo: Shôeido, 1916). Reprinted in *Kindai Nihon joshi kyôiku bunkenshû*, volume 16 (Tokyo: Nihon Tosho Sentâ, 2002), p. 154.

<sup>732</sup> Hosoi Wakizô, *Jokô aishi* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shôten, 1925). Cited in Uno, 'The Death of Good Wife, Wise Mother?', p. 301.

<sup>733</sup> See Sato, *The New Japanese Woman*, pp. 45-77; and Miriam Silverberg, 'The Modern Girl as Militant', in Gail Lee Bernstein (ed), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 239-266.

<sup>734</sup> While the numbers of middle-class women working increased during the 1920s, they still constituted a minority of women and of the entire workforce. They did, however, become the subject of much attention due to the concerns held by conservative bureaucrats and social commentators about how middle-class women working would impact the family and social stability. See Margit Nagy, 'Middle-class Working Women during the Interwar Years', in Gail Lee Bernstein (ed), *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 199-216.

<sup>735</sup> Hoshi no Sôetsu, 'Chadô to seishin shûyô', p. 68.

<sup>736</sup> Miwata Masako, 'Shinsan o home tsukushite shingane no gotoshi', p. 154.

<sup>737</sup> On *shokugyô fujin* see Murakami Nobuhiko, *Taishôki no shokugyô fujin* (Tokyo: Domessu Shuppan, 1983).

typical working women can they become truly thoughtful and aware women'.<sup>738</sup> The painter Fujita Tsuguji (藤田嗣治 1886-1968) said that 'when dressed in Japanese costume women must behave according to Japanese customs of modesty and quiet, and it is wrong for them to imitate American movie actresses'.<sup>739</sup> In her manners and deportment a woman could also express her identity. For those who wished to convey an image closer to that of the traditional Japanese woman than the modern girl, learning tea was a way to cultivate this identity.

A process which had begun in the Edo period and gained strength in the Meiji period, whereby tea became associated with femininity, was fully developed by the 1930s. In 1935 a senior *otokoyaku* (男役 female actor of male roles) in the all-female theatre troupe of the Takarazuka review stated that she and the other actors 'are all just ordinary girls...who practice the tea ceremony and flower arrangement when not performing onstage', in order to quell concerns about the female actors behaving 'in a manly fashion in their daily lives'.<sup>740</sup> Art historians have suggested that images of female beauties making tea were popular in the 1930s because they showed women 'engaged in appropriately delicate and passive activities'<sup>741</sup> and 'provided an ideal of feminine harmony and peace at a time when the Japanese world was marked by discord and war'.<sup>742</sup> Studying tea could be used as proof of femininity, and as a refutation against claims of masculinity. This feminine image of tea evoked feelings of peacefulness, in contrast to the violent and masculine world of politics and war.

## Conclusion

There are several continuities between women's tea of the Edo period, as discussed in the preceding chapters, and women's tea in the Meiji period. The discourse that tea is a means of teaching women deportment and etiquette and that it is a form of bridal training are one example. The means of promoting tea to women was also similar, as revealed by an examination of Meiji period guides for women's

<sup>738</sup> Ashikari, 'The Memory of the Women's White Faces', p. 69.

<sup>739</sup> Cited in Kendall H. Brown, 'Flowers of Taishō: Images of Women in Japanese Society and Art, 1915-1935', in Lorna Price and Letitia O'Connor (ed), *Taishō Chic: Japanese Modernity, Nostalgia and Deco* (Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts, 2001), p. 17.

<sup>740</sup> Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1998, p. 73.

<sup>741</sup> Kendall H. Brown, 'Prints and Politics in Early Shōwa Japan: Shin-Hanga and Women', in Kendall H. Brown (ed), *Light in Darkness: Women in Japanese Prints of Early Shōwa (1926-1945)* (Fisher Gallery, University of Southern California, 1996), p. 11.

<sup>742</sup> Sharon Goodman, 'Body Politics: Bijin in Shin-Hanga', in Brown (ed), *Light in Darkness*, p. 63.

edification and *sugoroku*. Therefore, the Meiji period did not see the beginning of women's tea, as is often claimed, or even a new beginning in women's tea, but a continuation of earlier developments, albeit in a new social context. It was a context in which tea became re-invented as both Japanese and feminine as part of the process of modernisation and national identity making. Tea in the Edo period was associated with elite culture, and this was an appealing feature of it for women. In the Meiji period this association remained and tea also took on nationalistic associations as the locus of 'traditional' Japanese culture, standing in opposition to that which was Western and modern. It therefore had a dual appeal to women; learning tea was a way of improving their social status, and, a way of preserving their identity as Japanese and the nations' cultural heritage. That is, for women to study tea was to cultivate their national and gender identity. This is an enduring legacy of the Meiji period, as tea to this day remains most closely associated with Japaneseness and femininity. It is a legacy, though, built on the foundations laid in the Edo period.

## Conclusion

It is clear that women's participation in Japanese tea culture, both as practitioners and producers, has a much longer history than is currently suggested in both academic and tea school literature. From the very period in which the practices and customs of drinking powdered green tea were being formalised into the cultural form *chanoyu*, in the late sixteenth century, we find records of women's participation, limited though they may be. Over the course of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, some of the most celebrated and prominent male tea practitioners of the day were involved with women's tea practice, men such as Sen Sôtan, Kamiya Sôtan, Hosokawa Sansai, Kawakami Fuhaku and Ii Naosuke. This contradicts the claims, which are all too often made, that women did not practice tea, or that even if they did, they did not participate in tea culture in its primary form of tea gatherings, and even that women were forbidden from doing so until the late nineteenth century. In fact, we find that, not only were women engaged in tea practice well before the Meiji period, their knowledge of tea culture was depicted in literature and on the stage. Female tea practitioners were part of early modern popular culture and had a place in the popular imagination.

Because of women's participation in tea culture, and the apparent growth of this during the latter half of the Edo period, a discourse developed which sanctioned and promoted this. This discourse came both from a tea master, operating within one of the most popular tea schools of the time, and from outside of the tea schools, in a popular form. Women's tea practice thus operated at two levels: at the elite level, alongside and with the approval of high-ranking male practitioners, such as those mentioned above; and at the popular level, most likely outside of formal school institutions and structures and alongside other women. This discourse was continued into the Meiji period, and with the addition of a new discourse on tea as the quintessence of traditional Japanese culture to be preserved primarily by women, the foundations were laid for the growth of women's tea practice in modern Japan.

As important as the findings of this thesis are, there are equally as many questions which have, by necessity, been left un-answered. Some of these are a result of the nature of the sources used, for without a much greater amount of evidence from official tea sources, it is impossible to gauge the extent to which women were participants in the formal institutions of tea culture. It has been hypothesized that

women's participation in tea largely took place outside of these institutions and their structures. However, it is possible that if such sources were made available this may prove to be incorrect. Also, due to the nature of the sources used, this thesis has focused more on commoner, samurai and court aristocratic women's participation in tea culture and less on that of women of smaller groups such as courtesans and nuns, though they were also touched upon where possible. Perhaps 'women in early modern Japan' as a category is far too broad to be treated as a whole. Yet, because there has been such little research conducted on the subject of women's tea practice, an attempt was made here to cover as many aspects of that as possible. Future research on the practice of tea among different groups of women would surely do them further justice, and capture the nuances of how tea culture was conceived of in relation to different models of femininity.

Notwithstanding such limitations, the significance of this research on the history of women's participation in tea culture is manifold. It necessitates a re-evaluation of our understanding of contemporary Japanese tea culture, dominated by women as it is. It also requires us to revise our understanding of the history of tea culture, particularly in regards to its popularization, and of early modern Japanese women's history, particularly in regards to gender and status. The findings in these areas were made possible by paying attention to sources previously neglected by mainstream scholarship on tea history, and by reading sources previously discussed in a new way – looking for what they could tell us about women's tea practice more broadly, rather than as evidence of a unique circumstance.

Tea culture in modern Japan is dominated by women, with women comprising something in the order of 90% of all tea practitioners, and it has a decidedly feminine image. Despite this, there has been little analysis of how a shift occurred from a supposedly male-dominated culture to a female-dominated one. Most studies have pointed to Meiji and Taishō period developments to provide an answer. However, this work is limited and has failed to move beyond a top-down approach of 'the tea schools (read Urasenke) opened up the doors of tea to women and introduced tea into the curriculum of girls' schools'. The research presented here, by contrast, has shown that the female-dominated world of tea culture in modern Japan has strong roots in the early modern period. There are many continuities between women's tea practice and the discourse on women's tea of that time and today, most notably the notion that



knowing tea makes one a suitable and proper wife, the '*temae* as *sahô* discourse', and the study of tea as a form of bridal training.

Having an understanding of women's participation in tea culture during the Edo period adds to our overall picture of the history of Japanese tea culture. We see clearly the popularization of tea among new social groups: women and commoners. Through examining the discourse on women's tea in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it has been possible to trace the shift from elite to popular activity. Furthermore, it has been argued that this was part of a broader civilizing process taking place, with women's bodies being one site on which this process occurred, and, most importantly, was displayed. It was also found that the tea schools did not have complete control over tea culture, with a popular discourse on women's tea emerging from outside of their sphere of influence. Thus, there was no singular, dominant discourse on tea culture, or on women's participation in that culture, as we find today with the Sen schools.

In fact, it is clear that there was a significant degree of variation between the tea schools and among tea masters in attitudes to women's tea practice during the Edo period. Schools such as Horinouchi and Yabunouchi, which registered women as students during the nineteenth century, clearly did not have a policy of excluding women. The Sekishû school also encouraged women's tea practice, through the writing of Ôguchi Shôh in *Toji no tamoto*, which was adapted and disseminated over the next century or more by other tea masters within the school, such as Ii Naosuke. The rules, procedures and ethics of women's tea outlined in *Toji no tamoto* were put into practice by tea masters like Ii Naosuke and Katagiri Sekishû, who included women of their family and household in their tea gatherings, as both hosts and guests. It may also have been possible for a woman to receive a tea name and become a tea master within this school, if the assumptions about the identity of Sôgyû are correct.

At the same time, there were some male tea practitioners and political leaders, such as Sugiki Fusai, Ôguchi Shôh's friend and Tokugawa Nariaki, who disapproved of women's tea practice. There was thus no consensus on the necessity or appropriateness of women's tea practice, and those writing about it, whether in privately circulated manuscripts or commercially produced books, seem to have been cautious of attracting criticism for advocating it – hence their focus on modesty, morality and putting the duties of a wife and mother before the practice of tea. However, on balance the majority opinion seems to have been in favour of women's

tea practice, particularly from the eighteenth century. Having said this, women's tea practice was usually encouraged within limits: in a familial/household context and focusing more on mastering the basic thin tea procedures than the more complex thick tea ones. Nonetheless, the idea that women should learn tea was clearly part of both public and tea school discourse in the late Edo period.

The findings of this thesis are also of relevance to our understanding of gender and status in the Edo period. It has been shown that there were multiple ideas and ideals of femininity in early modern Japan. Knowledge of tea culture was connected to these various ideals, represented at each extreme by the courtesan and the elite wife. Thus, there were different types of women who practiced tea in different ways: the courtesan, who was flamboyant, flirtatious and extravagant; nuns, who were independent and artistic; aristocratic and samurai women, who were graceful, accomplished and demure. Gradually, commoner women also began to participate in tea culture. They followed the latter model of genteel femininity. It was this model which came to be most closely associated with women's tea practice in modern Japan, rather than a model associated with courtesans or nuns. This expansion of an elite ideal of femininity to a broader status and class of women was a precursor to the late Meiji/Taishô expansion of the 'good wife, wise mother' ideal. In modern Japan, tea culture became equated with this model of middle and upper class femininity.

One reason for the spread of tea practice among commoner women is that they used tea as a means of learning to comport themselves in the manner of the elite and thereby heighten the appearance of their status. In learning tea, women learnt to sit, stand, carry objects, open and close doors, eat and drink in an elegant and graceful manner. They could thus transform the way in which they performed the quotidian actions which in a subtle but powerful way convey one's accumulation of social and cultural capital. Women could also raise their status officially, through marriage. This was most likely to occur if a commoner woman gained a position in service in a samurai household, where she would gain further exposure to elite culture. Learning tea was one form of preparation for going into service, for the reasons outlined above; that is, a woman learnt to be graceful. In addition, the elite households who employed female attendants valued their knowledge of tea culture as a symbol of their own capital accumulation. This could be displayed to other members of the family or household and to political associates at tea gatherings in which female attendants participated as hosts, or more often as guests.

There were significant implications for the official status system resulting from commoner women's participation in tea culture, service in elite households and ability to cross status boundaries through marriage. In accumulating symbolic and cultural capital through their participation in tea culture, commoner women were bridging a status gap between themselves and higher ranking court aristocratic and samurai women. As both Ôguchi Shôô and the authors of guides for women's edification indicated, learning tea positively altered the way a woman carried herself and this was recognisable to others. In narrowing the gap between their appearance and comportment and that of elite women, commoner women made the social boundaries between these status groups less significant. This was part of a 'civilizing process' that occurred during the mid to late Edo period.

Another factor in the blurring of status boundaries was commoner women entering into service in elite households. They were part of the 'bridging class' who contributed to this process, by interacting with and adopting the culture of the elite. More so than commoner men, commoner women were uniquely positioned within early modern society to bridge the official status divide through marriage. There were not many instances of this as dramatic as that of Keishôin, a commoner who became the wife and then mother of a Shogun, but the examples of women such as Yoshino Michi suggest that small-scale status mobility was not isolated. It was probably these instances that had more significance in terms of social change than the more dramatic but less frequent leaps in status.

Whilst there is no evidence of a direct correlation between learning tea, entering into service and raising one's status through marriage, there are indications of an indirect relationship existing. Learning tea was one form of preparation for going into service for commoner women. This is clearly stated in several guides for women's edification. It is further attested to by examples of women performing *temae* at interviews for positions in service, and depictions of women doing tea in 'success in service' themed *sugoroku*. Entering into service was a way for commoner women to increase their marriageability, making them a potentially attractive match for a man of samurai status.

One issue which arises out of this research, is the relative importance of status versus gender in the Edo period. It has been argued that status differences among women were more important than gender difference between men and women. We have seen that women were not assigned status in their own right. Rather, they held

the status of their family, which could change upon marriage. A woman's status determined the degree to which she participated in tea culture, with those of higher status, such as court aristocrats and high-ranking samurai, or unique status, such as Buddhist nuns and top-ranking courtesans, having greater involvement than those of lower status. A woman's family, or the household to which she belonged in the case of female attendants, also played a determining role in whether she participated in tea culture, rather than their having been any general taboo against female tea practice. Women from a family or household in which the men were tea practitioners were far more likely to be involved in tea culture than women from a family in which there were no male tea practitioners.

When considering the perceptible increase in the number of female tea practitioners during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the reasons why women studied tea, it is important to keep in mind that it was not an issue of gender empowerment, with women aiming to match the capital accumulation of men, as Kato has argued occurred in the twentieth century.<sup>743</sup> Rather, it was an issue of status, with commoner women aiming to acquire the same levels of social and cultural capital held by elite women. In addition, the participation of women in the practice and production of tea culture indicates that the view of the Edo period as the nadir for Japanese women is no longer tenable, particularly when considered in conjunction with other recent scholarship on women's roles in cultural practices and production, or women's literacy. On the contrary, we find that women were active participants in early modern culture – they were among its subjects, producers and consumers.

In a discussion of the issue of women's literacy in seventeenth-century Japan, Peter Kornicki has commented that 'there has obviously been a misprision of the social, cultural, and economic participation of women in the burgeoning urban and literate cultures of seventeenth-century Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo which have hitherto been cast as essentially male'.<sup>744</sup> He concludes by stating that 'it is undeniable that women were reading...Not, of course, all women by a long way, but enough to matter, even in the seventeenth century'.<sup>745</sup> The same can be said of women's tea practice. It is undeniable that women were practicing tea throughout the Edo period. To say that they did not begin to do so until the Meiji period, and because of the decisions of

<sup>743</sup> See Kato, *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment*.

<sup>744</sup> Kornicki, 'Unsuitable Books for Women' p. 82.

<sup>745</sup> *Ibid*, p. 183.

Gengensai, is clearly misleading. Furthermore, to continue to deny the significance of this, both at the time and for our understanding of tea history and women's history, is misguided. Not all women were tea practitioners in early modern Japan, but there were enough to matter. Their history warrants our attention. This thesis has been a first step towards recovering that history. In so doing, we increase our understanding of the history of tea culture in early modern Japan, the position of women in early modern Japanese society and their role in cultural practices and production. We are then better positioned to understand the relationship between women and tea culture in modern Japan.

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