

Aesthetic Authorities: The Socio-Political Dimensions of
Warlord Tea Praxis in Early Modern Japan, 1573-1860

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Abstract

This dissertation examines the practice of *chanoyu* (a performative art form featuring the formalized preparation of tea) by the regional warlords who took up the art in great numbers in Japan from the late sixteenth century forward. Spanning the period from 1573 until 1860, the case studies of seven warlord tea masters, as well as many ancillary figures, demonstrate the manner in which warlord tea praxis first developed in Japan and provide insight into why the art was embraced so widely by the military elite. Tracing this development through four chronological stages, this dissertation challenges the marginalization of warlord tea praxis in current scholarship, arguing that warlord tea masters were not only central to the field of early modern tea, but that warlord tea masters shaped the historical development of *chanoyu* in significant ways: assuming public roles as aesthetic authorities, collaborating with artisans, preserving and cataloguing tea utensils of historic import, contributing extensively to tea discourse through their writings, and articulating the connections between *chanoyu* and the governance of the Tokugawa state.

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Introduction: Warlord Tea in Historical Context

[A warrior] should make inquiry into the way of
horsemanship, tea, archery and tactics.
~Hosokawa Yūsai¹

From the late sixteenth century onward, the practice of *chanoyu*² – a performative art form characterized by the ritualized preparation and service of green tea – grew in popularity among Japan’s samurai. Quick to realize that the art conferred a veneer of cultural respectability upon its serious practitioners, elite samurai took up tea in earnest as the acquisition of cultural skills eclipsed the importance of the military arts following the close of the Warring States era (1467-1573).³ During the long period of peace which followed the establishment of the Tokugawa regime in 1600, tea praxis also proved a useful expedient for the demonstration of the balance between civil learning (*bun*) and military skills (*bu*) deemed desirable traits by many early modern intellectuals.

Among those who took up tea were many of the regional warlords (*daimyo*⁴) who ruled autonomous territories under the new aegis of Tokugawa authority. For warlords who sought a

¹ From *Hosokawa Genshi kyokun hyakushu*, Hosokawa Yūsai’s collection of one hundred poems concerning the qualities of an ideal warrior. Reproduced in Hiroichi Tsutsui, “The Transmission of Tea Traditions through Verse.” *Chanoyu Quarterly*, Vol. 24 (1980): 40.

² Although *chanoyu* is often glossed as “tea ceremony” in English language sources, the inclusion of the word “ceremony” is problematic as it carries a number of meanings that do not apply to tea praxis in the Japanese context. This dissertation will default to the common Japanese term *chanoyu*, while alternately employing the English terms “tea” and “tea praxis”. Whereas Japanese *chanoyu* is clearly an activity with ritualized aspects, it lacks the overt religious overtones ascribed to “ritual” as defined by Catherine Bell, a religious studies scholar who acceded that “few societies can rival the emphasis on ritual found in Japan.” Catherine Bell. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 184.

³ Eiko Ikegami. *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture*. Structural Analysis in the Social Sciences. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005, 143.

⁴ *Daimyo* were feudal lords and leaders of powerful warrior clans spread across the Japanese archipelago from the medieval period until the end of Tokugawa rule in 1867. Like the term “samurai,” the use of the term “daimyo” is so ubiquitous in early modern historiography that italics and other diacritical marks for the term are commonly omitted, a precedent which this dissertation also observes. The term consists of two characters, “*dai*” (大 “great”) and “*myō*” (名 “name”). For more on what qualities distinguish *daimyo* from other warriors, see Martin Collcutt. “Daimyo and Daimyo Culture.” *Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture, 1185-1868*. Yoshiaki Shimizu, ed. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988, 1-46.

means by which to demonstrate cultural refinement, tea praxis presented an attractive option. Originating with the emulation of the interest in *chanoyu* evinced by latter-day Ashikaga shoguns and the unifiers Oda Nobunaga (d. 1582) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (d. 1598), tea became a pastime pursued with avidity for its own merits. Warlords interested in tea found that instruction was readily available from the cadres of wealthy merchants who had already embraced tea. Moreover, unlike other cultural arts (such as poetry) which required aristocratic connections and the mastery of a huge canon of extant knowledge (not to mention literacy), *chanoyu* was a pastime for which wealth and leisure time were, at least initially, the only significant prerequisites.⁵ As expressed in the poem by the warlord Hosokawa Yūsai, which opens this introduction, familiarity with tea soon became as indispensable to warriors as did the military arts with which *chanoyu* is equated. For these reasons, tea was foremost among the arts embraced by Tokugawa-era warriors, and it disseminated among them from the top downward.

Chanoyu first coalesced as a distinct art form during the late Warring States period. Earlier modalities of tea consumption in Japan ran the gamut from tea sold to the public at large by itinerant vendors to the imperial court's elegant pastime of *tōcha*, a game organized around the blind identification of tea varieties. The later "way of tea" (*chadō* or *chanoyu*) was distinguished from these early precedents by the formalization of complicated (and sometimes secret) procedures for the preparation and service of tea. Those who wished to master *chanoyu* beyond a basic level required the guidance of a skilled teacher who could guide would-be practitioners through the intricate procedures, specialized vocabulary, and wide range of

⁵ This latter point about warriors being able to buy their way into the study of *chanoyu* is made quite convincingly by Dale Slusser. "The Transformation of Tea Practice in Sixteenth-Century Japan," in *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice*. Morgan Pitelka, ed. New York: Routledge. 2003, 47.

implements created specifically for the art – characteristics that tea shared with many of Japan’s other traditional performing arts.⁶

As relatively autonomous rulers of the lands under their control, regional lords numbered among the few in Japanese society with the financial wherewithal to acquire the numerous specialized implements (many of them costly imports from China and Korea) required to conduct a serious tea practice. During the late Warring States period, some warlords took up *chanoyu* in emulation of the Ashikaga shoguns. The Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408) encouraged trade with Ming China, stimulating anew a thriving domestic market for Chinese and Korean art objects (*karamono*) in Japan. Among other items, connoisseurs coveted imported tea bowls, tea caddies, and hanging scrolls used to prepare tea and decorate tea spaces. The eighth Ashikaga Shogun Yoshimasa’s (1435-1490) interest in tea prompted him to commission the construction of what is considered Japan’s earliest dedicated tearoom.⁷ Such interest further popularized tea, and soon wealthy merchants in the port city of Sakai who supplied the Ashikaga with imported tea objects became leading practitioners and teachers of the art, with many prominent warriors numbering among their students and patrons.⁸ While the earliest indications of warrior interest in tea can be traced to this period of Ashikaga rule, it was not until unification (1573-1600) that the potential of the art to reify cultural authority would be fully explored by the

⁶ *Chanoyu* appears to be the earlier term, appearing as early as 1470 in an entry included in the *Daijyōin Record of Various Events in Temples and Shrines (Daijyōin jisha zatsujiki)*. Compiled between 1450-1527, the text details events and observations recorded by three successive *monzeki* priests of Nara’s Kōfukuji temple. *Chadō* appears to be a later coinage, appearing in late sixteenth-century works such as *The Chronicles of Lord Nobunaga (Nobunaga-kō ki, 1598.)*

⁷ This is the Dojinsai tearoom at Jishoji temple in northeastern Kyoto. Jishoji (formerly Jisho-in) is better known as the “Silver Pavilion” (Ginkakuji). The temple was Yoshimasa’s primary residence from 1484 until his death in 1490. For more on Jishoji, see Donald Keene. *Yoshimasa and the Silver Pavilion: The Creation of the Soul of Japan*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

⁸ Well-known tea practitioners from this epoch included members of many of Sakai’s prominent merchant families, including Sen Rikyū (1522-1591), Tsuda Sōgyū (d. 1591), and Imai Sōkyū (1520-1593). Murai, Yasuhiko. “The Development of Chanoyu: Before Rikyū.” Paul Varley and Isao Kumakura, eds. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989, 27.

two warlords who undertook Japan's political unification: Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Tea and the unifiers

Oda Nobunaga's consolidation of political power in 1573 utilized *chanoyu* as one of many strategies by which he laid claim to political authority.⁹ Nobunaga held numerous tea gatherings, collected valuable tea utensils, and employed three Sakai merchants – Imai Sōkyū, Tsuda Sōgyū and Sen Rikyū – as official tea masters in his service. Nobunaga clearly recognized *chanoyu*'s potential for establishing his claim to power over the realm. Scholar Theodore Ludwig has characterized Nobunaga's use of tea as a “means of dramatizing consensus for ... hegemony.”¹⁰ Nobunaga courted potential allies by inviting them to lavish tea gatherings. He also began collecting tea utensils, even acquiring a number of well-known pieces by threat of force. Nobunaga's practice of rewarding the service of his retainers with gifts of tea utensils further reinforced the use of tea as one conduit for the assertion of political authority. One anecdote relates how Nobunaga presented the military commander Shibata Katsuei (1522-1583) with control of Echizen province and a treasured tea kettle from his own collection in return for bringing the contentious Kaga region under Nobunaga's control.¹¹

Nobunaga realized that his possession of well-known and valuable tea utensils served as a proxy for political authority. Nobunaga's acquisition of famous tea utensils that were formerly

⁹ The era during which Nobunaga and his successor Hideyoshi completed Japan's political unification is referred to by a number of terms. Art historians tend to favor the composite term “Azuchi-Momoyama” which denotes the respective physical locations of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi's castles. Political historians in Japan sometimes utilize the portmanteau “Shokuhō,” using the Chinese readings of the representative characters from each man's family name. In the present work, the period encompassing the years 1467-1573 is designated as Japan's “Warring States” or *sengoku* era.

¹⁰ Theodore M. Ludwig. “*Chanoyu* and Momoyama: Conflict and Transformation in Rikyū's Art.” Paul Varley and Kumakura Isao, eds. *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989, 82.

¹¹ This anecdote appears in Chikamatsu Shigenori's *Chaso kanwa*, first published in 1804. An English translation of this work is available. Shigenori Chikamatsu. *Stories from a Tearoom Window [Chaso kanwa]*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1982, 76-77.

housed in the Ashikaga shogunal collection, for example, was considered a sign that his succession to power was a legitimate one. To wit, the formal presentation of tea utensils to Nobunaga's son Nobutada (d. 1582) formed a key component of the latter's establishment of authority. At a New Year's tea held on the fourth day of the first month of 1578, Nobutada used eleven famous tea utensils bestowed by his father to formally announce his position as heir.¹² Nobunaga extended his authority to the control of who had the right to perform *chanoyu*, issuing licenses granting permission to study tea exclusively to favored retainers such as Toyotomi Hideyoshi, a general under Nobunaga's command (and his eventual successor) who was granted the right to practice tea by Nobunaga in 1578.¹³ Such practices marked *chanoyu* as one form of currency with which military rulers could ensure and reward loyalty, and thereby raised the perceived value of the art among warriors.¹⁴

Following Nobunaga's death in 1582 during the rebellion of his vassal Akechi Mitsuhide, Hideyoshi assumed power and soon realized Nobunaga's vision by bringing the remainder of the realm under unified rule. With the help of official tea masters such as the merchant Sen Rikyū, Hideyoshi legitimized his political power through displays of his tea utensils and knowledge of *chanoyu*. These included Hideyoshi's preparation of tea for Emperor Ogimachi (d. 1586) in the famous "Golden Tearoom" (*kigane no zashiki*) and the Grand Kitano Tea Gathering he convened in the fall of 1587.¹⁵ Both Hideyoshi and the later Tokugawa shoguns emulated the precedents set by Nobunaga in the presentation of famous tea utensils in return for faithful service.

¹² Paul E. Demura-Devore. "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists in Seventeenth-Century Tokugawa Japan: The Case of Sen Sōtan and Sons." Ph.D. dissertation. University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2005, 46-47.

¹³ Paul Varley. *Japanese Culture*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000, 162.

¹⁴ Julia R. Nakano-Holmes. "Furuta Oribe: Iconoclastic Guardian of *Chanoyu* Tradition." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1995, 32.

¹⁵ One of the most important cultural events of the Momoyama era, the Grand Kitano Tea Gathering was an event created by Hideyoshi, who issued a public call for all tea practitioners to assemble at Kyoto's Kitano Tenmangu shrine for a public tea-drinking festival on the first day of the tenth month of 1587. See Louise Allison Cort. "The Grand Kitano Tea Gathering." *Chanoyu Quarterly* 31 (1982): 31-43.

Writing about Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, historians George Elison and Paul Varley note that both men exhibit a “mixture of genuine affection for the spiritual world of the tea ceremony and a blatant cupidity for its material implements, their use as signs of cultural accomplishment and misuse as emblems of political prestige and power.”¹⁶ The sociologist Kristin Surak observes that both unifiers used tea to seek “consecration as men of culture”.¹⁷ Both leaders cannily augmented their public reputations with artistic activities presented to counterbalance their overt roles as military victors and rulers.

The early modern transition

The personal engagement of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi with *chanoyu* enhanced the art’s reputation among Japan’s warlords as a fashionable, and politically advantageous, activity. Like these early hegemon, warlords soon found that a familiarity with the technical procedures, philosophical underpinnings, and aesthetic predilections of *chanoyu* benefited their personal reputations and furthered their political careers. During the opening decades of Tokugawa rule, the first four shoguns employed official tea experts just as Nobunaga and Hideyoshi had done – but these men were now recruited from among the military elite, rather than from the merchants of Sakai. This shift is attributable both to the rising numbers of elite warriors skilled in *chanoyu* as well as to an overall social shift toward warrior authority.

Under the evolving protocols of the Tokugawa state, formal tea gatherings often comprised a *de rigueur* portion of the official schedule for the reception of Tokugawa shoguns. For the warlords hosting such functions in their home territories, building tearooms, acquiring

¹⁶ Paul Varley and George Elison. “The Culture of Tea: From Its Origins to Sen no Rikyū.” *Warlords, Artists and Commoners: Japan in the Sixteenth Century*. Elison, George and Bardwell L. Smith, eds. Honolulu, University of Hawaii Press, 1981, 212.

¹⁷ Kristin Surak. *Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013, 61. The fact that social links between warriors and the tea-loving merchants in port cities such as Sakai also facilitated useful ties to dealers in military supplies and armaments surely provided a compelling secondary interest.

tea utensils and knowledge of proper tearoom deportment assumed importance for those wishing to avoid embarrassment. The inclusion of tea gatherings among the events warlords were required to attend at Edo Castle further emphasized the necessity of *chanoyu* skills among the warrior elite. Those whose knowledge *surpassed* the rules of basic comportment, however, found that their reputations as men of culture were augmented by their superior expertise. Moreover, warlords who sufficiently excelled at tea to merit the designation of “master” (*sōshi*) found that their secondary identities as aesthetic authorities conferred significant social capital both within and beyond the milieu of military society.

By the time Tokugawa Ieyasu (d. 1616) consolidated power in 1600, samurai status had become a prerequisite for tea masters in the state’s employ.¹⁸ The warlord Furuta Oribe (d. 1615) succeeded the merchant Sen Rikyū (1522-1591) as an official tea master to the Tokugawa regime, the first to come from a warrior family.¹⁹ The pre-eminent teacher of his era, Rikyū had been dead nearly a decade and high-ranking warlords numbered among the most prominent of his surviving disciples and potential successors. Furuta Oribe was among this group and his emergence as the new tea master for the realm marks, if not the origins of warlord tea, a shift toward warrior dominance of the art.

Warlord tea masters

In the historiography of Japanese tea practice, warlords such as Oribe who achieved official recognition for their *chanoyu* skills are commonly designated as “warlord tea masters”

¹⁸ Nakano-Holmes, “Furuta Oribe,” xiii, 9.

¹⁹ Although many scholars consider Oribe’s promotion to this position to mark the genesis of a style of tea ceremony specific to members of the military elite, a “warlord tea” (*daimyō cha*), this approach is belied by the many earlier warlords of Japan’s Warring States era and unification period who were also serious tea practitioners. Nakano-Holmes, “Furuta Oribe,” xiv.

(*daimyō chajin*).²⁰ Throughout the long *pax Tokugawa*, warlord tea masters played central roles in the procedural development of the art, expanded its aesthetic lexicon, and directly shaped the development of *chanoyū*'s material culture. The dissemination of tea praxis throughout Japanese society was facilitated by both the personal actions and persistent legacies of expert warlord practitioners. It is therefore curious that the treatment of this group in the historical narrative relegates them to a role on the margins, instead placing an outsized emphasis on influential merchant tea masters, chief among them Rikyū and his descendants.

Rikyū's long shadow

This dissertation asserts that current tea historiography has valorized the legacies of Rikyū – both real and imagined – to the extent that many historical figures, including Rikyū's own warrior contemporaries and patrons, are virtually eclipsed in the historical narrative. This approach is in agreement with the observation of art historian Andrew Watsky, who notes that “the attention accorded Rikyū has had the unfortunate consequence ... of overshadowing other tea men of the time and thus obscuring some of the rich complexities of the period.”²¹ This obfuscation of roles is particularly true for warlord tea masters, who have long been the victims of a mythology centered upon the person of Rikyū, a discourse which first emerged in late seventeenth century texts published around the time of the one-hundredth anniversary of Rikyū's death.²² While these revisionist accounts accord warlord practitioners limited recognition as disciples, contemporaries, and even patrons of Rikyū, the role of warlord tea masters as tea practitioners in their own right has to date received insufficient scholarly attention. This

²⁰ “Tea history” (*chadōshi*) is a recognized sub-genre of historiography in Japan.

²¹ Andrew Watsky. “Commerce, Politics, and Tea: The Career of Imai Sōkyū (1520-1593),” Morgan Pitelka, ed. *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2003, 18.

²² Although many of these texts lack sufficient grounding in historical records, their contents have nevertheless been widely reproduced and disseminated up until the present day, and they have shaped dominant historical narratives to a significant extent

dissertation traces the evolution of this flawed historical narrative, illustrates the manner in which the roles of key players from the warrior status group have been redacted from it, and seeks to act as a corrective to this trend.

Countering the historical origins of the constructed narrative of Rikyū's primacy with an re-examination of sources contemporary to warlord tea masters across the full span of Tokugawa rule, this project traces the development of warlord tea praxis as a distinct historical narrative, one closely intertwined with the broader history of *chanoyu*, and read across class boundaries. In an attempt to move beyond the limits of the biographical scope which characterizes much of the extant scholarship on warlord tea masters, this dissertation reconstitutes the history of early modern warlord *chanoyu* from 1573 (the year in which Nobunaga assumed full power) until 1860, a point on the cusp of the collapse of Tokugawa rule.²³ Challenging the topical biases and flawed historicity of dominant historiographical narratives, this dissertation advances a revised and augmented roster of key historical actors, one which includes prominent warlord tea masters presented in their proper socio-historical contexts. In so doing, the dissertation presents a more accurate and balanced framework for understanding the full scope and significance of the field of early modern tea praxis than has been previously offered.

In questioning prevalent interpretations of warlord tea praxis, this study will explore how elite warrior practitioners positioned themselves in relationship with – rather than in opposition to – the tradition of “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*) associated with Rikyū and his successors. This will be achieved through a chronological examination of the characteristics that defined warrior tea at different points in its development and an analysis of how leading warlord tea practitioners

²³ The year 1860 also marks the death of Ii Naosuke (1815-1860), the dissertation's penultimate case study of specific warlord tea masters (Chapter Five).

positioned themselves vis-à-vis the legacy of Rikyū. Chapter One describes the manner in which historiographical trends concerning warlord tea praxis have developed from the late Meiji period to the present and offers new perspective concerning how the new examination of warlord tea praxis this project undertakes may augment or shift our scholarly understanding of Tokugawa-era tea praxis as well as the broad field of early modern cultural history. Subsequent chapters trace the shifting roles of warlords within the larger field of *chanoyu* over the course of the Tokugawa period, organizing the data into four chronological phases in the development of warlord tea praxis, along with relevant case studies of prominent warlord tea practitioners from each stage, as follows:

The “unification phase,” 1573-1615

Chapter Two addresses the “unification phase” of warlord tea praxis, tracing the emergence of the first warlords to gain public recognition as tea masters during the early stages of clearly delineated warlord tea praxis. Beginning with Nobunaga’s consolidation of power in 1573, the unification phase considers two warlord tea masters and vassals of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi who, like these two unifiers, studied tea directly with Rikyū. Many of the high-ranking warriors who served Hideyoshi emulated him in studying tea under Rikyū’s tutelage, and at the time of Rikyū’s death these men were considered his closest disciples, a group of warriors often termed “Rikyū’s Seven Sages” (*Rikyū shichi tetsu*). Among this group, Furuta Oribe (1543-1615) and Hosokawa Sansai (1563-1646) both witnessed the transition from the Warring States era into the long Tokugawa peace, and found that their reputations as tea masters and as political leaders were augmented by their artistic connections to Rikyū long after the merchant tea master’s fall from grace and death in 1591.

As two of the men among those most often identified in the secondary scholarship as warlord tea masters, the careers of Oribe and Sansai both illustrate how the historical accounts of early warlord tea masters constantly evaluate them against a manufactured notion of tea “orthodoxy” centered upon the figure of Rikyū. Whereas Sansai is lauded in early modern sources for his fidelity to Rikyū’s precedents (both real and imagined), Oribe is pilloried for his “hedonistic” *chanoyu*, his many individual innovations to tea praxis depicted by some early modern commentators as disrespectful to Rikyū. The examination of the *chanoyu* activities of Oribe and Sansai undertaken in Chapter Two broadens the scope of previous work on these two figures beyond the reductive comparisons to Rikyū which characterize much of previous scholarship. Chapter Two contends that the oppositional model centered upon the perception of “orthodox” tea praxis as defined by Rikyū is historically unsupportable, given the ahistorical nature of any recognized *chanoyu* orthodoxy during the lifetimes of Sansai and Oribe.

Moreover, accounts dating to the lifetimes of these two figures reveal that Oribe and Sansai both consciously embraced and publicized their personal and artistic ties to Rikyū while incorporating new techniques, spatial designs, and utensil preferences into their individual modes of tea practice. The evidence will show that while such innovations are often considered evidence of the development of a new “warrior style” tea, they do not necessarily signal a philosophical distancing from Rikyū, per se. Such innovations are thus in keeping with the overall tenor of tea during this period across the broad span of social groups and do not constitute evidence that may sufficiently support the claims that Oribe’s “warrior tea” was substantively different in value or intention from that pursued by other contemporary practitioners. Chapter Two finds that the construct of an orthodoxy based on Rikyū is an inaccurate measure of the contributions of unification phase warlord tea practitioners to *chanoyu*

insofar as contemporary sources demonstrate the falsity of such claims. Instead, the careers of both Hosokawa Sansai and Furuta Oribe illustrate two examples of how warlord tea practitioners during this early stage effectively mined their connections to Rikyū in the name of articulating their own individual approaches to *chanoyu* praxis.

The “intermediate phase” (1615-1673)

Chapter Three moves the narrative past the immediate impact of Rikyū’s person with an examination of the next generation of warlord tea masters during a period considered by many historians as the apex of warlord tea. This “intermediate phase” (1615-1673), constitutes an era in which three warlord tea masters established enduring reputations for expertise in the field independent of any personal connections to Rikyū. Three warlord tea masters – Kobori Enshū (1579-1647), Katagiri Sekishū (1605-1673), and Kanamori Sōwa (1584-1656) – became focal points of a thriving salon culture centered upon tea praxis both in the imperial capital of Kyoto and the shogunal headquarters in Edo. Taken individually, each man’s unique modes of tea practice and definitions of aesthetic taste (*konomi*) propelled tea aesthetics and practice forward, increasing the popularity of the art across social groups, and disseminating it even further among the warrior status group.

During this period, warrior ascendancy in the field of tea praxis also spurred rivalries between warrior-led tea traditions and the three schools of tea founded by the merchant descendants of Sen Rikyū that under the leadership of Rikyū’s grandson Sen Sōtan, contended with rival daimyo tea masters for patronage and prestige. Chapter Three traces the origins of this tension between merchant and warrior tea masters to its origins in the professionalization of tea under Sōtan and the concomitant rise of the family-head (*iemoto*) system. As Kristin Surak notes, as “rival schools reconfigured the diversity of tea practices into a codified field,” the Sen family

oversaw the “elevation of their ancestor [Rikyū] to the lofty position of a ‘tea saint’.”²⁴ In response, warlord tea masters such as Katagiri Sekishū asserted their own authority through claims that they, not the Sen family, transmitted the correct version of Rikyū’s teaching, bloodlines notwithstanding. Chapter Three identifies how seventeenth-century warlord tea masters claimed and exercised considerable artistic authority, while detailing the origins and outcomes of several contemporary challenges to that authority from the pivotal Genroku period (1688-1704) forward.

The “reform phase,” 1750-1815

The “reform phase” (1750-1815) of *chanoyu* is considered in Chapter Four. This phase is typified by the efforts of daimyo tea master Matsudaira Fumai (1751-1818) and his contemporaries to reclaim a tea practice “by warlords, for warlords” from what they considered to be a state of degradation brought about by the broad social dissemination of the art. Fumai decried the rapid popularization of tea among commoners and urban denizens, claiming that these developments had degraded the ethos of *chanoyu* into just another form of “frivolous pastime” (*yūgei*). Fumai’s efforts to reclaim tea praxis for practitioners whom he perceived worthy of the art was expressed both through his collection of renowned teaware and through his authorship of treatises which asserted the unique right of warriors to leadership in the field of tea. These attempts to reform and reclaim tea for warrior elites fit in with Fumai’s own elitist views on tea, which perceived tea praxis as especially fitting for warlords, since they could make of the art “an adjutant to governing the country well.”²⁵

²⁴ Surak, *Making Tea, Making Japan*, 92-93.

²⁵ Isao Kumakura. “Matsudaira Fumai: The Creation of a New World of *Chanoyu* .” *Chanoyu Quarterly* 25 (1980): 24. This quote is drawn from Fumai’s treatise “Useless Words” (*Mudagoto*), authored in 1770.

Tea history memorializes Fumai as an avid collector and cataloguer of tea utensils. Over his lifetime, he assembled a colossal collection of items which he catalogued in the *Notebook of the Utensils of the Country of the Clouds (Unshū dōgu cho)*. In the opening passages of the text, Fumai cautions his heir Gettan that future lords of his domain of Matsue must treat his collection with “scrupulous care,” since taking care of them after Fumai’s own death would be the “performance of filial piety.”²⁶ In addition, like previous warlord tea masters, Fumai advised fellow tea practitioners among the warrior elites on the finer points of utensils and procedure, often offering instruction via correspondence just as Kobori Enshū had once done. Like Katagiri Sekishū, in whose school of tea he was certified as a teacher, Fumai also cherished the “rustic tea” tradition as interpreted through the warlord-founded Sekishū school.²⁷ Fumai’s interpretation of *chanoyu* as an apt form of training for the business of governance would continue to evolve into the nineteenth century, when early modern *chanoyu* entered a final “statecraft phase.”

The “statecraft phase,” 1815-1860

Chapter Five presents the case of the warlord and statesman Ii Naosuke (1815-1860), the figure who best typifies tea praxis close to the close of the early modern period. Naosuke’s career offers a glimpse of warlord tea practice in a final “statecraft phase” which roughly coincided with Japan’s coerced opening to American trade and a leadership crisis in the Tokugawa shogunate. Building upon the perceived decline in the status of the warrior-based Sekishū school that Matsudaira Fumai had sought to correct a half-century earlier, Naosuke

²⁶ Kumakura, *Ibid*, 29.

²⁷ Reiko Tanimura. “Tea of the Warrior in the Late Tokugawa”. Morgan Pitelka, ed. *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2003, 141. Tanimura has suggested that for Sekishū and Fumai alike, the Nanpōroku represented the “fundamental core of warrior tea” to the extent that it was considered a secret teaching (*hidensho*) within the Sekishū school. The validity of the text was not contested until modern times, so it remained in wide circulation in Fumai’s lifetime.

forwarded an interpretation of *chanoyu* as a discipline especially – even exclusively – suited to members of warrior status group by textually asserting the central place of the founder Sekishū in tea history through his revisions of established genealogies of tea masters. Whereas Fumai’s reform efforts had focused on the world of objects, Naosuke’s late-Tokugawa approach to rectifying the marginalization of warlord tea was pursued through the world of ideas and the medium of artistic lineage.

Thrust into high-stakes dealings for the Tokugawa government in middle age, Naosuke’s late-life political career overshadowed the appreciation of his identity as a tea master until relatively recently, when Tanimura Reiko and other scholars began to apprehend his significant influence on late Tokugawa-era tea praxis. A master of the Sekishū school, Naosuke interpreted *chanoyu* practice as a form of spiritualized self-cultivation best suited to the needs of statesmen such as himself. Naosuke wrote prolifically on tea throughout most of his life and his extensive scholarship demonstrates a consistent focus on restoring the rightful place of warriors (and specifically the Sekishū tradition) within tea history.

In sum, this dissertation addresses the absence of a dedicated historical study of early modern warlord tea masters across the full span of the Tokugawa period. While numerous biographical studies of individual warlord tea practitioners have been produced, few of these works have applied a perspective which extends beyond the lifespans of their primary subjects. Addressing this lacunae requires dismantling the discursive notion of an oppositional relationship between Rikyū-style “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*) and “warlord tea” (*daimyō-cha*) common to much previous scholarship. This task will be accomplished through the demonstration of points of social and stylistic convergence between the two traditions coupled with a thorough exegesis of the historical development and evolution of warlord *chanoyu*. The

erroneous bifurcation of the field between the constructs of “rustic” and “warlord” tea has been acknowledged in a limited manner by scholars such as Theodore Ludwig, Dale Slusser and Hayashiya Tatsusaburō, among others, but the issue remains inadequately addressed by historians.²⁸ This project challenges the persistent historiographic tendency to evaluate warlord tea as a mode outside of the main field of historical tea praxis and argues for its essential centrality to the larger scope of both tea history, and the cultural history of early modern Japan.

Primary sources on tea used in this study

Early modern texts on tea and other documents pertaining to the lives and activities of warlords comprise the primary body of evidence that this dissertation utilizes. Writings on *chanoyu* survive in a number of genres and formats. They can be categorized into five major types: 1) personal or public records of tea gatherings (*chakaiki*), 2) inventories or compendia of renowned tea utensils (*meibutsuki*), 3) instructional texts concerning tea procedures and etiquette (*densho*), 4) compilations of anecdotal narratives featuring famous tea practitioners (*kanwa*), and 5) various philosophical writings on the spiritual or aesthetic nature of tea praxis (*chasho*).

There is significant overlap between these genres, with many texts manifesting characteristics of more than a single category. For example, the *Hosokawa Book of Tea* (*Hosokawa cha no sho*, 1668) is primarily an instructional text concerned with tea procedure, but it also includes a lengthy opening passage touching upon tea philosophy and the contributions of its namesake, the warlord Hosokawa Sansai, to the art. Some familial records of tea gatherings

²⁸ Tatsusaburō Hayashiya, Masao Nakamura, and Seizō Hayashiya, eds. *Japanese Arts and the Tea Ceremony*. Joseph Macadam, trans. New York: Weatherhill, 1974, 115. See also Dale Slusser, “The Transformation of Tea Practice”, 57; and Ludwig, “*Chanoyu* and Momoyama,” 71.

such as the *Matsuya Tea Record* (*Matsuya kaiki*) also include anecdotes or accounts of the activities of earlier tea masters.²⁹

Scholarly interpretation of early modern tea texts is frequently complicated by a lack of narrative detail. This is particularly true of *chakaiki* records, for which the typical entry assembles a sketch of a particular tea gathering with the time of day, location of the gathering, menu, utensils used and guests present. These records are typically organized around gatherings *offered* by a specific host (or hosts common to one family lineage), or in some cases, the tea gathering record represents all those gatherings *attended* by a specific guest. Information concerning the nature of the relationships which may exist between guests, what event(s) may have occasioned the tea gathering being described, or what topics of conversation passed among the group are largely omitted. While records of tea gatherings may provide useful historical leads concerning the social networks in which tea practitioners moved, what utensils they possessed, and the tastes which characterized their own tea oeuvre, making historical sense of them often requires supplemental data. For example, additional information is sometimes found in exchanges of correspondence in which participants discuss a given tea gathering with colleagues, or in shogunal histories such as the *True Record of the Tokugawa* (*Tokugawa jikki*).

Like *chakaiki*, catalogues of tea utensils (*meibutsuki*) varied widely in the amount of data recorded. Some catalogues presumed that readers already possessed a familiarity with the names and import of the famous items they listed, others fulfilled a more didactic role by providing this

²⁹ The *Matsuya kaiki* contains records kept by three members of the Matsuya, a family of artisans in Nara. It spans the years 1533 until 1650: Matsuya Hisamasa (d. 1598), Matsuya Hisayoshi (d. 1633), and Matsuya Hisashige (1566-1652). Hisashige's entries span the period from 1604 until 1650. Matsuya Hisashige is also the author of *Account of the Four Masters of the Way of Tea* (*Chadō shiso densho*), a 1652 collection of stories concerning famous tea masters. Matsuya Hisayoshi and Hisashige Matsuya. *Matsuya kaiki* [Matsuya record of tea gatherings]." *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 9. Sōshitsu Sen, ed. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1967, 157-453.

information to the reader. The most detailed catalogues include not only the name of the item, but also information about its provenance, a list of famous events at which it was displayed or used, a full chain of ownership, and how much certain persons paid to acquire it. The scope of these catalogues may be limited to a singular private collection or may attempt a comprehensive inventory of well-known items that extends far beyond the confines of an individual collection.

Many warlord tea masters compiled utensil inventories. In the mid-seventeenth century, the warlord Kobori Enshū compiled one early example, a document entitled the *Ranking of Tea Caddies* (*Chaire shidai*, circa 1646), in which renowned tea caddies were listed by name and ranked according to Enshū's assessment of their relative quality.³⁰ In 1778, the descendants of the warlord tea master Hosokawa Sansai compiled a pictographic record, the *Visual Ledger of Tea Caddies and Teabowls* (*Chaire chawan shashinjō*), to document Sansai's treasured tea utensils. The document includes full-color illustrations from multiple angles for more than two hundred entries of tea utensils. One of the most detailed *meibutsuki*, the eighteen-volume *Catalogue of Past and Present Famous Utensils* (*Kokon meibutsu ruiju*, 1787) compiled by the daimyo tea master Matsudaira Fumai included listings of famous utensils both within his own massive collection and those of other tea men, living and dead.³¹

Tea texts, historical evidence, and the problem of authenticity

Persistent questions of authorship, attribution, and the reliability of sources problematizes the use of many tea texts as historical evidence, requiring researchers to proceed with a healthy

³⁰ Enshū is one of the daimyo tea figures covered in depth in chapter three, and was frequently called upon by both tea practitioners and potters to assess the quality of ceramic teawares. For more on Enshū's work in this capacity, see Andrew L. Maske. *Potters and Patrons in Edo Period Japan: Takatori Ware and the Kuroda Domain*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2011, 40.

³¹ Matsudaira Fumai. *Kokon meibutsu ruijū* [Collection of Ancient and Modern Famous Utensils, 1791]. National Diet Library. <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2563677>. 10 July 2015.

skepticism concerning their contents. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the proliferation of tea texts in all five genres, just one expression of a burgeoning early modern print culture in Japan.³² Publishers marketed these texts both to *chanoyu* practitioners as well as other persons who desired to learn about tea. As participation in tea gatherings became more accessible to commoners over time, a market emerged for instructional texts on tea etiquette, basic preparation procedures, and written accounts featuring well-known figures in tea history. The educational impulse which drove the sales of these works also prompted the inclusion of sections on tea in early modern encyclopedic works which covered broad topics considered of use to the general public. Texts designed for autodidacts included offerings such as *A Catalog for Tea Practitioners* (*Bunrui sōjinboku*, 1626) which presented the basics in three sections: rules for hosts and guests, instructions concerning procedures of tea preparation, and various methods for displaying utensils.³³ Another such publication, Yabunouchi Chikushiun's *Discussions on the Origins of Tea* (*Genryū chawa*, 1745), offered novice practitioners a pragmatic, step-by-step introduction to tea.³⁴

By the late seventeenth century, many instructional texts evinced a clear advocacy for a specific school of tea, citing figures from that school as authoritative sources. The warrior and Hosokawa family retainer Iori Ichio studied tea under the daimyo Hosokawa Sansai, and later authored a book on tea which bore his master's name. As previously mentioned, the result of Iori's labors was the *Hosokawa Book of Tea* (*Hosokawa chanoyu no sho*), published in 1668.

³² Mary Elizabeth Berry has provided an excellent overview of early modern popular print culture. See Mary Elizabeth Berry. *Japan in Print: Information and Nation in the Early Modern Period*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

³³ Shunkei Shinshōsai. Manuscript 1564/published 1626. *Bunrui sōjinboku* [A Catalog for Tea Practitioners]. In *Chadō koten zenshū*, edited by Sōshitsu Sen. Vol. 3. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1967, 143-352.

³⁴ The title of the *Bunrui sōjinboku* derives from a visual pun derived from the form of the character for tea (茶), represented by the portmanteau term *sōjinboku*. The upper part of the character is the radical for grass - *sō*, the middle one is interpreted as man - *jin*, and the radical at the bottom means wood, *moku*, read as *boku* in the amalgamated title.

The text purports to synthesize the tea instructions and anecdotes of Sansai, taking pains to validate this authority by identifying Sansai as one of Rikyū's original disciples (even though Rikyū had perished more than seven decades earlier), and including a colophon from Sansai supposedly dating to the year of his death in 1646.³⁵ *Accounts of Tea: Finger Pointing at the Moon Collection (Chawa shigetsushū)*, a 1701 text attributed posthumously to Sen Sōtan but actually written by his disciple Fujimura Yōken (1613-1699), employs a similar strategy for validation through the inclusion of a number of anecdotes about Rikyū and his style of tea even though Sōtan himself was still a teenager at the time of Rikyū's suicide in 1591.³⁶

The “Rikyū revival” movement

As the popularity of *chanoyu* as a pastime grew, the circulation of spurious accounts purporting to contain Rikyū's judgments proliferated in the late seventeenth century, expressions of a “Rikyū revival” moment which sought to posthumously elevate Rikyū's status in the name of bolstering the reputations of the tea schools administered by his descendants.³⁷ Despite the pervasive tendency for early modern tea texts to seek legitimacy by asserting their connections to Rikyū, it is crucial to note that few sources dating to Rikyū's own time, let alone by his own hand, exist. Two texts which claimed to date to Rikyū's time are *Rikyū's One Hundred Teas (Rikyū hyakkaiki)*, published in 1680, and *Record of Nanpō (Nanpōroku)*. The earlier of the two, *Rikyū's One Hundred Teas*, purports to document eighty-seven tea ceremonies hosted by Rikyū late in life. Compiled by an unknown person or persons, the text's claims to authenticity remains

³⁵ Toriainen, *From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi*, 34.

³⁶ The text was putatively authored by Fujimura Yōken and transcribed by Kuzumi Sōan, two of Sōtan's disciples. "Chawa Shigetsushū" [Accounts of Tea: Finger Pointing at the Moon Collection, 1701]. In *Chadō koten zenshū*, Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1967, 197-252.

³⁷ Akio Tanihata, ed. *Yoku wakarū chadō no rekishi* [Easy-to-Understand Tea History]. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2007, 203.

suspect due to the inclusion of inaccurate dates, among other reasons.³⁸ Similarly, the *Record of Nanpō* purported to be a collection of oral teachings recorded by one of Rikyū's disciples, but is in fact believed to have been composed by Tachibana Jitsuzan (1655-1708) in the 1690s.³⁹ As Herbert Plutschow states, despite modern doubts about their veracity, until relatively recently such texts were instrumental in establishing Rikyū as the “tutelary deity of tea and in claiming that Rikyū's tea is the only legitimate one,” a claim which certainly holds true throughout the early modern era.⁴⁰

Moreover, the Rikyū revival movement and the centrality of Rikyū to tea discourse from the Genroku period onward resulted in the publication of a number of texts which implied that the warlord practitioners who had dominated much of the field of tea during the previous century (for example, Furuta Oribe and Kobori Enshū) did not measure up to the high standard purportedly defined by Rikyū. An example of this rhetoric may be observed in Yabunouchi Chikushiun's *Discussions on the Origins of Tea* (*Genryū chawa*, 1745), which details the post-Rikyū division of *chanoyu* practice into various schools and asserts that the “many lords” who admired and emulated the daimyo tea masters Kobori Enshū and Furuta Oribe were, in effect, ignorant of Rikyū's implicit superiority:

All origins of the rules of tea flow from Rikyū, but they were later divided into various traditions; all contributed something to tea, differing across the boundaries of status and class, according to skill and the times, both for connoisseurs and for others. ... Rikyū, following [Murata] Jukō's tastes, favored *wabi* tastes in the construction of the tearoom, the design of the

³⁸ See Eric Rath. "Reevaluating Rikyū: Kaiseki and the Origins of Japanese Cuisine." *Journal of Japanese Studies* 39, No. 1 (2013): 67-96.

³⁹ Eric C. Rath. *The Ethos of Noh: Actors and Their Art*. Cambridge: Harvard University East Asia Center, 2004, 169. For more on the *Record of Nanpō*, see "Nanpōroku" [The Record of Nanpō], in *Gendai goyaku Nanpōroku* [A Contemporary Translation of the *Nanpōroku*], ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron Shinsha, 2009. See also *Yamada Sohen zenshū* [The Collected Words of Yamada Sōhen], Vol. 1, edited by Isao Kumakura. Kamakura: Shumeidō, 1959.

⁴⁰ Herbert E. Plutschow. *Rediscovering Rikyū and the Beginnings of the Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Folkestone, Kent: Global Oriental, 2003, 168.

garden, and simply preferred quiet and seclusion ... Even though it's said that Oribe and Enshū also emulated Rikyū's style, together many lords adopted [the use of] Oribe's inner sliding door or the middle gate Enshū designed ... *wabi* persons came to say that Enshū's style had merit, and found it elegant. This was because no one had detailed knowledge of the way of tea."⁴¹

This passage reflects the tendency of late seventeenth-century authors to propose a qualitative hierarchy of alternate traditions, placing Rikyū and the schools in his direct lineage in the ascendancy through subtle denigration of the traditions of tea founded by members of the warrior elite. Here, the popularity of those warrior-based traditions is dismissed as the result of inferior knowledge possessed by the "many lords" who comprised the ruling military elite.

Unlike the data-driven *chakaiki* and *meibutsuki* genres, philosophical tea texts offer some of the most ready access to any given practitioner or school's interpretation of *chanoyu*. Not all tea masters wrote such texts, and even in cases where authorship is attributed, these claims must be carefully investigated. As previously discussed, Hosokawa Sansai did not directly author the text which bears his name; and no surviving works outside of personal correspondence can authoritatively be ascribed to the authorship of Rikyū. Similarly, the *Transmissions from Lord Furuta Oribe (Furu-Ori-kō densho)*, was written not by the warlord tea master whose name the text bears, but by later disciples who attributed the work to their teacher.⁴² After the seventeenth century, the number of tea writings whose authorship can be reliably attributed to daimyo tea masters increases. This is true for the works of Matsudaira Fumai and also of the nineteenth century tea master Ii Naosuke, both prolific authors who considered the specific benefits accorded by *chanoyu* to daimyo in support of the work of statecraft.⁴³

⁴¹ "Genryū chawa." [Discussions on the Origins of Tea, 1745], in *Chadō koten zenshū* Vol. 3, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1967, 400-401.

⁴² "Furu-Ori kō densho" Dates unknown. Matsuyama Yonetaro and Kumakura Isao, eds. *Chado shiso densho* [Record of the Transmissions of the Four Masters]. Kyoto: Shibunkaku: 1974: 71-137.

⁴³ Fumai and Naosuke's writings on tea will be considered in chapters four and five, respectively.

For all of these reasons, this dissertation also makes extensive use of supplemental textual sources such as regional records, Tokugawa shogunal records, and the personal and official correspondence of daimyo tea masters and their contemporaries. Many of these sources remained unpublished, in private collections and thus not easily accessible to scholars until recent decades, with a significant number of them having been made publically available for the first time within the past ten to fifteen years.⁴⁴

The material culture of tea

The survival of a rich body of artifacts tied to early modern tea practice supplements the textual record of daimyo tea. From the fifteenth century onward, tea utensils considered to reflect particular historical or aesthetic value were designated as *meibutsu*, or “renowned items.”⁴⁵ Although serious tea practitioners from every social group during the early modern era exhibit an interest in viewing and acquiring *meibutsu* for their own collections, these objects were often closely associated with warrior practitioners. For example, instructional manuals like *The Classifications of Tea (Bunrui sōjinboku, 1626)* contain passages in which the possession of *meibutsu* is presented as a matter of financial resources:

Long ago *chanoyu* was divided into three levels: the upper, the middle, and the lower. Being in the upper level means that one is a superior ...or wealthy person, and owns some famed utensils. The middle means either that one is wealthy but does not own any famed utensils, or that one owns

⁴⁴ Tadachika Kuwata published one of the earliest such collections in 1970 with *Chajin no meisho-kan* [Famous Letters of Tea Persons] (Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan). This was following in 1985 of Furuta Oribe’s correspondence edited by Ito Toshiko and also that of Rikyū. See *Furuta Oribe no shojō* [The Correspondence of Furuta Oribe]. 1985. Ito, Toshiko, ed. Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1985; *Rikyū no tegami* [The Letters of Rikyū]. 1985. Komatsu, Shigemi, ed. Tokyo: Shogakkan.; *Sōtan no tegami* [The Letters of Sōtan]. 1997. Kiyose Fusa and Sogabe Yōko, eds.. Kyoto: Kawara Shoten; and *Kobori Enshū no shojō* [The Correspondence of Kobori Enshū]. Two volumes. 2002/2007, Kobori Sōkei, ed. Tokyo: Tōkyōdō Shuppan, 2002/2007.

⁴⁵ This designation can be traced back to the Ashikaga shoguns and the *dōbōshū* specialists who managed their massive art collections. Since well-known *meibutsu* were often named, familiarity with these items and their histories came to comprise one portion of the knowledge base expected of expert tea practitioners, even though they may have never laid their eyes on the item itself.

famed utensils but is poor (in other ways). The lower means that one is a poor person and does not own any utensils.⁴⁶

This passage explicitly ties the possession of *meibutsu* to social status and financial means. In asserting that only persons owned *meibutsu* and that conversely, those of more modest means did not, *Classifications of Tea* proposes the existence of a natural material hierarchy within the tea world. Naturally, warlords were counted among those with the resources to obtain *meibutsu*, but of course this group could also include wealthy merchants, clerics and artisans. While the acquisition, possession and exchange of *meibutsu* was an important component of warlord tea praxis, it was certainly not a practice limited to that group. Wealthy merchant families like the Matsuya also amassed significant collections of known utensils. *Meibutsu* artifacts are significant to our full understanding of elite warrior tea insofar as shoguns and warlords were among the social groups who possessed the material resources necessary to amass large collections of these items, taking full advantage of the ability of *meibutsu* to serve as markers of prestige and commodities of exchange for meritorious service or other favors. Throughout this dissertation, we will find that warlord tea masters not only collected and displayed *meibutsu*, but they did so in a manner which contributed to their self-definition as men of tea, establishing palpable links to previous tea masters, asserting their place in lineages of tea knowledge, and using *meibutsu* as a key outlet for the articulation of their expertise in the field.

Methodological approaches

Previous scholars have traced connections between artistic activities and political power, and their work suggests approaches useful to this study. The historian and sociologist Eiko Ikegami's notion of "aesthetic publics" – social groupings organized around shared cultural pursuits and politically exploited by their constituent members – provides one lens through

⁴⁶ Toriainen, "From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi," 138.

which the sociological dimensions of the early modern tea world may be interpreted. Ikegami identifies the “cross-listings” of elite practitioners in extant tea diaries as one means of understanding the nature of these wide-ranging aesthetic networks as they crossed both geographic and class boundaries.⁴⁷ This dissertation adopts Ikegami’s notions concerning the makeup and function of aesthetically-based social networks to examine patterns of connection – both actual and projected – between figures in the “aesthetic publics” constituted by the field of early modern tea, analyzing the nature and limits of such interpersonal connections in order to better understand the persistent and self-conscious connections of warlord tea practitioners to the validating figure of Rikyū, to non-warrior tea practitioners, and to each other. Ikegami’s model also provides insight into the competitive nature of urban cultural salon, and how aesthetic groups and activities provide personal validation even in the absence of social position or political prestige.

Material culture theory provides a second approach to the historical study of early modern tea insofar as physical artifacts such as teabowls and tearooms survive in great numbers in Japan and elsewhere, and these objects too shed light on the tastes and activities of historical figures. This dissertation takes the work of the art historian Karen Gerhart, the Sinologist Craig Clunas, and the historian Morgan Pitelka as models for how artifacts may shed light on history. Gerhart explores painting and architecture as sites for the active expression of early modern political power and the legitimization of rule.⁴⁸ Clunas argues for the “specialized discourse of objects” in his study of early modern patterns of consumption and commodities exchange in Ming China, an art market which not only directly supplied many of the tea objects entering

⁴⁷ Eiko Ikegami. *Bonds of Civility: Aesthetic Networks and the Political Origins of Japanese Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005: 121.

⁴⁸ Karen Gerhart. *The Eyes of Power: Art and Early Tokugawa Authority*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999.

Japanese collections throughout the Tokugawa period, but which provided a key model for how such items were traded and exchanged in Japan.⁴⁹ Morgan Pitelka's work on the first Tokugawa Shogun Ieyasu reveals how surviving possessions may act as a sort of "table of contents to the cultural practices and products" of a given historical figure.⁵⁰ The manner in which historical insights may be gleaned from material culture is further informed by the theoretical constructs of the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's ideas about how cultural capital in an "objectified state" forms a "coherent universe" apply very well to *meibutsu* discourse as explored in this dissertation.⁵¹

The next chapter concerns the development of tea historiography on warlord tea practitioners from the Meiji period to the present, detailing the discursive construction of a semantic rift between Rikyū-style "rustic tea" and warlord tea over time. Describing the emergence of the notion of "warlord tea masters" in conjunction with the notion of a bifurcation of the field of early modern *chanoyu*, Chapter One discusses the problematic nature of this approach and offers some sense of the manner in which subsequent chapters of the dissertation strive to address these issues.

⁴⁹ Craig Clunas. *Superfluous Things: Material Culture and Social Status in Early Modern China*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004.

⁵⁰Morgan Pitelka. "The Empire of Things: Tokugawa Ieyasu's Material Legacy and Cultural Profile." *Japanese Studies* Vol. 29, No. 1 (2009): 19.

⁵¹For more on Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, see Pierre Bourdieu. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984.

Chapter One: Constructing Aesthetic Authority

This chapter traces the manner in which historians have treated the subject of warlord tea in modern scholarship. Describing the manner in which extant historiography has posited a bifurcation of early modern tea praxis into two strands: “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*) and “warlord tea” (*daimyō-cha*) –this chapter reveals how a more thorough examination of contemporary sources renders that distinction untenable. Tracing the production of historical studies on tea from the late Meiji period to the present, this chapter outlines several problematic lacunae in extant scholarship on warlord tea and articulates how subsequent chapters propose to address such omissions.

Defining “warlord tea”

Academic writings before World War II designated warlords who exhibited a serious engagement with *chanoyu* as “warlord tea persons” (*daimyō chajin*), and referred to the tea practiced by such figures as “warlord tea” (*daimyō cha*).¹ Both terms are historiographical rather than historical – they do not appear in early modern dictionaries such as the 1603 *Japanese Portuguese Dictionary* (*Nippō jisho*), or in any of the wide variety of primary-source tea texts which date to the Tokugawa period. The use of both terms appears to date to the 1930s, occurring with much greater frequency in postwar publications from the 1950s onward.

In the rare instances when the term “daimyo tea” is defined, an interpretive distinction is frequently posited between the “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*) of non-warrior groups and tea practiced by warlords, but the nature of this separation is often articulated in a contradictory manner. For

¹ The historicity of the term “*daimyo-cha*” is uncertain. It does not appear in the 1603 *Nippō jisho*, which, it should be noted, does contain an entry for “*vabi-hito*” (Japanese, *wabihito*, or “person of *wabi*”). In a non-tea context, the compound noun “*wabihito*” appears in sources related to *waka* poetry occurring as early as the tenth century, when it appears in the *Gosen wakashū* poetic compilation. The earliest use of the term in published works that I have located dates only to 1935, when it appeared in YoshioTakahashi . *Shūmi bukuro* [A Packet of Pastimes]. Tokyo: Shūhōen Shuppanbu, 1935.

example, the entry for “daimyo tea” included in a definitive reference work, *Kadokawa’s Dictionary of the Way of Tea (Kadokawa chadō daijiten)*, lists four defining characteristics of warlord tea praxis:

- 1) warlord tea and its practitioners emphasize specific aesthetic values unique to daimyo groups and distinct from the concept of “rustic” (*wabi*) tea;
- 2) warlord tea “loosened” the constraints of “rustic tea” by enlarging the tearoom form and resurrecting the use of a large shelf (*daisu*) used in the formal reception chambers (*shoin*) of shogunal palaces for use in the small *sōan*, or “thatched hut,” tearooms designed by Rikyū and other earlier merchant tea masters;
- 3) warlord tea exhibits a strong inclination for the display of calligraphic works written by Zen priests in the display alcoves included in the design of *sōan*-style tearooms; and,
- 4) warlord tea and its practitioners tend to value the past and tradition, manifesting in the predilection for the collection and preservation of storied tea objects passed down from previous generations (*meibutsu*).²

The Kadokawa dictionary defines warlord tea according to the traits of it assumed aesthetic difference, modifications to tea procedure and spaces, Zen influences in tearoom décor, and an overarching valuation of the past in the selection of utensils. Various problems emerge from this definition. For example, while innovation in the spatial design of the tearoom and/or the types of utensils used within it is posited in this entry as a hallmark of warlord tea, no

² Entry for “*daimyo-cha*” in the *Kadokawa chadō daijiten*, Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1990, 803-804. Suggestively, another tea dictionary published in 2010 by Tankōsha, the publishing arm of the Urasenke school of tea which traces its origins to Rikyū, elides entries for “*daimyōcha*” and “*daimyō chajin*” altogether. See also *Shinpan chadō daijiten* [Dictionary of the Way of Tea, New Edition], Vol 1, ed. Hiroichi Tsutsui Hiroichi et al. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2010. The term *wabi-cha* (rustic tea) does not appear as a compound in these dictionaries, suggesting something of the degree to which *chanoyu* is generally associated with the *wabi* aesthetic and, by extension, with the Sen family.

explanation for similar alterations undertaken by non-warrior practitioners, including the descendants of Rikyū, is offered. The value of tradition and the use of Zen calligraphy in the tearoom is not unique to warrior tea practitioners – it is also readily practiced in non-warrior schools of tea from the seventeenth century forward. And while warlords may have possessed the financial means with which to purchase and maintain collections of valuable and renowned art objects, early modern records show that some non-warriors also possessed such treasures. In sum, the four “characteristics” which purport to set the practice of warlord tea apart from that of other practitioners are also common tendencies within other practitioner groups.

Such definitions also assert the claim of difference along aesthetic lines. In so doing, “daimyo aesthetics,” such as the notion of “austere beauty” (*kirei sabi*) attributed to the daimyo tea master Kobori Enshū, are distinguished from a cluster of aesthetic terms linked to the value of “rusticity” (*wabi*) associated with early merchant tea masters and specifically with Rikyū and other Sen family members. This constellation of “rustic” tea aesthetics, according to the definition, includes the “withered” (*hie*) aesthetic of fifteenth-century merchant tea master Murata Jukō (1423-1502), the concept of “rusticity” closely associated with sixteenth-century merchant tea master Rikyū, and the “warped” (*hyōgeta*) aesthetic favored by the daimyo Furuta Oribe.³ Oribe, a warlord tea master who is often hailed as one of the founders of warlord tea, seems an odd choice for inclusion in the “rustic tea” faction if the social status of practitioners is indeed one of the demarcations used to delineate warlord tea. This suggests that perceptions of what qualifies as warlord tea among certain scholars and lexical compilers prioritized aesthetic distinctions over those based solely upon the realities of a practitioner’s socio-political status. In other words, all warlords are not practitioners of warlord tea purely by virtue of possessing

³ *Kadokawa chadō daijiten*. Suggestively, a dictionary published by the Sen family’s Urasenke publishing house, Tankōsha, in 1978 omits any mention of Oribe from the definition of *wabi*, but references Katagiri Sekishū, another warlord tea master. “Wabi,” in *Chadō jiten* [A Dictionary of Tea]. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1978, 823.

daimyo status, but rather through the nature of their artistic preferences. This suggests that the term “warlord tea” references a style that was more widespread than the previous narrow definition, tied as it is to political roles, suggests.

The apparent lack of interest in the social status of practitioners may also be observed in the language employed in early modern tea texts, where the social status of practitioners is rarely emphasized. Some texts concerning warlord tea masters may iterate their social status through the inclusion of appellations such as “lord” (denoted with the suffixes *-dono* or *-kō*) or through the utilization of monikers referencing the lands they ruled, but these denominations are often limited to the title or opening passages and do not recur within the main body of the text. More often, like other non-warrior masters of *chanoyu*, warlords are referred to by the same terms which denote master-teachers of tea from other social groups, such as *sōshi* (master teacher). This holds true even in works where one may reasonably expect to find lexical status markers such as the *Hosokawa Book of Tea* (*Hosokawa chanoyu no sho*, compiled in the late 1640s, and published in 1668). Since this text was authored by the Hosokawa family retainer Iori Ichio (1602-1689), one may naturally expect to find some emphasis placed upon the status of the family patriarch Hosokawa Sansai, whose views on tea comprise the text’s subject matter. Instead, the compiler limited himself to the addition of the title “Lord” to Sansai’s name (using the suffix *-kō*) and does not otherwise stress Sansai’s elevated political status in the text, instead keeping the focus squarely upon Sansai’s authority as a *chanoyu* master.⁴

Instructional tea texts produced for a general readership around the same time also routinely omit such markers of status. One such example is the *Genealogy of Tea* (*Chafu*), a didactic work on tea compiled for popular consumption and published during the Kambun era

⁴ Ichio Iori. “*Hosokawa chanoyu no sho*.” [The Hosokawa Book of Tea]. 1668. Sōshitsu Sen, ed. *Chadō koten zenshū*. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1967, 125.

(1661-1672). While the text describes the distinguishing features of several daimyo practitioners in comparison to the practices of Rikyū and his grandson Sen Sōtan, it completely avoids overt mention of the warrior status of three separate warlords, instead referring to these tea masters by their proper names with no mention of their political status, suggesting that such artistic identities exist in conjunction with, but are not solely reliant upon, social position.

Constructing difference: warlord tea and rustic tea

Even when pursued on purely aesthetic terms, the bifurcation of tea history between the rustic tradition of tea embodied by non-warrior practitioners and warlord tea remains a problematic paradigm; and yet it is one widely reproduced by scholars of tea history.⁵ The replication of this notion will be touched upon in more detail throughout this dissertation, but for the moment let it be noted that this semantic split has already attracted critical attention from at least two other scholars. Historian Theodore Ludwig observed that “the assumption of a sharp dichotomy between the simple, unrestrained art known as *wabicha* and the flamboyant, luxurious practice that has been called daimyo tea” is misleading, since both daimyo and “*wabi* masters ... were deeply involved in both.”⁶ Tea scholar Dale Slusser offered additional depth to Ludwig’s assessment, noting that mastery of the *wabi* style of tea (for which he uses the synonymous term “grass hut tea” or *sōan-cha*) was a prerequisite for the mastery of *chanoyu*, regardless of the practitioner’s social status:

⁵ The figures most commonly referenced as the progenitors of rustic tea are Murata Jukō, Takeno Jō’ō (1502-1555), and Sen Rikyū (1522-1591). Examples of scholars who have asserted a split between daimyo tea and *wabi* tea include Minna Toriainen, Tanihata Akio and Paul Varley. Minna Toriainen is an historian and the author of *From Austere Wabi to Golden Wabi: Philosophical and Aesthetic Aspects of Wabi in the Way of Tea*, a work in which she delineates the origins of the concept of *wabi* and traces its development in early modern writings on tea. Paul Varley is a cultural historian and tea scholar who also co-edited the scholarly volume *Tea in Japan*. Tanihata Akio is a cultural historian of *chanoyu* and the author of *Chanoyu no bunkashi: kinsei no chajintachi* [The Cultural History of Chanoyu: Early Modern Tea Practitioners] and other works on warlord tea. These three figures are just a representative sampling of historians who have suggested the presence of a semantic divide between the *wabi* tradition and the warrior practice of tea during the early modern period, 1600-1868. See the bibliography for full entries for the aforementioned texts.

⁶ Ludwig “*Chanoyu* and Momoyama”, 71.

...it must be realized that practice of the grass-hut [*sōan*] mode of tea culture was required for dominance *within the field* of tea culture, while at the same time this mode opposed the dominant hierarchy of the military lords *outside of the field* of tea culture. When military lords ... sought recognition within the tea world, tension between these elements of the grass-hut mode were certain to appear.⁷

Slusser concludes that the creation of new and innovative forms of tea practice was the only way that warlord practitioners could resolve the tension he describes between two competing power dynamics: the dominance of the merchant-created *wabi* aesthetic within the tea world and the larger, warrior-dominated society in which early modern tea praxis found itself embedded. Slusser's a priori assumption that rustic tea was the dominant mode of tea (and one to which warlords had to respond) reflects the dominant historiographical narrative for this period – one which pits warlord tea masters *against* tea culture itself. Slusser's assertion that for warlord tea masters, the possession of political power affected their chances of success in the “field of tea culture” seems to overlook the both significant advantage in access to that world afforded by their warlord status as well as the fact that the aesthetic value systems invented and disseminated by individual warlord tea masters not only frequently incorporated some notion of “rustic tea,” but also offered expanded and innovative artistic visions which attracted disciples and adherents on their own merits.

The false rift between rustic tea and warlord tea that attempts to segregate military lords from the rest of the early modern tea masters over issues of aesthetics, if not of status, finds its early origins in the Genroku period (1688-1704). As mentioned in the Introduction, during this epoch a number of texts purporting to convey the essence of *wabi* values through the authentic teachings of Rikyū emerged in a phenomenon that has been termed the “Rikyū revival” movement. Historian Morgan Pitelka notes that by the Genroku era, Rikyū's posthumous fame

⁷ The so-called “grass-hut” style of tea (*sōan-cha*) is synonymous with “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*). Slusser, “The Transformation of Tea Practice,” 57.

had grown to the point that objects connected to Rikyū were avidly collected and displayed by prominent tea practitioners in every social group.⁸ It was no coincidence that this phenomenon occurred around the time of the one-hundredth anniversary of Rikyū's death in 1591, an occasion which provided his successors and admirers with an excellent excuse to celebrate (and cement) his reputation. Legitimized by spurious texts such as *Record of Nanpō*, the three schools of tea founded by members of the Sen family (Omotesenke, Urasenke and Mushanokōji-senke) all laid claim to the authoritative legacy of Rikyū in an attempt to elevate the status of their common ancestor, and thus designate themselves as the sole authorities concerning what constituted authentic tea practice.

Accordingly, the Genroku "Rikyū Revival" movement can be conceptualized as a turf wars in which various tea factions (warrior practitioners among them) sought to establish the validity of their claims to *chanoyu* authenticity in a field in which, albeit to differing degrees, all parties acceded to the implied authority connoted by the *idea of Rikyū*, if not his true historical footprint. Within the social context of the Tokugawa regime, where power, occupation and social mobility depended entirely upon one's inherited place within extant hierarchies, such jockeying for authority was entirely in keeping with the times.

The marginalization of warrior tea practitioners within the historical narrative is the result not only of Rikyū revivalism but of a concomitant trend toward the professionalization of tea masters led by the scions of the Sen family from the late seventeenth century onward. These groups had a vested interest in marketing the image of Rikyū which validated their own business endeavors by virtue of the claims to descend from him. The long shadow cast by a deified Rikyū has shaped the course of most subsequent historical enquiry into the development of *chanoyu*,

⁸ For more about the collection of objects with ties to Rikyū, see Morgan Pitelka. "Tea Taste: Patronage and Collaboration among Tea Masters and Potters in Early Modern Japan." *Early Modern Japan: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. Vol. 12, Issue 2 (Fall-Winter 2004): 27.

hampering the serious study of warrior tea as a purely historical phenomenon, fraught as it is with sectarian interests, the quasi-spiritual nature of tea history which impedes objective analysis, and the tendency for scholarship on the subject to emerge to a significant degree from the schools of tea themselves, with the Sen family schools taking a lead role in this enterprise.

While the manufactured notion of a Rikyū *chanoyu* orthodoxy advanced by many early modern tea texts consistently places warlord practitioners in a position subordinate to the rustic tea tradition, an examination of the accounts of social interaction among influential warriors reveals that these men accorded the notion of *wabi* a central place in terms their own stylistic conventions, made self-conscious connections to Rikyū's legacy, and also considered *chanoyu* as a form of spiritual practice – an approach very much in keeping with the tenets of rustic tea as defined by Rikyū. In other words, warlord tea masters themselves conceptualized their engagement with tea as anything but peripheral to the field, and rightly so, as they occupied central places within, and at points even dominated, the early modern tea world.

Tracing modern scholarship on warlord tea praxis

Although stories concerning the past activities of warlord tea masters appear in a number of early modern anecdotal compilations (known as *kanwa* or *chawa*), true historical scholarship on warlord tea practitioners emerged in the twentieth century. While tea never disappeared entirely, very little in the way of substantive research was produced during the Meiji (1868-1912) and Taisho (1912-1926) periods as national focus shifted to the business of Japan's rapid modernization and tea fell into decline. As the historian Jordan Sand explains, during this period the numbers of male tea practitioners dwindled while young women took up *chanoyu* in great numbers since the study of tea was considered means by which they could prepare for the

eventual management of their own households. Sands observes that *chanoyu* was “appropriated by the girl’s schools as a device to inculcate elaborate rules of comportment and behavior for reception of guests.”⁹

The first sustained scholarly study on the history of tea thus dates to the early Shōwa period (1925-1989). In 1936, two leaders from the family schools of tea -- Sen Sōshitsu (1893-1964), the fourteenth-generation family head of the Urasenke school, and Sen Sōshu (1889-1953), the twelfth-generation family head of the Mushanokōji-senke school -- oversaw the editing and publication of the *Way of Tea (Chadō)*, a series of fifteen volumes dedicated to reproducing excerpts from selected primary source material on tea and also to providing scholarly essays, written by dozens of authors, on topics which ranged from the origins of the *wabi* aesthetic to the connections between *chanoyu* and Japan’s traditional farcical theater (*kyōgen*). Overall, the series emphasizes scholarly interpretation over the reproduction of primary sources. Material on *chanoyu* by warlord tea practitioners is concentrated in the eleventh volume of the series, which profiles many of the same figures this dissertation addresses, including Hosokawa Sansai, Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, Katagiri Sekishū, Kanamori Sōwa, and Matsudaira Fumai.¹⁰ Volume Eleven of the series includes interpretative articles concerning the tea of the men listed above, but only includes snippets of their own writings embedded within those sections.¹¹

Chadō correctly claims to provide the first substantive scholarly study of many of these figures. Typical entries include several short passages excerpted from primary source materials attributed to these figures embedded within longer, interpretative essays written by the series

⁹ Jordan Sand. *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture, 1880-1930*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003, 49.

¹⁰ Chapter Five will propose several reasons for the absence of Ii Naosuke (1815-1860) from this group.

¹¹ *Chadō* [The Way of Tea], eds. Sen Sōshitsu and Sen Sōshu. Vol. 11. Tokyo: Sōgensha, 1936.

editors and other scholars. The accompanying essays (which are the primary focus) place each figure and text into historical context, explaining who figures were and the nature of their relationships to one another. Analysis concerning the aesthetic or philosophical positions of warlord tea practitioners is scant and cursory in nature. Where applicable, figures such as Sansai and Oribe, who were contemporaries of Rikyū, are discussed as his disciples rather than as tea masters in their own right.¹² Insofar as the *Chadō* series made primary source material on warlord tea practitioners available to a general readership (in many cases for the first time), it represents an important stage in the development of the scholarly consideration of warlord tea. Although a handful of other studies did appear during the late 1930s, none dealt with warlord tea praxis at any length, and Japan's militaristic expansion into East and Southeast Asia significantly restricted the publication of new tea scholarship until the end of the postwar Occupation.¹³

Postwar scholarship on tea history

The production of scholarship on tea grew steadily in the postwar era with the publication of seminal works such as the 1956 study *Tea (Cha)*, edited by Hayashiya Tatsusaburō, Nakamura Masao and Hayashiya Seizō (an English translation under the title *Japanese Arts and Tea Ceremony* followed in 1974) and Kuwata Tadachika's *History of the Way of Tea (Chadō no rekishi)* in 1967. These works by Hayashiya and Kuwata both typify a "first wave" of post-Occupation scholarship on warlord tea insofar as they both adopt approaches which measure warlord tea practitioners against the posited "standard" of Rikyū – an interpretative construct in which the warlord tea practitioners are routinely placed at a disadvantage. In one representative passage, Hayashiya writes of Kobori Enshū that his tea lacks the "spiritual strength" that Rikyū's

¹² Eitarō Takushima. "Kobori Enshū no kenkyū" [Research on Kobori Enshū], ed. Sōshitsu Sen and Sōshu Sen. *Chadō*, Vol. 11. Tokyo: Sōgensha, 1936, 49.

¹³ One other example of a prewar study on daimyo figures is Akimoto Zuiami's *Ryūsō Furuta Oribe no sho to sono chadō* [Lineage founder Furuta Oribe's Writings and Tea]. Tokyo: Gakusei Shoin, 1938.

tea possessed, going on to say of both Furuta Oribe and Enshū that their status dictated that their styles constituted the “staging of a tea performance that would suit the current tastes of the daimyo.”¹⁴ This does not mean that either scholar neglects the description of the careers and aesthetic preferences of warlord tea practitioners. Hayashiya’s *Tea* praises Katagiri Sekishū for advancing warlord tea praxis to a state of “perfection,” while later publications of Kuwata’s such as *Tea and Tea Men (Chadō to chajin)*, published in 1980), relate many anecdotes concerning the abilities of warlord tea masters.¹⁵ But the repeated comparisons of other tea practitioners to Rikyū, and the repeated assertion of the warlord tea/rustic tea distinction remains a defining hallmark of the scholarship of these two men.

The year 1967 marked the first-edition publication of another multi-volume compilation, this time comprised almost entirely of primary-source texts drawn from the canon of writings on tea stretching from the twelfth to the nineteenth centuries. Edited by the family head of the Urasenke tea lineage, the publication of the twelve-volume *Complete Compendium of Classical Writings on the Way of Tea (Chadō koten zenshū)* made many historical texts available to the general public for the first time, and triggered the production of numerous publications on tea history both within Japan and abroad. Edited by the fifteenth-generation family head of Urasenke, Sen Sōshitsu XV (b. 1923), *The Complete Compendium* built upon the aforementioned 1935 *Way of Tea (Chadō)* series edited by his father, Sen Sōshitsu XIV (with whom he shares a common name). The series contains a number of materials attributed or otherwise linked to warlord tea masters, particularly the eleventh volume, which includes full transcriptions of the *Furu-Oribe sōdensho* (also known as the *Furu-Ori-kō densho*, commonly attributed to Oribe but probably written by his disciples), the *Hosokawa Book of Tea (Hosokawa*

¹⁴ Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 118-119.

¹⁵ Kuwata, Tadachika. *Chadō to chajin* [Tea and Teamen]. Tokyo: Akita Shoten, 1980.

chanoyu no sho) written by Hosokawa Sansai's student and chief retainer Iori Ishio, Kobori Enshū's "Letter to be Discarded" (*Kakisute-bumi*), and Katagiri Sekishū's "Three Hundred Precepts of Sekishū" (*Sekishū sanbyaku kajyō*). This dissertation will examine these texts in detail in later chapters.

The publication of so many primary sources, accompanied by moderate commentary, in *The Complete Compendium* also directly stimulated the production of scholarship on tea history outside of Japan, much of which initially appeared in *Chanoyu Quarterly*, an English-language journal on *chanoyu* history and practice published by the Urasenke school of tea in Kyoto. Commencing in 1970, *Chanoyu Quarterly* regularly presented translated contributions from many of Japan's leading tea historians, such as Masao Nakamura's studies of two teahouses designed by and associated with the warlord tea masters Furuta Oribe¹⁶ and Katagiri Sekishū.¹⁷ Notably, Nakamura's approach to his subjects was laudatory, maintaining a narrative focus on these two warlords, and omitting any overt comparisons to Rikyū. The lack of a comparative thrust in Nakamura's articles above may be attributed in part to its focus on tea architecture rather than philosophy and aesthetics, as these latter topics appear to more readily invite unfavorable comparisons to Rikyū.

By the mid-1980s, articles which, like Nakamura's, had been translated from their original Japanese were supplemented by original English-language scholarship written by Western scholars, many of whom were working with primary sources such as the ones first made available through the *Chadō koten zenshū* series.¹⁸ This wave of foreign interest in tea history eventually prompted the publication of articles on early modern *chanoyu* in mainstream English-

¹⁶ Masao Nakamura. "Furuta Oribe and Ennan." *Chanoyu Quarterly* No. 17 (1977): 9-17.

¹⁷ Masao Nakamura. "Katagiri Sekishū and Korin'an." *Chanoyu Quarterly* No. 23(1980): 22-36.

¹⁸ A. L. Sadler, A.L. *Chanoyu: The Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1962.

language scholarly journals such as *Monumenta Nipponica*, which published Beatrice M. Bodart's "Tea and Counsel: The Political Role of Sen Rikyū," in 1977.¹⁹ Elizabeth Lillehoj's early work on the warlord tea master Kanamori Sōwa, for example, was published in 1994.²⁰ More other articles concerning Rikyū and the Sen family schools of tea also followed in the pages of *Chanoyu Quarterly* until publication ceased in 1999. In the two examples above, Lillehoj and Bodart both engage warlord tea practitioners on their own terms, although in Bodart's case the focus remains primarily on Rikyū, not the warriors he served (Nobunaga and Hideyoshi).

Beginning in the 1970s, Japanese scholars produced numerous studies of individual warlord tea masters. These accounts, which are often quite biographical in orientation, tend to consider warlord tea praxis in a manner delimited by the lifespans of the figures they profile, but are useful supports for this project insofar as they uncover evidence on each man's approach to tea and the details of his personal life. Take, for example, two book-length studies on the seventeenth-century warlord tea master Kobori Enshū by Mori Osamu²¹ and Ōta Hiroshi.²² Published almost thirty years apart, both texts nevertheless adopt a similarly biographical approach to Enshū at the expense of significant analysis of the various tea salons in which he was active over the course of his career. Such works offer key insights into the formation and unfolding of an individual career, but fail to place warlord tea masters within the larger field of early modern social networks organized around tea. The result is a narrow focus on each man's

¹⁹ Beatrice M. Bodart. "Tea and Counsel. The Political Role of Sen Rikyū." *Monumenta Nipponica* 32, No. 1(1977): 49-74.

²⁰ Elizabeth Lillehoj. "The Early Kanamori Family and Tea." *Chanoyu Quarterly* 77 (1994): 33-55.

²¹ Mori, Osamu. *Kobori Enshū*. Osaka: Sōgensha, 1974.

²² Ōta, Hiroshi. *Tekunokuratto Kobori Enshū: Ōmi ga unda sainō* [Technocrat Kobori Enshū: The Genius That Omi Produced] . Hikone, Japan: Sunraisu Shuppan, 2002.

life without a fuller sense of how his career is representative of, or divergent from, those of other tea masters, including non-warriors.²³

The late 1980s and early 1990s were a particularly dynamic time for scholarship on warlord tea as a new generation of tea scholars emerged both in Japan and abroad. Leading the field is Kumakura Isao (b. 1943), who has contributed to more than one hundred and thirty books Japan's cultural history over the course of his long (and continuing) career. Among those which touch on daimyo tea praxis are *Rikyū Oribe, and Enshū* (1983) *Ii Naosuke's Tea (Ii Naosuke no chanoyu, 2007)*, *Record of Kobori Enshū's Tea Friends (Kobori Enshū no chayūroku, 2007)*, and an edited volume on the involvement of women in early modern *chanoyu*, *Ōguchi Shō'ō and the Encouragement of Women's Tea (Ōguchi Shō'ō: Josei chanoyu no susume, 2013)*.²⁴

In 1989, Kumakura collaborated with the American historian Paul Varley to co-edit the first edited volume dedicated to tea scholarship in the English language, *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*, published in 1989. Produced in advance of the four-hundredth anniversary of Rikyū's death, *Tea in Japan* brought together a number of Japanese and Western scholars to produce the first serious compilation of essays on tea history available in English. Warlord tea practitioners figure heavily among the topics considered by the authors, including Theodore Ludwig's aforementioned article concerning tea in the late Momoyama era (1568-1600) and Paul Varley's study of the early modern development of *chanoyu* following the pivotal Genroku era (1688-1704).²⁵ Varley also encouraged further research on tea history

²³ This trend has begun to shift in recent years, with contributions such as Kumakura Isao's 2007 study of Enshū's social networks, *Record of Kobori Enshū's Tea Companions (Kobori Enshū chayūroku)*. However, this development is overdue, and much more work remains to be done. See Isao Kumakura. *Kobori Enshū chayūroku* [Record of Kobori Enshū's Tea Companions]. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 2007.

²⁴ Full citations for these texts are available in the Bibliography.

²⁵ Varley, "Chanoyu: From Genroku to Modern Times," 161-194.

outside Japan, overseeing two doctoral dissertations at his home institution (the University of Hawaii at Manoa where he held the Sen Sōshitsu chair) on tea: Judith Nakano-Holmes's 1995 dissertation on the warlord tea master Furuta Oribe, and Paul Demura-Devore's 2005 dissertation on Rikyū's descendants through his grandson, Sen Sōtan.²⁶ Dennis Hirota's *Wind in the Pines: Classic Writings of the Way of Tea as a Buddhist Path* made available for the first time in English translations of many classical tea writings dating to the early modern period and earlier, including two authored by the daimyo tea masters Kobori Enshū and Ii Naosuke.²⁷

The role of art history

A significant portion of early scholarship which specifically addressed warlord tea practitioners emerged from the field of art history through museum exhibitions featuring objects preserved from the collections of early modern warlord tea masters. In 1988, the National Gallery of Art in Washington featuring an exhibition on daimyo culture, "Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture, 1185-1868," which included a number of tea objects as one portion of the exhibition.²⁸ In 1992, the Tokugawa Art Museum in Nagoya organized the exhibit "*Shoin and Sukiya: Daimyo Tea Ceremony*."²⁹ In 2000 and 2001, respectively, the Tanabe Art Museum in Matsue and the Shimane Prefectural Museum both mounted exhibitions organized around the tea collections and chanoyu career of the warlord tea master Matsudaira Fumai.³⁰ Two years later,

²⁶ Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists" and Nakano-Holmes, "Furuta Oribe."

²⁷ Dennis Hirota, ed. *Wind in the Pines: Classic Writings of the Way of Tea as a Buddhist Path*. Kyoto: Asian Humanities Press, 1995.

²⁸ Yoshiaki Shimizu, ed. *Japan: The Shaping of Daimyo Culture, 1185-1868*. Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988.

²⁹ *Shoin and Sukiya: Daimyo Tea Ceremony*. Nagoya: Tokugawa Art Museum, 1992.

³⁰ Catalogues which included new research on Fumai were published for each of these exhibitions: *Fumai-kō ten: chanoyu shunjū* [Lord Fumai Exhibition: Springs and Autumns of Tea]. Matsue: Tanabe Art Museum, 2000.; and

the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York mounted an exhibition which included works attributed to the warlord tea master Furuta Oribe, entitled “Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan.”³¹ Similarly, Hosokawa Sansai’s tea objects have been included in several exhibitions organized by the Eisei Bunkō, the Tokyo-based archive which manages the Hosokawa family collections, including the 2009 “Lords of the Samurai: The Legacy of a Daimyo Family” exhibition at San Francisco’s Asian Art Museum and a series of major exhibitions in Japan during 2011-2012 which travelled to national museums in Tokyo, Kyoto, and Fukuoka. In 2014 an exhibition centered on a single tea leaf storage jar but engaging Muromachi and early modern tea more broadly, “Chigusa and the Art of Tea,” was featured at the Freer Art Museum at the Smithsonian in Washington and later, at Princeton University’s art gallery. Such events, and countless others like them held during the same period in Japan, demonstrate a persistent and growing interest in the material culture and underlying history of early modern tea culture and warrior tea praxis both in Japan and abroad, and across disciplines.³²

Recent English-language research

English-language research into *chanoyu* has continued to evolve in recent years.

Japanese Tea Culture: Art, and History, and Practice, another edited volume published in 2003, features the work of a new generation of Western scholars on tea, a group which includes

Daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai ten: seitai 250-nen. [Exhibition of the Daimyo Teaman Matsudaira Fumai’s Collection: 250th Anniversary]. Tokyo: NHK Promotions, 2001.

³¹ *Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*. 2003. Murase Miyeko, Amemiya Mutsuko, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, eds. New Haven: Yale University Press.

³² *Chigusa and the Art of Tea*. 2014. Louise Allison Cort and Andrew Mark Watsky, eds. Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery (Smithsonian Institution), and Princeton University Art Museum. Seattle: Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and University of Washington Press.

volume editor Morgan Pitelka, the art historians Louise Cort, Andrew Watsky and Patricia Graham, and tea scholars Dale Slusser, Tim Cross, and Tanimura Reiko.³³ Several of the articles in *Japanese Tea Culture* touch upon warlord tea, with the contributions by Slusser and Tanimura demonstrating particular focus on how warlords assumed authority in the field of *chanoyu* and what benefits they derived from these activities. More recently, studies of historical *chanoyu* have engaged the topics of cultural nationalism and national identity. Published in 2009, Tim Cross' *The Ideologies of Japanese Tea: Subjectivity, Transience & National Identity* analyzes the processes by which tea ideologies emerge, are transmitted via various media, including film, and are ultimately used as form of soft power to shape ideas and worldviews. The sociologist Kristin Surak picks up the theme of tea as an exercise in nationalism in her 2013 book, *Making Tea, Making Japan: Cultural Nationalism in Practice*.³⁴

Persistent ellipses in the historiography of warlord tea

While the field of tea history has entered a state of vibrant activity and expansion during the postwar era, when considered as a whole, extant historiography continues to display a number of problematic biases in approach. Subsequent chapters of this dissertation identify and address five unresolved issues which remain prevalent in extant historiography. These are: 1) the continued absence of any sustained study of warlord tea praxis across the full span of the early modern period; 2) the continued and misguided application of Rikyū, the Sen schools, and/or the rustic tea aesthetic as imposed standard(s) for the evaluation of warlord tea masters; 3)

³³ Morgan Pitelka, ed. *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History, and Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

³⁴ Although both works primarily examine modern Japan, Cross engages early modern tea praxis through an interrogation of the family head (*iemoto*) system which arose during the late seventeenth century, and Surak's focus on post-Meiji developments in tea praxis is prefaced by a useful chapter on the early modern antecedents of how tea came to be configured as a nationalist enterprise and a marker of Japanese identity. Tim Cross. *The Ideologies of Japanese Tea: Subjectivity, Transience & National Identity*. Folkestone, UK: Global Oriental, 2009; and Surak, Kristin. *Making Tea, Making Japan : Cultural Nationalism in Practice*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2013.

the omission of sufficient analysis of the significance of warlord participation in (and creation of) social networks centered on *chanoyu*; 4) the omission or devaluation of the individual contributions of warlord tea masters to tea history as a whole; and 5) the lack of adequate analysis of the unique facets of warlord tea praxis, such as its application of tea to the processes of state governance. The following chapter's focus on the emergence of a distinct warlord *chanoyu* at the close of the unification period in the late sixteenth century will begin the analysis of these five issues, with particular attention to the concept of Rikyū and his version of rustic tea as a standard for historical evaluation.

Chapter Two: No Tea Outside of Rikyū? Hosokawa Sansai, Furuta Oribe and the Question of Chanoyu Orthodoxy

In a letter written to the warrior Matsui Yasuyuki (1550-1612)¹ in early 1591, the tea master Sen Rikyū informed his correspondent that two of his disciples, the warlords Hosokawa Tadaoki (tea name Sansai, 1564-1646) and Furuta Shigenari (commonly known as Oribe, 1544-1615) had come to see him off at the bank of the Yodo River the previous day. Rikyū was leaving Kyoto in disgrace, boarding a boat bound for a period of short house arrest in his home city of Sakai after incurring the wrath of the hegemon Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Less than two weeks later, Rikyū's political patron and onetime disciple Hideyoshi summoned the tea master back to Kyoto and ordered him to commit suicide, a punishment for Rikyū's purported slights to his dignity as ruler, former student or not.²

Like Hideyoshi, Sansai and Oribe also numbered among Rikyū's closest *chanoyu* disciples, having each studied with the merchant tea master for nearly a decade. Rikyū's letter to Yasuyuki expresses his surprise and gratitude for the sendoff, discerning the risky nature of the gesture. Under the circumstances, the sendoff could be viewed as a political statement with the potential to further provoke an already incensed Hideyoshi. Rikyū closed the short missive by requesting that that Matsui, a leading retainer to the Hosokawa family, convey his gratitude to Sansai.³ The Yodo River anecdote is repeated in many narratives recounting the exploits of early

¹ Matsui Yasuyuki was a top retainer to both Hosokawa Tadaoki (Sansai) and his father, Fujitaka (Yūsai). The Hosokawa clan granted Yasuyuki a stipend of 26,000 *koku* following Sansai's assumption of power in the province of Bizen, a domain awarded to the Hosokawa after serving in the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600. Like Sansai and Oribe, Matsui also studied *chanoyu* with Rikyū. See "Matsui Yasuyuki." Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 24 January 2014.

² The letter is dated the fourteenth day of the second month of 1591 and written in Rikyū's own hand.

³ It is possible that by addressing the letter to Matsui instead of his master, Rikyū hoped to protect Sansai from official censure for his actions. A copy of this letter, which I examined at a 2011 special exhibition in Kyoto, appears in *Higo Matsuike no meihin* [Fine Articles from the Matsui Family of Higo Province], ed. Chadō Shiryōkan.

warlord tea practitioners, and has also become a well-known chapter in biographies of Sen Rikyū. Moreover, the scene has been recreated in at least two postwar cinematic depictions of Rikyū's life, and is also included in some popular manga versions of tea history.⁴ The Yodo River story is thus one of the best-known accounts of the connections of warlord tea practitioners to Rikyū, marking Hosokawa Sansai and Furuta Oribe as primary representatives of that group in the popular imagination. The tale's wide dissemination highlights a key feature of the early "unification phase" of daimyo tea praxis (1573-1615): an era when many warlord tea practitioners claimed direct personal links to Rikyū.

This chapter explores the extent to which early warlord tea masters like Sansai and Oribe alternately iterated, and suppressed, personal connections to the figure of Sen Rikyū in the process of developing their individual approaches to tea praxis. Whereas connection to Rikyū provided one means by which warlord tea masters of the transitional unification phase asserted the validity of their own opinions and practices, the limits and nature of Rikyū's own practice was not a matter of universal agreement during their lifetimes. After Rikyū's death, his former disciples, many of them high-ranking warriors, determined their own proclivities and tastes in tea matters without the benefit of any authoritative guide to tea praxis originating with Rikyū (other than their own memories of the man). Rikyū left no didactic texts that were indisputably of his own authorship, although many later works would claim to accurately reflect his intentions.

Kyoto: Chadō Shiryōkan, 2001, 28, 223. It is a holding of the Matsui family archives (Matsui Bunkō) in Yatsushirojō, Kyūshū.

⁴ Cinematic interpretations of this incident are included in Teshigahara Hiroshi's "Rikyū" (Capitol Films, 1989) and Kumai Kei's "Sen no Rikyū: Honkakubō ibun" (released in English as "Death of a Tea Master," Shōchiku Eiga, 1989). Manga reworkings of Rikyū's life include Kiyohara Natsuno's *Sen Rikyū* (2004, reprinted 2011), which illustrates this incident, and Nishizaki Taisei's 2008 manga *Tōcha daimyo: Rikyū shichitetsu*, which shows Rikyū leaving on the boat but omits any presence of Oribe and Sansai at the scene. Natsuno Kiyohara. *Sen Rikyū*. Tokyo: Hon no Zasshisha, 2011, 341. See also Taisei Nishizaki and Kazuya Kudo. *Tōcha daimyō: Rikyu shichitetsu* [Tea Contest Warlords: Rikyū's Seven Sages]. Tokyo: Leed, 2008.

From the mid-seventeenth century onward, the merits and failings of warlord tea practitioners such as Oribe and Sansai were re-evaluated by authors who asserted the existence of an abstract “orthodoxy” of tea practice, one ostensibly defined and articulated by Rikyū. This chapter argues that the very notion of a Rikyū-centered “tea orthodoxy” is a historical fallacy – a later invention intended to promote Sen family interests – and not a salient framework for the historical analysis of the development of warlord *chanoyu*. Moreover, the overwhelming focus on Rikyū in such revisionist accounts is belied and challenged by accounts dating to the lifetimes of the men they purport to analyze, resulting in an incomplete understanding of the proper place of warlord tea practitioners in the history of *chanoyu*.

This chapter examines the emergence of warlord tea praxis as a distinct feature of early modern *chanoyu* beginning during the completion of political unification and continuing into the first fifteen years of Tokugawa rule. Examining Furuta Oribe and Hosokawa Sansai as representative case studies of unification-phase warlord tea masters, it will show how the careers and posthumous depictions of each figure illustrates the lack, rather than the presence, of a functional notion of orthodox tea praxis during this period. An examination of contemporary accounts will instead show that later attempts to establish a notion of an orthodoxy based upon of Rikyū was a reaction to the growing prominence of warlord tea masters in early Tokugawa society, and had little to no impact upon the tastes or approaches to tea adopted by Oribe and Sansai. A rationale for the selection of Oribe and Sansai as case studies in early warlord tea praxis will be followed by an introduction to the group of close Rikyū disciples known as the “seven sages.” Profiles of each man’s political career and tea activities will follow, including analyses of how each warlord oriented himself to Rikyū’s legacy, and the limits of that early connection within their own engagement with tea. Finally, the conclusion will consider the

mechanisms by which early warlord tea masters established artistic reputations, attracted disciples, and asserted artistic authority in the field of tea.

Oribe and Sansai: oppositional exemplars of warlord tea

The selection of Oribe and Sansai as representative case studies in unification-era warlord tea masters is a response to the fact that the two men were frequently juxtaposed as exemplars of two differing approaches to tea, mutually measured against an invented “Rikyū orthodoxy.” As the Yodo River anecdote which opens this chapter reflects, not only were Oribe and Sansai both closely associated with Rikyū, but they were often discussed in tandem in early modern tea writings. Seventeenth-century texts posthumously evaluated both Oribe and Sansai on the basis of their perceived fidelity to Rikyū’s style of tea. In this discursive model, Oribe’s innovations away from Rikyū’s precedents are contrasted with Sansai’s imitations of Rikyū. The adoption of Rikyū as the standard of measure allowed those with personal investments in Rikyū’s legacy to alternately valorize Sansai and denigrate Oribe, ultimately asserting Rikyū’s superiority to both warriors in a paradigm which maligned warlord tea praxis.

One such example is found in *Kōshin’s Summer Record (Kōshin gegaki)*, a manuscript dated to 1663, and distributed within the Omotesenke school of tea. Putative author Sen Sōsa (1613-1672) was not only Rikyū’s great-grandson and the founder of the Omotesenke lineage, but he was also among the first to produce a written account of the Sen family history.⁵ As a descendant of the Sen family, Sōsa’s vested interest in shaping the definitive historical accounts of his ancestor’s legacy and the relative merits of Rikyū’s closest disciples is evident in his characterizations. Born only two years before Oribe’s death in 1615, Sōsa clearly could not have

⁵ Morgan Pitelka. “Sen Kōshin Sōsa: Writing Tea History.” In *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice*, ed. Morgan Pitelka. London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, 86, 103.

claimed to possess any personal knowledge of Oribe's character or tea style. Nevertheless, the *Summer Record* had no qualms in declaring Oribe as the most inept of Rikyū's disciples, a judgment seemingly predicated upon Oribe's reputation for innovations in tea procedure and the design of tea utensils which were seen as challenges to practices attributed to Rikyū.⁶ In many cases modern tea historiography has continued to echo the interpretative pairing of Oribe with Sansai observed in Sōsa's seventeenth-century text, suggesting that Sansai and Oribe represent variant –even oppositional – directions vis-a-vis the development of *chanoyu*.⁷

This oppositional model is both reductive and biased, informed by the asserted centrality of Rikyū to any discussion of warlord tea practitioners, especially those who studied directly with him. The sources reveal that Oribe was not obsessed by heterodox innovations that overturned Rikyū's precedents any more than Sansai was preoccupied by the preservation of a Rikyū-based orthodoxy. During this early stage of Tokugawa tea practice, claims that such an orthodoxy existed, especially for warlord practitioners, are spurious at best. Rather, what is observable during the first four decades of the Tokugawa regime (and exemplified in the case studies of Oribe and Sansai) is more accurately described as a lingering respect for Rikyū by men who knew and practiced with him personally, but who were not bound to the endless replication of his tea. Instead, they emulated their former teacher's own spirit of innovation, modifying their taste in tearooms, tea utensils, procedures and philosophies as they saw fit.

⁶ *Kono uchi, Oribe ichi chanoyu nōmu sōrō*. Reproduced in *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi*, Vol. 1 [Tea History According to the Sources], ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 2002, 116. See also Akio Tanihata. "Men of Tea: An Evaluation of Yamanoue Sōji, Part II." *Chanoyu Quarterly* 27 (1981): 55.

⁷ One such example is the work of Yabe Sei'ichirō, whose laudatory study of Hosokawa Sansai described unification era tea praxis as characterized by "two currents" – one represented by Sansai's adherence to Rikyū-centered values, and the other by Oribe as brash innovator. Sei'ichirō Yabe. *Hosokawa Sansai: chanoyu no sekai* [Hosokawa Sansai: The World of Chanoyu]. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2003, 21.

While texts such as the *Summer Record* claim that Sansai and Oribe embody two distinct models for the early development of warlord tea, others highlight the prominence of both men in the tea discourse well into seventeenth century. A passage in Ikeda Mitsumasa's (1609-1682) seventeenth-century essay, *Discussions on Various Lords (Rekkō kanwa)* recounts a conversation purported to have taken place between Rikyū and Sansai in which the warlord questioned his teacher about a successor, asking, "If you should die, who will succeed you as the foremost master of *chanoyu* in the realm?"⁸ In Mitsumasa's account, Rikyū replied, "My son Dōan performs *chanoyu* beautifully, but his character is poor. Hence he will not be able to succeed me as master within the realm. Won't the successor most likely be Furuta Oribe?"⁹

In its assertion that Rikyū considered social status as one deciding factor in anointing a new leader for the art of *chanoyu*, this anecdote seems to validate warlord leadership of the post-Rikyū tea world on the basis of good breeding. In this narrative (which is of questionable historicity), Rikyū rejects his own son Dōan as potential successor despite his skill. Disparaging his "character" is one way of referencing Dōan's lowly social station. On the other hand, if high social status and pedigree was the only consideration, surely Sansai should succeed Rikyū, as his family history was much more prestigious than Oribe's. Although Mitsumasa's narrative suggests that leadership of the tea world must be claimed through a combination of social status and artistic vision, it also grants authority to name the most able *chanoyu* practitioner in the realm to Rikyū. To someone of Mitsumasa's generation, for the realm's leading tea master to be someone whose social status was befitting of the position would be a foregone conclusion, given

⁸ *Tenka no chanoyu shinan, dare nite mo ya aru beki to mōsu sōrō.*

⁹ This passage from the *Rekkō kanwa* is reproduced in full in Akimoto Zuiami's 1938 analysis of Oribe. See Akimoto, "Ryūsō Furuta Oribe," 29. It also appears in Kumakura Isao's edited volume of primary sources materials related to tea history. "'Tenka no chanoyu shinan' from *Rekkō kanwa.*" *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources], Vol. 1, ed. Kumakura Isao. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 1994, 139-141.

the rigid strictures of social status particular to the period.¹⁰ The politicized nature of the role of tea master is reflected in the language Ikeda's account employed in describing tea praxis as "tea of the realm."¹¹

Written in the mid-seventeenth century, well after Oribe had succeeded Rikyū as the leading official tea master and indeed, long after Oribe's own death in 1615, in his text Mitsumasa had the luxury of retrospectively validating events that took place long before his own birth. Nevertheless, the value of this account is how it shows just how normative warlord leadership of the tea world had become by the mid-seventeenth century, a process that began during the unification phase. And again, Sansai and Oribe are the two figures referenced, together with Rikyū, reifying their centrality to tea discourse of the period.

Rikyū's "seven sages"

In many respects the historiographical notion that this study describes as "warlord tea" begins with Rikyū's close disciples during the period of his service first to Nobunaga and later, to Hideyoshi. The term "seven sages of Rikyū" is often applied to the inner circle of warlords who served Hideyoshi and also studied tea with Rikyū during the period 1582 until Rikyū's death in 1591. Hosokawa Sansai and Furuta Oribe are considered the foremost representatives of this group. As frequently as the appellation appears in early modern discussions of warlord tea masters, there is no evidence of its usage during the lifetimes of Rikyū, Oribe, or even Sansai, who died in 1646. The earliest occurrence appears in the merchant and tea enthusiast Matsuya Hisashige's *Account of the Four Masters of the Way of Tea (Chadō shiso densho, completed in 1652)*. A resident of Nara, Matsuya was a contemporary of both Sansai and Oribe, and his

¹⁰ Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 137.

¹¹ Ikeda, Mitsumasa (1609-1682). "*Rekkō kanwa*" [Discussions on Various Lords]. In *Shiseki shūran*, edited by Heijō Kondō. Tokyo: Kondō Shuppanbu, 1924, 4.

personal entries in his family's tea diary, the *Matsuya Tea Record* (*Matsuya kaiki*) recorded many gatherings with Sansai.¹² There is also surviving correspondence sent between Hisashige's father (Matsuya Hisayoshi, d. 1633) and Oribe.¹³ Thus, there is evidence of the Matsuya family's familiarity, across two generations, with how both of warlords oriented themselves to *chanoyu*.

In addition to Sansai and Oribe, the remaining members of the "Rikyū seven" are often identified as Maeda Toshiie (1538-1599), Gamō Ujisato (1556-1595), Takayama Shigetomo (more commonly known as Ukon and sometimes as Nanbō, 1552?-1615)¹⁴, Makimura Masaharu (also known as Hyōbu, 1545-1593), and Shibayama Munetsuna (also known as Kenmotsu, dates unknown).¹⁵ Of this group, Furuta Oribe, Hosokawa Sansai and Takayama Ukon are the three men most commonly listed as early-stage "daimyo tea men" in the secondary scholarship on tea history. The entire group of seven is united by other factors – all served the unifier Oda Nobunaga and, after his death in 1582, developed vassal relationships with his successor, Hideyoshi.¹⁶

Tea historian Murai Yasuhiko notes that the roster of names for the "Rikyū seven" has fluctuated over time and in a manner influenced by the compiler of the moment. A later version

¹² The *Matsuya kaiki* contains records kept by three members of the Matsuya family, who were lacquer artisans in Nara. With entries spanning the years 1533 until 1650, the diary records in turn the activities of three generations of the family: Matsuya Hisamasa (d. 1598), Matsuya Hisayoshi (d. 1633), and Matsuya Hisashige (1566-1652). Hisashige's entries span the period from 1604 until 1650 and thus contain most of the references to Sansai and Oribe. It is in Hisashige's account that the term *nana ninshū* (七人衆) occurs to reference the warlords who were Rikyū's close disciples.

¹³ Toshiko Ito, ed. *Furuta Oribe no shojō* [The Correspondence of Furuta Oribe]. Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1985, 24-25.

¹⁴ Ukon was the name of Takayama's political office and became a sobriquet for his person, as was common practice in premodern Japan. Shigetomo's tea name was Nanbō, and some European records refer to him as Takayama Justo.

¹⁵ Little is known about Shibayama other than that he was a warrior who served both Nobunaga and Hideyoshi. Yasuhiko Murai. "Rikyū nanatetsu," *Japan Knowledge Lib* database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 18 April 2011.

¹⁶ Plutschow, *Rediscovering Rikyū*, 145.

of the list was prepared by a great-grandson of Rikyū, Sen Sōsa (d. 1672).¹⁷ Sōsa's version replaced the name of Maeda Toshiie with that of Seta Masatada (also known as Kamon, 1548-1595), a warlord who ruled Ōmi (modern Shiga prefecture).¹⁸ Despite these arbitrary substitutions, the constant aspect of the “Rikyū seven” is the exclusive focus on high-ranking warriors engaged in serious study under Rikyū, and the explicit association of the group with the early phase of warlord tea.¹⁹ Whether discursively joined with the other five “sages” or not, the names of Sansai and Oribe are consistently foregrounded as leading disciples of Rikyū and as some of the first warlords to whom terms such as “tea person of renown” (*chanoyu no meijin*) is applied in early modern sources.²⁰

Furuta Oribe (1544-1615)

Furuta Shigenari, later known as Oribe, was born in 1544 in Motosumachi Yamaguchi, Mino province (modern Gifu prefecture) with the given name of Sasuke. In his youth, he was adopted by his uncle, Furuta Shigeyasu (the head of the main Furuta house), who lacked a male

¹⁷ Attributed to the tea master Kōshin, this text is a primary source central to the Omotesenke school of tea. It was first published in 1940, appearing in the journal *Wabi* that year. The *Kōshin gegaki* text was later included in the postwar editions of the *Chadō koten zenshū* series. Morgan Pitelka, “Sen Kōshin Sōsa,” 103.

¹⁸ Suggestively, Furukawa Hideaki asserts that some versions of the “Rikyū seven” replace the name of Furuta Oribe, not Maeda Toshiie, with that of Oda Uraku, but I can locate no early modern source which elides Oribe from the list. Hideaki Furukawa. “The Tea Master Oribe,” in *Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*, ed. Miyeko Murase. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, 101. Kumakura Isao's list matches the lineup provided by Matsuya. Kumakura, Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*,” 138). *Stories from a Tearoom Window (Chaso kanwa)*, an early nineteenth-century collection of anecdotes about figures in tea history, also replicates the list in the Matsuya text. Chikamatsu, *Chaso kanwa*, 135-136.

¹⁹ No version of the “Rikyū seven” includes Hideyoshi among the listing of Rikyū's disciples. This may be due to the difference in social station between Hideyoshi and other daimyo, or perhaps it is a result of the rift between Hideyoshi and Rikyū (or both). What is clear, however, is that although early modern sources record Hideyoshi's enthusiasm for chanoyu, none praise him as a master of the art. A direct link between the “seven sages” and daimyo tea has been asserted by a number of tea scholars, including Hayashiya Tatsusaburō, Murai Yasuhiko, and others. Tatsusaburō Hayashiya. 1964. “Shichi tetsu to daimyō-cha” [The Seven Sages and Daimyo Tea], in *Zuroku chadoshi: Rikyū no dōtō* [An Illustrated Tea History: The Traditions of Rikyū]. Kyoto: Tankōsha: 135-160; and Yasuhiko Murai. *Rikyū shichitetsu Sōtan shitenno* [Rikyū's Seven Sages, Sōtan's Four Emperors]. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1969.

²⁰ Nakano-Holmes, “Furuta Oribe,” 22. As detailed in the preceding chapter, the term “warlord tea master” (*daimyō chajin*) does not appear in early modern sources. The earliest instance of that I have located dates to the 1930s.

heir. Oribe later relinquished that position following the birth of a son to his uncle.²¹ Oribe's political career began in service to Oda Nobunaga as a deputy, and Nobunaga arranged Oribe's 1569 marriage to a sister of Nakagawa Kiyohide, the lord of Ibaraki castle in Settsu, near modern day Osaka and Hyogo prefectures. Oribe's association with Nobunaga brought him into contact with Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Following Nobunaga's death, Oribe fought alongside Hideyoshi at the battle of Yamazaki to defeat Nobunaga's assassin, Akechi Mitsuhide. It was during this period that Oribe first met Sen Rikyū and began the study of tea in his late thirties.²² While his introduction to tea came in middle age, Oribe seems to have vigorously embraced his new pastime and textual accounts of his presence at tea gatherings soon began to appear.

Tea diaries of the period record that on several occasions in the latter half of 1582, Hideyoshi assembled the era's *chanoyu* masters for tea gatherings at Yamazaki, a strategic site located between Osaka, Kyoto and Hideyoshi's residence. Oribe had been stationed in Yamazaki after the close of the battle which clinched Hideyoshi's position as Nobunaga's successor. The guest list for one tea event held on the seventh day of the eleventh month of 1582 included the four merchants who acted as tea masters for Hideyoshi: Sen Rikyū, Tsuda Sōkyū (d. 1591), Imai Sōkyū (1520-1593) and Yamanoue Sōji (1544-1590).²³ While Oribe's name does not appear in the records of the 1582 gathering, his continued service to Hideyoshi and his later presence in Yamazaki (evidenced by later references in letters written by Rikyū) makes his attendance at this

²¹ Oribe assumed the given name of Shigenari at adulthood. The origin of the name "Oribe" comes from his political position. See Nakano-Holmes, Julia R. 1995. "Furuta Oribe: Iconoclastic Guardian of Chanoyu Tradition," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation). University of Hawaii at Manoa, Manoa: 21-24. Daimyo status was generally accorded to warriors with stipends in excess of 10,000 *koku* per year.

²² Yasuhiko Murai. "Furuta Oribe." *Chanoyu Quarterly* No. 42 (1985): 28.

²³ Early professional tea masters were predominantly merchants from the influential port city of Sakai, whereas after the death of Rikyū in 1591, the tea masters of the Momoyama era (1582-1600) and Tokugawa era (1600-1868) were primarily warlords until the mid- to late-seventeenth century, when the sons of Sen Sōtan (Rikyū's grandson), sought employment as professionalized tea masters in the domains of various daimyo clans. For more on the professionalization of the Sen family, see Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists."

event plausible. The first explicit reference to Oribe in regard to tea activities is documented by entries in the records of Sakai tea man Imai Sōkyū.²⁴ Sōkyū records Oribe's presence at a major tea gathering hosted by Hideyoshi at Osaka Castle on the fifteenth day of the tenth month of 1583, as well as Oribe's continued attendance at Hideyoshi's Yamazaki and Jurakudai (Kyoto) residences.²⁵ The name "Oribe" refers to an estate near Kyoto granted to him at the time of his promotion to the junior fifth rank (lower grade) in 1585, a position that came with the title of "Lord Oribe" (*Oribe no kami*).²⁶ This promotion granted him the governance of Nishioka in Yamashiro province (Kyoto prefecture) for an annual income of 35,000 *koku*.²⁷

Oribe's relationship with Rikyū seems to have been a positive one, as evidenced both by the Yodo River episode which opens this chapter and a number of surviving letters sent from Rikyū to Oribe. In one example, Rikyū describes a bamboo flower vase he made for Oribe while Oribe was fighting on Hideyoshi's behalf around Odawara.²⁸ That vase was not the only tea object that Rikyū handcrafted for Oribe. Around the time of the Yodo River sendoff, Rikyū also

²⁴ Yoshiaki Yabe. *Furuta Oribe: Momoyama bunka o enshū suru* [Furuta Oribe: Navigating Momoyama Culture]. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten, 1995, 16. These include *Excerpts from the Tea Diary of Imai Sōkyū* (*Imai Sōkyū chanoyu nikki kakinuki*) and portions of the *Tennojiya Record of Tea Gatherings* (*Tennojiya kaiki*) written by Tsuda Sōgyū. The *Tennojiya Tea Record* was compiled by three generations of the Tsuda mercantile house of Sakai city. Its records span the years 1548 until 1590. Tennojiya was the family's shop name. The text includes entries from Tsuda Sōtatsu (1504-1566) and Tsuda Sōgyū (d. 1591). The mention of Oribe appears in an account dated to the fifteenth day of the tenth month of 1583. Guests included Hideyoshi's four tea masters (Tsuda Sōgyū, Imai Sōkyū, Yamanoue Sōji, and Sen Rikyū), and three other warriors in addition to Oribe. See also "Tennojiya," [Japan Knowledge Lib](http://www.jkn21.com) database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 2 January 2014.

²⁵ Murai, "Furuta Oribe," 29-30. Oribe's presence at Yamazaki is mentioned in a letter written by Rikyū to Yabunouchi Kenchū (Jōchi, 1536-1627), the first generation tea master of the Yabunouchi school of tea. Dated the fourteenth day of the twelfth month of 1582, it mentions Oribe by the abbreviated appellation of "Kosa Rikyū thanks Kenchū for a gift of tea and expresses his intention to enjoy it with Oribe. The name "Kosa" used in the letter is drawn from the Chinese readings of the first character of his family and given names, Furuta Sasuke. He would not receive the title of Oribe until 1585.

²⁶ Oribe's use of the given name "Shigenari" also dates to this time. Previously he was known by Furuta Kageyasu. Kumakura 1989, 138.

²⁷ Nakano-Holmes, "Furuta Oribe," 22. Rule of Nishioka had been previously granted to Oribe's biological father (Kuwahara) Shigeyasu, who had himself abandoned the Furuta name following his own adoption in to the Kuwahara family. Oribe had been adopted in his youth by his uncle, entering a separate branch of the Furuta family.

²⁸ This is the so-called "*Musashi abumi no fumi*." Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 138.

gifted a tea scoop of his own manufacture to Oribe, providing it with the evocative name “Tears,” a name which may have alluded to the closeness of their relationship. A second teascoop made by Rikyū was also given to Sansai at this time.

But it was not until after the death of Rikyū that Oribe emerged into the public eye as a leading shaper of *chanoyu* tastes in his own right. By the early 1590s, Hideyoshi had dubbed Oribe as “the abbot of tea,” effectively making him the leading tea master in the realm.²⁹ During this period he took on many disciples from the warrior classes, including the warlord and later tea master Kobori Enshū.³⁰ In a record dated to early 1599, the Kyushu-area trader and tea practitioner Kamiya Sōtan attended a tea gathering held at Oribe’s residence. Sōtan’s account of the gathering describes the teaware selected by Oribe as “warped” Seto ware. Furukawa Hideaki notes that Sōtan was “amazed by Oribe’s deliberate departure from the established practice of using Chinese or Korean teabowls” and substituting bowls of domestic manufacture in their place. This episode suggests that less than a decade after Rikyū’s demise, Oribe was confidently asserting his own tastes at the tea gatherings he hosted. Although he emulated Rikyū’s own preferences for domestically produced teabowls, the misshapen Seto ware he showcased was nevertheless a significant departure from the Raku bowls favored by the long-dead Rikyū.³¹

Such records of Oribe’s preference for “warped” bowls has come to function as a key aspect of his later reputation as an iconoclast based on the style of pottery he selected. In fact, the

²⁹ Ikeda, *Rekkō kanwa*, dai 48, 1-5 (see also *Dai Nihon shiryō*, vol. 12, no. 21, 99). The *Rekkō kanwa* is an historical essay attributed to Ikeda Mitumasa (1609-1682). In the passage referenced, Sansai asked Rikyū who should succeed him, and Rikyū, deferring his son Dōan on account of his low social status, named Oribe. Enshū in turn was Oribe’s disciple and one of his successors.

³⁰ Enshū’s life will be treated in depth in Chapter Three.

³¹ Furukawa, “The Tea Master Oribe,” 99-101. As Furukawa notes, the first references to “Oribe ware” (*Oribeyaki*) occur in the *Chaki bengyoku shū* [Collection of Studies on Tea Vessels], a work published more than fifty years after Oribe’s death in 1615. Despite their tenuous links to the man himself, Oribe ware items were quickly marketed as “in the tastes of Oribe” (*Oribe-gonomi*), a mute testament to the evocative power of Oribe’s name as a marker of taste, even posthumously.

style of pottery later credited to him and termed “Oribe-ware” postdates his lifetime and he had no hand in its design or manufacture. That is not to say that his tastes were not individual and striking, but rather to counteract the later, incorrect conflation of Oribe himself with the pottery style which bears his name. Other factors may account for Oribe’s adoption of domestic teawares, such as the fact that domestically produced wares were considerably less expensive than imported Chinese or Korean ones. Living on a relatively modest stipend, even a warlord such as Oribe may have found the acquisition of imported bowls beyond his financial means.³²

Another account of a tea gathering hosted by Oribe in 1599 is described in both *Accounts of Various Lords* and the *Matsuya Tea Records*. Held outdoors at Chikurinbo temple in Yoshino, a site renowned for its cherry blossoms during the flower-viewing season, Oribe hosted four guests: the tea diarist Matsuya Hisayoshi, Kobori Enshū, Kanamori Arishige (1558-1615) of Hida Takayama (Gifu prefecture), and Ishikawa Sadakiyo (d. 1626), lord of Ogaki Castle (Okayama). With the exception of the merchant Hisayoshi, the group was comprised of fellow warlords. According to Hisayoshi’s account, one of the items displayed by Oribe was a plaque bearing the legend “the departed soul of Rikyū” (“*Rikyū bōkon*”), one of the first overt references to Rikyū to appear in records of Oribe’s gatherings. As Hideyoshi’s death had occurred the previous year, this was the first memorial service for Rikyū that could safely be held without fear of any retaliation.³³ Oribe’s display of this plaque boldly reaffirmed his personal connection to Rikyū, whose surviving family members were exiled from Kyoto in the years immediately following Rikyū’s death. The decision to wait until Hideyoshi’s death to make what in essence

³² The tea scholar Takeichi Jun’ichi observes that Oribe’s tea diaries indicate that he held virtually not gatherings including valuable or noted Chinese vessels (*karamono*) during most of his career. Jun’ichi Takeuchi. “Furuta Oribe and the Tea Ceremony,” ed. Miyeko Murase. *Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003, 23.

³³ Matsuya Hisayoshi (d. 1633). “*Matsuya kaiki*” [Matsuya Tea Record]. In *Chadō kōten zenshū*, Vol. 9, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankōsha: 1967, 196. See also Murai, “Furuta Oribe,” 24-25.

was a political statement, however, suggests that Oribe was reluctant to challenge his patron in such a way that would endanger his own flourishing political career.

Nevertheless, in following years, Oribe continued to pay homage to Rikyū through the display of various artifacts at gatherings he hosted. The *Matsuya Tea Record* records that on the ninth day of the eleventh month in 1601, Oribe hosted a tea gathering at Fushimi at which he displayed in the alcove a letter from Rikyū that had been cut and remounted as a hanging scroll, a practice which Oribe is often credited with initiating.³⁴ This piece was most likely the “*Rikyū buni*” displayed again several decades later, in 1646, by Oribe’s student, the warlord tea master Kobori Enshū (one of the guests also present at the earlier gathering in 1599). The display of a letter from Rikyū in the place more usually occupied by a calligraphic work done by Zen priests suggests that Oribe (and by extension, his disciple Enshū) considered Rikyū’s legacy significant and instructive. Additionally, the possession of the letter and its display as a relic of Rikyū imparted a sense of history and indicated participation in a lineage of tea knowledge which augmented Oribe’s reputation.

Oribe’s textual production also emphasized Rikyū, making multiple references in the *One Hundred Precepts of Oribe* (*Oribe hyakkajō*), one of the few primary sources which may be reliably linked to Oribe’s own thoughts on tea. A manuscript in handscroll form of the *One Hundred Precepts* bearing Oribe’s personal cipher is preserved by Kyoto’s Kōshōji temple, which is also the site of Oribe’s grave.³⁵ The text to the *Precepts* opens and closes with overt references to Rikyū, claiming the content to be his “oral transmission”.³⁶ Frequent references to

³⁴ Matsuya Hisayoshi, *Matsuya kaiki*, 202.

³⁵ The handscroll was exhibited at New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art as a part of the “Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan” exhibit in 2003. Photographs of sections of the handscroll are included in the exhibition catalogue. Murase, *Turning Point*, 104-105.

³⁶ Reproduced in Osamu Kuno, ed. *Furuta Oribe no sekai* [The World of Furuta Oribe]. Tokyo: Seiunsha, 1989, 230-236.

Rikyū also appear in Oribe's disciple Kobori Enshū's record of his teachings, the *Keichō-era Record of Inquiries (Sōhokō Keichō otazune no sho)*.³⁷

Under Tokugawa rule, Oribe's engagement with *chanoyu* assumed additional official dimensions. He was employed by Tokugawa Ieyasu as both a diplomatic messenger (*tsukaiban*) and in the capacity of a professional tea etiquette instructor for his son Hidetada (1579-1632).³⁸

One historical record of the era, the *Guide to Things Seen and Heard during the Keichō Era (Keichō kenbunroku anshi)*, notes that Oribe's position in the tea world was cemented by this appointment as Hidetada's instructor, a development which resulted in a great demand for Oribe's services "high and low".³⁹ Oribe's ascendancy to this position made him the first warlord to be considered a true tea master, and demarcates the historical transition from merchant to daimyo tea masters.⁴⁰

Oribe's diplomatic roles were sometimes facilitated by his relationships in the tea world. In the seventh month of 1599, Ieyasu sent Oribe to negotiate a hostage exchange with Satake Yoshinobu (1570-1633), the ruler of Mitō (modern-day Ibaraki prefecture) and one of Oribe's tea students. Ieyasu's selection of Oribe for this task exploited his established master-disciple relationship with Satake, lending an additional measure of authority to Oribe's machinations on Ieyasu's behalf. In this instance at least, Oribe's efficacy as a Tokugawa functionary was predicated upon the authority he commanded through *chanoyu*.

³⁷ The *Sōhokō Keichō otazune no sho* is completely reproduced in Akimoto Zuiami's *Ryūso Furuta Oribe no Shō to sono chadō*. Akimoto, *Ryūso Furuta Oribe*, 163-211.

³⁸ Hidetada's studies under Oribe would continue for more than a decade. Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists," 51.

³⁹ "Oribe, Tenka no sōshi to naru," (from *Keichō kenbunroku anshi*). *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources], Vol. 1, ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 1994, 142-143.

⁴⁰ The tendency to mark the purported transition from merchant to daimyo tea masters with Oribe's succession to Rikyū as the leading authority in the tea world is repeated by too many historians of tea to provide a complete list, but representative scholars include Tanihata Akio and Kumakura Isao, among others. Tanihata, "Men of Tea," 137; and Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 139.

Growing public recognition for Oribe's authority on tea matters also allowed him to network extensively within the larger tea community, and his professional opinion was in demand. Oribe's letters, for example, evince a wide-ranging correspondence with tea growers (Kanbayashi Shunsho), and practitioners (including Kobori Enshū, Ueda Sōko, Tsuda Sōbon, and Oda Uraku). In a number of surviving letters, Oribe offers advice on or facilitates the exchange of tea and tea items. For example, in an letter to Tsuda Sōbon dated the fourteenth day of the fifth month,⁴¹ Oribe acknowledged his receipt of a hanging scroll, confirming that its calligraphy (a poem) was by the Song-dynasty Chinese Zen priest Chizetsu Dōchū (Chinese, Chijue Daochong, 1169-1250).⁴² In the letter, Oribe acknowledged the quality of both the poem's composition and its calligraphy, but asserted that the human figures included in the scroll are "of poor appearance and I think it would be difficult to put it out for tea."⁴³

For Oribe, whose tea activities supplemented his annual income, the ability to render aesthetic judgments with confidence was a valuable skill. To wit, a letter sent from Oribe to Matsudaira Ukyō no Taifu (also known as Ōkōchi Masatsuna) states that he has located a fine piece of calligraphy suitable for display in the decorative alcove of the tearoom. Oribe invites Matsudaira to come and view it in consideration of purchase, including his desired price of ten gold coins in the missive.⁴⁴ An account in *Stories from a Tearoom Window* (1804) also emphasizes Oribe's occasional financial straits, noting that on one occasion he sold off a

⁴¹ The year is elided, but Toshiko Ito and other scholars believe it to have been written during the period 1596-1600 on the basis of the materials used and writing style. Ito, *Furuta Oribe no shojō*, 27

⁴² Sōbon was one of the compilers of the Tennōjiya tea diary.

⁴³ Ito, *Furuta Oribe no shojō*, 6-27. Sōbon was probably a son of Tennōjiya Tsuda Sōgyū, the Sakai merchant and tea master. An image of this letter also appears in *Turning Point: Oribe and the Arts of Sixteenth-Century Japan*. Murase, *Turning Point*, 106.

⁴⁴ Murase, *Turning Point*, 107.

valuable Chinese tea caddy to pay a debt to the warlord Ishida Mitsunari. A tea-leaf jar is said to have also made up a portion of the repayment.⁴⁵

Oribe's career would be cut short in 1615 when he was accused of communicating with the Toyotomi faction during the siege of Osaka castle – an infraction for which his Tokugawa patrons ordered him to commit suicide in 1615.⁴⁶ As this chapter will presently discuss, Oribe's fall from Tokugawa favor and the nature of his untimely end resulted in spurious critiques of his legacy in tea texts produced long after his death.

Hosokawa Sansai (1563-1646)

Sansai was the eldest son of Hosokawa Fujitaka (tea name Yūsai, 1534-1610), and unlike Oribe, he was born into a family of high pedigree. The Hosokawa were among the three warrior houses that served the Ashikaga as deputy shogun (*kanrei*) during the Muromachi period (1333-1573). Yūsai served the twelfth Ashikaga shogun, Yoshiharu (1511-1550), and following Yoshiharu's death, allied himself with Oda Nobunaga. As the son of Yūsai, a man who was not only a respected battlefield veteran but also an accomplished poet and tea practitioner, Sansai was introduced to the study of poetry and *chanoyu* from an early age. Sansai's political career began as an inner castle guard at Nagaoka Castle.⁴⁷

In 1580, Nobunaga arranged Sansai's marriage to Akechi Tama, later known as Hosokawa Gracia (1563-1600). Gracia was the Christian daughter of Akechi Mitsuhide, ruler of Tamba, a province near the capital of Kyoto adjacent to Tango, the domain later awarded to the

⁴⁵ Chikamatsu, *Chaso kanwa*, 168-169.

⁴⁶ Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 139.

⁴⁷ Nobunaga was reportedly so pleased with Sansai's service that it was the leader who gave Sansai his adult given name of "Tadaoki", drawing the "Tada" from the name of Nobunaga's eldest son, Nobutada as a means of recognition and affiliation.

Hosokawa by Hideyoshi in 1589.⁴⁸ The marriage proved something of a liability for Sansai, as in 1582 Gracia's father Mitsuhide betrayed Nobunaga, mounting an attack at Kyoto's Honnōji temple in which Nobunaga and his eldest son Nobutada were forced to commit suicide. Following this incident, Mitsuhide appealed to his son-in-law Sansai for aid and was refused. Mitsuhide was subsequently defeated by a force led by Hideyoshi that included Oribe among its ranks. Like Oribe, after Nobunaga's death both Yūsai and Sansai entered the service of Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who awarded all rights to the 117,000-*koku* Tango domain mutually to father and son.⁴⁹

Following Hideyoshi's death in 1598, the Hosokawa threw their lots in with Tokugawa Ieyasu, eventually fighting on the Tokugawa side of the Sekigahara Battle in 1600. Subsequently, Sansai was granted rule over Buzen province (parts of modern Fukuoka and Ōita prefectures) in Kyushu, establishing his headquarters first at Nakatsu and later at Kokura Castle, completed in 1603.⁵⁰ He also was awarded a portion of Bungo province (Ōita prefecture) for a combined total annual income of about 359,000 *koku*.⁵¹ In the years that followed the establishment of Tokugawa rule, the Hosokawa continued to support shogunal interests, participating in the Osaka campaigns of 1614-15 which solidified the Tokugawa hegemony. In 1632, the Hosokawa were moved to the large domain of Higo (Kumamoto prefecture). Over a period of just thirty years, the Hosokawa received a series of successively more lucrative

⁴⁸ "Hosokawa Gurasha (Gracia)" [Japan Knowledge Lib](http://www.jkn21.com) database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 20 April 2011.

⁴⁹ Mary Elizabeth Berry. *Hideyoshi*, Harvard East Asian series. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982, 123. Tango is now a portion of modern Kyoto prefecture. Under Hideyoshi, the Hosokawa ruled Tango province from the port city of Maizuru on the western coast of Japan

⁵⁰ Toshio Toda. *Sengoku Hosokawa ichizoku: Hosokawa Tadaoki to Nagaoka Yōgorō Okiaki*. [The Warring States Hosokawa family: Hosokawa Tadaoki and Yōgorō Okiaki of Nagaoka]. Tokyo: Shin Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1982, 169-170.

⁵¹ "Kaidai" *Hosokawa cha no sho*. In *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 10, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1967, 127. The impressive Hosokawa income is in stark contrast to Oribe's modest 35,000-*koku* income, one which Oribe passed on to his eldest son after Hideyoshi's death in 1598.

appointments, advanced to the rule of successive domains which more than quadrupled their annual income from the original 117,000-*koku* territory they held in Tango to the 540,000-*koku* province of Higo, the region the clan would rule until the time of the Meiji Restoration (1868). The Hosokawa's continued accretion of political power and advancement to the rule of increasingly larger domains placed the Hosokawa within the upper echelons of early modern warlord families.

The earliest reference to Sansai at a tea gathering appears in the Sakai merchant Tsuda Sōgyū's *Tennōjiya Record of Tea Gatherings*. In an entry dated to 1580, Sōgyū reports his attendance at a large gathering at Miyazu hosted by the eighteen-year old Sansai, at which the diarist's fellow guests included Hosokawa Yūsai (Sansai's father), Akechi Mitsuhide and his son (Sansai's father-in-law and brother-in-law, respectively), and the tea master Yamanoue Sōji. A meal was served and then poetry was composed, though the poems were not preserved in the diary.⁵² Mentions of Sansai continue to appear in numerous merchant tea diaries through the first four decades of the seventeenth century. Many of these accounts highlight Sansai's close relationship to Rikyū, often utilizing material objects to stress a personal connection.

Stories linking Sansai and Rikyū through the medium of material culture abound. One such narrative centers upon a bamboo tea scoop named "Bent" (*Yugami*) gifted to Sansai from Rikyū.⁵³ Records accompanying the teascoop in the current Hosokawa family collection state that it was one of a pair carved by Rikyū and presented to Sansai in 1591. These details appear in a manuscript written by Sansai documenting the teascoop's origins. Sansai also inscribed the accompanying bamboo storage tube with the words "creation of Rikyū's" (*Kyū no saku*). Sansai

⁵² Nakamura, "Furuta Oribe and En'an," 9.

⁵³ This is thought to be one of a pair of teascoops fashioned by Rikyū at the time of his house arrest in Sakai. As detailed earlier, the other teascoop would be the one named "Tears" (*Namida*) presented by Rikyū to Oribe.

recognized that the cultural capital embodied in this item made it useful in the politics of gift exchange. Sansai presented the “Bent” teascoop to fellow tea practitioner Hirano Nagayasu (1558-1628), a renowned warrior who had distinguished himself at Sekigahara.⁵⁴ An undated letter from Sansai to Nagayasu accompanied the teascoop stating that it was being gifted to Nagayasu in accordance with a promise Sansai had made to send him one in thanks for his “strenuous efforts” describing the enclosed item as unparalleled. Writing that “among all teascoops, this is the finest,” Sansai reveals to Nagayasu that his sorrow at having to part with it was such that tears were shed.⁵⁵ Three years after Sansai’s death, Matsuya Hisashige wrote about his attendance at a 1649 tea gathering hosted by the Hirano clan at which the “Bent” teascoop was featured, so the recipients were also aware of this item’s value. Two generations later, the teascoop and the accompanying documents were returned to Sansai’s descendants by Nagayasu’s grandson, and both items remain in the Hosokawa family collection to the present day.⁵⁶ This chain of events illustrates the manner in which tea items associated with famous personage such as Rikyū acted as a form of cultural currency in early modern tea praxis. While Sansai’s selection of it as a gift suggests its value, it also shows that Sansai himself was not inextricably tied to Rikyū, since he was ultimately willing to part with it.

Another physical memorial to Sansai’s relationship with Rikyū is preserved at Kōtōin, a Hosokawa family temple Sansai built at Kyoto’s Daitokuji temple complex. An 1804 account by

⁵⁴ “Hirano Nagayasu.” Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 10 April 2015.

⁵⁵ *Hosokawake no shihō: shugyoku no Eisei Bunko Korekushon* [The Lineage of Culture: The Hosokawa Family Eisei Bunko Collection], edited by the Tokyo National Museum, Kyoto National Museum and Kyūshū National Museum. Tokyo: NHK Promotions, 2010, 157; 375. Nagayasu’s name appears sporadically in Sansai’s correspondence with his third son Tadatoshi (1586-1641), Sansai’s successor as the second generation Hosokawa family member to rule from Kokura castle in Fukuoka, Kyushu. See “Hosokawa Tadatoshi.” Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 10 April 2015.

⁵⁶ Taka Akanuma, “Sen Rikyū’s Tea Utensils.” *Chanoyu Quarterly* No. 62 (1990): 30. Matsuya Hisashige also reports the appearance of “Yugami” at another tea gathering held on the eighth day of the eleventh month of 1650. Matsuya Hisashige (d. 1652). “Matsuya kaiki” [Matsuya Record of Tea Gatherings], in *Chadō koten zenshū*, ed. Sōshitsu Sen, Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1967, 451-452.

writer Chikamatsu Shigenori claims that a stone lantern at Kōtoin (one that acts as the grave marker for Sansai and his wife, Gracia) was a gift from Rikyū to Sansai. Published in 1804, Chikamatsu's account claims that lantern was among Sansai's most cherished possessions, so much so that he travelled with it during his lifetime, having a retainer set it up at each point along his trip to greet him as he entered the gate.⁵⁷ If the tale is true, material culture such as the stone lantern provides compelling evidence of the manner in which Sansai used objects to stress his connection to Rikyū.⁵⁸ In the same account as above, it is also recorded that among the tea implements Sansai received from Rikyū was the so-called "Amida Hall" (Amida-dō) tea kettle.

Hosokawa Sansai, having once come across two Amida-do kettles, one with a wide mouth, the other small, asked Rikyū which was the true Amida-do shape and was told that the one with the wide mouth was the true shape. Sansai then asked him if perhaps the wide mouth was not too wide overall, and did not the small mouth make for a better appearance? Rikyū, however, reiterated that, no, the small mouth was not acceptable, yet he also added that making the wide mouth a little smaller might indeed improve the kettle, for that was the shape of his own "Amida-dō" ... Henceforth, all inquiries have faithfully held to Rikyū's preference in kettles.⁵⁹

This account from the *Chanoyu kōjidan*, an early modern collection of anecdotes about famous tea figures, depicts Sansai as Rikyū's subordinate insofar as the warrior readily accedes to Rikyū's judgments concerning proper shapes for the mouths of tea kettles. The assertion of Rikyū's authority in this text is unsurprising when one considers that the term "Amida-dō" was first applied to a tea kettle commissioned by Rikyū from a kettle maker by the name of Yojirō. Since it was Rikyū's own precedent which first established the hallmarks of the "Amida-dō"

⁵⁷ Chikamatsu, *Chaso kanwa*, 133-135.

⁵⁸ Yoko Woodson, et al, eds. *Lords of the Samurai : The Legacy of a Daimyo Family*. San Francisco: Asian Art Museum-Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture, 2009, 160-161; 186-187.

⁵⁹ Shigenori Chikamatsu. "Excerpts from the *Chanoyu kōjidan*." *Chanoyu Quarterly* 29 (1981): 53.

style of a kettle, this anecdote suggests less about Rikyū's knowledge of tea objects than it does about the rationale for his authority on matters pertaining to tea and its material culture.⁶⁰

In addition to a rich legacy of material culture in the form of tea utensils retained in his personal collection, the materials available on Sansai also include his personal correspondence on tea topics with Rikyū, Matsui Yasuyuki, his son Tadatoshi, and others. The *Hosokawa Book of Tea* (*Hosokawa cha no sho*), a record of *chanoyu* teachings attributed to Sansai was compiled by the Hosokawa clan retainer Ichio Iori (1599-1689) late during Sansai's lifetime and will be discussed later in this chapter.⁶¹ Sansai died in retirement in 1646.

Authenticating Rikyū

As the previous chapter outlined, if warlord tea was indeed different in kind from the "rustic tea" associated with Rikyū and other merchant tea masters (as claimed by much of the current historiography), the efforts of warlord tea masters to link themselves to his legacy require further explanation. As demonstrated in the preceding passages, Sansai and Oribe both stressed their relationship to Rikyū through the display of objects associated with him and through references to him in their tea writings. As evidenced by Matsuya Hisashige's records and those of others, such attempts by Sansai and Oribe to associate their tea practice with Rikyū enhanced each warlord's authority as a tea master, but in both cases it would be inaccurate to interpret

⁶⁰Although the *Chanoyu kōjidan* was published in 1804, the text purports to have been compiled in 1739. This account is reproduced in *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources]. Kumakura, *Shiryō ni yoru*, Vol. 1, 32. See also "Amida-dō." *Kōjien* 5th edition, ed. Shinmura Izuru. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1998, 79.

⁶¹The text bears a colophon dating it to 1641, but it was published in 1668, well after Sansai's death. Thus the level of direct input Sansai himself put into the text is questionable, but the existence of this instructional record is nonetheless evidence of the Sansai's status in the tea world, since his association with the text lent it credibility. "Kaidai" (*Iori 1668, 129-130*). "Ichio Iori." Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 15 March 2011. Iori was a *kobushin* retainer engaged in construction and building work, a position which commanded an annual salary of less than 3000 *koku*. A skilled woodworker, Iori is also known for the creation of a number of bamboo teascoops and *biwa* (lute) musical instruments

these gestures as signaling deference to Rikyū on all matters of tea. Indeed, each of the tea gatherings featuring a Rikyū artifact detailed above also incorporated elements determined solely by Sansai or Oribe, expressing their own individual tastes. The inclusion of an item referencing Rikyū was simply one element of an orchestrated assemblage of objects, guests, and seasonal themes.

By acknowledging their connections to Rikyū through the display of artifacts and textual references, both Sansai and Oribe staked a claim to positions within the larger tea lineage and set themselves up as “Rikyū authorities.” Accordingly, both men acted as consultants concerning the authenticity of tea items attributed to or associated with Rikyū (such as bamboo tea scoops, flower vases, and even written documents). Sansai’s correspondence with his son Tadatoshi recounts several examples of the validation or rejection of such items; and Oribe was also often approached by owners of letters who wished for him to validate that the handwriting was indeed that of Rikyū.⁶²

Like Oribe, Sansai’s observation and ownership of artifacts made or handled by his former teacher marked him as someone qualified to judge the authenticity of items attributed to Rikyū. For example, a letter from Sansai to his son Tadatoshi discussed a teascoop attributed to Rikyū that was brought to Sansai for authentication. After inspection, Sansai writes to Tadatoshi it did not resemble the work of his teacher and dismisses the owner’s claims that Rikyū produced it.⁶³ Sansai also actively modeled utensils of his own manufacture after those fashioned by Rikyū. His teascoop “Imperfectly Carved” (*Kezuri-sokonai*), not only resembled Rikyū’s teascoop in

⁶² Nakano-Holmes, “Furuta Oribe,” 42; and Yabe, *Hosokawa Sansai*, 10-12.

⁶³ Akira Haruna. *Hosokawake sandai: Yūsai, Sansai, Tadatoshi* [Three Generations of Hosokawa: Yūsai, Sansai, Tadatoshi]. Tokyo: Fujiwara Shoten, 2010, 383.

form and materials, but the imperfection suggested by its name also directly evoked Rikyū's model, the "Bent" teascoop.⁶⁴

In spite of the personal authority implied by the passage of aesthetic judgments on the suitability of various media for use in tea gatherings, for both Oribe and Sansai the display and documentation of Rikyū artifacts in their possession illustrated how warlords in this early stage warlords not only strove to secure their own claims to Rikyū and his legacy, but did so as a key component of constructing their own, individual tea identities. But as the above examples suggest, Rikyū was not the sole source of their claims of expertise, nor were their appraisal activities limited to objects associated with his person. Moreover, each warlord's evolving tea practice came to incorporate utensils and approaches that superseded or challenged the limits of Rikyū's established precedents, developing along with the tenor of the times.

The problem of orthodoxy

The next section will examine the problematic nature of the concept of orthodoxy in early seventeenth-century tea praxis. By the late seventeenth century, texts relating tales of early warlord tea masters were already constructing a discursive divide between the tea praxis of Oribe and Sansai. Many accounts emphasized Oribe's purported rejection of Rikyū's training and tastes and therefore vilified the man himself. Sansai, on the other hand, was lauded as a close adherent to Rikyū's style. As the following pages will illustrate, both assertions frequently lack sufficient basis in historical facts.

The discursive pairing of Sansai and Oribe in an oppositional model often centers on the issues of creativity and innovation. Oribe is celebrated and castigated for his creativity;

⁶⁴ *Hosokawake no shihō*, 157. A 2011 exhibition at the Kyoto National Museum featured both teascops. Visually, the two are virtually indistinguishable, and the exhibition catalog's side-by-side presentation of the two seems designed to further emphasize the connection between Rikyū and Sansai.

Hosokawa Sansai is lauded for his conservatism. Historians have claimed that as an “outstanding conservative” Sansai stands “in strong contrast with Oribe.”⁶⁵ A passage in Matsuya Hisashige’s *Transmitted Writings of the Four Tea Masters (Chadō shiso densho, 1662)* stresses both Oribe’s skill and Sansai’s fidelity:

When it comes to *suki* (tea aficionados), there are bound to be differences. For this reason, the method, originality, and skill of Oribe’s tea was surpassing. Sansai’s tea did not depart one step from Rikyū’s technique and his name was thus not well-known in the world.⁶⁶

Hisashige offers a simple comparison on the basis of creativity, suggesting that innovation accounts for Oribe’s renown, while a lack thereof is responsible for Sansai’s less central position in the tea world. Hisashige’s observation that Sansai’s conservatism undermined what is clearly an extensive legacy belies the extent of his actual fame as a tea master – Sansai’s name appears frequently in tea diaries of the time (including Hisashige’s own), he wrote extensively on tea for the benefit of his grandson Mitsunao (the eldest son of Tadatoshi, 1618-1650) in his *Queries and Replies for the Tea Aficionado (Suki kikigaki)* and the Hosokawa family preserved for posterity one of the finest artifact records of early modern *chanoyu* in the world.⁶⁷

The issue of creativity – when it was sanctioned, to what extent, and by whom, lies at the heart of the discursive evaluation of Sansai and Oribe made in early modern tea texts. Narratives discussing innovation in procedures, taste in utensils, and even tearoom design and décor focus almost primarily upon two groups – the descendants of Rikyū who went on to found the “three

⁶⁵ Hayashiya et al, *Japanese Arts and the Tea Ceremony*, 65.

⁶⁶ The historian Yabe Sei’ichirō, among others, argues that this characterization of Sansai as stylistically conservative has compromised his legacy insofar as Oribe’s “iconoclasm” was more celebrated than Sansai’s conservatism. Yabe quotes Matsuya Hisashige in this passage from the *Chadō shiso densho*. The translation here is my own. Yabe, *Hosokawa Sansai*, 14. See also *Chado shiso densho [Transmitted Writings of the Four Tea Masters]*, in *Chanoyu koten sosho*, Vol.1, ed. Ginshoan Matsuyama and Isao Kumakura. Kyoto: Shinbunkaku, 1974.

⁶⁷ For more on this document, see Hosokawa Sansai. *Sukikikigaki*. Tokyo: Mainichi Shinbunsha, 1978.

houses of Sen” tea traditions and daimyo practitioners.⁶⁸ Comparatively few passages in widely disseminated procedural manuals such as *A Catalog for Tea Practitioners* (*Bunrui sōjinboku*, 1626), or didactic collections of tea anecdotes such as Yabunouchi Chikushin’s *Discussions on the Origins of Tea*, (*Genryū chawa*), 1745) describe the undertakings of merchant or townsperson practitioners, even though the intended readership of such works surely included persons from those social groups.⁶⁹

Sources dating closer to the lifetimes of Oribe and Sansai seem to celebrate, rather than denigrate, new techniques and experimental approaches to utensils, tearoom space and decoration. To wit, the late Momoyama-era merchant tea master Yamanoue Sōji praised innovation in *chanoyu* as a virtue for a practitioner.⁷⁰ Oribe’s association with innovation is not purely accidental. Hideyoshi specifically instructed Oribe to develop a style of tea more befitting the samurai, since Oribe’s life until that point had been one of constant exposure to military life, he was uniquely qualified for the task.⁷¹

Articulations of Oribe’s taste in tea objects is primarily expressed with regard to ceramic media. This association is, in part, a historical accident due to the fact that a major style of Japanese tea ware assumed his name (*Oribe-yaki*, or Oribe-ware) despite the complete absence of any direct historical link between Oribe the man and that ceramic tradition (although the adoption of Oribe’s name for this kiln does offer evidence of the cachet his name carried for the kiln which produced it in his home province of Mino in western Aichi prefecture). As the

⁶⁸ Paul Varley, “*Chanoyu*: From the Genroku Epoch to Modern Times,” in *Tea in Japan: Essays on the History of Chanoyu*, ed. Paul Varley and Isao Kumakura. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989, 165. The sons of Sen Sōtan (Rikyū’s grandson) founded the Omotosenke, Urasenke, and Mushanokōji Senke schools of tea, and these schools and their disciples tied legitimacy and artistic authority to claims of descent from Rikyū.

⁶⁹ Yabunouchi’s text asserted that the only true way of tea was defined by Sen Rikyū.

⁷⁰ Tanihata, “Men of Tea,” 50, 56.

⁷¹ Tadachika Kuwata. *Cha ni ikita hito* [Men Who Lived through Tea]. Vol. 7, in *Zusetsu chadō taikai*. Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1965, 43.

earlier account from Matsuya Hisashige's diary illustrated, the tea utensils Oribe is said to have favored were described as misshapen "oddities" (*hyōgemono*), an anecdote which seems to have been the genesis of the association of Oribe's person with asymmetrical tea ware.⁷²

Other records also stress Oribe's aesthetic predilection for imperfection and asymmetry. One such account from the *Record of Oribe's Tea Gatherings* (*Oribe chakaiki*) dates to the twenty-second day of the first month, 1601.⁷³ At a New Year's season tea gathering hosted by Oribe, he is said to have hung a Chinese Yuan-dynasty scroll in the tearoom alcove and made extensive use of Seto-ware tea bowls and unconventional square serving dishes, including one Seto teabowl that had "gone wrong in the firing."⁷⁴ The bowl is described alongside accompanying utensils in a matter-of-fact manner that does not draw undue attention to the bowl other than the use of the term "gone wrong in the firing".⁷⁵ Indeed, the selection of native Seto-ware bowls was already a departure from established conventions for using Korean or Chinese bowls, but not one without precedent, as Rikyū's own predilection for domestically-produced Raku-ware bowls has been well-documented. In one contemporary account, the merchant Kamiya Sōtan declared his astonishment at the "warped" Seto-ware teabowl presented by Oribe as host at a tea gathering which occurred on the twenty-eighth day of the second month of 1599.⁷⁶ Sōtan's surprise notwithstanding, Oribe's preference for domestic tea ware was not far removed from Rikyū's own rustic aesthetic, which "preserved a respect for *karamono* [foreign

⁷² Oribe's artistic vision has been both praised and pilloried. Modern opinions on Oribe tend to be positive – the latest pendulum swing in opinion concerning Oribe's legacy. While scholar Furukawa Hideaki writes in laudatory terms about the daimyo's "fresh expansiveness in keeping with the bold character of warrior society" and "distinctive appreciation for imperfection and asymmetry" in tea utensils, Kumakura Isao describes Oribe's tastes as possessing a "heterodox character which went against the trend of the times." Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 133; 139.

⁷³ This record, which seems to have been compiled after Oribe's death, draws together accounts of Oribe's activities drawn from a number of other contemporary tea diaries.

⁷⁴ Much in the same way that the Yabure-bukuro water jar had done. See page 72 and footnote 78 in this chapter.

⁷⁵ Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 139.

⁷⁶ "Seto chawan hyōgemono" from *Kamiya Sōtan nikki*, in *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources], Vol. 1, ed. Isao Kumakura Isao. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 1994, 127-129.

objects] and other traditional utensils while preserving *and elaborating upon* Rikyū's fascination with Japanese-made wares."⁷⁷

The value placed by early modern practitioners on objects perceived to represent Oribe's tastes suggests that the tea master's purported iconoclasm was not off-putting in the estimation of early modern tea practitioners. One example of a ceramic "oddity" associated with Oribe is the "Burst Bag" water jar, a piece rendered incapable of holding water due to a vagary of the firing process which caused deep cracks to form in at base of the jar. Handed down in the Tōdō daimyo clan of Iga province (western Mie prefecture), Oribe reportedly relished the one-of-a-kind nature of "Burst Bag" stating in a missive to Ōno Harufusa that although the piece was badly cracked, it was exceptional and should be treasured, for no other like it will ever be made.⁷⁸ The work has been called "representative of the aesthetic preferences of Oribe," advocating "free-form individualistic designs with abstract patterns and naturally-produced strong glaze effects."⁷⁹

Even the suggestion of an association with Oribe was enough to mark some pieces as desirable for seventeenth-century tea men. For example, although it is uncertain that Oribe ever owned or even handled it, a tea caddy named "Hungry Ghost's Belly" (a reference to its slightly bulging shape), was considered by latter warlord tea practitioners (and by Oribe's student Kōbori Enshū) to embody Oribe's tastes. It is said that the warlord Maeda Toshitsune (1593-1658) heard of its existence and searched all over Kyoto for it, eventually buying it from a dealer named

⁷⁷ Furukawa, "The Tea Master Oribe," 99-100. Furukawa paraphrases this account from the Kamiya Sōtan nikki [Diary of Kamiya Sōtan].

⁷⁸ Kuno, *Furuta Oribe no sekai*, 319.

⁷⁹ Nicole C. Rousmaniere, Nicole C. "Tea Ceremony Utensils and Ceramics," in *Japan's Golden Age: Momoyama*, ed. M. L. Hickman. Dallas, TX: Dallas Museum of Art, 1996. 219. Rousmaniere notes that the jar may have spent some time in Oribe's own utensil collection, but this cannot be verified with extant sources. The name "Yaburebukuro" ("burst bag") was assigned in 1955, when the piece was formally designated an Important Cultural Property by the Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs. In earlier sources, it was simply described as a "basket-shaped water jar" (*kagogata mizusashi*).

Kameya Eisen for thirty pieces of gold. The caddy subsequently passed through the hands of several prominent warlords, including the Tokugawa shoguns, the Matsui and Hotta families. It eventually returned to the Maeda family after 1772. All of these exchanges were predicated merely on the scant *suggestion* that it was a good example of Oribe's preferences in teaware.⁸⁰

In contrast to the plethora of documented and imagined articulations of Oribe's tastes, Sansai's tastes are rarely discussed. This may be attributable to his superior wealth and social status. His collection of tea utensils would have been vast in comparison to Oribe's, both on the basis of his longer lifetime and as a result of his substantial income. A survey of Sansai's surviving tea objects likewise does not reveal any clear tendency to favor certain pottery styles or makers.

The first evidence of an asserted (if not widely observed) "tea orthodoxy" dates to the closing decades of the seventeenth century when the newly professionalized Sen family schools of tea began to link legitimacy and artistic authority to claims of descent from Rikyū.⁸¹ While issue of orthodoxy (and by implication, heterodoxy) was engaged in later narrative portrayals of daimyo tea men, this does not seem to have been a concern of warlord tea practitioners such as Oribe and Sansai during the unification era.

Attacks on Oribe

Many of the characterizations which juxtaposed Oribe and Sansai as leading exemplars of warlord tea masters direct harsh criticisms toward Oribe while either praising or benignly ignoring Sansai. One of the many accusations leveled against Oribe when he was ordered to commit ritual suicide by Tokugawa Ieyasu was that he was a "defiler of the world's treasures" –

⁸⁰ Murase, *Turning Point*, 135.

⁸¹ Varley, "Chanoyu from the Genroku Epoch," 165.

an epithet which may have stemmed from Oribe's practice of cutting up hanging scrolls for remounting as new pieces (a practice for which there is material evidence, including the noted "Flowing Engō" scroll later listed as chief among the eighteenth-century daimyo Matsudaira Fūmai's treasures⁸²) or the charge that Oribe intentionally smashed good teabowls in order to repair them and use them in a repaired state.⁸³ These latter claims concerning intentional damage to unblemished tea objects lack historical evidence, and seem to originate from a much later text by the Confucian scholar-bureaucrat and leading shogunal advisor Arai Hakuseki (1657-1725). In his *Comments on Old Tales* (*Rōdan ichigonki*, first published in 1733), Hakuseki recounts the charges, and warns that those who perceive Oribe as interesting and creative on the basis of such actions have been sorely misled.⁸⁴ In contrast to such charges against Oribe, records concerning Sansai instead focus upon his careful preservation of tea utensils and his production of documents communicating their value and importance to his successors.

Posthumous criticisms of Oribe extended to his comportment at tea gatherings. In a passage appearing in the popular text *A Catalog for Tea Practitioners* (*Bunrui Sōjinboku*, 1626), Oribe was taken to task for numerous breaches of established tearoom etiquette at a 1607 gathering hosted by Oda Uraku.⁸⁵ However, while the narrative casts Oribe as an eccentric character, the account is not purely mean-spirited since Uraku's own bemused reaction to Oribe's unconventional desire to view tearoom items out of turn and in a manner obtrusive to the

⁸² Yabe, *Furuta Oribe*, 13-15.

⁸³ Furukawa, "The Tea Master Oribe," 100.

⁸⁴ "'Oribe ni tai suru hidan' from *Rōdan ichigonki*, in *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources], Vol. 1, ed. Isao Kumakur. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 1994, 145-147. This passage, which recounts a supposed prophecy of Oribe's unnatural death attributed to Matsudaira Ise no kami, is interpreted by Kumakura Isao as a judgment on Oribe – namely, that his "violent end" was the natural result of his alleged destruction of valuable tea items.

⁸⁵ Examples of unconventional behavior in this account included Oribe's examination of the condition of the tea kettle and charcoal, conducted at such close range that he clumsily almost upset the arranged utensils on display.

overall flow of the proceedings is described in a humorous tone.⁸⁶ The passage closes with an observation (attributed to Uraku) that if even famous tea practitioners can make such blunders, there is hope for less talented would-be practitioners to also master the art.⁸⁷

Tearoom architecture provided a secondary site for both the comparisons drawn between Sansai and Oribe and as an expression of each figure's tastes. Just as Rikyū himself had done, Oribe introduced his own innovations to tearoom design, and these were largely focused upon providing some spatial accommodation for guests of differing social rank. Though it does not survive to the present day, extant drawings of his "Swallow Hermitage" (*En'an*) tea hut show that the design of this small tearoom located at Oribe's residence in Kyoto featured modifications which not only deviated significantly from earlier precedents, but also offers insight into how the social nature of *chanoyu* gatherings was evolving during the early Tokugawa era. When Oribe departed for the siege of Osaka Castle, he entrusted the tea hut to the care of his brother-in-law Yabunouchi Jōchi (1536-1627), the founder of the later Yabunouchi school of *chanoyu*. The original structure was destroyed by fire in 1864.⁸⁸

The "Swallow Hermitage" was not the first tearoom Oribe designed, but as a later example it is considered to represent the full evolution of his style. It was a three and three-quarter mat tearoom, only slightly larger than Rikyū's two-mat "Waiting Hermitage" (*Tai'an*), the tearoom considered most representative of his style. Unlike the intimate dimensions of the two-mat room introduced by Rikyū, Oribe's design at the "Swallow Hermitage" acknowledged the social exigencies that practitioners embedded within the Tokugawa hierarchy must observe

⁸⁶ Kumakura notes that Uraku's own approach was widely viewed as heterodox, if not radical. See Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 142.

⁸⁷ Even though Oda Uraku was a tea master in his own right.

⁸⁸ A replica of *En'an* was constructed in 1867 and remains under the administration of the Yabunouchi school of tea to the present day in southern Kyoto. "Yabunouchi Jōchi." Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 27 April 2015.

by creating an adjoining room which could be opened up to the main body of the tearoom to serve as an additional, less prestigious seating area for the attendants of high-ranking guests. These “attendant seats” in the anteroom reflect Oribe’s sensitivity to the nuances of social hierarchy and gaps in relative status. At the “Swallow Hermitage” tearoom, the attendant seating denotes a one-mat area located at a remove from both the host’s position as he prepares tea, and at a right angle to the seating area for the primary guests.⁸⁹ The attendant seats functioned as a concession to the nuances of social class gradations. Later commentators claimed that Rikyū intended the tearoom to function as a realm outside of class distinctions. Therefore, attendant seats would not be required because no status distinction would, in theory, be made between the primary guest and his lower-ranking attendants. Oribe came under criticism on this point.

Oribe’s spatial innovations in tearoom design also provided fodder for his later characterization as an iconoclast, even though during his lifetime they seem to have been welcomed by fellow tea practitioners. Oribe is considered the originator of the “eight-windowed tearoom” design which introduced windows positioned opposite the host’s position, admitting light which would make the preparation of tea more easily observable during daylight tea gatherings. The primary criticism seems to have been that the natural “spotlight” cast upon the host in such a setting placed unseemly emphasis on the host’s person.⁹⁰ Criticisms of Oribe’s design compared this well-lit interest with Rikyū’s surviving “Waiting Hermitage” (*Tai’an*) tearoom, which has fewer windows, placed high and not in proximity to the host, thus shrouding the host in semi-darkness.

⁸⁹ This style is also sometimes called *En’an-keshiki* in honor of Oribe’s En’an tea house. See Nakamura, “Furuta Oribe and En’an,” 11.

⁹⁰ Furukawa, “The Tea Master Oribe,” 99-100.

Tea historians have been quick to label Oribe's modifications to the tearoom as not only a challenge to Rikyū, but to conflate it with the broader distinction made between Rikyū's heralded rustic tea and the warlord tea. Oribe's practice has been labelled a "more hedonistic form of *chanoyū*" – one which stood in opposition to "what Rikyū represented."⁹¹ But such critiques are countered by the fact that even the purportedly conservative Sansai adapted Oribe's designs for use in his own tearooms. For example, Sansai's "Pine-Facing Arbor" (*Shokōken*) tearoom at Kotōin temple in Kyoto incorporates both the use of a window opposite the host's position and Oribe's three and three-quarter mat dimensions in its design, a fact which challenges the notion of Sansai's complete adherence to Rikyū's precedents and suggests that not only did Sansai share Oribe's openness to change, but that such innovations were common during their lifetimes. Such modifications were easily accepted because there was in fact no "Rikyū orthodoxy" in place to enforce them.

In fact, the expansion that both Oribe and Sansai made from the tiny proportions of Rikyū's intimate two-mat tearooms (itself a contraction from earlier, larger precedents set by Rikyū's own predecessors) was entirely in keeping with the times. Oribe was first and foremost a warrior and thus naturally attuned to issues of social status.⁹² For example, the design of the "Swallow Hermitage" also included a pull-out sliding wall that could visually partition the first guest from lower-ranking guests in the tearoom – an innovation indicative of his sensitivity to social hierarchies.

⁹¹ Kumakura "Kan'ei Culture," 141.

⁹² Nakano-Holmes, "Furuta Oribe," 200.

Sansai's own attitudes toward Oribe do not appear to have been critical, even when he articulated his own desire to adhere to Rikyū's practices. An entry in *Tamon'in Diary* dated the twenty-second day of the third month of 1599 attributes the following quote to Sansai:

A person who was inept in the old days is better than a man who is skilled today. That is why Oribe attained fame for a creativity that is different from Rikyū's. But I do not need a thing like creativity. Rather, I endeavor to transmit Rikyū's teachings just as I received them.⁹³

This passage emphasizes Sansai's desire to preserve Rikyū's teachings, not his material tastes – a distinction which neatly severs Oribe's tastes for warped teabowls and redesigned tearooms from evaluations of his fundamental dedication to *chanoyu* and the teachings in which such material artifacts were ensconced.

Other records also suggest that Sansai admired Oribe's skill. An account in Matsuya Hisashige's *Matsuya Tea Record* reports that Sansai did not consider himself a peer to Oribe or Rikyū. In the entry, which recounts Hisashige's visit to Sansai's Yoshida residence in Kyoto on the fifth day of the tenth month of 1637, the author reports Sansai's assessment of his relationship with Oribe to be one of student and mentor.⁹⁴ Later same year, Hisashige would write that among his own contemporaries Oribe's *tea* was "praised as first in the realm," and that Sansai compared himself unfavorably to Oribe in terms of skill.⁹⁵

As the previous evidence indicates, judgements leveled against Oribe originated not from his contemporaries, but date to a much later stage in the development of early modern tea. By the

⁹³ Tanihata, "Men of Tea," 55.

⁹⁴ Yabe, *Furuta Oribe*, 51.

⁹⁵ Matsuya Hisashige, *Matsuya kaiki*, 297; 330. The evidence upon which Hisashige is basing this assertion about Sansai is unclear, but the *Matsuya Tea Record* contains records of multiple tea gatherings shared between Hisashige and Sansai in Kyoto both prior to and following this entry, so ostensibly it was a reiteration of a statement made to Hisashige by Sansai.

time that Yabunouchi Chikushin's *Discussions on the Origins of Tea* appears around 1745, Sansai's close adherence to Rikyū's teachings is figured in clearly laudatory terms:

Hosokawa Sansai was the child of Hosokawa Yūsai, and a castle guard of the third rank. He also enjoyed tea. Rikyū received a stone lantern from Sansai. After Rikyū's death, Sansai donated the stone marker for his grave. At the great Kitano tea party, Sansai erected a tearoom facing a pine grove, naming it "Pine-Facing Hermitage" (*Shōkōan*). There is another story, told by some witness, that Sansai possessed great ability, *adhering to Rikyū's style in every way. This was said to be his great virtue.*⁹⁶

The text indicates how when Sansai was criticized for simply imitating Rikyū, he remarked that such an evaluation of his practice was overly simplistic since to achieve a personal style of tea required a mastery of the foundations defined by one's teacher. Thus, by the mid-eighteenth century, displays of originality had come to be perceived as evidence of a disregard for this rule, rather than as the hallmarks of natural ability that had once been praised as more important.⁹⁷

Disciples

Both Sansai and Oribe attracted tea disciples on the basis of the public recognition of their expertise. Whereas Sansai's chief disciples tended to be his own retainers, as a tea master officially recognized in that capacity by the new Tokugawa rulers, Oribe's network of disciples was wider. An examination of Oribe's tea records indicates that despite a relatively short career of twenty years or so, Oribe claimed more than sixty disciples, more than double the number of disciples that the Nara tea diarist Kubo Chōandō (1571-1640), author of the *Record of Chōandō* (*Chōandōki*) tea diary, attributed to Rikyū.⁹⁸ Although the later daimyo tea master Kobori Enshū (1579-1647) is the best-known of Oribe's principal disciples and became the leading tea master to the Tokugawa shoguns after Oribe's death, the complete group included such distinguished

⁹⁶ Yabunouchi Chikushin. 1745. *Genryū chawa* [Discussions on the Origins of Tea], in *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 3, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1967, 465. Yabunouchi lived from 1678-1745.

⁹⁷ Yabunouchi, *Genryū chawa*, 468.

⁹⁸ Kubo, Chōandō. 1640. *Chōandōki*, ed. Asao Kōzu. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2010, 16.

figures as the renowned painter and craftsman Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558-1637), the Hida-Takayama warlord Kanamori Nagachika (also known as Gen'ei, 1524-1608), and the second Tokugawa shogun Hidetada (1579-1632).⁹⁹ Oribe's disciples were predominantly military men and fellow Tokugawa retainers, but they also included Buddhist clerics and merchants. Oribe's primary disciple Kobori Enshū ultimately authored the *Keichō-era Record of Inquiries (Sōhokō Keichō otazune no sho)*, a series of responses Oribe ostensibly made to questions concerning both taste and procedure that Enshū posed to him during the period.

Less is known about Sansai's disciples, but sources such as the *Hosokawa Book of Tea* (authored by his retainer Ichio Iori), Sansai's extensive correspondence on tea with his third son, Tadatoshi, and the five hundred and twelve sections of the *Queries and Replies for the Tea Aficionado*, the instructional manual on *chanoyu* he wrote on behalf of his grandson Mitsunao, offer some insight into Sansai's efforts to transmit his knowledge and exert influence upon other tea practitioners. It is telling that the section of *Queries and Replies* dealing with the teachings of Rikyū is immediately followed by a similar section on the teachings of Furuta Oribe.¹⁰⁰ The tea of both daimyo continued after their deaths within the tea traditions established in their names. Among the handful of non-Sen schools of tea listed in one 1804 text are the school of "Furuori" (common shorthand for Furuta Oribe), and the school of Sansai (*Hosokawa-ryū*).¹⁰¹ The survival of tea schools in the names of both men well after their deaths attests to the enduring impact these early warlord tea masters had upon tea history.

⁹⁹ Nakano-Holmes, "Furuta Oribe," 261-267.

¹⁰⁰ Hosokawa Sansai, *Sukikikigaki*, 275.

¹⁰¹ Chikamatsu, *Chaso kanwa*, 136-137. There continues to be a Sansai-school of tea operating in various locations around Japan, and an Osaka-based teacher who claims to teach Oribe-school tea, but in both cases it is difficult to say what link, if any, either organization has with the historical figures. It seems clear that Oribe's students were largely incorporated into the tradition of his disciple Kobori Enshū following his death in 1615. The Sansai tradition passed out of the Hosokawa family lineage immediately after his death. A website purporting to present the currently lineage states the twenty-first generation school head (iemoto) is someone with the family name of Moriyama. *Sansai School Way of Tea Homepage (Sansai-ryū chadō hōmupēji)*. <http://sansai.info/genealogy.html>. 23 April 2015.

Conclusion

This chapter posits that the unification phase (1573-1615) of warlord tea practice was a period in which a handful of skilled tea practitioners emerged from the group of elite warriors who served Hideyoshi and studied *chanoyu* with Sen Rikyū. Among this group, Furuta Oribe and Hosokawa Sansai emerged as two of the first tea masters from among Japan's regional warlords. Examining Oribe and Sansai's efforts to establish and transmit their individual modes of tea in tandem with each figure's various assertion of connection to Rikyū, this chapter has shown that the notion of "tea orthodoxy" cannot be accurately applied to the field of early modern tea during this early stage of development.

This chapter has also challenged the accuracy of a historical discourse which has tended to view unification-phase tea praxis from the dual vantage points of innovation and fidelity. As the contemporary sources examined here show, both constructs are limiting and ahistorical. Oribe was a product of his time, one in which no notion of "orthodox tea" had been articulated and modifications to tea utensils and spaces were not only common, but welcomed. Conversely, the tea praxis of Sansai and other former disciples of Rikyū, including Oribe, regularly included gestural allusions to Rikyū which honored their teacher even as current trends continued to mold and modify contemporary tastes, spaces, and modalities.

Despite many claims to the contrary in secondary tea historiography, the ascendancy later accorded to Rikyū by texts dating to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries exercised no influence over the actions of tea practitioners, warlord or otherwise, living during the initial development phase of warlord tea praxis prior to 1615. In these later, revisionist narratives, Sansai and Oribe are relegated to minor planets in Rikyū's orbit, evaluated primarily in terms of

how they accede to, or defy, the pull of his considerable gravity. This approach is deeply flawed, at fundamental odds with the evidence dating to the lifetimes of both men. Both Oribe and Sansai consciously leveraged their early association with Rikyū to their advantage while significantly modifying their own tea praxis beyond the set limits of their shared teacher's own precedents. Such innovations were entirely normative during this initial period of warlord dominance of *chanoyu* within Japan.

The reduction of analysis on Oribe and Sansai to a consideration of their fidelity to, or deviation from, earlier precedents is an approach that elides their larger contributions to the development of early modern *chanoyu* during the first decades of Tokugawa rule. Scholarship on Oribe is in particular need of such reform. A reading of contemporary sources proves Oribe's actions to have been entirely in keeping with the social milieu he inhabited. Indeed, it was emulated some degree by Sansai. Sansai and Oribe each made unique contributions to the field of early warlord *chanoyu*. To interpret their careers merely in terms of how well they adhere to or react against an imagined "orthodoxy" results in the failure to properly assess their respective contributions.

Standing side-by-side on the banks of the Yodo River in 1591 to pay respect to their disgraced teacher, neither Sansai or Oribe could have predicted how their engagement with *chanoyu* would continue to shape their lives and even their political prospects. In that moment, they were merely two warrior tea men, separated by the nuances of social status, but united in their commitment to the way of tea and in respect for their common teacher. While an understanding of mutual relationships to the person, and the legacy, of Rikyū is a necessary component of any evaluation of their individual careers as tea masters in their own right, that is merely one of many possible lenses through which a fuller scholarly evaluation of their place in

tea history must be viewed. As early case studies in warlord tea praxis, the cases of Oribe and Sansai present scholars with an opportunity to extend the scope of *chanoyu* historiography beyond the current default position, which focuses purely on the figure in the boat, at the expense of all of those standing on the shore.

Chapter Three: Inventing Auteurs: Warlord Tea Masters and the Cultivation of Cultural Authority, 1615-1673

Oribe is disputatious
Tōtomi has refined beauty
and a cutting blade
Sōwa is princess-like
And Sōtan squalid.¹

The Tokugawa-era comic poem above succinctly defines commonly-held notions concerning the personal characteristics of four leading figures in seventeenth-century tea praxis. Three of the four figures described by the unknown poet were warlords – Furuta Oribe (discussed in the previous chapter), Kobori Enshū (given name Masakazu, 1579-1647) and Kanamori Sōwa (given name Shigechika, 1584-1656). The fourth was Sen Sōtan, a tea master from a rival, non-warrior lineage and an important commentator on warlord tea. The poem is indicative of the extent to which elite warriors dominated the field of tea during most of the seventeenth century. Each of the tea masters referenced defined *chanoyu* on their own terms, in the process establishing the sort of personal “brand” that the poem above exploits for humorous effect.²

This chapter examines the period 1615 to 1673, a key “intermediate phase” in the historical development of warlord tea praxis characterized by the development and diffusion of

¹ The original text of the poem reads: *Ori rikutsu /kirei kippa wa / Tōtomi / ohime Sōwa ni / musashi Sōtan*

² “*Kan’ei chajin no chafū*” [The Tea Styles of Kan’ei Era Tea Persons], in *Shiryō ni yoru chanoyu no rekishi* [Tea History According to the Sources]. Vol. 2, ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Shufu no Tomosha, 1994, 220-221. Tōtomi is name of the province that Kobori Enshū first ruled, and a personal referent for his person. This translation is by Paul Varley and appears in Kumakura, “Kan’ei Culture and *Chanoyu*,” 142-143. The poet creates a series of sobriquets that succinctly sums up each figure. Furuta Oribe is maligned as “disputatious,” Sen Sōtan (the commoner grandson of Sen Rikyū) as “squalid,” and Kanamori Sōwa is given the appellation of “princess” (*hime Sōwa*). Finally, Kobori Enshū (here referenced by the alternate proper name Tōtomi), is tagged with two modifiers, “*kirei*” is a reference to Enshū’s aesthetic of “austere beauty” (*kirei-sabi*), and “*kippa*,” a word which Kumakura Isao claims suggests a sharp knife –suggesting both a clever intellect and also alluding to Enshū’s warrior identity.

individuated interpretations of tea practice independent of any need for exterior validation by direct connections to the person of Rikyū.³ Enshū, Sōwa, and a third warlord tea master examined here, Katagiri Sadamasa (hereafter referred to by his tea name Sekishū, 1605-1673), all came of age during an era when the importance of personal ties to the legitimizing figure of Rikyū had diminished after the close of the unification period of warlord tea, 1568-1615. Under the aegis of Tokugawa political power, Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū were the leading figures in a new “second generation” of warlord tea masters recognized as experts on the basis of their individual merits as *chanoyu* auteurs and social tastemakers. During this intermediate phase, warlord tea masters defined their artistic personas through invention and innovation, disseminating textual and material expressions of the individual tastes which characterized their individual claims to aesthetic authority in the field of tea praxis.

A key product of these activities during the mid-seventeenth century was the creation of *chanoyu* “salons” centered upon charismatic tea masters and populated by their various contemporaries: disciples, fellow tea practitioners, artisans, Buddhist and Shinto clergy, and members of the aristocracy. Historical accounts of this chapter’s three case studies (Enshū, Sōwa, and Sekishū) reveal how such salons operated as key hubs of social interaction in thriving interpersonal networks tied to tea. The breadth and diversity manifest in seventeenth-century warlord tea praxis and its complex social networks challenges the tendency of postwar tea historiography to present warlord tea masters as social outliers operating at the margins. Indeed, there is substantial evidence indicating that warrior tea masters such as Enshū, Sōwa, and

³ The period is bookended by two deaths – that of Furuta Oribe in 1615, and that of Katagiri Sekishū in 1673, an event which in many respects marks the beginning of period during which the Sen family schools asserted strong leadership in tea practice while warlord tea entered a period of decline in the absence of any charismatic figure to lead the field of warrior tea after Sekishū. Additionally, after the close of Sekishū’s period of service to the fourth shogun Tokugawa Ietsuna (d. 1680), the Tokugawa ceased the long practice of employing an “official” tea master for the realm, another shift which lead to a slow decline in warlord tea praxis in the closing years of the seventeenth century.

Sekishū operated at the center of a thriving seventeenth-century artistic milieu centered upon the city of Kyoto (and to a lesser extent, the political headquarters of Edo). This chapter explores the social effects of Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū's fully individualized interpretations of tea practice within the context of the early seventeenth social setting and the full spectrum of historical agents active in tea praxis.

This chapter is organized into three sections. In the first, biographical sketches of three case studies of warlord tea masters (Enshū, Sōwa, and Sekishū), will be presented along with supporting material drawn from early modern texts written by or about them that aid in elucidating the multifaceted social roles each man occupied. Relevant materials include texts directly authored by warlord tea masters for their disciples as instructional guides for the proper preparation of tea and as reflections on each figure's sense of tea praxis as a personal discipline, or even as a spiritual exercise. Since the authorship of many such accounts is difficult to verify (texts attributed to tea masters are often written retrospectively by their disciples), the reliability of such accounts must be subjected to scholarly interrogation which balances their value as conduits for commonly-accepted aspects of each figure's attitudes and tastes with the gaps which exist between first- and second-hand accounts. For this reason, wherever possible such records are supplemented by the written observations of other contemporary figures and with letters bearing the personal ciphers of leading warlord tea masters and their various correspondents.

In the second section, material on the commoner tea master Sen Sōtan and his sons will be introduced to broaden the context of seventeenth-century tea praxis beyond the warrior classes. This section identifies several class-based tensions observable in mid-seventeenth tea praxis that informed a later discursive tendency to downplay or even attack the contributions of

warlord tea masters.⁴ As warriors struggled to define the place of tea within their bureaucratic roles, non-warriors strove to make a paying profession of the art.

Finally, the conclusion will explore why, despite their divergent styles and personalities, it made sense to the author of the poem which opens this chapter to group the warlords Enshū, Sōwa, and Sekishū with the merchant tea master Sōtan. The poet's decision to pair each figure with a descriptive catchphrase reflects the degree to which all four men referenced in the poem strove to establish a personal style that distinguished their tea praxis from that of their contemporaries. Taken separately, all three warriors enunciate highly individualized interpretations of seventeenth-century tea praxis, and yet an examination of their careers also reveals significant commonalities in the strategies used to advance their individual "brands" as *chanoyu* auteurs. All three warlords leveraged the notion of personal taste (*konomi*) and exploited artistic social networks to establish distinct, albeit intersecting, warrior tea lineages; each adopted a distinct stance vis-a-vis aesthetic principles for tea, collaborated with artisans in the production of new tea wares, and participated in the various, overlapping cultural salons centered upon mid-seventeenth century *chanoyu* activities.

Kobori Enshū (1579-1647)

Kobori Enshū is perhaps the best-known of all seventeenth-century tea masters. The amount of extant scholarship available on Enshū exceeds that available for Katagiri Sekishū and Kanamori Sōwa. The proliferation of scholarly attention to Enshū may be attributed to his

⁴ The construct of "salon culture" provides a useful approach to understanding warlord tea between 1591 and 1673. The notion of the "salon" is a borrowing from eighteenth-century French literary history, but Japanese scholars have adopted it as one way to talk about social circles coalescing around artistic interests in the early Tokugawa period. Kumakura Isao, for example addresses the idea of a "*chanoyu* salon" as an identifying component of the two decades of the Kan'ei epoch, in an analysis highlighting the role of the Buddhist priest and tea aficionado Shōkadō Shōjō (1584-1639) in facilitating connections between tea practitioners. Likewise, Ōka Yoshiko has described the "cultural salons" which formed around Hōrin Jōshō (1593-1668), abbot of Rokuonji temple in Kyoto. Enshū, Sōwa, and Sekishū were all among the members of the "salons" created by both Shōkadō Shōjō and Hōrin Jōshō.

enduring reputation as the architect-designer of many surviving sites recognized as historically significant (such as the Honmaru garden at Nijō castle in Kyoto) and his role as the founder of two surviving Enshū schools of tea located in Tokyo, both of whom identify themselves as conduits for the modern transmission of Enshū's "warlord tea" or "warrior tea".⁵ Perhaps no single tea master's name is as commonly associated with warlord tea as that of Kobori Enshū. As early as the eighteenth century, commentators credited Enshū with creating a style of *chanoyu* uniquely suited to warrior practitioners.⁶

Enshū's lifelong service to the Tokugawa included a variety of administrative positions, including that of shogunal tea master. In this capacity, he offered personal instruction in tea procedures to the third shogun Iemitsu (r. 1623-1651). Although he did not hail from a high-ranking family, from an early age Enshū benefitted from advantageous social connections. Born into a household of retainers to the Asai (another warrior family), Enshū was in the service of a family related by marriage to the unifier Oda Nobunaga.⁷ The Kobori family lived in a village with the same name as their family in the province of Ōmi (modern Shiga prefecture, Nagahama city). Enshū's father, Shinsuke, served as an estate administrator for Hashiba Hidenaga

⁵ There are currently two branches of tea schools which claim Enshū as their founder (*ryūso*), and both trace their lineages to Enshū himself. The "Kobori Enshū" school of tea is located in Tokyo and currently headed by Kobori Sōen (b. 1946) the sixteenth-generation head of a school founded not by Enshū personally, but by his brother Kobori Masayuki (1583 - 1615). Masayuki died before Enshū's own career was at its height, but is said to have received instruction from his older brother, who is still heralded as the spiritual founder of the school. Conversely, the "Enshū" school is currently headed by the thirteenth-generation *iemoto* (school head) Kobori Sōjitsu and his retired, but still active father, the former grand master Kobori Sōkei. Both schools publish and disseminate materials on Enshū, but in recent years the Enshū school issued a number of publications, including selections from his written correspondence, published in two volumes as *Kobori Enshū no Shojō*, ed. Sōkei Kobori. Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan, 2002/2005. See also "Enshū-ryū chadō." <https://enshuryu.sakura.ne.jp/enshuryu/index.html>. Web. Accessed September 27, 2014; and "Kobori Enshū-ryū." <http://koborienshu-ryu.com/>. Web. Accessed September 27, 2014.

⁶ *Chanoyu no Rekishi: Sōtan, Sōwa, Enshū to sono jidai* [Tea History: Sōtan, Sōwa, Enshū and Their Times]. Kyoto: Chadō Shiryokan, 1983, 5. Whereas Toyotomi Hideyoshi is said to have ordered Furuta Oribe to reform tea procedures in a way to make them more appropriate for warriors, it Enshū (Oribe's disciple) who is considered to have achieved this goal.

⁷ Asai Nagamasa (1545-1573) was the brother-in-law of Oda Nobunaga. At birth, Enshū was known by the given name of Sakusuke in childhood and by Masakazu upon reaching the age of majority. The name Enshū, by which he is predominantly known, is an alternate name for Tōtomi, which would become his domain in 1608.

(Toyotomi Hideyoshi's half-brother), a post to which an annual stipend of 3,000 *koku* was attached. At the age of eighteen, Enshū wed the adopted daughter of the daimyo Todo Takatora (1556-1630).⁸ In 1600, his marital connection to the Todo facilitated the link to Tokugawa Ieyasu which resulted in Enshū's presence on the winning Tokugawa side at the decisive Battle of Sekigahara. In return for the Kobori family's service at Sekigahara, they received an increase of their annual family stipend to 15,400 *koku*.⁹

In 1604, Kobori Shinsuke died and Enshū took over the administration of his father's 12,000-*koku* estate in Bitchū-Matsuyama (modern Okayama prefecture). His first official appointment for the Tokugawa followed in 1606, the year that Enshū was named construction commissioner for a new palace project underway for Retired Emperor Go-Yōzei. His father had previously held a similar position and construction and architectural design were not unfamiliar to Enshū, who had previously accompanied his father on a series of official appointments. His use of the name Enshū also dates to this period, when the court awarded him the title of Lord of Tōtomi and promoted him to the lower fifth rank in 1608.¹⁰

The architectural projects Enshū undertook were performed on behalf of both the Tokugawa shogunate and the imperial court, and brought him into contact with influential figures in both circles. For example, Enshū oversaw the landscape design of the grounds surrounding Nijō castle, including the Ninomaru garden, in anticipation of an imperial visit from Emperor Go-Mizuno'o which took place on the sixth day of the ninth month of 1623.¹¹ Enshū's work on architectural projects was carried on in addition to several long-term administrative

⁸ The Todo enjoyed a comparatively generous stipend of 10,000 *koku* per annum.

⁹ Teiji Itō, "Kobori Enshū: Architectural Genius and Chanoyu Master," *Chanoyu Quarterly* 44 (1985): 10-12.

¹⁰ Itō, "Kobori Enshū," 14-18. He had previously been known as Kobori Sakusuke Masakazu.

¹¹ Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists," 75. The imperial visit to Nijō took place on the sixth day of the ninth month of 1623. Enshū assisted the second shogun Hidetada in preparing tea for the Emperor Go-mizuno'o at Nijō castle.

roles in the Tokugawa bureaucracy. After an early assignment as the keeper of Matsuyama Castle in Bitchū, Enshū assumed a series of positions as a city magistrate in Yamato, Yamashiro, Kawachi, Izumi and Settsu provinces. In 1623, he was made magistrate of Fushimi, a position he would hold for the next twenty-four years while his reputations as a tea master and architect grew. By mid-life, Enshū's skills created a high demand for his services. According to the family history *Kobori Genealogy (Kobori kafu)*, Enshū spent the seventh month of 1633 overseeing the construction of Minakuchi Castle in Ōmi, the eighth month on garden design for Retired Emperor Go-Mizuno'o and the Empress Tōfukumon'in, the ninth month on design and construction of a teahouse in Ōmi, and the tenth on the design of a freestanding tea hut in Nijō castle's Honmaru garden.¹²

Two Enshū biographers, Itō Teiji and Ōta Hiroshi, observe that this mix of bureaucratic and artistic activities seems to have suited Enshū. Ōta lauds Enshū as the consummate “technocrat,” that is, one whose technical expertise in one or more fields enhances their personal power in other socio-political spheres.¹³ Certainly, an acknowledgement of the intertwined nature of Enshū's roles as an administrator and as an artist is key to the understanding of his historical legacy. Itō notes that for Enshū the technocrat, success was predicated on the constant adjustment of his comportment to a variety of settings and types of social interactions.

To survive in the complex organization, [Enshū] had to become as shrewd as a modern-day business executive. At times, he would have had to be cunning and servile, at other times, haughty and audacious, flattering and patient with the powerful, while insistent on honor and severely authoritative with subordinates.¹⁴

¹² Hiroshi Ōta, Hiroshi. *Tekunokuratto Kobori Enshū: Ōmi ga unda sainō* [Technocrat Kobori Enshū: The Genius That Omi Produced]. Hikone, Japan: Sunraisu Shuppan, 2002, 77.

¹³ Ōta, *Ibid.*, 10-11.

¹⁴ Itō, “Kobori Enshū,” 18.

Enshū's juggling of multiple roles and responsibilities may be understood as one product of a still-solidifying Tokugawa political order. In his study of Tokugawa political structures, Conrad Totman observes that in the early decades of bakufu rule, official posts were often fluid in nature and the limits of their authority unclarified. This state of affairs often resulted in officials, like Enshū, who held multiple posts concurrently and had duties which extended beyond those posts. In comparison, the mature bakufu was characterized by reduced flexibility in the definition of official roles and duties.¹⁵ Enshū's reputation as someone skilled in a variety of fields was surely facilitated by the flexibility afforded him by the era's loose definition of official roles.

Enshū's education with regard to state bureaucracy began in tandem with his early study of tea under the guidance of Furuta Oribe from around 1595 onward. Following Oribe's death, Enshū quickly garnered a reputation for creativity in artistic circles, resulting in his appointment by Tokugawa Hidetada as tea instructor for the third shogun, Iemitsu. As an official tea expert, Enshū assumed responsibility for the planning and oversight of many of the official tea events held at Edo Castle. His duties also encompassed tasks such as flower arrangement, the selection and display of tea utensils and other preparations for important state tea gatherings, including the ones associated with the imperial visit to Nijō Castle in 1623.¹⁶

With clients and patrons on both sides of the *bakufu*-court divide, Enshū had to satisfy the expectations of two quite different cultural milieux. As a member of the warrior class and a Tokugawa magistrate, he was deeply embedded in the etiquette of samurai society and the

¹⁵ Conrad D. Totman. *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1600-1843*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967: 182-183.

¹⁶ Itō, "Kobori Enshū," 14.

formalities of warrior hierarchy in which he had passed his entire adult life as a mid-level retainer. Interactions with the imperial court required conversance with the court's own rules of engagement. And in artistic circles, Enshū the tea master wielded significant authority and was consulted with deference by men who were otherwise placed well above him in political station. The constant adjustments which his position at the juncture of vastly differing social worlds surely accounts for Ōta's apt use of the term "technocrat" to describe Enshū.

Enshū's correspondence reveals that he negotiated the shifts between these worlds adeptly, cultivating relationships across the social spectrum, many of which were connected with his emerging identity as a *chanoyu* teacher and expert.¹⁷ For example, among Enshū's many correspondents were many prominent members of Kyoto's Buddhist community. Like many warriors in the area, he pursued Zen training at Daitokuji temple as a young man and maintained relationships with Rinzai-sect priests there including Kōgetsu Sōgan (1574-1643), Takuan Sōhō (1573-1645), and Shun'oku Sōen (1529-1611).¹⁸ Shun'oku Sōen was his spiritual mentor and had also instructed Enshū's tea teacher, Oribe, and Rikyū's grandson, Sen Sōtan (1578-1658) in Zen meditation. Sōen was therefore also deeply connected to the wider *chanoyu* community. Enshū's relationship with Kōgetsu Sōgan, the founder of the Ryūkōin subtemple at Daitokuji, was also close. As the second son of the prominent Sakai-city merchant and tea master Tsuda Sōgyū (d. 1591), Sōgan already possessed deep connections within the tea world.¹⁹ The priest commissioned Enshū with the design and construction of the "Mysterious Hermitage" (*Mittan*)

¹⁷ Much of this correspondence has been preserved by the Enshū family in Tokyo. Selected letters were published in two volumes appearing in 2002 and 2005, respectively. *Kobori Enshū no shojō* [The Correspondence of Kobori Enshū], ed. Sōkei Kobori. Two volumes. Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan, 2002/2005.

¹⁸ Iguchi, Kaisen. 1979. "Genpaku Sōtan" Nakamura Masao, Hisada Sōya, and Iguchi Kaisen, eds. *Kyō no chake* [Tea Families of the Capital]. Tokyo: Kuromizu Shobō: 102.

¹⁹ Andrew L. Maske. *Potters and Patrons in Edo Period Japan: Takatori Ware and the Kuroda Domain*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011, 25.

tearoom located at Ryūkōin.²⁰ The third priest with whom Enshū enjoyed ties was Takuan Sōhō. Takuan had been named the 137th-generation head abbot of Daitokuji temple in 1609 after serving a stint at Nanshūji temple in Sakai, the site of one of Sen Rikyū's three graves. Enshū's own son received spiritual instruction from Takuan during the late 1620s.

While Enshū's connections to powerful men among Kyoto's Buddhist clerics often brought him into contact with new disciples and patrons, such relationships also sometimes tested his loyalties as a bakufu official. In the late 1620s, Sōgan, Takuan, and Emperor Go-Mizuno'ō (r. 1611-1629) became entangled in the so-called "Purple Robe Incident" of 1627-1629, a protracted power struggle that pitted Tokugawa authorities against influential members of Kyoto's Buddhist community and the imperial court. Since the Muromachi period, it had been the custom for sitting emperors to award a purple robe to Buddhist clerics in recognitions of meritorious service along with the title of either "National Teacher" or "Zen Master". As early as 1613, Tokugawa Ieyasu issued "Regulations on the Imperially-Awarded Purple Robe," instructing Kyoto's powerful Zen temples to seek bakufu permission before approaching the court seeking this honor, but the injunction (and several subsequent orders) had been largely ignored.²¹ In 1627, the Tokugawa summarily stripped one hundred and fifty priests of their purple robes, along with all attendant imperial ranks and titles. Offended, Emperor Go-Mizuno'ō protested the move, backed by a petition signed by priests including Sōgan and Takuan. Takuan's defiance was particularly vehement insofar as he had extensive connections not only within the imperial court, but also with bakufu officials, having been personally

²⁰ Arata Isozaki. *Japan-ness in Architecture*, ed. David B. Stewart and trans. Sabu Kohso. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006, 301; 304.

²¹ Duncan Williams notes that Ieyasu's goal was to assert bakufu control into the purple robe process as one means of influencing the appointment of influential abbots to powerful Rinzai Zen temples within the "Five Mountains" (*gozan*) system, while concurrently curtailing the power of the court and Kyoto's aristocrats. Duncan Williams. "The Purple Robe Incident and the Formation of Early Modern Sōtō Zen Institutions." *Journal of Japanese Religious Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (2009): 34-35.

welcomed to Edo by the third shogun Iemitsu.²² Takuan's show of resistance to the order resulted in his exile to the remote northern province of Dewa. Sōgan was spared exile under the condition that he assumed the leadership of the northern sect of Daitokuji, a condition proposed by the bakufu's prosecuting agent, Ishin Sūden (1569-1633). In 1629, the emperor was formally divested of his right to bestow purple robes and attendant honors. Incensed and mortified by the Tokugawa incursion on traditional imperial powers, the following year Go-Mizuno'o abdicated the throne in favor of his daughter, the female Emperor Meishō (r. 1630-1643).²³

These developments placed Enshū in the uncomfortable position not only of having friends on both sides of the conflict, but of having to engage with all parties in the midst of the fray insofar as his close relations with Daitokuji priests had also opened the doors of the imperial court to him, consulting with Emperor Go-Mizuno'o and the Empress Tōfukumon'in on matters related to tea. During the middle of the emperor's abdication process, shogunal prosecutor Ishin Sūden ordered Enshū to redecorate the Konchi-in complex in northeastern Kyoto. Shortly thereafter, in an attempt to placate the newly retired emperor's anger, the bakufu also commanded Enshū to construct buildings and design gardens for Shugakuin, a villa with extensive grounds intended as an imperial retreat for Go-Mizuno'o.²⁴ In a letter addressed to Takuan at the New Year in 1628 (prior to his later banishment), a deferential Enshū mentions his appreciation for the spiritual guidance Takuan was providing to his son and tacitly acknowledges the priest's upset concerning the Purple Robe scandal, writing "I am well aware of your resentment" before offering Takuan a poem on the seasonally-appropriate topic of "young

²² Matsunosuke Nishiyama. *Edo Culture: Daily Life and Diversions in Early Modern Japan, 1600-1868*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997, 35.

²³ Williams, "Purple Robe Incident," 35-36.

²⁴ Isozaki "Japan-ness in Architecture," 304.

leaves” as solace.²⁵ Enshū was a frequent correspondent with both Takuan and Sōgan during this period, an intimacy which may very well have compromised his political prospects with the Tokugawa if it had been made common knowledge.

Another incident highlights the possibility for conflict to arise between Enshū’s political and artistic identities. During Tokugawa Hidetada’s tenure as shogun Enshū was accused of the embezzlement of 10,000 *ryō* in official funds.²⁶ Characterizing the embezzlement as a misunderstood case of a budget overrun, Itō Teiji claims this incident is a sign that Enshū chose the “path of art” over his bureaucratic responsibilities.²⁷ In an anecdote that may be apocryphal, Itō contends that three influential daimyo – Ii Naotaka (1590-1659)²⁸, Sakai Tadakatsu (1587-1672)²⁹ and the tea master Hosokawa Sansai came to Enshū’s assistance, contributing funds to cover the shortfall. As a sign of his gratitude, Enshū is said to have presented his benefactors with a number of famous tea items: presenting the Ii family with a hanging scroll called “Black Tree” from the former collection of Sen Rikyū; the “Asuka River” thick-tea container to the Sakai clan, and other items to Hosokawa Sansai.³⁰ While its historical veracity cannot be decisively confirmed, this anecdote illustrates a recurring leitmotif in Enshū’s historiographical

²⁵ *Kobori Enshū no shojō*, Vol. 1, 2-4.

²⁶ As a unit of currency, one *ryō* was equivalent to a *koban*, the standard gold coin of the Tokugawa shogunate. One *koban* was 17.85 grams in weight.

²⁷ Itō, “Kobori Enshū,” 19.

²⁸ Itō suggests that Ii Naotaka, *fudai* daimyo of Hikone, may responsible for Enshū’s promotion to daimyo status, sharing an anecdote from the *Uchu no Kansu* in which Ii chides Iemitsu for allowing a low-ranking tea instructor to serve him as tea instructor. Iemitsu, taking the hint, increased Enshū’s stipend by 3,000 koku. Despite this, Enshū remained on poor terms with Ii Naotaka, taking umbrage at his intercession. Itō, “Kobori Enshū,” 27.

²⁹ Sakai Tadakatsu, also known as Sanuki-no-kami, was a member of the *rōjū*, master of Wakasa-Obama castle, and daimyo of Obama domain in Wakasa province. He was one of the two highest ranking bakufu officials in Tokugawa Japan. The Sakai were identified were a *fudai* clan and hereditary vassals of the Tokugawa. Japan. “Sakai Tadakatsu.” *Nihon Jinmei Daijiten*. Accessed via Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 10 October 2010.

³⁰ Itō, “Kobori Enshū,” 18. Itō offers no historical source for this account, and I have yet to encounter it elsewhere. However, the presence of some of the gifts mentioned in the story in the proper collections among the Ii and Sakai families would seem to support it indirectly, this is not conclusive evidence.

depiction as a tea practitioner whose artistic enthusiasm sometimes overshadowed restraint, and one whose legacy was often documented through the material exchange of *chanoyu* art objects.

As his reputation grew, Enshū became publicly recognized as an arbiter of good taste: identifying, naming, and circulating tea objects that he determined possessed artistic merit. Such activities not only bolstered his reputation but also garnered him financial gain. Dating back to at least 1608, Enshū's activities vis-a-vis tea art objects took several forms, including the extension of his personal patronage to artisans, collaboration with artists to produce works made specifically to order, the appraisal of pieces submitted for his opinion by other tea practitioners, and the management of the Tokugawa household's collection of tea objects.

The case of Enshū's interactions with the Kuroda family in Kyūshū provides a salient example of the manner in which he exercised his expertise for personal profit and to bolster his reputation. Family records of the Kuroda, warlords in Chikuzen province (near modern Fukuoka in Kyūshū), indicate that by 1615, Enshū had been named a Kuroda retainer. By the 1620s, the tea master was in regular correspondence with the warlord Kuroda Tadayuki (1602-1654), advising him on poetic names for tea caddies and other items of locally-produced Takatori teaware.³¹ As a domain-supported kiln, Takatori made ceramics specifically for the use of the lords of Kuroda, with profit from the sale of excess wares remitted directly to domain coffers. Not only did Enshū benefit materially from his association with the Kuroda, but the Takatori kilns sponsored by the Kuroda domain also flourished financially due to Enshū's efforts to advance Takatori wares in and around pottery markets in Kyoto.

³¹ Maske, *Potters and Patrons*, 32.

Enshū's interests in promoting certain styles of teaware were not limited to the Takatori kiln. The Takatori kiln was one of several kilns which received and benefitted from Enshū's official stamp of approval, the so-called "seven kilns of Enshū." The term references seven pottery kilns in locations ranging from the Kansai region around Kyoto and Osaka to Kyūshū from which Enshū selected specific pieces to promote as meritorious. Recognition of this kind accrued tangible benefits to the artisans associated with these kilns – inclusion on the list could not only cement a kiln's reputation, but also allowed potters to command higher prices for their products at market.³² In a 1646 letter sent to Kuroda Tadayuki concerning a batch of Takatori tea caddies sent to him for evaluation, Enshū assured the daimyo that he had assessed the products of the kiln's recent firing by quality, writing:

I have divided all of the tea caddies fired at your provincial kiln into high, middle, and low grades and send them back to you marked as such. The [best] tea caddy fired this time is even finer than the Somekawa and Akinoyo caddies you currently possess.³³

The Kuroda typically retained the objects identified as best by Enshū for their own use or as potential gifts, placing the remainder for sale at locations around Japan. While Enshū was not the first warlord tea master to collaborate with kilns to produce tea wares, no previous tea master

³² *Chanoyu No Rekishi: Sōtan, Sōwa, Enshū to Sono Jidai*, 34. The seven pottery styles recognized by Enshū included five near the Kansai region where he resided: Shitoro in Tōtomi where he became ruler from 1608, Zeze in his former home of Ōmi, Asahi from Uji (south of Kyoto), Akahada from Yamato province (modern Nara), and Kosobe from Settsu (between modern Osaka and Hyogo prefecture). Two additional kilns were located near each other in Kyūshū: Agano (in Buzen) and Takatori (in Chikuzen), both in the area of modern Fukuoka city. In the case of two of the seven "Enshū kilns", the tea master's involvement has been attributed with a key role in establishing that kiln as a source for tea wares, though some of these associations appear to be apocryphal. For example, while the Kosobe kiln in the province of Settsu seems to have been virtually unknown until recognized by Enshū in 1625, art historian Helen Gorham's claim that the Zeze kiln in Enshū's former home province of Ōmi was founded in 1630 in response to advice issued by Enshū to the ruling Ishikawa family is countered by other accounts which claim that Enshū, along with fellow tea masters Kōetsu Hon'nami and Shōkadō, were patronizing the Zeze kiln long before the Ishikawa took over in 1634.

³³ Maske, *Potters and Patrons*, 40. This (excerpted) translation is by the art historian Andrew Maske. The *Somekawa* (Dyed River) tea caddy had received its name from Enshū nearly twenty years prior to this exchange, closer to the beginning of Enshū's long relationship with the Kuroda.

matched his level of activity in this regard.³⁴ In addition to his consultations with the Kuroda, Enshū also collaborated with potters at established kilns, such as Okumura Tosaku at the Asahi kiln in Uji, to produce wares to order.³⁵

Among Enshū's various appraisal activities, his creation of a list of newly identified named and publicly recognized tea objects, the so-called "later celebrated objects," had the most enduring impact on the material culture of *chanoyu*.³⁶ Establishing the category of "later celebrated objects" in a text entitled *Ranking of Tea Caddies (Chaire shidai)*, Enshū expanded contemporary notions of what constituted "famous tea objects" through the inclusion of this new group of domestically-produced tea caddies that he considered worth of renown.³⁷ While inclusion in the text alone was sufficient to mark a given tea caddy as worthy in Enshū's estimation, the text also undertakes a more overt valuation of pieces by ranking objects in descending order of perceived merit. By the time Enshū produced the *Ranking*, many of the included caddies were already in the possession of others (and in some cases, in his own collection), but the text also served another useful function during a time when many people were entering the field of *chanoyu* praxis for the first time – it provided a new cache of "verified" tea objects that new practitioners could seek to purchase or acquire as gifts.

³⁴ Such activities found precedent not only in Rikyū's rumored collaboration with Chōjiro of the Raku kiln but also in the daimyo Hosokawa Sansai's role in the founding of the Agano kiln in Kyūshū (also included in Enshū's list of seven) in 1602.

³⁵ Hazel H. Gorham. *Japanese and Oriental Ceramics*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1971, 32-33.

³⁶ These are known as the *chukō meibutsu* in Japanese.. Other sub-categories of *meibutsu* include the *Ryūei-gyobutsu* owned by the Tokugawa shogunal family; the *Yawata-meibutsu* owned by clerical tea practitioner Shōkadō Shōjō, the *Senke-meibutsu* owned by the families descended from Sen Rikyu, and the later, 18th-century *Unshū-meibutsu* catalog assembled by the daimyo Matsudaira Fumai. *A Chanoyu Vocabulary: Practical Terms for the Way of Tea*. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 2007, 30, 139

³⁷ Kobori, Enshū. "Chaire shidai" [A Ranking of Tea Caddies]. In *Kobori Enshū: Bi no deai-ten. Daimyō chajin Enshū 400 nen*. [Kobori Enshū: An Encounter with Beauty, Four Hundred Years of the Daimyo Tea Master Enshū], ed. Asahi Newspaper Cultural Division. Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 2007, 169-171. Although the surviving text is limited to tea caddies, additional headings on the document for Chinese Tenmoku teabowls suggest that either the record is incomplete and the original contained additional sections, or that the headings indicated that Enshū intended to include additional sections but the document remained unfinished.

These activities in *chanoyu* tastemaking provided Enshū with a platform to articulate the aesthetic value of *kirei-sabi*, or “austere beauty” – a term which has come to be associated specifically with his tea practice. The “austere beauty” aesthetic has been described by as an “amalgam of tastes from at least three ages: the ancient courtier age, the Higashiyama epoch [of the 1400s], and the Muromachi epoch [of the 1500s]” and included a vision of tea praxis that was more expansive and luxurious than that associated with the “rustic tea” of Rikyū. Popularized by Enshū, the use of the word “beauty” (*kirei*) became widespread in *chanoyu* circles during Enshū’s own lifetime.³⁸ For example, the term appears in a passage of the *Matsuya Tea Record* (*Matsuya kaiki*) in which Matsuya Gensaburō describes Enshū’s preparation of tea as “beautiful.”³⁹ For Enshū, *austere beauty* was a product of his long engagement with courtier culture and connections to imperial personages including Emperor Go-Mizuno’o, his consort Tōfukumon’in, and Prince Hachijō Toshihito (1579-1629), for whom Enshū designed a teahouse and other structures at the Katsura Detached Palace starting in 1618.

Further connections can be made between Enshū’s tastes and court culture, and the lexicon of classical *waka* poetry provides another such link. Enshū was an eager collector of calligraphic writings executed by the Heian courtier-poet Fujiwara Teika (1162-1241). The avidity with which Enshū collected artifacts tied to Fujiwara Teika is compelling evidence of his

³⁸ For more on “austere beauty,” see Sōkei Kobori. 2005. *Kirei-sabi no cha: Kobori Enshū no bi to kokoro*. [Tea of Austere Beauty: Kobori Enshū’s Aesthetics and Spirit]. Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2005, 12-13. This text is authored by Enshū’s 15th generation descendant and current iemoto of the still-active Enshū school of tea. Sōkei states quite plainly in the preface to this text that the origins of the term are unclear and leaves it at that. The origins of the term are unclear. Kumakura Isao speculates that the phrase may have originated with a comic verse (*kyōka*) comparing the styles of Enshū, Oribe and Sen Sōtan. Kumakura’s conclusion is highly speculative and unsupported by historical evidence. The term does not appear in general dictionaries. Isao Kumakura. “Wabi, kabuki, kirei: Kobori Enshū no chanoyu no keifu” [Rusticity, Perversity, Beauty: A Genealogy of Kobori Enshū’s Tea], in *Kobori Enshū: kirei sabi no kiwami*, eds. Sōkei Kobori, Isao Kumakura, and Arata Isozaki. Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2006, 25.

³⁹ Kumakura, “Kan’ei Culture and *Chanoyu*,” 148.

interest in classical court culture and the Japanese poetic canon.⁴⁰ An aristocrat, Teika held a position in the Imperial Bureau of Poetry, assembled by Emperor Go-Toba to compile poetic anthologies, and was later invited to Kamakura to teach court poetry to the shogun. This position made him in effect a professional artist, living in part off the largesse of his warrior patrons. Enshū may very well have drawn a parallel between Teika's means of livelihood and his own.⁴¹

The tea master's interests were also in line with a contemporary fashion for "the resurrection of courtly traditions" dating to the late Heian and early medieval periods. While artistic traditions influenced by the imperial court "never died away," in the tea world Enshū and his contemporary Kanamori Sōwa were instrumental in the widespread popularization of teaware (teabowls, tea-leaf jars and even hanging scrolls) which visually engaged seasonal motifs drawn from the canon of classical poetry.⁴² Moreover, Enshū appropriated poetic language in articulating his own approach to tea in his undated *Letter to be Discarded* (*Kaki-sute no fumi*). This short manuscript describes the "essence of chanoyu" as "like the mist in spring, the cuckoo bird hidden among the young green leaves in summer, the lonely evening dusk of autumn, and dawn over the snow in winter."⁴³

All of these influences seem to have shaped Enshū's trademark aesthetic of "austere beauty," one which enjoyed tremendous popularity during his lifetime. However, after his death in 1656, both Enshū and *his aesthetics* were roundly criticized by proponents of rustic tea. Led

⁴⁰ Kobori Enshū *bi no deai-ten*, 78-79. Enshū collaborated with the Buddhist priest, calligrapher, and tea devotee Shōkadō Shōjō to create a series of portraits of the "six poetry immortals" (a group which includes Teika). Such activities provide further evidence of his admiration for Teika.

⁴¹ Plutschow, *Rediscovering Rikyū*, 40.

⁴² Elizabeth Lillehoj. *Art and Palace Politics in Early Modern Japan, 1580s-1680s*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 2011, 20-21.

⁴³ Kobori Enshū. "Kakisute-bumi" [Letter Written to Be Discarded]. In *Wind in the Pines: Classic Writings of the Way of Tea as a Buddhist Path*, translated by Dennis Hirota. Kyoto: Asian Humanities Press, 1995, 289.

in part by descendants of Rikyū and their disciples, this group took issue with Enshū and other practitioners of warlord tea, declaiming the superiority of Rikyū’s “rustic tea” while discursively denigrating alternate traditions. A representative passage penned by the unknown author or authors of the late seventeenth-century *Genealogy of Tea (Chafu)*, criticized his putative departures from the example of Rikyū, and blamed Enshū for an overall degeneration of tea practice:

Kobori Tōtomi [Enshū] based his tea upon the model of Furuta Oribe, and completely discarded the rules of Rikyū’s time... [Enshū’s style] is considered interesting by the inexperienced, and the sick state of tea nowadays has arisen from this indecent state of affairs.⁴⁴

Another posthumous criticism leveled against Enshū specifically, and more broadly against warlord tea, is that his practice recognized distinctions in the social status of guests. One story concerns Enshū’s violation of the usual custom of placing water basins high above the ground when designing the tea garden at Edo Castle. Enshū is said to have argued the fact that the users of the castle water basin were primarily warlords and other high-ranking retainers who would be offended should the basin be placed at a level above them. Itō lauds Enshū’s ability to make the “world of *chanoyu* reflect the status-conscious Tokugawa society.”⁴⁵ Such adjustments to the dimensions of tea spaces were not unique to Enshū, however. His teacher Oribe also made such concessions, and like Enshū, Oribe was also criticized for these alterations.

It is difficult, however, to assess Enshū’s intentionality in making these changes. Was he, as the historian Hiyashiya Seizō has asserted, seeking to “throw off the constraints inherent in Rikyū’s subdued, *wabi-cha* [rustic tea] tradition” and remake tea in a guise that would better

⁴⁴ *Chafu*, as quoted by Tatsuya Naramoto. “Kobori Enshū,” in *Cha*, ed. Hayashiya, Tatsusaburō. Tokyo: Kawade Shobo, 1956, 263.

⁴⁵ Itō, “Kobori Enshū,” 19.

“serve the shogun and daimyo as an elegant pastime?”⁴⁶ There seems to be little evidence to suggest that Enshū’s response to the practical needs of designing tea spaces for warriors of differing ranks in a milieu which demanded that such nuances be addressed constituted an intentional challenge to rustic tea.

Such shifting design norms are best conceptualized in terms of artistic “preference” (*konomi*). Conceptually, *konomi* is a notion defined by the unique practices and demonstrated tastes of a given individual. Often, however, “preference” becomes a gestalt capable of outliving its human originator, one subsequently subjected to continued alteration and augmentation.⁴⁷ Scholars such as Isozaki Arata have considered the development of tea history in terms of a series of dominant artistic gestalts from as one auteur’s tastes cedes its place to the next. Isozaki describes the shift from *Rikyū-gonomi* to *Enshū-gonomi* as “a transposition between different worlds – from darkness to sunlight, from an enclosed microspace to an open space, from centrality to a diagonal leap ... a shift from *wabi* to *kirei-sabi*.” Viewing preference as “a self-organizing system,” Isozaki notes that this often results in the attribution of works to specific auteurs on the basis of style alone, often in the absence of other evidence.⁴⁸ Therefore, in talking about Enshū’s tastes, a careful distinction must be made between material items used or praised by Enshū and later pieces simply labeled as “of Enshū’s preference,” and between procedural precedents which he was known to have espoused versus those attributed to him without supporting documentation. When applied judiciously, the construct of “preference” is historically

⁴⁶ Seizō Hisashiya. “Kobori Enshū no cha” [The Tea of Kobori Enshū], in *Me de miru chadō jiten I: Chadōgu no nagare* [Visual Dictionary of the Way of Tea, Types of Tea Utensils], ed. Goto Musuem. Tokyo: Mokujisha, 1996, 120-123.

⁴⁷ “*Konomi*” is a multilayered term which can designate a personally advocated and adopted style, a preference for the products of others or one’s own manufacture, or even denote a product endorsement by someone considered an authority in a given field. The *Nihon kokugo daijiten* and *Kōjien* both list meanings as diverse as color preference, leaning, trend, personal taste, and desire. In the tea world, utensils are often designated as the “*konomi*” of aesthetically authoritative figures.

⁴⁸ Isozaki, *Japan-ness*, 299-304.

useful insofar as it reveals the degree to which Enshū had gained wide recognition as a tea master and artist, both during his lifetime and posthumously.

Enshū's prominence in the art world both during his lifetime and for posterity is evidenced by the cultural currency attributed to the notion of preference. As a construct, "Enshū's preference" (*Enshū-gonomi*) not only outlived its creator, but continued to inform tastes in tea utensils, landscape design, and architectural styles throughout the early modern period. The tea utensils Enshū first designated as "later celebrated objects" continued to be considered central touchstones in the field of tea lore, and later cataloguers of historically renowned tea objects would consciously model their efforts upon his own textual models.⁴⁹ Enshū's renown continues to the present day, when two separate tea schools naming him as the founder continue to operate in the Tokyo region.

Kanamori Sōwa (1584-1656)

Among the men included in Enshū's extended circle of tea acquaintances was Kanamori Shigachika (more commonly known as Sōwa). While not a close disciple of Enshū's, Sōwa knew him and their respective places within the Tokugawa bureaucracy suggest several parallels even though Enshū's prominence within the tea world surpassed that of Sōwa by dint of his official appointment as a tea master to the Tokugawa. Conversely, Sōwa is of particular interest for this study because unlike Enshū, who found ways to reconcile and even merge his warrior and artistic identities, Sōwa felt it necessary to reject his warrior role, at least nominally, in order to devote himself to tea.

⁴⁹ One such example is the warlord tea master Matsudaira Fumai (1750-1818), whose career is discussed at length in Chapter Four.

The scholarship on Sōwa is meager compared to the volumes of material written about Enshū. A relative dearth of good primary source texts may be in part to blame for this, as the editors of the largest compendium of written material on Sōwa, *The Tea Texts of Kanamori Sōwa* (*Kanamori Sōwa chasho*), concede that none of the half-dozen texts included in the publication were directly authored by Sōwa himself, even though they were treated as authentic expressions of Sōwa's tea philosophy throughout the early modern period.⁵⁰ Thus, much of the scholarship produced on Sōwa to date has drawn heavily on mentions of Sōwa in sources written by his contemporaries and a limited number of his personal letters which survive to the present. Despite this scarcity of material, Sōwa's case is important insofar as it illustrates the lengths to which some warlords were willing to commit themselves to tea praxis as a primary livelihood. In this respect his tea career presents an alternate trajectory for warlord tea praxis – one in which the practitioner privileges tea above his other social roles and their attendant responsibilities, effectively eschewing one for the other.

Although he is often included in historiographical lists of “warlord tea masters,” the circumstances of Sōwa's tea career call that label into question. Unlike Enshū and Sekishū, as a young man Sōwa rejected the opportunity to succeed his father as ruler over the province of Hida (in modern Gifu prefecture) in favor of a life dedicated to tea in the capital of Kyoto. Nominally at least, Sōwa retained his warrior identity, but in relinquishing the benefits which would have accrued to his position as the next lord of Hida, Sōwa risked his own security in the attempt to establish a livelihood as a full-time tea aesthete.

⁵⁰ Akira Tani, ed. *Kanamori Sōwa no chasho* [The Tea Writings of Kanamori Sōwa]. Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1997. Most, such as the 1670 *Sōwa chanoyu densho*, are attributed to disciples who claimed their texts distilled the transmitted essence of Sōwa's teachings.

Sōwa's family history was, like Enshū's, marked by a relatively recent rise to political power. The Kanamori family rose to a place of relative prominence during the period of political unification in the 1560s. Sōwa's grandfather, Kanamori Nagechika (1524-1608) served Oda Nobunaga, Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu in turn. By 1586, Hideyoshi confirmed the Kanamori land in Hida to which accrued an annual income of 38,700 *koku*. After Hideyoshi's death, Nagechika fought with Ieyasu at the Battle of Sekigahara, thereby consolidating their land holdings in Hida (which were passed to his adopted son Kanamori Yoshishige) and also receiving the former lands of his mother in parts of Mino and Kawachi. Like many men of his generation, Nagechika was dedicated to both martial and aesthetic pursuits, tea among them. Like Enshū, Sōwa trained in Zen under the abbot Shun'oku Sōen, who later became the 111th head abbot at Daitokuji temple in Kyoto. Nagechika's connection to Sōen facilitated his links to the tea world, for which Daitokuji functioned as a spiritual center. Several tea masters among those employed by Hideyoshi numbered among Nagechika's close acquaintances, including the Tsuda family of Sakai, and Sen Rikyū.⁵¹

Ruling Hida from the castle town of Takayama, Nagechika's adopted son Yoshishige (1558-1615) was also deeply involved in tea activities. Tea masters including Sen Dōan (Rikyū's eldest son), Yamanoue Sōji, Oribe, and Enshū, were all members of his extended social circle.⁵² As the eldest of Yoshishige's seven children, from childhood Sōwa was surrounded by not only the accoutrements of tea but also would have likely encountered many of these central figures in

⁵¹ Isao Kumakura. *Kobori Enshū chayūroku*. [Record of Kobori Enshū's Tea Companions]. Tokyo: Chūō Kōron, 2007, 275. An account of Nagechika appears in the *Rikyū hyakkaiki* [Record of One Hundred of Rikyū's Tea Gatherings], detailing his presence at a tea gathering held in the eleventh month of 1590.

⁵² Elizabeth Lillehoj. "The Early Kanamori Family and Tea." *Chanoyu Quarterly* 77 (1994): 42. Lillehoj cites a passage in the *Kirobengi* which relates Tokugawa Ieyasu's desire to have Yoshishige act as a tea instructor to his son Hidetada, a role which was eventually filled by Furuta Oribe.

the sphere of *chanoyu*.⁵³ Despite their shared interest in tea, the relationship between Yoshishige and Sōwa was strained. A final rift between father and son occurred when Yoshishige ordered Sōwa to participate in the 1614 winter campaign against Osaka Castle and in response Sōwa defied his father, departing instead for Kyoto in the company of his mother, who had divorced Yoshishige years earlier. Yoshishige publicly disowned Sōwa, who in turn discarded his formal rank as a warrior, choosing instead to pursue an artistic life in Kyoto.⁵⁴ Once he had relocated to the capital city along with his mother, Sōwa initially sought refuge at Daitokuji temple, where he took the tonsure and assumed the name Sōwa for the first time.⁵⁵ His presence at Daitokuji provided him with the opportunity for increased interaction with other tea practitioners and he soon counted Enshū, Sōtan, and Sekishū among his frequent associates. Accounts of Sōwa's activities begin to appear in written records compiled by other tea practitioners from the mid-1620s.

For example, one of Enshū's tea records, the *Arrangement of Enshū's Tea Utensils* (*Enshū dōgu okiawase*), lists Sōwa as a guest at a tea gathering hosted by Enshū on the fifteenth day of the eleventh month of 1626; so it seems that within one decade of his relocation to Kyoto, Sōwa was participating in tea activities alongside the leading tea masters of the day. The priest Hōrin Jōshō's diary also records Sōwa's presence in Kyoto, the earliest references dating to around 1638.

⁵³ Sōwa's name at birth was Kanamori Shigechika. His mother, originally from the Endō family in Mino, divorced Yoshishige in 1590 after less than five years of marriage. Sōwa's connections with his mother remained strong throughout his life, and when he himself married, he is said to have taken a wife from his mother's side of the Endō family.

⁵⁴ His use of the tea name Sōwa dates from this period. Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 91.

⁵⁵ Tadachika Kuwata, ed. *Chajin no meisho-kan* [Famous Letters of Tea Persons]. Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan, 1970, 192.

Sōwa may have abandoned his formal responsibilities as the one-time heir to the lordship of Hida domain, but his connections to fellow warriors survived the shift to his new identity as a tea aesthete. Despite being disinherited by his father, Sōwa maintained connections with family members in Hida, even calling upon local Kyoto potters to relocate to the area and establish a new market for teaware in central Honshū. At least one local kiln in the modern Takayama region, the Koito, is the product of collaboration between Sōwa and his younger brother Kanamori Shigeyori (1594-1650), who took over the lordship of Takayama in 1615.⁵⁶ While his contemporaries Enshū and Sekishū managed their tea activities through the framework of their ongoing appointments within the Tokugawa hierarchy, Sōwa's entrepreneurial vision and his location in the art-oriented milieu of the capital allowed him to create a unique social niche in which he could leverage the vestiges of his warrior identity to promote himself as a source of aesthetic authority with regard to *chanoyu*. Relinquishing the responsibilities of his position within the Tokugawa state allowed Sōwa an unusual level of freedom to interact with various communities in Kyoto, including artisans and the aristocracy in addition to the clerical contacts which were the legacy of his studies at Daitokuji.⁵⁷

As evidenced by his surviving correspondence, Sōwa was particularly well-acquainted with many of the leading artisans of his day. In a letter sent to his disciple Yamashita Ichinojō (dates unknown), Sōwa informed Yamashita that the calligrapher, ceramicist and lacquerer Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558-1637) had visited Kyoto. Dated on the twenty-second day of the eleventh month in an unspecified year, Sōwa informs Yamashita of Hon'ami's arrival in the capital and then proceeds to thank Yamashita for an earlier missive. Sōwa's relationship with Yamashita

⁵⁶ "Kanamori Shigeyori." Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 16 September 2014. This connection appears to be a valid one, though I cannot verify in contemporary sources. The present kiln master at the Koito kilns is Taikan Nagakura, also a sixteen-generation tea master in the Sōwa school of tea. "Koito-yaki". Web. <http://www.koito-yaki.com/>. Accessed September 16, 2014.

⁵⁷ Lillehoj, *Art and Palace Politics*, 189.

may have been that of master and disciple, but his use of honorific language structures suggests that Yamashita was a member of the social elite. Even so, Sōwa had no problem refusing a request from Yamashita pleading that he is “presently busy,” hastening to add that perhaps Yamashita’s request could be made again later in the year. By way of apology for being unable to assist Yamashita, Sōwa instead presented gifts – a *Kagazome* dyed *kosode* robe and cotton sash, even though his letter humbly noted that “they are not particularly beautiful.”⁵⁸ This exchange hints at the ambiguity of Sōwa’s social position, existing as it did outside of the defining framework of the larger Tokugawa bureaucracy. His use of honorific language in addressing Yamashita and the presentation of mollifying gifts suggest deference, while his master-disciple relationship with his correspondent affords Sōwa some leeway in his response, as evinced by his refusal of Yamashita’s request. This exchange reveals not only the breadth of Sōwa’s connections, but also suggests that his liminal, self-created position in Tokugawa society was one which afforded him a degree of flexibility in interpersonal relations not available to those with more clearly defined roles within the hierarchy. In this respect, Sōwa may have enjoyed more freedom to cultivate and benefit from new social connections than Enshū and Sekishū did, operating from within the Tokugawa bureaucracy.

Sōwa’s personal rejection of his rightful place in Hida domain does not mean that he did not continue to associate with fellow warriors and Tokugawa functionaries. An account of one such encounter appears in *Gatherings of Kanamori Sōwa (Kanamori Sōwa kondate)*, and details a tea gathering hosted by Sōwa in 1655 at which two representatives of the bakufu government were in attendance. Sōwa’s decision to formally renounce his place in the Tokugawa hierarchy meant that he neither benefited from, nor was bound by, a clearly defined role within the

⁵⁸ Kanamori, Sōwa. “Kanamori Sōwa jihitsu shojō” in *Chajin no meisho-kan* [Famous Letters of Tea Persons], ed. Tadachika Kuwata. Tokyo: Tokyodō Shuppan, 1970, 190-194.

increasing rigid system of social estates. This places him outside of, but not in opposition to the Tokugawa hierarchy. The presence of bakufu officials at his 1655 tea gathering suggests that he was not estranged from warriors still within the Tokugawa bureaucracy.⁵⁹

Sōwa's most enduring, and best-known, collaboration was with the ceramic artist Nonomura Ninsei (1598-1666). Ninsei opened a kiln opposite the front gate of the Omuro-Ninnaji temple in northern Kyoto, so the pottery for which he became famous is commonly known as Omuro ware.⁶⁰ Sōwa and the artist soon struck up an acquaintance, and the tea master became Ninsei's first important patron, commissioning enameled teabowls and tea jars in Ninsei's characteristic style both for use in his own tea practice, and as gifts for important patrons among the aristocracy.⁶¹ Even a cursory examination of Sōwa's surviving tea utensils shows a clear preference for design motifs drawn from the canon of classical poetry and decorative painting in which most of the nobility was well-versed. This tendency is particularly true of the pieces upon which Sōwa collaborated with Ninsei to design and produce. Many of these were presented to or commissioned on behalf of Sōwa's aristocratic patrons, who found the designs to their liking. Sogabe Yōko and other scholars have attributed the popularity of his style of tea among the aristocracy to these refined tastes.⁶² Likewise, in an era when many kilns such as Raku, Seto and others favored heavier, organically shaped pieces in various earth-toned ash glazes. Ninsei's extensive use of vividly colored enamels to create lavish depictions of

⁵⁹ Conrad D. Totman, *Politics in the Tokugawa Bakufu, 1600-1843*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967, 182-183. As Totman notes, flexibility of this sort was only possible during the first decades of Tokugawa rule when official and non-official roles alike enjoyed a higher degree of "fluidity" than they would under the more mature bakufu structure which emerged by the early eighteenth century.

⁶⁰ Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 92.

⁶¹ One such commission featured pair of nesting Ninsei teabowls enameled in a pattern of gold and silver diamonds presented by Sōwa to Empress Tōfukumon'in one of his primary imperial patrons. This pair of bowls was recently shown in an exhibition at Japan's MOA Museum of Art in Shizuoka. They may be viewed at: <http://www.moaart.or.jp/en/exhibition/201303wa/>

⁶² Fusa Kiyose and Yōko Sogabe, eds. *Sōtan no tegami* [The Letters of Sōtan]. Kyoto: Kawara Shoten, 1997, 267.

botanical and landscape subjects catered to the elegant tastes of the nobility. Thus the aesthetic sympathies between Sōwa and Ninsei gave rise to collaboration on both the artistic and social level. Sōwa introduced Ninsei's work both to members of the court and also to warrior companions, notably the ruling Maeda clan of the Kaga region and their chief retainers, the Honda family, greatly increasing the potter's fame and list of paying clients.⁶³ In lieu of a newly coined aesthetic catchphrase equating to Enshū's "beauty," Sōwa's close association with both Ninsei and the court functioned as the defining elements of his own tastes. Sōwa's "preference" is thus closely tied to Ninsei's works and also to items which reflect the tastes of Go-Mizuno'o's court.

According to the tea text known as the *Pagoda Tree Record (Kaiki)*, Sōwa also established relationships with courtiers such as Konoe Nobuhiro (previously mentioned in this chapter as Go-Mizuno'o's brother), and Ichijō Akiyoshi (1605-1672, a son of Emperor Go-Yōzei).⁶⁴ Sōwa's connection to the Empress Tōfukumon'in is the best-documented of these aristocratic ties, and the one which probably resulted in the sobriquet of "Princess Sōwa" (*hime Sōwa*) by which he was known.⁶⁵ The gendered nature of this label suggests several possible readings. On the one hand, designating a man of artistic authority as "princess" suggests a reading in which Sōwa is considered figuratively unmanned by his renunciation of his official warrior status. There is some possibility that his full-time devotion to *chanoyu* was perceived by

⁶³ *Ninsei no chawan* [The Teabowls of Ninsei], Kanshō Series, Vol. 7. Nezu Art Museum, ed. Tokyo: Nezu Art Museum, 2004, 44-45; 66. A large collection of Ninsei's productions is preserved in the Honda Collection now housed in Kanazawa. The Honda family records also include an illustrated inventory of the family's tea utensils which includes a great number of Ninsei bowls.

⁶⁴ Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 91. The *Kaiki* concerns the activities of the tea master and courtier Konoe Iehiro (1667-1736), writing well after Sōwa's own lifetime. Several entries detailing tea gatherings between Sōwa and Konoe Nobuhiro are included. See "*Kaiki*." *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 5. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1967: 412-413. An examination of Hōrin Jōshō's diary reveals that Nobuhiro was also a frequent visitor at Rokuonji temple, and there are accounts of Sōwa visiting the temple in the nobleman's company. Also see Lillehoj, "The Early Kanamori Family and Tea," 46.

⁶⁵ It is unclear if this term was used in Sōwa's own lifetime, but it seems to have been in circulation by the eighteenth century, when the comic poem which opens this chapter utilized the term.

some parties (possibly fellow warriors) as effete. On the other hand, the moniker may simply be a reference to Sōwa's primary patron, the Empress Tōfukumon'in.

Tōfukumon'in was the daughter of second Tokugawa shogun Hidetada (1579-1632) and his wife Tokuko (d. 1626), also of warrior background. In 1620, she married Emperor Go-Mizuno'o. Both parties were pawns in a larger Tokugawa game of harmonizing shogunate-court relations by creating martial and other familial ties to the imperial household. She was granted the title of empress in 1624 following the birth of a daughter. A series of clashes between Go-Mizuno'o and Tokugawa authorities, which culminated in the emperor's abdication in 1629, meant that Tōfukumon'in's position was often the difficult one of being caught between her warrior origins and her imperial role. Thanks to the wealth afforded by her familial ties to the Tokugawa, Tōfukumon'in eventually found her place in Kyoto society as a patron and practitioner of the fine arts, tea among them. Tōfukumon'in was acquainted with many of the leading tea masters of the day, including Kobori Enshū. But she only studied tea under the direct tutelage of two: Sōwa and Sen Sōtan.

Sōwa clearly enjoyed a high degree of personal access to members of the aristocracy and imperial family during the mid-seventeenth century.⁶⁶ There is some evidence that Sōwa's instruction may have extended beyond the person of the empress to include her two children, Meishō (r. 1629-1643) and Go-Kōmyō (r. 1643-1654), as well as the retired Emperor Go-Mizuno'o himself. While these sources have not been verified, Elizabeth Lillehoj suggests it was not altogether unimaginable given the close relationship between Sōwa and Go-Mizuno'o's brother Konoe Nobuhiro detailed in the seventeenth-century diary *Dividing Plant Record* (*Kakumeiki*), and Nobuhiro's own correspondence with Go-Mizuno'o, which mentions Sōwa by

⁶⁶ Elizabeth Lillehoj "Tōfukumon'in: Empress, Patron and Artist," *Woman's Art Journal* 17, No. 1 (1996): 32.

name.⁶⁷ Certainly Sōwa's imperial connections opened many other doors of Kyoto society to him, naming the priest Hōrin Jōshō as a representative example of someone favorably impressed by Sōwa's level of access to the court.⁶⁸

Such consultations suggest that he had attained a widespread reputation for his taste and expertise. As in the case of Enshū, Sōwa's reputation as a tea master is evidenced by the frequency with which he was asked to make appraisals of the quality or value of tea objects. Members of the Maeda family in Kaga (modern Ishikawa prefecture) and of the Asano family in Aki (modern Hiroshima prefecture) corresponded with Sōwa, requesting the authentication and evaluation of utensils in their extensive collections. Scholars such as Oka Yoshiko who have studied Sōwa's letters reveal that his connections with warlords were extensive and even included members of the ruling branch of the Tokugawa family. Sōwa's good reputation with shogunal rulers is illustrated by a 1628 account of a tea gathering recorded in the *Record of Meetings (Gokaiki)* detailing Sōwa's provision of the utensils for an event at which the second-generation shogun Hidetada was the designated guest of honor.⁶⁹

As a case study in warrior tea praxis, Sōwa's uncompromising approach to tea praxis thus presents both a definitional conundrum – and a suggestive counterpoint – to the cases of his contemporaries Kobori Enshū and Katagiri Sekishū. Insofar as Enshū and Sekishū's careers were tied inextricably to their warrior identity and roles within the Tokugawa social structure, Sōwa's

⁶⁷ From *Kanamori Sōwa kondate*, as quoted in Lillehoj, "The Early Kanamori Family and Tea," 47. The original text is reproduced in *Kanamori Sōwa no chasho* [The Tea Writings of Kanamori Sōwa], ed. Akira Tani. Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1997, 307-357. The *Dividing Plant Record (Kakumeiki)* is discussed in further depth later in this chapter.

⁶⁸ Yoshiko Ōka. "Kan'ei bunka no chanoyū" in *Kan'ei bunka no nettowāku : Kakumeiki'no sekai* [Kan'ei Cultural Networks: The World of *Kakumeiki*], eds. Ōka Yoshiko, and Reizei Iwama. Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 1998, 167.

⁶⁹ Quoted by Elizabeth Lillehoj, the *Gokaiki* is in the position of the Keio University Library. The diary details about forty-three tea gatherings and spanning the period 1623 to 1632. Lillehoj, "The Early Kanamori Family and Tea," 47-49.

public rejection of his official place in warrior society provides a useful vantage point from which to consider the benefits tea masters derived from their official positions. Sōwa's retention of a sort of "unofficial" warrior status by maintaining persistent connections to powerful warrior families through his brother Shigeyori suggests that even though he renounced his official role, Sōwa readily understood the advantages attendant upon maintaining his continued connections to his warrior identity. The religious training Sōwa sought immediately after his departure from Hida-Takayama provided him with a new identity socially-sanctioned for warriors: that of Buddhist monk. In trading his battle armor for clerical robes, Sōwa was able to straddle the divide between warrior and monk, devoting himself to his artistic interests in the gap created between these two identities. In this sense, the case of Sōwa lends additional perspective to the study of intermediate-phase warlord tea masters insofar as he occupied a position that was facilitated through the material wealth and social prestige of his former life as a high-ranking warrior. While his case is not representative, it provides a compelling counterpoint to the careers of Enshū and Sekishū, both of whom remained firmly ensconced within the Tokugawa bureaucratic hierarchy.

Sōwa's withdrawal from government service to pursue the aesthetic life was unusual for his era. Although his course of action would be often emulated in the mid-eighteenth century as Chinese-influenced literati culture grew in popularity under a mature Tokugawa system, Sōwa's own successful transition to the artistic life was a choice facilitated by the social prestige and wealth he enjoyed as a member of the Kanamori family.⁷⁰ In other words, Sōwa's rejection of his warrior life in favor of a career as a tea master was made possible by his previous possession

⁷⁰ Conrad D. Totman. *Early Modern Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993, 405. By way of example, Totman offers the case of Yanagisawa Kien, a senior retainer of the Kōriyama domain, who resigned his post to pursue a variety of arts, calligraphy, painting, poetry and tea among them.

of social status as an elite warrior (and by his new status as a monk). The financial impact of his estrangement from his father was significantly offset both by Yoshishige's death within the same year (1615) and the close relations he subsequently enjoyed with his brother Shigeyori (who took Sōwa's place as the lord of Hida). These enduring kinship ties, and his brother's facilitation of lucrative, ongoing connections between Sōwa and the neighboring, wealthy Maeda clan of Kaga eased a transition that may have otherwise been a difficult one. It follows that Sōwa's choice of an aesthetic life should be interpreted squarely within the larger framework of the material advantages afforded by the connections which, at least initially, made it possible. In this respect at least, he is completely representative of trends in the history of warlord tea praxis.

Katagiri Sekishū (1605-1673)

Following Enshū's death in 1647, Katagiri Sekishū was appointed as an official tea master to the Tokugawa shogunate. Some twenty-five years Enshū's junior, Sekishū was born in Settsu, Ibaragi Castle, the eldest child of Katagiri Sadataka, a warlord with land holdings in both Yamato and Kawachi (modern Nara/Osaka prefectures). The Katagiri family served Hideyoshi, but after the Battle of Sekigahara pledged their loyalty to the new Tokugawa government. Sekishū succeeded to the domain after his father's death in 1627, and subsequently became head of Koizumi Castle in Yamato. Like Enshū, Sekishū was also employed both as a *bakufu* construction commissioner and a district administrator over the course of his career.

In contrast to Enshū and Sōwa, however, Sekishū's tastes were said to be a throwback to Muromachi-style tea, newly re-privileging the rustic aesthetic strongly associated with Rikyū and his heirs. Sekishū learned tea from Kuwayama Sadaharu (tea name Sōsen, 1560-1632). Sōsen served both Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu and is said to have been a student of Rikyū's eldest son Dōan. For these reasons, Sekishū is thus often described as belonging to the

extended lineage of Rikyū.⁷¹ Historian Tanimura Reiko argues that Sekishū understood himself to be continuing a “tradition derived from the authentic heir of Rikyū’s tea practice.” Like both Enshū and Sōwa, Sekishū also studied Zen at Daitokuji under the priests Gyokushitsu Sōhaku and Gyokusho Sōban. Tanimura suggests that Sekishū challenged Sen family claims to special access to Rikyū’s vision by instead asserting his own version of “spirituality,” influenced by Zen Buddhism.⁷²

Like both Enshū and Sōwa before him, Sekishū’s rise as a tea master took place in stages and was facilitated by his relationships with other leading tea men in Kyoto. In 1632, Sekishū travelled to Kyoto from his home domain in Iwami/Yamato Koizumi (modern Nara prefecture) and assisted in the rebuilding of Chion-in temple in eastern Kyoto, which had been destroyed by earthquakes and fires. This project consumed more than a decade. In 1638, he built the “Tall Grove Hermitage” tearoom (Kōrin-an) at Daitokuji.⁷³

Sekishū’s approach to establishing his credentials in “rustic tea” was to circumvent the debate by referencing the precedents that predated even Rikyū. His writings explicitly evoke the fifteenth-century tea masters Murata Jukō and Takeno Jō’o before going on to discuss Rikyū. Moreover, Rikyū is not accorded with any special authority in Sekishū’s tea writings. Instead, he includes the practices of his own teacher Sōsen, among the authoritative sources he cites in support of his own interpretation of a correct form of rustic tea. Evidence of this is provided by Sekishū’s “Letter on Rusticity” (*Wabi no fumi*, 1661) a document clearly intended to resonate with the treatise of an identical title attributed to Jō’ō two centuries earlier. Suggestively, the

⁷¹ Lillehoj, “The Early Kanamori Family and Tea,” 44.

⁷² Tanimura, “Tea of the Warrior,” 139. Sekishū’s founding of the Jikōin subtemple at Daitokuji (a Zen temple compound in Kyoto with a long connection to tea practitioners) in 1663 is also mentioned as further evidence of his various linkages to earlier tea traditions.

⁷³ Sekishū’s grave is also located within the grounds of Daitokuji.

historical provenance of the Jō'ō *Letter on Rusticity* is itself questionable, as it appears only in a Sekishū-school work of uncertain date, the *Five Secret Items Transmitted in the Sekishū School* (*Sekishū-ryū hiji gokajō*).⁷⁴ It is possible that Sekishū, or one of his followers, authored them both. In any event, the intent of both works is clear – for Sekishū to definitively align himself with the larger tradition of rustic tea and to place himself into a rustic-tea lineage which included, but did not inordinately privilege, Rikyū. By declining to accord Rikyū any special recognition as more authoritative than other teachers, Sekishū summarily rejected any suggestion that surviving members of the Sen family of tea practitioners has any more claim to the notion of “rusticity” than he did himself.

One point upon which Sekishū deviated from the models suggested by Enshū and Sōwa was in his embrace of the written word to transmit his particular vision of tea praxis. The primary record of Sekishū's textual ruminations on tea is found in his *Three Hundred Precepts of Sekishū* (*Sekishū sanbyaku kajyō*). Considered Sekishū's comprehensive statement on his tea philosophy, the *Three Hundred Precepts* attributes Sekishū's fundamental values of tea practice to the three earlier tea masters he collectively calls the “tea sages”: Murata Jukō (1423-1502), Takeno Jō'ō, and Tori Insetsu (dates unknown).⁷⁵ Containing references to precedents set by Murata Jukō, Ikkyū Sōjun, Sen Rikyū, Sen Dōan, and Kuwayama Sōsen, in the *Three Hundred Precepts* Sekishū pointedly did not portray Rikyū (or his son Dōan) in any fashion which sets them apart from other practitioners, much less assign any weight to the maintaining past standards set by these figures. Although Rikyū is mentioned in the text alongside his own teacher Sōsen,

⁷⁴ Dennis Hirota notes that the authorship of the text is unknown and probably does not link directly to Takeno Jō'ō, but it during Sekishū's own lifetime this was probably not common knowledge. Many texts were considered accurate transmissions due to the custom of orally transmitting specialized knowledge. Sekishū's version is reproduced in the *Shinshū chadō zenshū*. Katagiri, Sekishū. *Wabi no fumi* [A Letter on Wabi], in *Shinshū chadō zenshū*, ed. Tadachika Kuwata. Tokyo: Shunshūsha, 1956, 367-368.

⁷⁵ Katagiri Sekishū. “Sekishū sanbyaku kajyō” [Three Hundred Precepts of Sekishū], in *Sekishū-ryū: bunken shiryō* [Cultural Archives of the Sekishū School], Vol. 5. Kyoto: Mitsumura Suiko Shoin, 1985, 91.

Sekishū's emphasis is on the diversity of styles to be found in early tea praxis predating the time of Sen Rikyū. For example, in the following passage, Sekishū considers the practices of past tea masters with regard to the tea garden and traces how practices have changed over time:

In Rikyū's time, there was still no outer tea garden. One began to be used from the time of Dōan onward. According to the account of Lord Kuwayama, this is so that it suits the pace of the guests, allowing them the time to put their garments in order and the like.⁷⁶

In this passage, Rikyū is mentioned alongside Dōan and Sekishū's own teacher without any special indication that any man's precedents were more valid than those of any other. In fact, the text contains few references to other tea masters, living or dead, and virtually no mention of Sekishū's older contemporaries, the tea masters Enshū and Sōwa. While some scholars have interpreted Sekishū's interest in rustic tea as a reaction to the more courtly aesthetic associated with Enshū and Sōwa, the omission of their names from the *Three Hundred Precepts* instead suggests that in an era marked by a proliferation of tea traditions and styles, warrior and non-warrior alike, perhaps he was simply more interested in recording his own impressions for a select readership of his followers. It is also possible that he viewed these predecessors as rivals to his own articulation of tea values and omitted them for that reason.⁷⁷

This leveling approach to earlier tea masters, including Rikyū, evident in Sekishū's writings may reflect the fact that he laid claim to teachings handed down by an alternate branch of the Sen family. Sekishū's own teacher Sōen studied with Rikyū's son Dōan; the scholar Nakamura Masao suggests that Sekishū made a distinction between Dōan's interpretation of

⁷⁶ This passage is from the version of the text known as the Gyōzan-bon, which is considered to be the oldest version and the closest to the original text. Edited by the daimyo Yanagisawa Yasumitsu (also known as Gyōzan, 1753-1817), ruler of Kōriyama in Yamato (modern-day Nara prefecture), and student in one of the many branches of Sekishū-style tea which had proliferated by the mid-eighteenth century. Gyōzan was also a close associate of Matsudaira Fūmai, a warlord tea master profiled in chapter four, and a fellow student in the Sekishū tradition popular among warriors. Katagiri Sekishū, "Sekishū sanbyaku kajyō," 8; 46.

⁷⁷ Masao Nakamura. "Katagiri Sekishū and Kōrin-An," *Chanoyu Quarterly* 23 (1980): 29.

wabi and that made by Sōtan (who was the son of Shōan, Rikyū's adopted son through his second marriage). This is important because the three dominant Sen schools, each claiming an understanding of tea informed by Rikyū's vision for *chanoyu* by dint of family ties, all emerged from the Shōan/Sōtan family line in Kyoto, rather than from Dōan's branch of the Sen family, which had re-established itself in Rikyū's natal city of Sakai. Despite this claim by Sōtan and his sons, Sekishū could also lay claim to a teaching that boasted a competing familial connection to Rikyū through the Dōan family line. Nakamura notes that during an era where many "high-ranking military claimed to follow Rikyū's school," this demonstrable tie to the Sen family lent Sekishū's warrior tea praxis an additional layer of credibility among warriors even though Sekishū himself never stressed the connection to the Sen family.⁷⁸ This linkage to Rikyū and his own respect for the principles of rustic tea mean that unlike his contemporaries Enshū and Sōwa, Sekishū did not redefine tea practice through a new version of personal "preference" or via the creation of new aesthetic concepts, but instead sought to define rustic tea on his own terms.

Although he had been a fixture in early modern *chanoyu* for decades, Sekishū's period of formal service to the shogun began in 1665 with an appointment to the position of tea instructor to Tokugawa Ietsuna (1641-1680), the fourth Tokugawa shogun. In 1665, Sekishū prepared tea for Ietsuna and the daimyo of Iyo, Funakoshi Nagakage.⁷⁹ *The True Record of the Tokugawa (Tokugawa jikki)* records the occasion: "The senior vassals who sat with the shogun praised the skilled performances of Sekishū and Funakoshi Nagakage. The shogun was particularly satisfied. He dined with the tea masters and bestowed gifts upon them."⁸⁰ Just three years after this high

⁷⁸ Nakamura, "Katagiri Sekishū and Kōrin'an," 25.

⁷⁹ Nakamura, *Ibid.*, 34.

⁸⁰ Nakamura, *Ibid.*, 35. This is Nakamura's translation. I believe that the Funakoshi Nagakage referenced by Nakamura may be the man also known as Funakoshi Sōshū (1597-1670), a tea disciple of Sekishū's who had also formerly studied with both Furuta Oribe and Kobori Enshū. The *Biographical Dictionary of Japan* states that Sōshū

point, Sekishū resigned all of his posts, and spent the final five years of his life in retirement. Sekishū was the last official tea master to the Tokugawa regime, a shift attributable in part to the declining centrality of *chanoyu* in state protocols by the closing decades of the seventeenth century, a development that shall be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Sekishū's retirement in 1668 marks the close to the intermediate phase of warlord tea because no new leading tea master clearly succeeded him in leading *chanoyu* after his death. Sekishū's anti-lineage tendencies prompted him to encourage his would-be disciples to found their own schools of tea, not in his name, but in their own. There is little evidence that Sekishū foresaw his role as founder to a lineage of tea praxis, even one as splintered and diverse as the Sekishū school later became under numerous offshoot "branches". Sekishū's apparent reluctance to establish a lineage to carry on in his name also runs counter to the earlier examples of Enshū and Sōwa, both of whom consciously set out to create a personal brand. Sekishū's extensive writings on *wabi* and the spiritual aspects of tea, rather than aesthetic concepts, constitute his style. In this respect, he diverges from earlier trends in warlord tea and ushered in an era which lacked any prominent figures among daimyo tea practitioners. This dearth of leadership from among warlord teamen after 1670 created an opening for the resurgence of the Sen family of merchant tea practitioners.

The Sen family and seventeenth-century chanoyu

Part of the reason for the dominance of daimyo in tea praxis through the middle of the seventeenth century may be ascribed to the compromised position in which the Sen family of merchant tea practitioners found itself in the decades initially following Rikyū's suicide in 1591.

also prepared tea in Sekishū's company. "Funakoshi Sōshū," Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 11 September 2014.

Rikyū's disgrace and mandated suicide effectively opened the field of *chanoyu* to leadership by daimyo already active in tea praxis, including his former disciple Furuta Oribe. The Sen family had been forcibly disbanded after 1591, and Rikyū's children, including his sons Dōan and (adopted son) Shōan, as well as his grandson Sōtan, were exiled to various locations after the Sen family properties in Kyoto were confiscated. Shōan sought refuge with the daimyo Gamō Ujisato (1556-1595), one of Rikyū's former disciples in Aizu. Within a few years, Shōan received a document of reinstatement through the combined mediation of Ujisato and Tokugawa Ieyasu and returned to Kyoto. Shōan's reinstatement appears to have taken place in the early Bunroku era (1592-1595), although the exact date remains unclear. An undated letter known as the "letter summoning Shōan" (*Shōan meshidashijō*) survives: signed by both Gamō Ujisato and Tokugawa Ieyasu. It summons Shōan back to the capital at Hideyoshi's behest.⁸¹ While Dōan attempted to re-establish the Sen family in their natal city of Sakai, Shōan (the adopted son of Rikyū's second marriage) went on to head the re-established Sen household in Kyoto. Sen Sōtan succeeded his father in the family headship following Shōan's death in 1614.⁸² By the closing decades of the seventeenth century, the rising prestige of the Sen family in Kyoto led by Sōtan and his sons would present a significant challenge to the cultural authority of warlord tea masters such as Enshū, Sōwa, and Sekishū.

⁸¹ The scholar Tsutsui Hiroichi suggests that this letter may be the instrument of Shōan's reinstatement. Hiroichi Tsutsui. "Sen Sōtan," *Chanoyu Quarterly* 46 (1986): 10.

⁸² Isao Kumakura. "Sen no Rikyū: Inquiries into His Life and Tea," in *Tea in Japan*, edited by Paul Varley and Isao Kumakura. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989, 64. Shōan was actually the son of the nō master Miyaō Saburō Sannyū and Rikyū's second wife, Sōon. Little is known about the whereabouts of Rikyū's son Dōan after 1591. Elsewhere, Kumakura suggests that Dōan may have established a rival branch of the Sen household in Rikyū's natal city of Sakai that was in competition with the Kyoto branch headed by Shōan. As evidence for this, he cites an account from the *Zuiryūsai nobegami no sho* concerning Sōkan, Dōan's son. Purportedly, Sōkan borrowed the original copy of Rikyū's death poem from the Kyoto Sen family for a tea ceremony and afterward refused to return it, causing a long rift that was only repaired with the return of the poem to the Omotesenke branch of the Sen in 1751. See also Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and Chanoyu," 150.

Leading this challenge was Sen Sōtan, the grandson of Sen Rikyū who revived the family's fortunes. Sōtan and three of his four sons emerged in the latter half of the seventeenth century to challenge effectively the dominance of warrior figures as *chanoyu* authorities. Some scholars have suggested that a rift occurred in the tea world around the late 1660s. On one side of the gulf were the three Sen traditions of tea founded by Sōtan's sons and on the other, Sekishū and Sen Sōtan's four main disciples.⁸³ Sekishū's connections to an alternate branch of the Sen family have already been detailed, but this particular division took shape after the deaths of Enshū (1647) and of Sōwa (1656) and pivoted upon fundamentally oppositional attitudes concerning the transmission of tea knowledge. Sekishū, joined by Sōtan's four best-known disciples, believed the acquisition of expertise in *chanoyu* was primarily a matter of direct transmission from master to disciple, not a matter of bloodlines or birth.⁸⁴ In opposition to this, three of Sōtan's four sons (Kōshin Sōsa, Sensō Sōshitsu, and Ichio Sōshu) posited the primacy of the Sen family bloodline to which they all laid mutual claim.

Sen Sōtan (1578-1658)

Sōtan was a young man at the time of Rikyū's suicide and came of age during his father's attempt to salvage the family fortunes. Sōtan took his headship of the Sen household seriously, and set about rebuilding the family's tea legacy. An examination of Sōtan's correspondence provides evidence of the vast social network to which he belonged, and reveals a latent antipathy toward warrior practitioners, albeit one that he was careful to express only in private family letters.

⁸³ The "four heavenly kings of Sōtan" (*Sōtan shitennō*) are usually listed as Fujimura Yōken (1613–99), Sugiki Fusai (1628–1706), Yamada Sōhen (1627–1708), and Kusumi Soan (1636–1728).

⁸⁴ Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 158.

Sōtan's wide circle of acquaintances extended to the leading daimyo tea masters of the era.⁸⁵ Indeed, the social circles frequently by Enshū, Sōwa, Sekishū and Sōtan demonstrate significant overlap. All four had close ties to Daitokuji temple, with Enshū, Sōwa and Sōtan all sharing the same spiritual adviser (Shun'oku Sōen). Like both Enshū and Sōwa, Sōtan also cultivated connections among the court of Emperor Go-Mizuno'o in Kyoto. Both Sōwa and Sōtan provided direct instruction in *chanoyu* procedure to the Empress Tōfukumon'in. In fact, Sōtan's second wife, Sōken, had previously served as a lady-in-waiting to the empress and provided Sōtan with the requisite introductions. And like Sōwa, Sōtan exchanged gifts with the empress, among them a dark green lacquered utensil stand trimmed in red which still remains in the imperial collection. Sōwa's close contemporary Konoe Nobuhiro was another social connection shared with Sōtan.⁸⁶

Primary sources, such as the diary of the Buddhist priest Hōrin Jōshō, chief abbot of the Zen-sect temple Rokuonji in northern Kyoto, bolster the evidence of close connections among this group. The diary makes mention of all four figures in chronologically proximate entries which suggest they may have often crossed paths.⁸⁷ Evidence of this includes frequent mentions of social engagements with Sōtan that appear in Hōrin Jōshō's *Dividing Plant Record* (*Kakumeiki*).⁸⁸ The opening passages of the *Dividing Plant Record* include a series of entries which appear to date to the commencement of a friendship between Hōrin and Sōtan. The first

⁸⁵ Like both Oribe and Enshū, Sōtan trained at Daitokuji temple, and in 1599 was given the religious name of Gempaku by his teacher, the 111th temple abbot Shun'oku Sōen (1529-1611). The account of Sōtan's study at Daitokuji and his receipt of the name "Gempaku" is recorded in Shun'oku Sōen's "One Silent Scroll" (*Ichimokuko*). Tsutsui, "Sen Sōtan," 11-12. See also Kaisen Iguchi. "Gempaku Sōtan," in *Kyō no chake* [Tea families of the capital], eds Masao Nakamura, Sōya Hisada, and Kaisen Iguchi. Tokyo: Kuromizu Shobō, 1979, 102.

⁸⁶ Tsutsui, "Sen Sōtan," 22; and Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 156.

⁸⁷ Spanning the years 1635 to 1668, this record contains entries on an almost daily basis throughout that period. Rokuonji is better known today by its alternate name of Kinkakuji, home to the famous Golden Pavilion.

⁸⁸ Louise Allison Cort. "Shopping for Pots in Momoyama Japan," in *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice*, ed. Morgan Pitelka. London: Routledge Curzon, 2003, 66.

mention of Sōtan in the *Kakumeiki* details an invitation for tea extended to Sōtan by Hōrin on the thirteenth day of the eleventh month of 1639. Sōtan reciprocated with an invitation on the twelfth day of the third month of 1640. The diary then goes on to record on another visit late in 1640, upon which occasion Sōtan brought a hanging scroll with mounted calligraphy by the revered Zen priest Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1481) to Kinkakuji. In the entry for that day, Hōrin expresses his pleasure at viewing such a treasure, records how the two men discussed the merits of the calligraphy, and goes on to mention that after his departure, Sōtan sent Hōrin a letter including a comic poem.⁸⁹ This evidence all points to a congenial and close friendship between the two men.

Just as was the case with the three warlord case studies included in this chapter, Sōtan's engagement with networks of tea practitioners of his era provides evidence of how such networks crossed social boundaries of class and status. An account of Sōtan written by his disciple Sugiki Fusai (1628-1706) reveals the extent to which Sōtan was engaged with tea circles within the capital:

Having succeeded to the Sen house, Sōtan revived an abandoned tradition and clearly displayed the way of tea to the world. Those who praised him were legion: people from the cities and countryside, from far and near. They called upon him from morning until night to join together in *chanoyu*. Such was his popularity. The Sen house flourished as it had in Rikyū's day. Both the emperor and the retired emperor admired Sōtan. He was frequently called by the Tokugawa shogun, but did not go.⁹⁰

Sugiki's assessment of Sōtan's tea and its appeal suggests that Sōtan was not withdrawn from Kyoto society, despite his later reputation as a hermit. Historian Kumakura Isao concedes that Sōtan's "broad range of acquaintances" included fellow daimyo, members of the imperial family,

⁸⁹ Hōrin, Jōshō (1593-1668). *Kakumeiki* [The Dividing Plant Record, compiled 1635-1668], Vol. 1, ed. Toshihide Akamatsu. Kyoto: Shibunsha, 1958, 190, 219, 275.

⁹⁰ This passage is drawn from Sugiki's *Fukō chawa* and reproduced in Kumakura, "Kan'ei Culture and *Chanoyu*," 151. See original in Sugiki Fusai, "Fukō chawa," in *Chadō*, Vol. 11. Tokyo: Sōgensha, 1936, 11-747.

and courtiers.⁹¹ Kristin Surak is more direct in her assessment, identifying Sōtan as a “social climber who used Rikyū’s name to construct a sprawling network of tea associates and disciples” while cultivating “elite connections to garner appointments for three of his sons.”⁹²

Ultimately, what distinguishes the historiographical treatment of Sōtan from contemporary warrior tea masters is the close association of his person with the development of the “rustic tea” aesthetic. Sōtan’s appropriation of “rusticity” placed the Sen family and their tea practice in contradistinction to “Princess” Sōwa’s courtly aesthetic and Enshū’s notion of *kirei-sabi*, treating both styles as inauthentic expressions of *chanoyu* values tied explicitly to warlord tea praxis.⁹³ This oppositional branding allowed Sōtan and his sons to claim that they offered would-be disciples a more correct interpretation of *chanoyu* than available from Enshū, Sōwa, or other warrior tea masters. Sōtan’s efforts to “revive” his grandfather’s style of tea and re-establish the Sen family fortunes was carried out in a social milieu whose interest had already been piqued by the multiplicity of fresh aesthetic perspectives popularized by the era’s warlord tea masters.

A tacit competition for disciples, resources, and prestige was waged between Sōtan and his warlord contemporaries. Unlike warlord practitioners who had multiple sources of income, for Sōtan, winning paying disciples and generous patrons was the linchpin of economic survival not only for himself, but for the Kyoto branch of the Sen family. Indeed, even when Sōtan did

⁹¹ Kumakura, “Kan’ei Culture and *Chanoyu*,” 153.

⁹² Surak, *Making Tea, Making Japan*, 63-64.

⁹³ Much of the volume of later writing on Sōtan’s “rustic tea” appears in historically suspect sources such as the *Record of Nampō (Nampōroku)*. This makes it difficult to separate Sōtan’s attitudes from later accounts of them. One example of this is the dubious attribution of later works such as *On the Identity of Tea and Zen (Cha zen doichimi)* to Sōtan. There is no direct evidence that Sōtan authored this text, which was first published in 1828. Tsutsui Hiroichi claims there may be a transcription of this text dating as early as 1715. He offers no explanation why there is not earlier copy (Sōtan died in 1658), and no mention of Sōtan’s authorship of *Cha zen doichimi* recorded in the account of Sōtan’s activities and philosophies preserved in *Fukō chawa*, the account of his disciple Sugiki Fusai (1628-1706). See Sugiki Fusai. “Fukō chawa,” in *Chadō*. Tokyo: Sōgensha, 1936.

succeed in employment for his sons as tea specialists within various warlord families, their comparative ranks remained low, typically as housemen. In contrast, warlord practitioners such as Enshū and Sekishū occupied higher positions within the Tokugawa bureaucracy by dint of their daimyo status, independent of any additional social benefits gained via their tea activities.⁹⁴

Sōtan's correspondence marks him as a key observer of warlord tea during the mid-seventeenth century. Preserved in at Fushin'an in Kyoto, his letters elucidate his efforts to advance the Sen family fortunes and reveal some of the invective he mounts privately against warlord tea, which he viewed as a competing interest. In two letters exchanged with his son, the tea master Kōshin Sōsa, Sōtan expressed his frustration with fellow Kyotoites to reject the courtly style of tea popularized by Enshū and Sōwa. In the first of these, dated the eighth day of the tenth month of 1649, Sōtan wrote:

As for the preference of these people, there are those who say they will not practice the rustic style. If that is their attitude, it's fine if we teachers of tea appear to have been talking nonsense for so many years. Even if we hear this, we must have the resolve to correct it.⁹⁵

Two days later (on the tenth), Sōtan again addresses Sōsa, including in this second missive a withering critique of both Sōwa and Sekishū:

As I wrote to you the other day, even though [Katagiri] Sekishū, [and] Kanamori [Sōwa] are the laughingstock of Edo because of their false way of tea, those such as myself must strive all the more to overcome it.⁹⁶

Sōtan's broadening of his critique to include both Sōwa's elegant tastes as well as Sekishū's own version of "rustic tea" indicates that Sōtan was not merely concerned with aesthetic differences. Even though Sekishū, like Sōtan, promoted a version of "rustic tea" derived (at least ostensibly)

⁹⁴ Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists," 98.

⁹⁵ Kiyose and Sogabe, *Sōtan no tegami*, 262-265.

⁹⁶ Kiyose and Sogabe, *Sōtan no tegami*, 262-265.

from Rikyū, Sōtan viewed him as a rival in competition for limited resources. Sōtan’s dismissal of Sekishū as the “laughingstock of Edo” seems without merit. In the year this letter was written (1649), Sekishū was already in a position of influence and enjoyed popularity as a tea master among the warrior classes – surely this was one impetus for Sōtan’s envious tone.

The language of these letters casts doubt upon tea scholar Tsutsui Hiroichi’s claims that “though Sōtan was at odds with many of the tenets of [warlord tea] *daimyo-cha*, he recognized that it was a legitimate way of *chanoyu*.”⁹⁷ The negative tone of Sōtan’s letters reflects the fact that during most of the seventeenth century, the prestige of the Sen family and Sōtan’s style of rustic tea remained lower than that enjoyed by the “warrior-style” traditions established by Enshū, Sōwa, Sekishū, and others.⁹⁸ The apparent animosity toward other tea lineages was an early predictor of the bitter rivalries between tea schools that became common in the final decade of the seventeenth century.⁹⁹

Sōtan’s reported refusal to accept personal patronage from warrior families provides another glimpse into the tension which existed between warrior and non-warrior tea traditions during this period. The diary of the calligrapher, artist and tea practitioner Hon’ami Kōetsu includes an undated entry concerning Sōtan’s unwillingness to accept employment from warrior houses which echoes the passage from Sugiki Fusai presented earlier in this chapter:

In a certain year Sōtan set off in the direction of Edo in response to an invitation to serve a daimyo. He had gone as far as Otsu when he was suddenly taken ill and decided not to continue on the journey. Actually, it turned out that he was pretending. Word has it that Sōtan could not agree with the idea of binding

⁹⁷ Tsutsui, “Sen Sōtan,” 18.

⁹⁸ Surak, *Making Tea, Making Japan*, 64.

⁹⁹ Morgan Pitelka. *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons and Tea Practitioners in Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2005, 83.

himself in service to the daimyo. Although we are intimate friends, there are times when Sōtan's strong will impresses me and makes me ashamed of myself.¹⁰⁰

Whatever Sōtan's personal aversion to service with warrior houses may have been, there is little doubt that he devoted his energies to securing tea-related positions for his sons with various regional warlords. Kumakura Isao's suggestion that Sōtan's efforts to secure lucrative positions for his sons positioned him "outside the area of power politics," is a disingenuous reading of Sōtan's conscious efforts at legacy-building. Sōtan was in fact engineering a canny strategy to diversify the foothold of Sen family members in the tea world to ensure that no single misstep could again unseat the family's artistic authority as had occurred at the time of Rikyū's fall from grace.

Despite the frustration expressed in his letters to Sōsa, Sōtan's endeavors bore fruit. Three of his four sons, Kōshin Sōsa (1613-1672), Sensō Sōshitsu (1622-1697), and Ichio Sōshu (1605-1676), gained reputations as tea authorities during a time which roughly corresponds to the later stages of the careers of Enshū and Sōwa, and dovetailed almost perfectly with the primary years of Sekishū's ascendancy in Edo.¹⁰¹ This ambition prompted Sōtan to undertake several trips to Edo during the 1630s to lobby influential warriors to employ his offspring.¹⁰² During this period, Sōtan's son Sensō Sōshitsu found employment as a tea expert by the Maeda daimyo of Kaga. His son Kōshin Sōsa accepted a position as tea adviser to the lord of Karatsu

¹⁰⁰ An undated account from the *Record of Hon'ami Gyōjo (Hon'ami Gyōjō ki)*, an account of Hon'ami Kōetsu's activities kept by his grandson, Hon'ami Kōho (d. 1682), who was also known as Hon'ami Gyōjō. Quoted in Tsutsui, "Sen Sōtan," 16. See also Louis Frédéric, "Hon'ami Kōetsu," in *Japan Encyclopedia*, trans. Kathe Roth. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005, 346.

¹⁰¹ Eventually, these three sons would found the Omotesenke (Sōsa), Urasenke (Sōshitsu) and Mushanokōji-senke (Sōshu) schools of tea – all of which remain active in Japan to the present day. Sōtan also had a fourth son, Sōsetsu, from his first marriage, but the two were on poor terms and Sōsetsu has left behind no legacy as a tea practitioner.

¹⁰² The definitive study of Sōtan's activities in this regard is Paul Demura-Devore's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation on the topic. Demura-Devore, "The Political Institutionalization of Tea Specialists in Seventeenth-Century Tokugawa Japan: The Case of Sen Sōtan and Sons. (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation)." Manoa: University of Hawaii at Manoa.

castle in Hizen (modern-day Saga prefecture), and eventually went on to serve Tokugawa Yorinobu (d. 1671) in the Kii branch of the Tokugawa family near contemporary Wakayama. Ichio Sōshu was adopted into the Yoshioka family of lacquerware artisans prior to accepting an appointment as a tea instructor to the Matsudaira clan in Sanuki (modern Kagawa prefecture in Shikoku).

The activities of the Sen family vis-a-vis warlord practitioners such as Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū reveals that for some groups, seventeenth-century *chanoyu* was a contentious field, but this does not seem to hold equally true for warlord practitioners. An examination of the writings of warlord tea masters does not yield invective similar to Sōtan's, perhaps an indication that for this chapter's three case studies, the Sen family did not pose a palpable threat. Both Enshū and Sekishū held Tokugawa appointments in addition to their identities as tea masters, and neither man exclusively relied upon his tea activities for personal income. Sōwa, in rejecting his formal position within the bakufu structure, was perhaps more vulnerable to such economic concerns, but if so, his correspondence does not betray it, possibly thanks to his close ties to wealthy patrons among the aristocracy and well-heeled Kyotoites. Insofar as Sōtan's complaints were of course made privately and to an immediate family member, the tension between the Sen family and warlord practitioners does not amount to a public feud, but rather a discursive struggle between competing aesthetic stances and claims to artistic legitimacy waged primarily through the written word as each tea expert sought to advance and propagate his own particular vision of ideal *chanoyu*.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the degree to which the social networks, aesthetic attitudes and career trajectories of three prominent warlord tea masters during the intermediate phase of

daimyo tea praxis overlapped and intertwined. Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū represent the most successful of what was a much larger group of warrior practitioners active during this period. Although they represent three distinct career trajectories, these three men distinguished themselves from the larger group by virtue of a common ability to advance their interests via the effective manipulation of social networks, political connections to the Tokugawa regime, and articulations (both material and textual) of their respective *chanoyu* philosophies and styles. Whereas this process focused primarily on material culture for Enshū and Sōwa, and upon discursive writings in the case of Sekishū, all three claimed, and were recognized as possessing, authority in the field of tea.

The mid-seventeenth-century tea world in which Enshū, Sōwa, Sekishū exercised this authority not only fostered stylistic encounters, but allowed each man the freedom and space to develop his unique and personal aesthetic vision of tea praxis.¹⁰³ The relative flexibility of the Tokugawa bureaucracy during this period allowed warrior tea masters such as Enshū and Sekishū to inhabit multiple and co-extensive roles as both civil administrators and artistic authorities. Others, like Sōwa, cut their ties of obligation to the warrior class but continued to find ways to benefit from lingering connections to that world. Warlord status also comprised a necessary element of each man's success in the tea world insofar as their positions within that power structure provided them with the considerable financial wherewithal to build valuable utensil collections (a key component of prestige in the tea world) and the social influence to

¹⁰³ The cultural salons such as those which formed around these three tea masters were elite outgrowths of what sociologist Ikegami Eiko terms “aesthetic publics” – that is, social networks arising from the early modern popularization of artistic traditions such as *chanoyu*. Ikegami explains that beginning in the seventeenth century, “for the first time in history, a large portion of the Japanese population began to assume the existence of objective cultural standards” and that “socialization through ... aesthetic circles became an important part of Tokugawa style of civility. Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*, 9.

attract disciples and cultivate the acquaintance of other influential figures in the broader tea world.

As a departure from the warlord *chanoyu* of the unification period covered in the previous chapter, the discursive de-centering of Rikyū as the penultimate authority on tea evident during the intermediate period indicates that for this generation of warlord tea practitioners, connection to Rikyū's legacy was no longer seen as a necessary component of artistic authority. This detachment allowed warlord tea masters of the mid-seventeenth century to exercise the freedom to define their own aesthetic values and styles. Even Sekishū's return to rusticity as a central aesthetic value is largely divorced from Rikyū in his rhetoric, as he traces it back to origins which predate the Sen family altogether.

A century later, revisionist texts would distort the careers of all three men, collapsing the discrete distinctions observable between Enshū, Sōwa and Sōtan during the previous century, and subsuming them all into readings of Rikyū's tea as definitive. One such passage in the 1745 *Discussions on the Origins of Tea (Genryū chawa)* takes particular aim at Enshū (the best known of these three warlord tea practitioners), discursively diminishing his contributions by claiming that his innovations little more than preferences for certain types of utensils:¹⁰⁴

Even though the perfection of tea etiquette was handed down from Rikyū, after his lifetime, tea practice divided into various traditions. Persons who wished to become knowledgeable about tea had differing tastes, depending upon the distinction between their high and low natures, their personal strengths and weaknesses, and even their sensitivity to time and the seasons.¹⁰⁵

Appearances and intentions vary with each school. Even wealthy persons may appreciate the rusticity of Sōtan, and even lovers of rusticity (*wabi-bito*) may

¹⁰⁴ The exact dates of the text's composition are unknown, but it is typically dated with the year of the author's death, 1745.

¹⁰⁵ Yabunouchi, *Genryū chawa*, 401.

appreciate Enshū's beautiful handling of things, but this is because many people are uneducated [concerning the difference]. At the same time, all of these [approaches] share a single origin, philosophy of the way, and sensitivity to the seasons. These approaches only differ in terms of their preferences for material objects, but are united in their similarities to Rikyū's primary example.¹⁰⁶

While Chikushin concedes that later practitioners all have "strengths and weaknesses," he continually asserts that Rikyū alone possessed the "proper style" upon which all later variations were ultimately modelled. Written well after the late-seventeenth-century movement for "Rikyū revivalism" had asserted Rikyū's primacy, Chikushin's assessment reflects the manner in which the celebration of unique warlord tea styles in the seventeenth century had been eclipsed by a new tendency in eighteenth-century tea discourse to subsume their "differing tastes" to the notion of Rikyū as the "primary example," effectively rewriting the narrative to bring warlord practitioners (in this case, Enshū), into line with the assumption of Rikyū's ultimate authority as the "single origin." Chikushin himself was a would-be reformer of *chanoyu* dismayed by the branching off of tea into various "wild styles" (*fūryū*) that he perceived to be "perversions" of Rikyū's original teachings.¹⁰⁷

However, such revisionist assessments of Enshū and his contemporaries stands in stark contrast to an examination of sources contemporary to the intermediate phase of warlord tea's development. For Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū, individualistic innovation and personal "brands" comprised a potent form of cultural capital with which they marketed their skills within the complex social networks they occupied, not just in Kyoto, but around the Japanese archipelago.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, unlike the first warlord tea masters of the unification period detailed in

¹⁰⁶ Yabunouchi, *Genryū chawa*, 401-02.

¹⁰⁷ Varley, "Chanoyu from the Genroku Epoch," 176-177.

¹⁰⁸ For Enshū and Sekishū in particular, their continued status as daimyo holding a series of influential bakufu posts necessitated frequent travel to and from Edo, allowing them to expand the scope of their patronage and influence along the full length of the Tōkaidō road, through relationships with artisans, appraisal activities, and the like.

chapter two, all three men were reluctant to capitalize upon Rikyū's legacy, preferring instead to develop their own individual artistic visions and assert their own aesthetic tastes. Considered from the standpoint of later warlord tea practitioners such as Matsudaira Fumai (1750-1818), the era of Enshū, Sōwa and Sekishū's efflorescence was viewed as a high point of warlord tea praxis and individualistic expression within a larger web of aesthetic connections established across the otherwise divisive lines of social class. Despite their many differences, the combined legacy of these three case studies meets in that singular point – they were all innovative auteurs acting in the richly diversified milieu of early Tokugawa-era *chanoyu*, aware of, but ultimately unconcerned with, the need for validation from any source other than their own artistic vision.

Chapter Four: “For the Ordering of the State”: Matsudaira Fumai’s Neo-Confucian Reclamation of Warlord Tea

By the mid-eighteenth century, many warlord practitioners perceived *chanoyu* to be in a state of decline. In the estimation of such warrior teamen, what was once a high art—the epitome of refinement—had been cheapened by the influx of new practitioners, primarily merchants and other townspeople. In the estimation of many warlords, this new tea praxis was little more than a vulgar “leisure art” (*yūgei*) no longer befitting their social prestige. For some, the answer was to abandon *chanoyu* altogether, but others responded by articulating a distinction between their own “elevated” tea practice and the debased tea of other (read: non-warrior) groups.

The warlord tea master Matsudaira Harusato (1751-1818, more commonly known as Fumai) was one such critic who refused to relinquish *chanoyu*, a pastime that he considered a component of his birthright as a daimyo and member of the warrior elite. Fumai and his peers envisioned themselves as social reformers, grappling with the self-appointed task of revitalizing tea, a task undertaken by and for their fellow warrior elites. Characterizations of tea as frivolous and wasteful in the Neo-Confucian discourse of the times questioned the value of tea upon both economic and ethical grounds. The historian Kumakura Isao writes that, for some daimyo of the period, tea “lost its function as a focal point for political ties among the samurai,” becoming merely a “beverage.”¹ Fumai and his contemporaries challenged such attacks on *chanoyu*, boldly setting out to reform tea praxis from within. Fumai claimed that *chanoyu* was properly reserved for warlords like himself, arguing that members of the military elite possessed superior

¹ Isao Kumakura. “Matsudaira Fumai : The Creation of a New World of Chanoyu,” *Chanoyu Quarterly* 25 (1980): 23.

ethics that uniquely qualified them to grasp the “essence” of *chanoyu* in a manner that others, most pointedly merchants and other commoners, could not hope to emulate.

This chapter examines the state of warlord tea practice from the latter half of the eighteenth century until the early decades of the nineteenth century (roughly 1750 until 1815). It examines the content and tenor of the mid-eighteenth century polemic concerning *chanoyu* and will offer several reasons for its development. The case of Matsudaira Fumai and his contemporaries will illustrate how warlord tea practitioners sought to reform tea praxis, implementing an elitist interpretation of tea designed to exclude those viewed as social inferiors. Informed by Neo-Confucian notions of social hierarchy that enjoyed currency during the eighteenth century, warrior-reformers like Fumai made their impact felt primarily through their multiple contributions to *chanoyu* discourse. Fumai’s writings have ensured his legacy within the broader scope of warlord tea history. Unlike his predecessors among the warlord tea masters covered in earlier chapters, Fumai showed little interest in the cultivation of a public persona as a tea master. With some important exceptions, his activities were largely conducted in the private sphere, for the exclusive benefit of those he considered his social peers or betters. Fumai’s legacy is important to the development of warlord tea because his approach to tea reveals some of the impetus behind the attitudinal shifts concerning social class and the arts occurring among warrior elites of the time. As such, this case study reveals that in this “reform phase,” Japan’s ruling military class asserted a claim to tea that sought to belittle, or even to forestall, the *chanoyu* praxis of social inferiors in the putative interest of reinventing tea as a new form of statecraft.

This chapter is organized into five sections. The first of these will detail Fumai’s life and political career along with his *chanoyu* training within the tradition first established by the

previous daimyo tea master Katagiri Sekishū (d. 1673). The second section compares Fumai's critique of late eighteenth-century *chanoyu* to the criticisms of other ideologues of the period, and explicates the manner in which he proposed to redress the debasement of tea praxis through the mastery and management of *chanoyu* knowledge. The third section will consider Fumai's philosophical orientation to *chanoyu* as expounded within his didactic and instructional writings. A fourth section will consider Fumai's engagement with the material culture of tea, investigating how he reconciled his own avid collection of antiquities with his criticisms of uninformed, conspicuous consumption among tea practitioners. Finally, the conclusion will consider what impact the careers of Fumai and his contemporaries had upon the overall trajectory of warlord tea praxis during the mid-Tokugawa period.

Fumai's Early Life

The second son of the warlord Matsudaira Munenobu (1729-1782), Fumai was born in 1751 at his family's Edo residence in Akasaka.² He was a member of the Yūki-Matsudaira branch of the larger Tokugawa family from which founding shogun Ieyasu had originated.³ Founded by Ieyasu's son Yūki Hideyasu, the Yūki-Matsudaira branch came into existence during the early Edo period, and included offshoot lineages in Fukui, Hirose, Mori, Tsuyama, Akashi, Itoigawa, and Maebashi in addition to Fumai's native Izumo-Matsue (modern Shimane prefecture).⁴

² At birth, Fumai's given name was Naosato; Harusato was the name he assumed upon reaching adulthood.

³ Fumai's familial connection to Ieyasu was through Ieyasu's second son Matsudaira Hideyasu (1574-1607, also known as Yūki Hideyasu), and his grandson Matsudaira Naomasa (1601-1666). Naomasa was the first generation Matsudaira daimyo of Matsue domain. Fumai became the seventh-generation lord of Matsue in 1769. "Unshū Matsue-han Matsudaira-ke keifu"[Genealogy of the Matsudaira Family in the Matsue Domain], in *Daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai ten : seitan 250-nen*. [Exhibition of the Daimyo Teaman Matsudaira Fumai's Collection: 250th Anniversary], ed. Shimane Kenritsu Bijutsukan, Tokyo: NHK Puromōshon, 2001, 200.

⁴ The main Matsudaira family head was located in Tsuyama. For more on the various branches of the Matsudaira and Tokugawa families, see *Matsudairake no nazo: Edo jidai to Tokugawake no rūtsu* [Riddle of the Matsudaira

In 1769, Fumai succeeded his father as the seventh Matsudaira lord of Matsue, inheriting lands that were in poor financial condition despite a generous annual income of 186,000 *koku*.⁵ Payments levied by the Tokugawa shogunate for the purpose of making repairs to buildings at Mount Hiei's Enryakuji temple complex during the mid-eighteenth century had depleted Matsue's coffers nearly to the point of insolvency.⁶ In collaboration with chief retainer Asahi Tanba (1705-1783), Fumai set about enacting a program of economic stimuli, the success of which established his reputation as a good financial steward. Tanba, who had previously served Fumai's father, wrote of Fumai that his administration of Izumo amounted to a "domainal revolution." Reform initiatives included the excavation of new irrigation canals, flood control measures taken to secure area rice paddies, domain construction projects, and the provision of support for the local lacquerware, ceramics, and paper industries in the region.⁷

Fumai's tea training

Fumai's study of tea began during his childhood in Edo, with instruction in the schools of earlier daimyo tea masters Kobori Enshū and Katagiri Sekishū, both of which were active in Edo at that time.⁸ He studied Zen under Abbot Daiten of Tenshinji temple in Azabu, Edo, from whom he received the Buddhist name Fumai by which he is best known in tea historiography.⁹ As a young man, Fumai identified himself as an adherent of the Sekishū school of tea founded by the warlord tea master Katagiri Sekishū almost one century earlier and still very popular in Edo where Fumai came of age. His teacher was the bakufu tea specialist Isa Kōtaku (d. 1808, also

House: The Edo Period and the Roots of the Tokugawa Family], ed. Rekishidokuhon henshūbu. Tokyo: Shinjinbutsu Shuraisha, 2010, 116-20.

⁵ *Matsudairake no nazo*, 240.

⁶ Repairs to Enryakuji were ongoing throughout the eighteenth century. Many temple buildings had been destroyed as the result of Oda Nobunga's attack on Enryakuji in 1571. See Pitelka, *Handmade Culture*, 202.

⁷ Isao Kumakura, "Matsudaira Fumai to Ii Naosuke [Matsudaira Fumai and Ii Naosuke]," in *Cha no tenkai [World of Tea Exhibitions]*, ed. Yasuhiko Murai. Tokyo: Shogakkan, 163.

⁸ Some accounts also claim that Fumai received instruction in the (Hosokawa) Sansai school of tea. *Daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai ten*, 3, 248.

⁹ Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 147.

known as Hansun'an), a third-generation head of one of the Sekishū tradition's numerous offshoot tea lineages.¹⁰ Fumai's interest in tea was serious. He is said to have mastered advanced procedures usually taught to only the most serious *chanoyu* acolytes at a relatively young age, and by his own account was successful in winning licensure as a transcriber of the *Records of Nanpō* (*Nanpōroku*, 1686), a late seventeenth-century text on tea venerated by the Sekishū school.¹¹ Fumai's efforts indicate that from an early age he was determined to pursue mastery of *chanoyu*.

From the commencement of his tea training, Fumai seems to have placed particular emphasis on his warrior identity, and as this chapter will presently discuss, articulated in his writings that his tea practice was also within the tradition of warlord tea. Despite the presence of an Edo-based branch of the Sen family of merchant tea masters (the Edosenke), Fumai sought instruction exclusively in styles of tea that claimed warrior founders; and his early writings about tea also made frequent reference to the laudable qualities of earlier warlord tea masters such as Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, and Katagiri Sekishū.

Fumai's critique of tea in "Useless Words"

Congruent with his ambition to master *chanoyu* procedures and school himself in the philosophy of tea, Fumai's production of tea discourse began while he was still a young man. In 1770, at the age of nineteen, Fumai produced a tract on tea entitled "Useless Words" (*Mudagoto*). In it, he decried the corruption of tea by the influx of economically well-heeled but

¹⁰ Unlike many tea traditions founded by warlord tea masters which developed among the hereditary descendants of one (or less commonly, two) family lineages, Sekishū sanctioned the creation of numerous lineages bearing the Sekishū designation among his disciples, and by extension, their own disciples. So, while there was at least one "Sekishū school" tea lineage founded and maintained by Sekishū's own male descendants, numerous offshoot lineages were formed, all bearing the Sekishū name. This is one reason that Sekishū-style tea was so pervasive, especially in the Kantō region, from the late seventeenth century onward.

¹¹ Hiroshi Tōma. "Matsudaira Fumai: daimyō chajin no kōseki" [Matsudaira Fumai: The Achievements of a Warlord Teaman], in *Daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai ten: seitan 250-nen*. [Exhibition of the Daimyo Teaman Matsudaira Fumai's Collection: 250th Anniversary]. Shimane Kenritsu Bijutsukan, ed. Tokyo: NHK Puromōshon, 2001, 194-195.

socially inferior persons. Claiming that such practitioners were “ignorant of the fundamentals of the way and thus prone to mistaking the true purpose,” Fumai stated that if tea could not be returned to the ideal defined by the “thatched-hut rusticity” (*sōan wabi*) of early tea masters such as Murata Jukō (d. 1502) and Takeno Jō’ō (d. 1555), he would have no option but to “pass the days gnashing my teeth in frustration.”¹²

The frustration Fumai expressed in this passage demonstrates his concern that tea was being debased by an increase in ill-informed (and socially inferior) practitioners. Informed by a Neo-Confucian worldview which stressed a natural separation of society’s “high” and “low,” for Fumai tea praxis was rightfully reserved for the higher orders of society, namely daimyo and other prominent samurai, whose social position inherently ceded them particular access to the “proper” interpretation of the moral and ethical implications of tea. In “Useless Words,” Fumai lays out his rationale for the special claim of warrior elites to *chanoyu*:

Lord Tokugawa Ieyasu also enjoyed tea, using the art to shape his government. Taking the essentials of tea as his principle, Ieyasu brought high and low into harmony just as he clearly envisioned. Thus, even in that disordered era, persons could gather in the space of a small chamber for tea, and disport with each other harmoniously – this was the true hallmark of a benevolent leader. Likewise, [Ieyasu’s son] Lord Hidetada, and [grandson] Iemitsu, and also his [great-grandson] Ietsuna were instructed in tea by [the warlord tea masters] Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, and Katagiri Sekishū; all three shoguns employing tea in governance as their ancestor had done, because they all had an understanding of the essence of tea. [Before this, Toyotomi] Hideyoshi, [Oda] Nobunaga, and other warriors of old also applied tea in this manner; no one knows how many thousands of them did so. There are likely those who think that warriors of middle rank and below have little use for tea. This is not the case. For the great, in great ways and for the small, in small ways, in the governance of a household or of oneself, the true meaning of *chanoyu* does not alter.¹³

¹² Matsudaira Fumai. “*Mudagoto*,” in *Cha-zen Fumai-kō* [Lord Fumai: Tea and Zen], ed. Baien Takahashi. Tokyo: Hōunsha, 1944, 171. For the full text of “*Mudagoto*,” see Abe, *Fumai-kō to chanoyu* [Lord Fumai and Tea], 136-41.

¹³ Matsudaira, Fumai. “*Mudagoto*” [Useless Words, 1770], in *Matsudaira Fumai*, eds. Seichū Naitō and Shigenori Shimada. Matsue: Matsue Imai Shoten, 1998, 171-172.

In “Useless Words,” Fumai specifically and deliberately evoked the heritage of warlord tea and the notion of “tea governance,” and placed himself in relationship to this heritage by articulating a connection to the unifiers Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, his own ancestor Ieyasu and the subsequent three Tokugawa shoguns, as well as to earlier warlord tea masters such as Oribe, Enshū and Sekishū. In Fumai’s worldview, only warriors possessed the moral rectitude to apply *chanoyu* to governance, whether of a domain, of a household or simply over one’s own person. In “Useless Words,” Fumai suggests that the field of tea would be most properly led by warlords such as himself. His contention that even warriors of lower rank can find aids to self-cultivation in tea, “(f)or the great in great ways, and for the small, in small ways” should not be misread as an egalitarian statement. Rather, his language echoes that of the Chinese Confucian text *Greater Learning* (Zhengzi’s *Dà xué*), which by 1790 had assumed a central position within the bakufu mandates for the education of the samurai classes in Japan. *Greater Learning* claimed that the peaceful ordering of the state proceeded from the proper ordering of the person through individual self-cultivation:

Those who wished to put their countries in order first regulated their households. Those who wished to regulate their households first cultivated their persons. Those who wished to cultivate their persons first rectified their minds. Those who wished to rectify their minds first made their thoughts sincere. Those who wished to make their thoughts sincerely first perfected their knowledge. The perfection of knowledge consists in understanding things.¹⁴

In “Useless Words,” Fumai critiqued the current state of tea as one in which “persons *who do not know better* think of tea as merely something to soothe the senses,” and he decried the tendency of such persons to “carelessly fritter away their money.” In essence, the offense of such practitioners was their failure to possess the “perfection of knowledge” Neo-Confucian principles demanded. For Fumai, the truly qualified practitioner was not only well-informed, but

¹⁴ Robert L. Backus. “Matsudaira Sadanobu and Samurai Education,” in *Eighteenth Century Japan: Culture and Society*, ed. C. Andrew Gestle. Wellington: Allen & Unwin, 1989, 138-139.

also recognized the way of tea as a “transcendent path,” something more significant than an activity pursued for mere leisure.¹⁵ Fumai had little sympathy for would-be tea practitioners who lacked the high level of training that wealth and social status made available to him. He reserved particular condemnation for the conspicuous consumption carried out by enthusiastic but ill-informed newcomers to tea. Such men, he wrote, “desire a variety of utensils ... seeking things that do not exist in this world, pairing a new teabowl with a pickling jar they’ve mistaken for a tea caddy, spending exorbitant sums in the quest to acquire such objects, putting tea into them, and then making others drink it.”¹⁶

Fumai’s sense of affront reveals the elitism at work in his approach to tea at an early age. As well-to-do merchants sought out instruction in tea and avidly began to assemble large collections of tea utensils, Fumai countered with an insistence that hobbyists seeking an outlet for their leisure time defiled *chanoyu* and fundamentally misunderstood the art’s true import. Instead, applying the tenets of his era’s pervasive Neo-Confucian discourse, Fumai asserted the warrior’s prerogative to pursue tea as an “aid to ruling the realm and ordering the polity” – applications that only applied to men of his own class since statecraft was the exclusive province of warriors.¹⁷ In this elitist view, contemporary tea was lacking in moral principle in great part because the wrong sort of people were engaged in the art. Fumai proposed to show that, reserved for and properly conducted by the warrior elite, *chanoyu* realized its innate potential for “the cultivation of the person, the regulation of the family, the ordering of the state, and the making

¹⁵ Naitō, *Mudagoto*, 174-175.

¹⁶ *Daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai ten*, 138.

¹⁷ Tadachika Kuwata. *Chadō to chajin* [Tea and Teamen]. Vol. 3, Tokyo: Akita Shoten, 1980, 248.

tranquil of the whole world” – language from “Useless Words” that seems directly modeled on that found in the earlier passage from *Greater Learning*.¹⁸

Fumai’s critique of late eighteenth century *chanoyu* was deeply informed by a sense of class privilege built upon the foundations of contemporary Neo-Confucian thought, which emphasized the hierarchical order of society as a fundamental, natural principle.¹⁹ Despite the vehement tone of “Useless Words,” Fumai maintained that redress was possible if pursued by men of ethics and education such as himself whose “perfection of knowledge” was equal to the challenge. Not all contemporary thinkers shared his vision for reform, however. In order to place Fumai’s activities in their fuller historical context, the following section introduces the views of other eighteenth-century critics of *chanoyu*.

Other contemporary critics of tea

Another critic was Fumai’s own relative, Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758-1829), a political dynamo who won appointment as senior counselor to the eleventh shogun Tokugawa Ienari (1773-1841). Like Fumai, Sadanobu was a lifelong tea practitioner. A student of the Enshū school of tea, he adopted the tea name of Rakuo in his retirement.²⁰ Like Fumai, Sadanobu wrote about tea persons that he felt were not the “right sort” of people. In his essay “Intention” (*Kokoro no sōshi*), written a few years after Fumai’s “Useless Words,” Sadanobu lampoons tea practitioners he perceives as boastful and ignorant:

Making tea is a very worshipful performance, I can tell you. The host invites his guests and comes to meet them with an important and knowing air. Then it is, ‘This scroll is by Kyōdō. I gave a huge sum for it. This kettle is an Ashiya. It cost me I

¹⁸ As translated in Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 147.

¹⁹ Eiko Ikegami has traced this worldview back to the Neo-Confucianism of Hayashi Razan (1583-1657), who wrote, “The sky is high above, and the earth is low below it. In the same manner, there is a distinction between the upper and lower classes of society. In human relationships, a master is more honorable, and a vassal is less so.” See Eiko Ikegami. *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995, 311

²⁰ Sadanobu studied tea in the Enshū school, which was popular among Edoites.

don't know how much. This teabowl was picked up cheap, it is true, but I don't suppose there is another like it.' ...

Tea persons are liable to a number of complaints such as blindness, a slandering tongue, curio-mania, garden-mania, building-mania, swelled-head, sycophancy, argumentativeness, over-eating and drinking, obsession with technique and cleanliness, stinginess, introversion, covetousness, and dilettantism.²¹

Sadanobu's satirical vignette echoes the thrust of Fumai's own polemic. Tea does not come in for criticism alone in Sadanobu's writings, as he also critiqued pretension and conspicuous consumption among poetry circles and music lovers. Fumai shared Sadanobu's horror that *chanoyu* was being equated with arts he considers less worthy, writing:

Nowadays, tea is mentioned in the same breath as *haikai* poetry and the games of *go* and *sugoroku*, a thing so endlessly regrettable that I can scarcely manage my writing brush."²²

The desire for reform, whether of individual arts like *chanoyu*, or of society writ large, was a trend characteristic of the era. The closing decades of the eighteenth century in particular bore witness to sweeping social reforms. In Sadanobu's case, his reputation as a bakufu reformer was predicated upon the management of his domain in Shirakawa (modern Fukushima prefecture). Succeeding his father as lord of Shirakawa in 1783, Sadanobu immediately met the challenges posed by a major famine in the area. Through a series of skillful financial strategies, Sadanobu managed to keep his subjects from starving and embarked upon a series of projects to stimulate the local economy, much in the manner that Fumai had done as the lord of Izumo a decade earlier. Sadanobu's reputation as a model ruler and reformer in Shirakawa (as well as his

²¹The date of this essay is unclear, but an illustrated handscroll of the text in the possession of the National Diet Library is dated to around 1808. Matsudaira Sadanobu. 1808. "Kokoro no sōshi" [Intention]. National Diet Library. <http://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/2540865>. 10 July 2015. This translation is from A.L. Sadler. *Chanoyu: The Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1962, 84.

²²From "Useless Words." See Tsuruzō Abe. *Fumai-kō to chanoyu [Lord Fumai and Tea]* Matsue: Matsue Imai Shoten, 1998, 137. *Haikai* poetry is more commonly known in the West as the seventeen-syllable poetic format called *haiku*. *Go* is a game similar to chess, while *sugoroku* is a dice game.

prestige as the leader of a branch of the Matsudaira closely tied to the Tokugawa shoguns) soon won him a role in the central warrior government. In 1787, Sadanobu became senior counselor to the new shogun Tokugawa Ienari. By the following year, Sadanobu became the acting shogunal regent. In this capacity, Sadanobu launched a series of initiatives collectively known as the Kansei Reforms (named after the period 1787-1793), seeking to alleviate provincial poverty through the increase of industry and economic production.²³ Reform measures included a top-down purge of the Tokugawa bureaucracy, removing officials he judged corrupt, dissolving Osaka and Kyoto guilds he considered predatory, and attempting to improve bureaucratic morale.²⁴ In an era plagued by natural disasters, famines, and rice riots, Sadanobu addressed the issue of agricultural instability with policies designed to bind the peasants to the land and to relieve the blight caused by excessive taxation of rural communities. Sadanobu also cancelled debts and undertook extensive monetary reforms. Fumai's local reforms in Izumo in many ways prefigured, albeit on a smaller scale, the method and spirit of the policies Sadanobu later implemented through the central government.²⁵

The political reforms that both Fumai and Sadanobu undertook provide insight into the rationale that both men applied to the reforms each advocated for contemporary *chanoyu*. In both cases, each man felt that it was the right and the duty of the ruling warrior classes to identify and redress social shortcomings. Both Sadanobu and Fumai characterized commoner tea enthusiasts of their times as aesthetically challenged bumbleres whose enthusiasm did not excuse their poor judgment. Conversely, they depicted themselves as morally, socially and artistically superior to such persons. But neither man proposed that tea was without merit. Both Fumai and

²³ Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 147.

²⁴ Haruko Iwasaki. "Portrait of a Daimyo: Comical Fiction by Matsudaira Sadanobu," *Monumenta Nipponica* 38, no. 1 (1983): 12.

²⁵ Herman Ooms. *Charismatic Bureaucrat: A Political Biography of Matsudaira Sadanobu, 1758-1829*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975, 77-88.

Sadanobu considered tea worthy of study and advocated the preservation of an unsullied tea tradition under the stewardship of warlord tea masters. Yet, they were less adamant than some of the ideologues who preceded them.

In earlier decades, *chanoyu* had come under attack by Neo-Confucian scholars such as Dazai Shundai (1680-1747) who objected to the economic wastefulness of tea, echoing the dismay over ill-informed consumers later echoed by Sadanobu and Fumai. In his treatise “Soliloquy” (*Dokugo*, 1738), Dazai groused about ill-informed tea enthusiasts, with an emphasis on the financial aspects of their ignorance:

People today who amuse themselves with *chanoyu* spend vast sums of money on ordinary ceramic objects that have nothing unusual about them and no distinctive merits and regard them as priceless treasures! Insignificant bamboo tubes and shafts are purchased for an hundred piece of gold and are thought to be extraordinary objects. It is all quite baffling.²⁶

Dazai considered *chanoyu* a threat to the Tokugawa social order, (mis)reading the rustic tea aesthetic as a celebration of the poverty to which his work was devoted to eradicating. As art historian Patricia Graham has observed, Dazai “decried *chanoyu* gatherings as pretentious, its utensils as filthy and overpriced, the custom of crawling through a low door as insulting, and the tearoom atmosphere dark and suffocating.”²⁷ While Dazai’s own language does not specifically target the merchant classes, his critique of persons who would use their wealth to purchase access to the art without the cultivation of taste he considered a prerequisite seems directed toward newcomers to *chanoyu*, which in this

²⁶ Translation from Paul Varley, “*Chanoyu*: From the Genroku Epoch,” 174-75. Born in Iida in Shinano Province (now Nagano Prefecture), Dazai Shundai accompanied his father to Edo as a child. At the age of fifteen, he entered the service of Matsudaira Tadanori, the daimyo of the Izushi domain in modern Hyōgo prefecture. After several years of study in the Kansai region, Dazai returned to Edo and became one of Ogyū Sorai’s leading students, specializing in the field of political economy. His best-known work is the *Keizairoku* (1729, Discussions of Economics), in which he emphasized the importance of economic affairs in both public and private life. “Dazai Shundai.” Japan Knowledge Plus Database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. Accessed March 23, 2014. For more on Dazai, see Tetsuo Nijita, “Political Economism in the Thought of Dazai Shundai, 1680-1747,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 31, no. 4 (1972): 821-39.

²⁷ Graham, *Tea of the Sages*, 75-76.

period primarily came from the wealthier members of the merchant class. Fumai's invective does not endorse Dazai's generalized disavowal of tea. True to the tenor of his own times, Fumai advised reform predicated on the maintenance of class divisions and the cultivation of the "right sort" of tea practitioner as solutions to the perceived corruption of *chanoyu* values.

Opposition to tea also arose from yet another quarter. The same popularity of Chinese thought that propelled Neo-Confucianism to the forefront of mid-Tokugawa political ideology also spurred an enthusiasm for Chinese-style literati culture, one which brought with it the fad for *sencha*, an alternate tradition of tea which posed an implicit challenge to the cultural validity of *chanoyu*.

Sencha as an alternative to chanoyu

The notion that *chanoyu* was increasingly becoming debased accounts in part for the rising popularity of *sencha*, a Chinese-style steeped-tea procedure that was gaining favor among Neo-Confucians and other admirers of classical Chinese literati culture during the late seventeenth century. The Confucian scholar Kaibara Ekiken (1630-1714) wrote *Precepts on Health Care (Yōjōkun, 1713)*, a text which instructed readers how to steep tea in the Chinese manner and contributed to the popularization of the *sencha* fashion in Japan. While Ekiken's egalitarian treatment of both the *sencha* and *chanoyu* traditions does not express a clear preference for one over the other, another Confucian scholar soon asserted the superiority of *sencha* over *chanoyu*. Mitani Sōchin's (1665-1741) *Documents on Tea*

in *China and Japan* (*Wakan chashi*, 1728) asserted *sencha*'s superiority to *chanoyu*, prompting swift rebuttals from *chanoyu* apologists.²⁸

The late-seventeenth century defense of *chanoyu* was undertaken by men such as Yabunouchi Chikushin (also known as Jyōtsū, 1678-1745), a Neo-Confucian scholar and author of the introductory manual, *Discussions on the Origins of Tea* (*Genryū chawa*, commonly dated to the year of Chikushin's death in 1745).²⁹ Chikushin conceded the need for reform, as in his estimation, contemporary tea praxis was "lost in a sea of fog without a compass" -- a lamentable condition to which his didactic text offered readers some means of redress. Chikushin argued for understanding tea as a efficacious method of self-cultivation, one "superior to both Confucianism and Buddhism as a path for learning the way to serve one's lord and to associate with friends; a path designed to avoid defiling one's thoughts with mundane desires and, in accordance with the rules of the world, to maintain oneself frugally and keep one's heart honest."³⁰ In contrast to Dazai, Chikushin's more sympathetic approach to tea as a form of self-cultivation laid the ideological groundwork for Fumai's later reforms more than a century later.

Fumai's tea apologetics

Fumai's defense of tea was built around a desire to expand and order the body of interpretative knowledge in which the tradition was enveloped. He began to compose explanatory commentaries on canonical works within the Sekishū school, such as the

²⁸ Graham, *Tea of the Sages*, 78. "Soliloquy" is also discussed in Yoshito Takabe, *Dazai Shundai*. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1997, 72.

²⁹ "Yabunouchi Jyūtsū". Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 10 July 2015. The Yabunouchi were a family of tea practitioners founded in the late sixteenth century. Chikushin was adopted into the family, becoming the fifth-generation family head.

³⁰ Varley, "Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch," 176-77.

Three Hundred Articles of Sekishū (*Sekishū sanbyaku kajō*, date and compiler unknown).³¹

Despite his self-characterization in “Useless Words” as “inexperienced,” Fumai’s activities and writings show a growing maturity and emerging authority in matters of tea.³²

Following up on the early “Useless Words” essay, in 1787 Fumai wrote *Reflections on Tea Gatherings* (*Chaji oboegaki*). Composed at the request of the fellow daimyo and tea practitioner Sakai Tadazane (tea name Sōga, 1755-1790), the title of this treatise takes direct inspiration from the *Records of Nanpō*, a text with which Fumai was intimately acquainted by virtue of his training in the Sekishū tradition. The “Reflections” section of the *Records of Nanpō* purports to be a textual transmission of the words of the tea master Sen Rikyū. In co-opting this title for his own manifesto, Fumai boldly asserts his own authority on tea as equally important to that of Rikyū.

Sōga, the intended audience for Fumai’s *Reflections*, was born in 1755. He was the eldest son of Sakai Tadamochi, first-generation ruler of Himeji, and would later succeed his father as the lord of Himeji castle.³³ Skilled in the martial arts, haiku and painting, Sōga was a multitalented individual whose attraction to tea was in keeping with his other cultural interests. Prior to his sudden death from illness in middle age, he maintained a vigorous correspondence with Fumai. The Matsudaira and Sakai claimed a common ancestor and both families enjoyed status of daimyo families allied to the ruling Tokugawa house. At 150,000 *koku* per annum, Sōga’s income was less than the 186,000 Fumai commanded, but the two men possessed comparable political and financial status.

³¹ The compiler(s) and date of compilation for the Three Hundred Articles of Sekishū remains unknown, and scholars concede it is probable that this occurred after Sekishū’s death in 1673. Sōshin Machida. *Katagiri Sekishū no shogai: Tokugawa yondai shōgun chadō shihan* [The Career of Katagiri Sekishū: The Tea Instructor to the Fourth-Generation Tokugawa Shōgun]. Kyoto: Mitsumura-Suiko Shoin, 2005, 49.

³² Abe, *Fumai-kō to cha*, 137.

³³ “Sakai Tadazane.” Japan Knowledge Lib. Database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. 12 March 2014.

Fumai's relationship with Sōga was cemented when the bakufu charged Fumai with the oversight of repairs to the Tōshōgū shrine at Nikkō in 1779. Fumai selected Sōga as his assistant for this task and this close association continued until Sōga's death in 1790. Tōshōgū was not only Tokugawa Ieyasu's mausoleum, but also an important shrine at which the former ruler was posthumously worshipped as a deity under the name Tōshōgū Daigongen.³⁴ As such, the shrine was an important symbol of bakufu power. Sōga's study of *chanoyu* as Fumai's disciple began in tandem with their work on repairing Tōshōgū.³⁵

Fumai's relationship to Sōga both as a fellow daimyo and as his *chanoyu* mentor thus informed the composition and content of the *Reflections* text. The text consists of thirty sections, of which sixteen were later reproduced in the modern compendium of Fumai's tea writings, the *Transmissions of Matsudaira Fumai (Matsudaira Fumai den)*.³⁶ In the text, Fumai showcases his knowledge of tea history, offering guidance to the reader on which previous tea masters are worthy of emulation (as well as the limits of their individual virtues). One entry declaims: "For tea gardens and tearooms, [Sen] Sōtan; for utensils, [Kobori] Enshū; for comportment and procedure, [Katagiri] Sekishū. Considering these three men as one authority, tea can be realized as a spiritual discipline."³⁷ In this passage and others like it included in *Reflections*, Fumai declines to take any single previous tea master as an ultimate authority, including even Sekishū, the founder of the school of tea of which he was a member. Instead, he repeatedly asserted his right to judge which portions of each man's teaching best fit his own needs. In this way, Fumai modeled the complete independence of late eighteenth-century warlord tea from the earlier

³⁴ Conrad Totman. *Tokugawa Ieyasu, Shogun*. Union City, CA: Heian, 1983, 189. Totman translates Tōshōgū Daigongen as "Light of the East, the Ultimate Made Manifest".

³⁵ Naitō, *Matsudaira Fumai*, 196.

³⁶ The original date of compilation is unclear. According to the National Diet Library, the earliest published versions of this text appeared in three volumes in 1917.

³⁷ Matsudaira Fumai. "Chaji oboegaki" [Reflections on Tea Gatherings, 1787], in Naitō, *Matsudaira Fumai*, 198.

omnipresence of Rikyū as an ancestral source of aesthetic authority. Effectively exempting warlord tea from this dictum, Fumai advanced his own opinions, justified and upheld by his elitist sense of birthright and social superiority.

Fumai reiterated his confidence in forming his own judgements in another undated (but seemingly later) treatise, *Mastery of the Way of Tea* [*Chanoyu kokoroe*].³⁸ While the influence of Sekishū's *Three Hundred Articles* is evident in the use of Sekishū's own phrase "true essence" (*hon'i*) also emphasized in *Mastery of the Way of Tea*, Fumai is quick to assert that a correct practitioner is himself the ultimate source of authority, writing, "although there is no limit to the various schools of tea, when it comes to selecting items and using them in a proper manner, it is best to rely upon one's own strength."³⁹

Another text expressing Fumai's elitist orientation to tea practice dates to the end of his life. *Tea Fundamentals* (*Chaso*) was written in 1817, one year before Fumai's death in retirement. *Tea Fundamentals* is a short, lyrical rumination on *chanoyu* that represents a departure from the pragmatic bent of his earlier writings, adopting a philosophical approach to the question of who should do tea, and in what spirit the art should be undertaken. Despite its use of natural imagery, the author's underlying message is consistent: *chanoyu* should be a distillation of one's individual tastes and grasp of the true meaning of tea:

Tea should be like the morning dew which lands upon the sheaves of rice in the fields, like the wild pinks which flower in a withered field. Developing the taste for such things in one's own heart, a person of tea can realize a practice of tea unique to himself ... If one is obsessive about the rules of tea one has learned, one becomes a stiff and insufferable tea person and will be laughed at like a country bumpkin who has learned *chanoyu*. Conversely, one should not develop their own style too freely,

³⁸ The historian Kuwata Tadachika dates the text to 1811 or later but does not provide support for that date. Kuwata 1980: 249.

³⁹ Matsudaira Fumai. "Chanoyu kokoroe" [Mastery of the Way of Tea, undated], in Naitō, *Matsudaira Fumai*, 212.

carelessly subsuming all other teachings into one's own – this too will make understanding impossible.”⁴⁰

In *Tea Fundamentals*, Fumai advocates moderation – cultivating a tea practice that is neither overly dependent on rules and precedents, but also governed and bounded by a firm grounding in *chanoyu* knowledge and a commitment to maintaining correct relationships between hosts and guests.

Fumai as pedagogue

Fumai's tea pedagogy was not limited to expression in his formal writings. His correspondence also reveals his sense of self-authority on tea matters. Fumai's letters to his disciple Sakai Sōga constitute an epistolary form of *chanoyu* instruction. A number of such letters have been preserved, and examination reveals that Sōga clearly recognized Fumai's authority in matters pertaining to tea, addressing him as “teacher” (*sensei*) in some of their extensive correspondence despite their relatively equal status within the Tokugawa social hierarchy.⁴¹

Most of Sōga's letters to Fumai sought guidance on fine points of tea procedure. It was Fumai's habit to annotate and return Sōga's original missives with his responses inscribed in red ink, much in the manner of a calligraphy teacher correcting a student's work. Sōga often used illustrations in his letter to help clarify his questions about technique. In one undated example, Sōga inquired about the proper method for unfolding the stack of paper used as a trivet for the tea kettle during the preparation of the charcoal for the fire, inserting small illustrations into the text from which Fumai could choose to indicate the proper manner.⁴² Sōga's frequent inclusion

⁴⁰ Matsudaira Fumai. “*Chaso*” [Tea Fundamentals, 1817], in Naitō, *Matsudaira Fumai*, 220.

⁴¹ Ichio Kobayashi. *Himeji hanshū chajin daimyō Sakai Sōga* [Lord of Himeji, the Tea Master and Warlord Sakai Sōga]. Himeji: Kuroda Insatsu, 1994, 6, 24.

⁴² Kobayashi, *Himeji hanshū chajin daimyō Sakai Sōga*, 24-25.

of self-effacing caricatures of his own person in letters indicated not only his respect for Fumai, but suggests the presence of a friendly intimacy between the two men. To wit, a New Year's greeting addressed to Fumai and his brothers opens with a small drawing of Sōga in formal dress, shown in profile in a full bow towards the names of his addressees. Another letter seeking Fumai's guidance on tearoom setup closes with another frontal self-portrait of Sōga, again prostrate in humble bow with his shaved pate visible.⁴³

In another surviving letter, Sōga outlines his mentor's position in the lineage of tea masters, listing Fumai's name at one terminus of the distinguished list. Sōga's lineage begins with the poet and painter Nōami (d. 1471), who served the Ashikaga shogun as an expert in the display of art objects, including imported ceramics used for the preparation of tea. The next two figures are the merchant tea masters credited with the early development of rustic tea, (Murata) Jukō and (Takeno) Jō'ō. The names of Sen Rikyū and his son Dōan occupy the next line, followed by the daimyo tea master Katagiri Sekishū and the three generations of bakufu tea teachers named Isa Kōtaku (all referenced by three iterations of the name of their primary teahouse, Hansun'an). Sōga's lineage then culminates with Fumai himself, referenced by Sōga with his tea name, Sōnō.⁴⁴ Fumai's red-ink annotations affirmed, rather than challenged, Sōga's association of his name with such illustrious figures. Taken as a whole, the correspondence between Fumai and Sakai Sōga indicates that by the mid-1780s, Fumai's expertise in tea marked him as an artistic mentor to at least one fellow daimyo.

Despite a legacy of writings on tea that span more than fifty years of his life, Fumai's deep engagement with tea ideology seems to have been a largely private enterprise, known

⁴³ *Himeji joshu Sakai Sōga no yume: cha to bi to bungei o ai shita otonosama* [The Dream of Sakai Sōga, Master of Himeji Castle: The Lord Who Loved Tea, Beauty, and the Literary Arts]. Himeji: Bungakukan, 2008, 15, 19.

⁴⁴ In other writings (such as the 1817 essay *Tea Fundamentals*) Fumai also identifies himself with the alternate tea name of Ichiichisai.

primarily to a select group of fellow daimyo and vassals. The philosophical writings detailed above were not published during his lifetime, though manuscripts may have been in limited circulation. His treatises and his correspondence were thus personal documents, disseminated only to a limited group of his daimyo peers. It seems that Fumai was disinterested in establishing his credentials as a philosopher of tea in a broader public sphere. Only the opinions of his social peers among the warrior elite seem to have carried any weight with him. Fumai appears to have heeded the cautions he advanced in *Tea Fundamentals* concerning establishing one's own tea lineage. Although a branch of the Sekishū school was established in his name, Fumai's own role in this development remains unclear, and it is likely to have occurred after his death. With the exception of his well-documented relationship with Sakai Sōga, no records that clearly outline the existence of other disciples have come to light.⁴⁵

Fumai's relative geographic isolation in Matsue for much of his adult life may have played one key role in the private nature of his tea ideology. The brash youth of nineteen who penned "Useless Words" was still enmeshed in the political life of Edo, whereas the mature author of *Mastery of the Way of Tea* (1787) was preoccupied with the administration of his own lands. Written much later from his retirement villa at Ōsaki, *Tea Fundamentals* (1817) expressed Fumai's lingering doubts about the wisdom of putting oneself forward as a public authority on tea praxis and its guiding philosophies. But this is not to suggest that there was no public component to Fumai's persona as a tea master. Indeed, during his lifetime the public face of Fumai's tea expertise (and the impetus for his resulting reputation as a warlord tea master) was instead based upon his contributions to the knowledge base concerning the material culture of *chanoyu*.

⁴⁵ *Matsudairake no nazo*, 249-250.

Fumai and the material culture of chanoyu

In the same year that he wrote *Mastery of the Way of Tea* at Sōga's behest, Fumai was finishing a massive eighteen-volume work, *Collection of Ancient and Modern Famous Utensils* (*Kokon meibutsu ruijū*), completed in 1787 and first published in 1791. *Collection of Ancient and Modern Famous Utensils* was Fumai's ambitious attempt to list all significant famous utensils (*meibutsu*) associated with the *chanoyu* tradition from the early fifteenth century until his own lifetime; but it was not his sole literary foray into the topic of *chanoyu*'s material heritage. Fumai authored at least three works addressing *chanoyu*'s material culture. In addition to the *Ancient and Modern Famous Utensils*, in 1811 Fumai published a three-volume work on Seto-ware tea caddies entitled *The Origins of Seto Pottery* (*Seto tōki ranshō*), and between 1812 and his death in 1818 he created a compendium in four volumes documenting his personal utensil collection, *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* (*Unshū meibutsuki*, first published in 1833).⁴⁶ It was thus Fumai's works on historical tea utensils, not his ideological writings, that formed the foundation for Fumai's public reputation as an authority on tea.⁴⁷

In writing about historical tea objects, Fumai was continuing a tradition central to warlord tea praxis and contributing to a genre of tea literature known as “famous object records” (*meibutsuki*). Accounts of renowned objects comprise one portion of the larger body of didactic material on tea that saw publication from the late seventeenth century onward, and content on renowned art objects tied to *chanoyu* had been included in books on tea since the early seventeenth century. *Meibutsu*, literally “famed things,” is a term denoting famous art objects

⁴⁶ Matsudaira Fumai. "Unshū meibutsu" [Record of Famous Items of Izumo, 1812-1818], in *Chadō koten zenshū*. Vol. 12, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha 1967, 371-411. Unshū is an alternate name for Fumai's home province of Izumo, in modern-day Shimane prefecture

⁴⁷ Fumai published *Collection* under the pen name of Old Man Tosai Shuko, but it seems that his authorship was an open secret during his lifetime. *The Origins of Seto Pottery* was published under his own name. Notably, the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* is the only of these selected for inclusion in the twelve-volume *Chadō koten zenshū* compendium of historical tea writings edited by the Sen family. See Matsudaira Fumai, "Unshū meibutsu," in *Chadō koten zenshū*. Vol. 12, Sōshitsu Sen, ed. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha 1967, 414.

whose particular names, characteristics, and pedigrees had become public knowledge, at least in artistic circles. The term dates roughly to the period of Ashikaga Yoshimasa's rule (1448-1473), a period coinciding with the lifespan of the influential tea master Murata Jūkō. An examination of contemporary tea texts reveals that use of the term was well-established by the latter half of the sixteenth century, when it appears in the first few lines of both Shinshōsai Shunkei's *Catalog for Tea Practitioners* (*Bunrui sōjinboku* compiled 1564, published 1626)⁴⁸ and in the *Record of Yamanoue Sōji* (*Yamanoue Sōjiki*, compiled 1588-1590).⁴⁹ A didactic work intended to initiate its readers into the basic tenets of tea praxis, Shunkei's *Catalog for Tea Practitioners*, explained the importance of utensils to tea praxis in the following manner:

The term 'suki' seems to be used in all the ways to mean to enjoy or have a fondness. The reason we have lately called tea practice *suki* is that in it one assembles a numerous (*su*) collection of utensils (*ki*). So *chanoyu* means having a big collection.⁵⁰

In this passage, Shunkei utilized the plethora of homophones found in the Japanese language to reinterpret "suki," a term connoting aficionados of an art commonly applied at this time to tea practitioners. By reading "su" as "numerous" and "ki" as "vessels," he equated the predilection for tea with "numerous utensils." While *Catalog for Tea Practitioners* is not a *meibutsuki* text insofar as pedigreed objects comprise only one portion of its broadly defined instructional

⁴⁸ Shunkei Shinshōsai. *Bunrui Sōjinboku* [A Catalog for Tea Practitioners, manuscript compiled 1564, published 1626], in *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 3, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankō Shinsha, 1967. The title of this text defies literal translation, so I have left it as is here. The title combines the term "bunrui" or "categorized" with a play on the Chinese character for tea (茶), which has been deconstructed into its three disparate orthographic portions: the three-stroke grass radical at top (*kusa kanmuri*), here borrowing the reading of sō for the full grass character 草), the two-stroke character for human being ("jin" 人) just below that, and the four strokes which resemble the character for "wood" or "tree" at bottom (木, "boku").

⁴⁹ Yamanoue Sōji. [*Yamanoue Sōjiki* [The Record of Yamanoue Sōji, compiled 1588-1590], in *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 6, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankōshinsha, 1967, 51.

⁵⁰ Sōshitsu Sen. *The Japanese Way of Tea: From Its Origins in China to Sen Rikyū*, trans. V. Dixon Morris. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998, 158.

content, it nevertheless constitutes a key early example of a work that discursively promoted the collection of famous objects by tea practitioners.

One hundred years later, Yabunouchi Chikushin's *Discussions on the Origins of Tea* attempted a more direct definition of *meibutsu*:

Meibutsu display an excellent character or shape, have [a chain of] transmission, those selected, combined, and put forth by a master or teacher [of an art], they are possessions treasured by noble persons.⁵¹

Dedicated *meibutsuki* texts, which listed examples of famous tea utensils by name, emerged by the mid-seventeenth century. These records provided tea aficionados with a useful reference for obtaining intelligence on well-known tea items. Conversance with this body of knowledge was considered one of the identifying characteristics of the mastery of tea. The ideal way to acquire this expertise was actually to view a large number of these pieces by attending gatherings at which they were used and displayed, a method that obviously required that one's networks of association in the tea world were both extensive and influential. Failing that, however, practitioners could familiarize themselves with well-known tea artifacts via reading about them in *meibutsuki* texts.

The first text to utilize the term *meibutsuki* in its title was published in 1660. The *Record of Distinguished Objects for Appreciation (Ganka meibutsuki)* is the earliest text dedicated solely to the topic of famous tea objects across a variety of categories. The unknown compilers arranged the objects in categories that both reflect the multiple ways in which *meibutsu* were defined. For example, the *Record of Distinguished Objects* lists items produced domestically separately from imported objects. Groups of *meibutsu* associated with specific historical epochs

⁵¹ "Genryū chawa," 412.

are granted their own sections (such as the *Higashiyama gyobutsu* items associated with fifteenth-century shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa), and the general ordering of items privileges older and more heavily pedigreed items with primacy of place at the front of the text. Other sections are organized by types of utensils such as flower vases or tea-leaf storage jars. Generally, the information provided for a given item is limited to its name and a short description, but in rare instances an additional comment is made.

Most early modern *meibutsuki* evince a developing interest in the “life histories” of specific tea objects – including data on the place of production, creators, and chain of ownership in the entry for each item.⁵² Such data was documented and constituted a portion of the perceived value of objects such as tea caddies, tea bowls and even the hanging scrolls used to decorate tearooms. The documented association of a given object with a famous (or notorious) owner(s), or occasion(s) could and did elevate the market value of the item far beyond the amount indicated by intrinsic value alone. Inscriptions on the boxes used to store tea items and documents accompanying objects recorded details of past ownership, but neither of these circulated publically, making *meibutsuki* texts the primary vehicles for the preservation and relation of such supplemental information.

Meibutsu texts varied in terms of the categories they utilized and how they organized information. For example, the *Matsuya Compilation of Famous Items (Matsuya meibutsushū)*, an undated seventeenth-century text edited by the merchant from Nara, Matsuya Hisashige (d. 1652), organizes entries around the individuals who owned or used famous utensils. Each entry

⁵² The notion of objects having a “life history” was echoed again in Walter Benjamin’s 1936 essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in which Benjamin (d. 1940) observed that “(t)he uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition. See Walter Benjamin. “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in *Illuminations*. Hannah Arendt, ed. and trans. Harry Zohn. New York: Schocken Books, 1977, 223.

begins with the personal name of the owner and then contains a listing of their *meibutsu* holdings. Some of the sub-entries include descriptive annotations detailing the item's chain of ownership, events at which it appeared, or other narrative details that add depth to the career of that object. Shorter notations append information about the physical dimensions, producer(s), or characteristics of the item, but these specifications are relatively rare.⁵³ In many cases the name of the item is listed alone without the benefit of a guiding category, indicating that the members of the Matsuya household producing and reading this document were sufficiently well-versed in *meibutsu* history to know what type of item a specific name referenced.⁵⁴ Before Fumai's time, *meibutsu* texts employed a variety of systems for the categorization of tea objects including ownership (for example, *Matsuya meibutsushū*) and historical epoch (such as *Ganka meibutsuki*).⁵⁵ In keeping with his self-defined role as a reformer of tea practice through systematic textual research, the organizational system Fumai employed in his *meibutsuki* writings determined the textual ordering of objects upon the basis of both the perceived values of antiquity, importance to *chanoyu* history, and his estimation of their monetary worth.

A key characteristic of Fumai's renowned object records is the inclusion of an entirely new category—so-called “later celebrated objects” (*chūkō-meibutsu*). As described in Chapter Three, these items were mostly tea caddies that Kobori Enshū identified as worthy of the *meibutsu* label in his text, *Ranking of Tea Caddies (Chaire shidai)*.⁵⁶ *Ranking of Tea Caddies*

⁵³ Hisashige was one of the three author-editors of the *Matsuya Tea Record (Matsuya kaiki)*, a record of tea gatherings in which three generations of the Matsuya family of lacquerers in Nara participated, covering the period from 1533 to 1650.

⁵⁴ Matsuya Hisayoshi, et al. *Matsuya Meibutsushū* [Matsuya Family Compendium of Famous Objects], in *Chadō koten zenshū*, Vol. 12, ed. Sōshitsu Sen. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1967, 1-70.

⁵⁵ For more on the *Record of Distinguished Objects*, see *Meibutsu chaki: Ganka meibutsuki to Ryūei gyo-butsu* [Famous Tea Utensils: Objects from the Ryuei Shogunal Collection Noted in the *Ganka meibutsuki*]. Nagoya: Tokugawa Art Museum and Nezu Art Musuem, 1988.

⁵⁶ Other sub-categories of *meibutsu* include the *Ryūei-gyobutsu* owned by the Tokugawa shogunal family; the *Yawata-meibutsu* owned by clerical tea practitioner Shōkadō Shōjō, the *Senke-meibutsu* owned by the families descended from Sen Rikyū, and the *Unshū-meibutsu* collection assembled by Fumai himself. The first written record

resembles a *meibutsuki* in function since it undertakes the systematic ranking of items according to perceived value.⁵⁷ One observable link to the later systematic classification of tea items is Enshū's use of categories to distinguish between foreign and domestic tea caddies. Enshū's confidence in his aesthetic judgments of the pieces included in the *Ranking of Tea Caddies* seems justified by how many of those tea caddies listed in that document in fact do later have their status as *meibutsu* reconfirmed by Fumai. Fumai's addition of these "restored masterpieces" to established registers of *meibutsu* objects more than a century after Enshū's death enabled more tea practitioners of all social classes to gain access to the *meibutsu* pieces required for use in certain kinds of formal tea services.⁵⁸ Yet, Fumai's records tended to be more descriptive than those of his predecessors such as Enshū.

Fumai's major innovation to the genre was a tacit acknowledgment of the economic value of tea utensils, and his own *meibutsuki* feature the addition of information about each listed object's value or price in real terms. A typical entry includes the name of the piece, a memo concerning any accompanying documentation, and a list of former and current owners. Moreover, in the case of items in Fumai's personal collection, notations concerning the year in which he purchased it, where it was purchased and for what price were appended since Fumai acquired each piece himself and thus had access to this additional data.

of the *chūkō-meibutsu* additions occurs in Fumai's 1787 *meibutsu* catalog. Enshū was particularly known for the aesthetic evaluation of tea caddies, an assessment expressed both in his own writings and in box inscriptions (*hakogaki*) he made on a number of such pieces.

⁵⁷ Although the surviving text is limited to tea caddies, additional headings on the document for Chinese Tenmoku teabowls and other items in the text suggest that either the record is incomplete and the original contained sections on other tea items, or that Enshū intended to include these sections but the document remained unfinished at the time of his death in 1647. *Daimyo no chanoyu* [Warlord Tea Ceremony], ed. Tokugawa Bujitsukan. Nagyoa: Tokugawa Bijutsukan, 2000, 119; 80. See also Osamu Mori. "Chaire shidai," in *Kobori Enshū*. Osaka: Sōgensha, 1974, 281.

⁵⁸ The term *chūkō-meibutsu* was coined in the late eighteenth century by Matsudaira Fumai, not Enshū, even though Fumai drew heavily on Enshū's mid-seventeenth century *Chaire shidai* for the items included in this expansion. For more on Enshū's classification of tea objects, see Mori, *Kobori Enshū*., 89.

Fumai's apparent preoccupation with the cost of individual pieces was likely a product of the uncertain fiscal environment in which he lived. As previously detailed, shortly after becoming the seventh-generation lord of Izumo, Fumai faced a fiscal crisis in Matsue. Additionally, many accounts about Fumai suggest that his avidity for building his personal collection of art objects associated with tea sometimes placed severe strain on Matsue's coffers. Despite his reputation as an astute financial manager and able political administrator, at times Fumai's passion for tea implements constituted a serious drain on his assets, as the warlord spent prodigious sums amassing and cataloging precious tea objects. In one 1808 letter written to the fellow daimyo Kuchiki Madatsuna (dates unknown), Fumai listed some fifteen of his most recent purchases, confessing, "I am in a position now where I can no longer buy even a piece of penny candy."⁵⁹

Collector and cataloguer

Fumai's public role as a collector and cataloguer of famous tea objects is at the center of his reputation as a warlord tea master, and his propensity for purchasing tea utensils has become central to the lore surrounding Fumai's historiographical persona. Historian Paul Varley relates a tale in which Fumai is said to have asked his chief retainer Asahi Tanba to show him the Matsue treasure house. Finding the family storehouses filled to the rafters with gold and silver, Fumai began to purchase tea utensils with abandon, assembling what would eventually be considered one of the finest collections of tea utensils in history, all at an estimated cost of 85,745 gold *ryō* and 3,900 silver coins.⁶⁰ While the authenticity of this story is uncertain, what is clear is that Fumai did assemble a massive personal collection of nearly eight hundred tea objects. The

⁵⁹ Hyōa Ikeda. "Matsudaira Fumai's Ido Teabowls," *Chanoyu Quarterly* 63 (1990): 14.

⁶⁰ This figure is suggested by Hayashiya Tatsusaburō. It is difficult to render such sums into modern equivalents, given monetary debasement and shifting values throughout the early modern period, but by any standard, this is a princely sum that only a daimyo with Fumai's large income could undertake. Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 159.

surviving artifacts (held in trust by the city of Matsue, several temples and shrines, and in some private collections) has formed the basis for a number of recent several museum exhibitions in Japan.⁶¹

As items entered his collection, Fumai adopted a strict protocol for cataloguing them, assigning a clear hierarchy of value and ranking each item within it, and meticulously documenting all of this in his written works. Fumai employed a system of categorization by descending level of quality and monetary value which set the standard for later catalogues that mirrored this structure. The catalogs themselves were lavishly illustrated, a process that surely incurred significant cost. The *Collection of Ancient and Modern Famous Utensils*, for example, included many pages illustrated with full color depictions of select items.

The opening lines of the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* state that Fumai collected tea utensils from his youth until the present, and charges his successors (to whom the preface is addressed) with the ongoing care of his collection after his eventual demise. In the preface to *Famous Items of Izumo*, Fumai instructed his successors, “even after I die [such items] should be carefully looked after and treated just as they were when I was alive. Indeed, this concern should be transmitted from generation to generation ... These things are world famous articles and treasures of Japan.”⁶² By stressing the importance of family heirlooms to the realm, Fumai suggested that his work in acquiring, documenting, and preserving these items was, in effect,

⁶¹ Two such exhibitions were held in 2000-2001 at the Shimane Prefectural Museum and the Tanabe Museum in Matsue in honor of the 250th anniversary of Fumai's birth in 1751. Held in 2000 and 2001 respectively, these exhibitions are documented in the catalogue *Fumai-kō ten: chanoyu shunjū* [Lord Fumai Exhibition: Springs and Autumns of Tea]. Matsue: Tanabe Bijutsukan, 2000. More recently, the Ikeda Museum hosted a Fumai exhibition, publishing *Fukkatsu! Fumai-kō daiensai: Kobayashi Ichizo ga ai shita daimyō chajin Matsudaira Fumai* [Resurrection! Lord Fumai Retrospective: The Warlord Tea Man Loved by Kobayashi Ichizo]. Hankyū Cultural Foundation, eds. Kyoto: Shibunkaku, 2013.

⁶² Kumakura, “Matsudaira Fumai,” 26.

another form of state business. Little wonder, then, that the meticulous bureaucrat Fumai felt it necessary to document value in culture, historical, *and* monetary terms.

A key indication of the value Fumai placed upon items in his collection is the inclusion of a second price column for a handful of entries in the opening passages of *Famous Items of Izumo*, written to the left of the price he actually paid. While no commentators appear to have addressed this second column, it consistently lists sums much greater than the entry provided denoting the price Fumai actually paid. Where present, these lefthand entries (which are not provided for every single item in the catalogue) begin with the character “*kurai*” or “*i*” and so suggest Fumai’s *approximation* of the item’s perceived “actual” worth, distinct from the price he paid, and in some cases more than double or triple the actual cost. When they occur in the entries below, that information has been labelled as “approximate value,” and appears to represent Fumai’s estimation of their market value at the time of writing. An examination of the two most valuable items listed in the catalogue of Fumai’s personal collection reveals the complex set of intrinsic and perceived variables by which value was determined and why Fumai’s own engagement with the material culture of tea has come to be understood as the defining characteristic of his contribution to tea history.

The Aburaya tea caddy

Fumai opened the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* with an entry for the “Oil Shop” (Abura-ya) tea caddy. Named for its first owners, father-and-son oil (*abura*) merchants in the city of Sakai, the entry for the caddy records the following data:⁶³

⁶³ Fumai’s own records offer no information about the original owner’s identity, probably due to the fact that he purchased it through a dealer and not from the previous owner.

Aburaya tea caddy, accompanied by a letter from Rikyū and a lacquered tray. Obtained from Aburaya Jōyū (and then owned by) Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Fukushima Masanori and his son Masatoshi, Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, Doi Toshikatsu, Fuyuki Kiheiji, and Kawamura Zuiken. Obtained in the third year of Tenmei [1783], second month, [when Fumai was] 33 years of age. [Purchased at the] Fushimi-ya; 1600 ryō. Approximate value: 10,000 ryō.⁶⁴

An imported Chinese piece dating to the Southern Song dynasty, the Aburaya tea caddy was in the common “shouldered” shape and included an ivory lid and accompanying lacquered tray. Although it was the second most expensive item in his personal collection, Fumai listed it first in *Famous Items of Izumo*, his own esteem for this item also indicated by his approximation of the caddy’s value at 10,000 ryō, more than five times the purchase price.⁶⁵ The tea caddy’s primacy of position is likely due to this inflated approximate value and also to the fact that both the unifier Toyotomi Hideyoshi and Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu are listed in the entry as former owners.⁶⁶ Fumai’s inclusion of information such as the date and place of purchase, the price and his age at the time of acquisition emphasize his personal connection to the piece and its long heritage, and indeed, this item has come to be associated directly with his person. Historian Paul Varley relates an anecdote claiming that Fumai so prized the Aburaya tea caddy that a retainer in his formal retinue was assigned the sole job of bearing a basket containing it alongside the lord’s own palanquin whenever Fumai travelled back and forth between Izumo and Edo.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Dates for the individuals in this entry are as follows: Fukushima Masanori (1561-1624); Fukushima Masatoshi (1601-1638); Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616); Doi Toshikatsu (1573-1644); and Kawamura Zuiken (1618-1699). Dates are unknown for Fuyuki Kiheiji. *Unshū meibutsu*, 371.

⁶⁵ Kumakura, “Matsudaira Fumai,” 27.

⁶⁶ *Unshū meibutsu*, 371.

⁶⁷ Varley, “*Chanoyu* from the Genroku Epoch,” 180.

The “Flowing Engo” scroll

Following the entry for the Aburaya tea caddy is the entry for a hanging scroll known as the “Flowing Engo.” This scroll commanded a purchase price significantly higher than the “Aburaya” tea caddy, but Fumai omitted any second approximation of value in the entry, perhaps suggesting that he considered the purchase price a fair reflection of actual value.

Yuanwu was a Chinese priest of the Chan (Zen) sect of Buddhism during the Song dynasty (960-1279). The scroll was produced late in Yuanwu’s lifetime and was the certificate of enlightenment for his primary disciple, Kukyū Jōryū (Chinese, Hūqiū Shàolóng, 1077-1136).⁶⁸ Like the “Oil Shop” tea caddy, the “Flowing Engo” scroll also claimed a distinguished line of previous ownership and use. The scroll entered Japan during the medieval period, and appears among the Chinese items in the possession of Daitokuji Zen temple in Kyoto. While at Daitokuji, it came into the possession of the noted Zen priest Ikkyū Sōjun (1394-1481) at the Daisen-in sub-temple there. Late in the fifteenth century, it passed into the possession of the tea master Murata Jukō.⁶⁹ The *Yamanoue Sōjiki* tea diary contains a passage which connects Jukō’s discernment with an account of his display of the “Flowing Engo” scroll at a tea gathering – an act which is said to have created the precedent for the use of calligraphic works by Zen monks as tearoom décor (now a common practice among all tea schools).⁷⁰ Jukō’s influential use of this scroll is also referenced in the 1745 *Discussions on the Origins of Tea*, in which the scroll is the first

⁶⁸ The scroll was the certification of enlightenment, or *inkajyō*, for Engo’s foremost disciple Kukyū Jōryū (Chinese, Hūqiū Shàolóng). It is considered the oldest extant document authored by a Chan master.

⁶⁹ Takuan Sōhō (1573-1645) became the 153rd abbot of Daitokuji in 1608. He founded Shōunji in 1625, so there was a natural linkage between the two Zen institutions. “Takuan.” Japan Knowledge Plus database, accessed May 5, 2013. <http://www.jkn21.com>.

⁷⁰ *Yamanoue Sōjiki*, 52.

example mentioned in a section which stresses the primacy of calligraphic hanging scrolls (often with Zen overtones) in the decoration of the tearoom for guests.⁷¹

References to the scroll by name appear in a number of earlier *meibutsuki* texts, including the 1660 *Record of Distinguished Objects for Appreciation* in which it is the very first object included under the section title “The Lord of Higashiyama’s venerable tea utensils,” a reference to Ashikaga Yoshimasa. It is listed as the seventh item in the *Matsuya Compilation of Famous Items*. Thus, by Fumai’s own lifetime, the “Flowing Engo” was already well-known and documented in well-known tea texts to which he was almost certainly exposed. The scroll later surfaced at one of Daitokuji’s sister temples, Shōunji in Sakai (founded in 1625). The means by which it came into Fumai’s hands is not recorded, but the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* records that Fumai purchased it in 1804.

The scroll’s illustrious chain of ownership, spiritual overtones, connection to the figure of Jukō, and association with setting a key precedent for the use of Zen calligraphy in the tearoom all marked it as a particularly desirable object for collectors, and a testament to Fumai himself as the current owner.⁷² Fumai’s writings explicitly state that he considered the scroll among the most valuable of his many personal treasures.

⁷¹ *Genryū chawa*, 399.

⁷² Zen calligraphy (*bokuseki*) mounted in the hanging scroll format (*kakemono*) is in many respects the definitive *karamono meibutsu*. As a category, it always receives primary listing in early modern *meibutsu* catalogs and texts such as the Genroku-era *Nanboroku* assert the importance of a hanging scroll bearing Zen sentiments as the most important object in the tearoom. This is partially due to the fact that the spiritual merits of the calligrapher, in most cases a venerable Chinese priest, were thought to physically adhere to the scroll itself. *Meibutsu chaki*, 198.

Engo calligraphy. [Owned by] Daitokuji temple – [moved to the city of] Sakai – [then found in the ownership of] Shōunji temple. Acquired in the first year of Bunka [1804] for 2,500 gold *ryō*.⁷³

Among the nearly six hundred items listed in the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* appear many other noted pieces that, like the two objects profiled above, also served to connect Fumai to the larger legacy of tea history, allowing him to connect in palpable way with objects handled by the likes of Jukō, Rikyū, Oribe, and Enshū.⁷⁴ The act of collecting, and the sharing of the knowledge of such items through published catalogues, offered Fumai a means to participate in, and contribute to, the legacy of tea history.

Fumai's writings about famous items also reveal other aspects of his approach to tea praxis that distinguish him from previous warlord tea masters. For example, mentions of dealers in teaware are common in *Famous Items of Izumo*. Fumai was a frequent patron of dealers in both imported and domestic teaware, building the bulk of his collection through purchases brokered by professional middlemen. The shop Fushimiya (belonging, an annotation informs the reader, to one Fushimiya Tadajirō, dates unknown), appears in entries for more than one hundred sixty items of the roughly six hundred objects listed in *Famous Items of Izumo*, and it was also the dealer Fumai used to purchase the “Oil Shop” tea caddy. Tea practitioners of Sansai and Oribe's generation most commonly exchanged utensils with fellow tea practitioners as gifts or by purchases arranged in person or via correspondence. Transactions of this kind required either personal acquaintance with the other party, or necessitated an intermediary who could arrange an introduction. Thus, Fumai's extensive dealings with professional dealers of tea objects marks a

⁷³ Matsudaira Fumai, *Unshū meibutsuki*, 272. The next highest price recorded for any single item is one thousand six hundred *ryō*, paid for the Aburaya *katatsuki chaire* tea caddy listed as the first item in the text. Only one or two other examples in the inventory reach the level of one thousand *ryō*. The “approximate value” listing for this item is the same as the actual price.

⁷⁴ For example, Fumai owned the “Kitano” teabowl used by Rikyū at the large public tea gathering organized by Toyotomi Hideyoshi at Kyoto's Kitano Tenmangu shrine in 1587. The bowl was named for this event, and it is also catalogued in the *Record of Famous Items of Izumo* with a selling price of 300 *ryō*. *Unshū meibutsu*, 374.

new phase in tea practice with regard to the manner in which objects were acquired and changed hands. Despite his youthful critiques at those who wasted money buying tea objects without the benefit of good taste, Fumai's own buying habits reveal a trend for the growth of an eighteenth-century market catering to the whims and desires of avid tea practitioners with money to spend.⁷⁵

Accounts of Fumai's tea gatherings

Accounts concerning Fumai's tea gatherings and the utensils displayed at such events appear in the writings of other tea practitioners and suggest that his activities as a collector were more than purely academic. Fumai's treasures were used and displayed publicly, even though the intended audiences were limited to elite retainers and his warlord peers. The diary of Okamoto Zuian (tea name Sōshū), a fourth-generation doctor in service to the Matsudaira family in Matsue, provides one such glimpse into Fumai's tea activities. The warlord's uncertain health insured that Fumai saw a good deal of Zuian during the years he resided in Matsue. Zuian's tea diary, *Okamoto Sōshū Record of Gatherings (Okamoto Sōshū kaiki, 1775-1808)*, records sixteen occasions upon which the physician was a guest at tea gatherings hosted by Fumai at Matsue Castle between 1775 and 1803. While the "Oil Shop" tea caddy does not made an appearance at any of those sixteen occasions (and Fumai had not yet acquired the "Flowing Engo" scroll), the items which were displayed for Fumai's guests do provide clues to the various influences on his tea. The decorative alcove of the castle tearoom featured calligraphy by Zen masters for a third of those gatherings, with five distinct calligraphic works by Daitokuji Zen priests, four of them by Kobori Enshū's mentor Takuan Sōhō and one by Daitokuji founder Shūhō Myōchō (1282–

⁷⁵ The growth of this market had begun in the late sixteenth century, as Japan participated in a robust trade network with the Ryūkyūs, China, Korea, Vietnam, and the Philippines, among other locations. The taste for imported ceramics fueled the growth of shops specializing in both imported and domestic teaware sprang up in cities like Sakai, Hakata and Kyoto where tea practice was widespread. See Cort, "Shopping for Pots in Momoyama Japan," 63.

1337, also known as Daitō Kokushi ("National Teacher of the Great Lamp"). Kobori Enshū also figures prominently in Fumai's selection of decorative scrolls, with letters, poems or other writings by Enshū featured three times. On another occasion Okamoto records that Fumai selected a letter by the warlord tea master Katagiri Sekishū.⁷⁶ Fumai's utensil collection and his practices in displaying items from it thus reified his connections to and participation in a long lineage of warrior tea masters who treated tea in part as one aspect of their spiritual identity-making. The selection of items from Enshū and Sekishū is salient insofar as Fumai considered both men as his *chanoyu* exemplars, modeling himself after these previous warlord tea masters.

Records of Fumai's tea gatherings indicate that he delighted in showcasing his treasures, often displaying a number of famous objects at a single tea gathering. One representative account details an 1816 tea gathering hosted at Fumai's Ōsaki villa during flower-viewing season. On this occasion, he displayed a painting by the thirteenth-century Chinese Buddhist artist Muqi, a teascoop made by Momoyama-era Zen monk Kei Shuso, a Korean Old Ido-ware teabowl named "Old Pine" (*Oimatsu*), a kettle that had once belonged to Sen Shōan (1546-1614), and a tea scoop made by Enshū.⁷⁷ In effect, almost every utensil used at this event was a *meibutsu* in its own right, a heady display of Fumai's virtuosity as a tea connoisseur.

By dint of their intrinsic value, *meibutsu* were associated specifically with warlord tea praxis, but the mere ownership of valuable items was insufficient to mark mastery. The diarist Yamanoue Sōji wrote of *meibutsu* that discernment and skill were more important than the mere possession of rare objects:

⁷⁶ Okamoto Zuian. *Okamoto Sōshū kaiki*, Excerpts. [Okamoto Sōshū Record of Gatherings, 1775-1808]. *Fumai-kō ten* [Lord Fumai Exhibition]. Tanabe Art Museum, ed. Matsue: Tanabe Art Museum, 2001, 91-98.

⁷⁷ Kumakura, "Matsudaira Fumai," 30.

One who gathers a collection of old and new Chinese utensils and devotes himself to the artistic display of famous objects is known as [a practitioner of] warrior tea . One who is skilled in judging the value of utensils and tea culture, and makes his way in the world by instructing tea practice is known as a tea person (*chajin*). One who does not own even one famed utensil, but incorporates the three qualities of resolution, creativity, and skill, is known as an admirer of rusticity (*wabi-suki*). One who owns Chinese utensils, can judge the value of utensils, is skilled in tea culture, has the three above qualities and aspires to a deep understanding of the way is a master (*meijin*).”⁷⁸

Yamanoue’s explicit association of *meibutsu* ownership with daimyo tea aficionados strikes a dismissive tone with regard to elite warrior practitioners insofar as it stresses an interest in “artistic display” and wealth over the qualities of personal judgment, creativity and skill emphasized as the qualities befitting a master, whether such a person is a warrior or not. The implication is that warlords may possess famous implements, this does not make up for a deficiency in taste. The diarist thus draws a distinction between practitioners who merely own famous pieces and those who have a “deep understanding” of both the utensils and the function of tea as a spiritual path, another attitude often associated with rustic tea.

While he never describes himself as a tea master and did not take disciples on in a formal sense, Fumai clearly placed himself in the company of those who had realized the “perfection of knowledge” and thus were uniquely qualified to lead the field of tea. Fumai’s compilation of *meibutsu* catalogs represents a codification of tea history in a manner that categorized, ranked, and ordered tea knowledge in a scientific mode that resonated with the intellectual trends of his times. These works also constituted the primary sites for the public demonstration of his mastery of *chanoyu* knowledge.

⁷⁸ Slusser, "The Transformation of Tea Practice in Sixteenth-Century Japan," 55. Slusser states he drew this translation from the version of the diary published in Hiroichi Tsutsui’s *Yamanoue Sōji ki o yomu*. Kyoto: Tankōsha, 1987: 259-260.

Conclusion

Until recently, tea historiography evaluated primarily Fumai on the basis of his contributions to the development of the genre of texts about famous tea items. In the postwar period, new scholarship has revealed the extent to which he participated in an ongoing public debate concerning both the merits and negative proclivities of tea praxis during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This chapter has illustrated the ways in which Fumai differed from previous warlord tea masters. His disinterest in the creation of a public persona as a tea expert based upon personal charisma, social connections, and a group of disciples as predecessors had done is one such departure: one which illustrates major shifts in how the samurai view the arts between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But in many respects Fumai emulated previous tea masters. Like Oribe, Enshū and other earlier warlord tea masters, Fumai wrote extensively about his philosophy of tea, kept records of his tea gatherings, collected and evaluated the value of tea implements. Although he had no formal group of disciples, he engaged actively in tea pedagogy with associates such as Sakai Sōga, his correspondence with whom reveals that Fumai had little difficulty placing himself in the expert's role. The relative anonymity of Fumai's role was in part a product of his geographic remove from the cultural centers of Edo and Kyoto in his home domain of Matsue, as well as a reflection of the bakufu's move away from designating one tea master as the director of *chanoyu* for the Tokugawa shoguns, a practice that ceased after Katagiri Sekishū's retirement in 1670.

Fumai's designation as a warlord tea master is thus primarily a historiographic one, posthumously awarded. Nevertheless, it is clear from his writings that Fumai did consider himself a tea master, albeit one whose high social status rendered self-promotion beneath his dignity. Fumai's discursive assertion of his own principles for tea study, and repeated statements

concerning relying on one's own authority rather than that dictated by precedent, mark him as an authority both in his own lifetime and thereafter. That this authority was only recognized by a handful of fellow daimyo and retainers seems not to have bothered Fumai in the slightest, nor should it color the evaluation of his historical legacy.

For Fumai, his authority was *sui generis*, requiring no validation beyond the privileged social position he had occupied from birth, coupled with the conviction of his own moral superiority. Fumai never felt it necessary to justify his classism – it was simply a normative feature of his personal worldview and not one that he felt he had to defend. Rather, within the Neo-Confucian gestalt of the era, his place at the top of the social hierarchy alone carried with it the implication of his own superior ethical vision. The reforms Fumai advocated did not undertake to educate the ill-formed among the lower classes, but rather to exclude them from tea praxis altogether. This approach that may offend our modern sense of fairness, but it was entirely in keeping with the status-conscious social milieu Fumai occupied. The approach to tea that Fumai and his peers embodied was a product of a mature Tokugawa cultural mode, one that “presupposed a morality which taught all men from the ruler down their place and duties in relation to each other, curbing ambition in conformity to the rules and expectations of each status in the network of human relationships.”⁷⁹ Thus, Fumai and his peers reflect an evolution of warlord tea praxis away from the use of tea as a *means* to cultural and political validation in the seventeenth century toward a later consideration of the art as the proper preserve of elite warriors, who were the only ones qualified—by dint of both *de facto* power and a society obsessed with differences of class—to grasp authentically its essence and to reform a tea praxis that failed to meet their arbitrary criteria. Fumai's work on *meibutsuki* texts was a significant

⁷⁹ Backus, “Matsudaira Sadanobu and Samurai Education,” 133.

articulation of this attitude insofar as these records were written for the benefit of the fellow elites Fumai considered “proper” tea practitioners, and excluded common readers both by dint of the expensive of the texts themselves as well as the prohibitive costs of the objects they catalogued.

Fumai’s multifaceted connections to the material culture of *chanoyu* have received more sustained scholarly attention. These too are key aspects of his legacy. Historian Mary Elizabeth Berry has noted that early modern tea practice was “inseparable from its vessels,” an assessment which Fumai appears to embody well.⁸⁰ The historian Morgan Pitelka observed that material culture offers a “means to illuminating the social networks of patronage and cultural practices” through which a given individual’s personal or familial authority was constructed and maintained.⁸¹ What Pitelka terms a “cultural profile” of such objects is shaped by multiple agents over time, by the object’s original creator, by subsequent owners, and by the various receptions accorded these objects by society at large. Material culture is thus a primary agent in the shaping of identity and the assertion of various types of aesthetic, social, or even moral, authority. In Fumai’s case, the worlds of material culture and textual production are unified in his life’s work on *meibutsu* catalogues. His dedication to the objects themselves, as well as their documentation for posterity, comprised a major contribution to early modern *chanoyu*.

Tea scholar Hayashiya Tatsusaburō has suggested that Fumai should be understood more as a *sukiya*, a “lover of tea” (and its accoutrements), than as a tea master.⁸² But Fumai was clearly more than simply a wealthy antiquarian. As this chapter has demonstrated, Matsudaira Fumai engaged in all of the typical activities of an early modern warlord tea master, omitting

⁸⁰ Mary Elizabeth Berry. *The Culture of Civil War in Kyoto*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994, 268.

⁸¹ Morgan Pitelka, "The Empire of Things: Tokugawa Ieyasu's Material Legacy and Cultural Profile," *Japanese Studies* 29, No. 1 (2009): 19.

⁸² Hayashiya, *Japanese Arts*, 153.

only the wider publicization of those roles, save through his writings. He was both a historian of *chanoyu* engaged in the proactive preservation of that heritage and someone who inserted himself into tea history through his acquisition of such objects. Fumai evinces his clear consciousness of this role when he charged his heirs with the continued preservation of his “treasures of Japan” in the opening lines of *Record of Famous Items of Izumo*. For Fumai, tea practice was the ideal form of self-cultivation in the Neo-Confucian mode, one which better qualified him to rule, and that also deeply informed the elitist worldviews around which such governance was constructed.

Chapter Five: “Correcting the Original Teachings”: Ii Naosuke and Late-Tokugawa *Chanoyu*

By the advent of the nineteenth century, shifting power dynamics within the tea world posed new challenges to the vision of a reformed tea “by warriors, for warriors” championed by the daimyo Matsudaira Fumai and his contemporaries. As described in previous chapters, the late seventeenth-century emergence of a hereditary system of organization for tea schools under family patriarchs called “family heads” (*iemoto*) had cemented the authority of the three Sen family schools in Kyoto, all of whom claimed the merchant Sen Rikyū as a common ancestor and “patron saint” (*chasei*). In Edo, the tea master Kawakami Fuhaku (1716-1807) founded the so-called “Edo House of Sen” (Edosenke) school. Although not a member of the Sen family, Fuhaku was a disciple of Sen Jōshinsai (1705-1751), the influential seventh-generation leader of the Omotesenke school. With the tacit approval of the Omote Sen faction in Kyoto, Fuhaku and his successors oversaw the instruction of Omotesenke-style tea in Edo. Thus, schools connected to the Sen tradition either by bloodline or by implied deputization collectively acted to eclipse much of the prominence the Sekishū school had formerly enjoyed among warrior tea masters until the early nineteenth century. Further compounding the reduced reach of the Sekishū school, the rising popularity of the Chinese-style *sencha* tea ceremony presented another competing art to draw elite warriors away from traditional *chanoyu* in favor of the simpler and less costly *sencha* practice.¹

¹ Reiko Tanimura. *Ii Naosuke: Shuyo to shite no chanoyu*. [Ii Naosuke: Chanoyu and Cultivation]. Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 2001, 66-67. Tanimura traces the dominance of the Sen schools to this period, citing the tenure of Omotesenke’s seventh-generation *iemoto* Jōshinsai (1705-1751) and Urasenke’s eighth-generation *iemoto* Yūgensai

Among these various contenders for artistic patronage, daimyo-founded tea lineages were not without their apologists in the nineteenth century. Unlike the Sen school and Enshū lineages (which like the Sen schools had split into two branch lines), the Sekishū tradition was not exclusively based upon hereditary bloodlines. Rather, Sekishū teachers had long encouraged the proliferation of sub-branches under the leadership of disciples without familial ties to the Katagiri family. In an environment in which various strains of tea praxis competed for adherents, the warlord Ii Naosuke (tea name Sōkan, 1815-1860) forcefully reasserted the primacy of the Sekishū school, and by extension, tea “by warriors, for warriors” much as his predecessor Matsudaira Fumai had done. Naosuke mounted a discursive defense of warlord tea which asserted the art as one uniquely befitting those who ruled, whether in regional domains, or as a part of the central Tokugawa state apparatus. Naosuke’s defense of warlord tea largely escaped the attention of historians until well into the postwar era because his writings remained in very limited circulation until that time, while accounts of his political career dominated historical studies concerning him. Over the past three decades, the gradual publication of the Ii family papers by the Hikone Castle Museum has enabled Ii Naosuke’s contributions to receive belated scholarly attention. Coeval with this, scholars of tea history have recognized Naosuke’s written contributions as crucial primary sources which illuminate the nature of warlord tea praxis at the close of Tokugawa rule.

This chapter will explore Naosuke’s tea career and explicate the relationship between his development as a practitioner of tea in tandem with his late arrival in the political realm. An examination of Naosuke’s extensive corpus of writings on the subjects of tea, and also on government, will demonstrate that he merits a place in the group of influential daimyo tea

(1719-1772). For more on the history of *sencha*, see Graham, *Tea of the Sages: The Art of Sencha* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press).

practitioners who shaped warlord tea over the long span of the Tokugawa era. Naosuke's correspondence, essays and the records of his tea gatherings demonstrate not only the increasingly public orientation of his tea activities, but also provide evidence of the manner in which some daimyo continued to assert a special claim to the larger legacies of tea history. Naosuke boldly co-opted the authority of Sen Rikyū, creating a new lineage emanating from Rikyū but eschewing Sen family descendants. Naosuke instead asserted the transmission of Rikyū's thought down the centuries via a warlord-centered lineage with his own figure placed at its culmination.

Naosuke as historical figure

Despite his lifelong dedication to the art of tea, Ii Naosuke has not always been remembered for his connection to *chanoyu*, despite his status as a branch master of the Sekishū school. This occlusion can be attributed to two factors. One is the dramatic, even scandalous, nature of Naosuke's political career, spanning a mere decade at the end of his life; the second, which shall be addressed later in this chapter, has to do with his relative obscurity prior to a belated entry into public life. Naosuke is particularly remembered for his actions during a two-year tenure (1858-1860) as the shogunate's great elder (*tairō*) during a time of unprecedented crises for the floundering Tokugawa government. At the time that Naosuke assumed this powerful post, a scant five years had elapsed since Commodore Matthew Perry's black ships had arrived in Edo Bay, breaching long-held policies supporting seclusion from most Western powers other than the Dutch; and the country became deeply divided over how best to respond to

the imposition of an unequal trade treaty put forth by United States Consul General Townsend Harris (d. 1878) in 1858.²

Although his tenure as great elder was brief, it was rife with controversy. Naosuke assumed a highly visible role in ratifying the Harris Treaty, settled a contentious shogunal succession dispute, and instigated a political purge which removed numerous opposing figures from leadership. This latter event led to his assassination by Mito loyalists in 1860, cutting short his careers as both a politician and as a tea master. These dramatic events have long overshadowed his depiction in the historical record, all but eclipsing the legacy of his lifelong contributions to and scholarship on *chanoyu*, even though the first four decades of Naosuke's life were devoted almost entirely to that art. Only recently have tea scholars such as Tanimura Reiko begun to acknowledge both Naosuke's artistic and political personas as key facets of his public career – ones that intersect in significant ways. An analysis of Naosuke's extensive writings on tea (many of which remained in very limited circulation during his lifetime) reveal that the state of tea praxis in the waning years of shogunal rule had taken a decidedly public turn – one in which Matsudaira Fumai's claim, circa 1770, that a personal tea practice offered substantive aid to rulers in the management of the polity was expounded – and expanded – by Naosuke's own interpretation of the applicability of *chanoyu* to warrior government.³

The limited postwar scholarship which does address both Naosuke's political and tea identities together acknowledges that his substantive textual legacy is the basis upon which his name has been added – albeit belatedly – to the historiographical register of important warlord

² Officially known as the “Treaty of Amity and Commerce” (*Nichibei shūkō tsūshō jōyaku*), the treaty is also commonly called the “Harris Treaty”. Signed on the USS Powhatan in Edo Bay on July 29, 1858, the agreement opened the port of Kanagawa and four other cities to American trade. There was tremendous public resistance to this decision within Japan.

³ Kuwata, *Chadō to chajin*, 248.

tea practitioners. The delayed scholarly attention directed to his tea activities has resulted in a perceivable interpretative rift between Naosuke's dual identities as a prominent political actor and as a master of tea. This situation remains largely unresolved in current scholarship, as scholars have tended to focus either upon Naosuke's political legacy, or upon his artistic one, to the exclusion of a more holistic evaluation of his contributions to both spheres. Even Tanimura's groundbreaking study, *Ii Naosuke: Chanoyu and Cultivation (Ii Naosuke: Shuyo to shite no chanoyu* published in 2001), organizes the consideration of Naosuke's engagement with tea in accordance with the stages of advancement in his political career.⁴ Tanimura notes that the interpretative bifurcation made between Naosuke's political and artistic identities makes it seem as if he has "been split into two separate personalities."⁵ The fact that unlike other warlord tea masters included in this study, Naosuke continues to be more commonly referenced by his given name rather than his tea name, Sōkan, offers additional evidence of the persistence of this interpretative split.⁶ In spite of this, the historical evidence suggests that even during his most intensive periods of political activity, Naosuke's interest in tea continued unabated. This chapter recognizes the importance of grasping a more holistic understanding of Naosuke's relevance to tea history – one that more fully comprehends his position at the terminus of the succession of early modern warlord tea masters that this project traces.

⁴ Reiko Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke: Shuyo to shite no chanoyu*. [Ii Naosuke: Chanoyu and Cultivation]. Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 2001. Later works have replicated Tanimura's political model for organization. An almost identical model may also be observed in Yoshikazu Mori's study, *Ii Naosuke: Bakumatsu ishin no kōsei* [Ii Naosuke: Characteristics of Late Tokugawa and Restoration Eras]. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2006.

⁵ Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke*, 4.

⁶ This may also be said to be true for Fumai, whose tea name of Sōnō is rarely used. However, Fumai is itself a Buddhist appellation, and therefore fitting as an artistic moniker. Fumai's given name was Harusato. A profile identifying Naosuke by his tea name in a section on important "late-stage" daimyo tea master appears in. *Cha ni ikita hito* [People Who Lived for Tea], ed. Tadachika Kuwata. *Zusetsu chadō taiki*, Vol. 7. Tokyo: Kadokawa shoten, 1965, 213-222.

Tendencies toward a disciplinary separation of scholarship on Naosuke into the camps of political history and cultural history can be partially explained by the chronology of his overall career. In many respects, Naosuke's political career began late in life, around the time of his unexpected succession to the leadership of Hikone domain in 1850 at the age of thirty-five. Up until that juncture, Naosuke spent many years living in relative retirement, dedicating a major part of his time to the tea ceremony, indulging his tastes for textual scholarship (particularly in the field of historical tea writings), and authoring numerous treatises on *chanoyu*, efforts pursued with the goal of eventually establishing his own branch of the Sekishū school of tea. While there is little evidence that these texts circulated widely during his lifetime, many of his writings were clearly intended for a wider audience and others seem to have been disseminated in a limited manner among a select group of fellow tea practitioners and disciples. It is on the basis of this body of work that Naosuke has come to be interpreted by cultural historians as a warrior who considered *chanoyu* a form of spiritual "meditation" and as a means for "moral improvement."⁷ Drawn from his extensive writings on tea, such characterizations of Naosuke as a tea master with a tendency to rumination upon the spiritual dimensions of tea practice appear to be at odds with his reputation among social historians as a headstrong political leader prone to the swift removal of his political detractors from office, but the evidence will show that Naosuke's political decisiveness reflects a personal tendency for firm judgment that is also observable in his approach to tea.

Historiographical trends

Naosuke's political legacy and his Meiji-era characterization as a traitor to the imperial cause appears to have impeded interest in the publication of his tea writings in the decades

⁷ Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 138.

following his death in 1860. Sensitive to the public perception of Naosuke as a traitor to the imperial court, his records were withheld from publication by the Ii family (in whose possession they remained) until the twentieth century. Conversely, it was precisely Naosuke's central role in events of national significance that marked the late Tokugawa years as important for tea historians. Paul Varley argues that Naosuke's dual identities as one of the "leading actors" in late Tokugawa politics and as a "devoted student and practitioner of *chanoyu*" constitute the basis of his contribution to tea history.⁸

Early political studies of Naosuke such as Shimada Saburō's three-volume *The Opening of the Country from Beginning to End: The Account of Lord Ii* (*Kaikoku shimatsu kan: Ii kamon no kami den*, 1888), Ōkubo Yosogorō's *Ieyasu and Naosuke* (*Ieyasu to Naosuke*, 1901), Nakamura Katsumaro's *Grand Elder Naosuke and the Opening of Ports* (*Naosuke tairō to kaikō*, 1909), and Nakamura Kichizō's *The Death of Grand Elder Ii* (*Ii tairō no shi*, 1920) focus primarily, if not exclusively, on the historical significance of Naosuke's political activities as a warlord and later, as great elder of the Tokugawa Council of Elders (*rōjū*), during the final decade of his life, 1850-1860.⁹ Naosuke's self-crafted identity as a tea expert is almost completely overlooked in such studies.

The first indication that Japanese historians were considering Naosuke in terms of tea history emerged in 1914, when retired industrialist Takahashi Yoshiō (1861-1937, also known as Sōan), gained access to materials still housed in the former Hikone domain, using them to

⁸ Varley, "Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch," 185-187.

⁹ Bibliographical citations for these early works follow. 1) Saburō Shimada. *Kaikoku shimatsu: Ii Naosuke no den* [The Opening of the Country from Beginning to End: The Account of Lord Ii, 1887-1888]. 3 volumes. Unknown publisher. NCID BA42576333; 2) Yosogorō Ōkubo. *Ieyasu to Naosuke* [Ieyasu and Naosuke]. Tokyo: Shunyōdō Shuppan, 1901 NCID: BN0882092; 3) Katsumaro Nakamura. *Naosuke tairō to kaikō* [Great Elder Naosuke and the Opening of the Ports]. Tokyo: Keiseisha, 1909; and 4) Kichizō Nakamura. *Ii tairō no shi* [The Death of Great Elder Ii]. City of publication unknown. Tenyūsha, 1920.

publish the two-volume *Stories of Grand Elder Ii's Way of Tea* (*Ii tairō chadōdan*) in advance of the one-hundredth anniversary of Naosuke's birth in 1815. Upon the heels of this, Takahashi produced a serialized set of seven articles under the headline, "Grand Elder Ii's Views on Tea" (*Ii tairō no chadōkan*) for publication in the national *Jiji shinpō* newspaper. Historian Kumakura Isao observes that these articles were among the first to make the full extent of Naosuke's involvement with tea known to the Japanese public.¹⁰ Despite this initial acknowledgement of Naosuke as a warlord tea master, lack of ready access to his papers forestalled further scholarship until the postwar period.

The year 1948 proved a turning point in the historiographical treatment of Naosuke, ushering in the establishment of the Great Elder Ii Historical Materials Research Organization in Hikone. Working from the local repository of Ii family papers, in 1950 this group published *Research on Grand Elder Ii* (*Ii tairō no kenkyū*). In 1953, Hikone native Yabe Kanichi drew on the same resources to write *Young Premier Ii Tairō and his Diplomatic Policies with the United States* (*Seinen shushō Ii tairō no seiji to Nichibei gaikō*). These early scholars had a great deal of material to work with, as the Ii family archives contain more than 27,000 manuscripts, roughly eight hundred of which directly concern *chanoyu*.¹¹ Although the focus of these immediate postwar works was still overtly oriented toward political history, greater access to Naosuke's papers in Hikone allowed the full scope of his engagement with and scholarship about tea to emerge for the first time. This led to the inclusion of Naosuke's most representative work, *Collection for a Tea Gathering* (*Chanoyu ichieshū*, 1857) in the 1961 edition of the multi-volume *Compendium of Classical Writing on the Way of Tea* (*Chadō koten zenshū*), a collection

¹⁰ *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*. [The Tea of Ii Naosuke]. Isao Kumakura, ed. Tokyo: Kokusho, 2007, 2. Efforts to obtain images of the original newspaper articles (which survive only in Japan) have so far been unsuccessful.

¹¹ Kumakura, *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, 3.

of primary sources writings on tea compiled and published by the Urasenke school of tea. Four years later, a brief profile of Naosuke using his tea name of Ii Sōkan was included in a section entitled “three warlord tea masters” (*sannin no daimyo chajin*) in 1965’s *People Who Lived for Tea (Cha ni ikita hito)*.¹²

Although a brief overview of Naosuke’s career appeared in the 1989 English-language volume *Tea in Japan*, the first in-depth study of Naosuke as a tea practitioner appeared in 2001, with the publication of Tanimura Reiko’s aforementioned study *Ii Naosuke: Chanoyu and Cultivation (Ii Naosuke: Shuyo to shite no chanoyu)*.¹³ Tanimura mined the trove of Naosuke’s writings on tea held by the Hikone Castle Museum to produce the first sustained analysis of Naosuke’s long engagement with *chanoyu*. Shortly thereafter, the Hikone Castle Museum staff released a two-volume set of historical materials covering Naosuke as a tea master, published in 2002 and 2007, respectively.

Despite the belated nature of historical research into the matter, during his own lifetime Naosuke’s reputation as a man of tea was a recognized facet of his public persona.¹⁴ Eventually, these records would extend to seven separate volumes. Later volumes record the presence of many notable late Tokugawa figures as guests at tea gatherings he held in Edo while acting as great elder. Despite his public persona as a tea master, Naosuke’s role in the settlement of a number of late-Tokugawa political crises overshadowed a much longer scholarly and personal engagement with *chanoyu* extending back into his childhood years as the son of Ii Naonaka, the thirteenth-generation lord of Hikone.

¹² *Cha ni ikita hito* [People Who Lived for Tea]. 1965. Tadachika Kuwata, ed. *Zusetsu chadō taikai*, Vol. 7. Tokyo: Kadokawa Shoten: 188-222.

¹³ Varley, “*Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch*,” 161-194.

¹⁴ Akio Tanihata. “The Tea Gathering of Ii Naosuke” [*Ii Naosuke no chakai*], in *Ii Naosuke n Chanoyu* [The Tea of Ii Naosuke], ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Kokusho, 2007, 159-179. The four-and-a-half mat Tenkō-shitsu tearoom is preserved at Hikone Castle.

Early life

Born in 1815, Ii Naosuke was the scion of one of the largest hereditary houses of daimyo allied to the Tokugawa shoguns. For nearly two centuries, Hikone domain (in modern Shiga prefecture) ranked among the largest in the realm, with an annual income that had grown to 350,000 *koku* by Naosuke's lifetime. Like many younger sons, Naosuke spent the first sixteen years of his life at Hikone Castle, where he was provided an education which incorporated both the arts and training in military skills. In 1831, the death of his father, Naonaka, compelled Naosuke (along with his younger half-brother Naoyasu, 1820-1888), to depart the castle compound and enter a separate residence as their elder brother Naomoto assumed the post as the fourteenth-generation lord of Hikone.

Following his departure from Hikone Castle, and with few prospects for a political career, Naosuke took up residence at a modest villa owned by the Ii family located just opposite Hikone Castle's outermost moat. Naosuke named his abode the "The Bogwood Residence" (*Umoreginoya*), and so closely is he associated with this site that historians such as Tanimura Reiko, Ōhara Kazuo, and Ōkubo Haruo all refer to the years 1831-1846 as Naosuke's "Bogwood Residence period."¹⁵ The villa's name is a reference to both the stymied nature of Naosuke's political career as well as his favorable self-opinion. A type of wood favored for its durability, bogwood is formed when timber is buried in marsh sediment, covered by volcanic flow, or submerged in water for many years, becoming partially carbonized in the process.¹⁶ The resulting material is prized for its resilience and beauty, since the wood often retains its natural

¹⁵ Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 141; and Kazuo Ōhara. *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru denkiteki shiryō kakurontenki nōto* [Ii Naosuke: Expository Notes from a Psychiatrist on Biographical Historical Materials]. Tokyo: Parade Books, 2011, 18.

¹⁶ "Umoregi." Japan Knowledge Lib database. <http://www.jkn21.com>. GWLA Consortium, University of Kansas. Lawrence, KS. 1 December 2014.

grain throughout a protracted process of out-of-sight metamorphosis. The trope of a potentially squandered, but nonetheless valuable, resource appealed to Naosuke's awareness that as the fourteenth son of a daimyo family, he may be fated to pass the years in obscurity.

At the age of twenty, Naosuke expressed these sentiments in the *Record of the House of the Buried Wood* (*Umorigiya no ki*, 1835), writing, "Even if I am a piece of buried wood and denied all material things and a future, I shall continue to cultivate those arts required by my station."¹⁷ While Naosuke articulated his sense of alienation from a political role, he also attempted to find some higher purpose in his enforced absence from public life:

It is not the case that I despise the world, nevertheless I have overcome my fixation on worldly matters and desire nothing more. Like a piece of wood buried in the mud, I am content with living in seclusion and pursuing the work that I ought.¹⁸

This statement should not be taken as an indication of Naosuke's resignation to a life spent in obscurity, as his writings throughout his years at the Bogwood Residence express the clear sense that the personal occupations he considered necessary were intended to ready him for the possibility, however remote, of public office. Writing in Japanese, the historian Ōhara Kazuo applied the English term "moratorium" to Naosuke's tenure at the Bogwood villa, interpreting this period as one in which Naosuke focused upon the work of arduous self-cultivation through civil and martial arts, eschewing the cultivation of broader social connections.¹⁹

His convictions notwithstanding, the odds that Naosuke would ever rule Hikone were negligible under a system which routinely saw younger sons farmed out to Buddhist monasteries or adopted into the families of fellow daimyo and other retainers. This practice was especially

¹⁷ Translation from Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 141.

¹⁸ This translation is my own. For more on the "Record of the House of the Buried Wood" see the Umoriginoya homepage, <http://www.umoreya.com/umoriginoya/umoriginoya.htm>. Accessed November 14, 2014. Tanimura notes that the original document is among the Ii family papers in the possession of the Hikone Castle Museum, document 6998. Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 141; 149.

¹⁹ Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 20.

common in cases where sons were plentiful, as was the case with the Ii family. Typically, younger sons were provided with residences detached from the primary household and sometimes afforded a modest living stipend. This seems to have been the case with Naosuke and his younger half-brother Naoyasu, both of whom were removed from the relative privilege of life within the keep of Hikone Castle. Upon the age of majority, supernumerary sons of daimyo families often found themselves under straitened economic circumstances in a society which forbade warriors to make the occupational shift to income-generating activities.

Ōhara Kazuo suggests that upon taking up residence at the Umoreginoya villa, the economic situation faced by Naosuke and Naoyasu was less dire than that faced by other daimyo offspring insofar as they were provided with an income of 300 *koku* annually, and many of the household expenses were defrayed by the central branch of the Ii family. In the seventh month of 1834, both Naosuke and Naoyasu were summoned to Edo for possible placement by adoption with other daimyo families. However, a position was only found for Naoyasu, who was adopted into the Naitō clan from Nobeoka domain (modern Miyazaki prefecture), taking the name of Naitō Masayoshi and eventually assuming leadership of the region with an annual income of 70,000 *koku*.²⁰ While his younger brother moved on to a life of privilege, Naosuke was faced with the galling prospect of departing Edo and returning to his humble lifestyle in Hikone.

Naosuke's frustration at this outcome is apparent in a letter he sent to his Edo-based instructor in the Yamaga school of martial arts, Nishimura Daishirō (dates unknown), following his ignominious return to Hikone around 1836. He writes, "Having been obliged by a prohibition to halt my progress along this path midway, my thought is that that my martial studies have been

²⁰ Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 18-19. Ōhara estimates that the combined impact of these family subsidies to the income of the two brothers brought their effective income level up to a level equivalent to an income of 1,000 *koku* per year.

brought to an end as if striking against a shield.”²¹ Naosuke employs the metaphor of a shield blocking his access to training in expressing his frustration at the suspension of his studies with Nishimura in Edo and the resumption of his life in seclusion.

Despite his complaint in the letter above, over the course of the fifteen years Naosuke spent at the Bogwood Residence his study of martial arts continued, often under the instruction of Ii clan retainers. His martial pursuits (fencing and archery) were bolstered by intellectual ones (tea, Zen meditation, poetry, and “national learning,” or *kokugaku*, a tradition of nativist studies which stressed the superiority of Japanese culture via Confucian ideologies and antiquarian literary studies). In this respect, Naosuke differed little from many other high-minded warriors who found themselves cut off from political office and with time on their hands. In Naosuke’s case, a dearth of official duties until the year 1848 seems to have catalyzed a prodigious rate of textual production. His writings during the years at the Bogwood villa included treatises on a variety of topics. He produced a treatise on martial arts detailing the progressive stages of his training with the sword, the spear (*yari*) and the crossbow (*ishiyumi*). Naosuke took his military studies seriously, receiving certification of the transmission in the teachings of the Yamaga Sōkō school of military studies in 1839.²² But despite these forays into the martial arts, *chanoyu* soon emerged as the primary focus of Naosuke’s intellectual efforts.

Naosuke’s introduction to tea seems to have occurred before he moved out of Hikone Castle. One likely source of Naosuke’s interest in the Sekishū school of tea was the family

²¹ Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 25; 378. The text of the letter is reproduced in two early-twentieth century political studies of Naosuke: Shimada, *Kaikoku shimatsu: Ii kamon no kami Naosuke den* (1888) and Nakamura, *Ii tairō to kaikō* (1909).

²² Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 22-25. Naosuke’s manuscript, entitled *Shichi-go-san iai hissho*, documents the author’s analysis of his own progression in the martial arts through seven beginning, five intermediate and three final stages of ability.

retainer Mano Akemi. Akemi entered the employ of the Ii clan around 1820, during Naosuke's early childhood, and trained in Sekishū-style tea under the tutelage of Katagiri Sadanobu (1802-1848), an eighth-generation warlord of the Koizumi domain (in modern Nara prefecture) and a senior member of the main branch of the Katagiri family. Letters exchanged between Akemi and Naosuke, as well as the retainer's surviving inscription on a box for a red Raku-ware teabowl in the Ii family collection, which attributed the bowl's production to Naosuke personally, suggest a close relationship existed between the two men.²³

Naosuke's selection of the Sekishū school may be purely coincidental, attributable to the initial training he received from household retainers such as Mano who had themselves studied in the Sekishū tradition. While Tanimura points to Naosuke's persistent concern with "the collapse of warrior-class tea and ... the disintegration of the warrior spirit in general," as possible reasons for Naosuke's gravitation to the Sekishū tradition, no evidence of the presence of teachers of alternate schools in the immediate Hikone region has come to light, so it may have been a matter of convenience alone. The Sekishū school had long enjoyed shogunal patronage as it was perceived to represent a tradition of tea uniquely tied to warrior identity. In defense of her contention that Naosuke deliberately chose the Sekishū school, Tanimura notes this may also have been a reaction to warriors who had elected to "switch their allegiance" from Sekishū tea to one of the three Sen schools. While Naosuke's later writings unquestionably assert the superiority of the Sekishū school, given his limited exposure to alternate traditions during this early period, the question of his intention remains ambiguous.²⁴

A Letter on the Way of Tea and Primer

²³ Mori, *Ii Naosuke*, 63-65. The dates of Mano Akemi's life are unknown.

²⁴ Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke shūyo to shite*, 6.

After leaving Hikone Castle at the age of sixteen, Naosuke undertook his tea practice in the four-and-a-half-mat tearoom “Dewy Grove Arbor” (*Juroken*) at the Bogwood Residence; and in accordance with *chanoyu* customs, *Juroken* came to serve as one of his many sobriquets.²⁵ Over the period of his residence at the villa, Naosuke produced a series of more than two dozen texts concerning *chanoyu*. Of these, two manuscripts attest to his approach to *chanoyu* with particular clarity: *A Letter on the Way of Tea (Toganō michifumi)* and *Primer (Nyūmonki)*.

Naosuke wrote *Letter on the Way of Tea* in 1838, when he was about 23 years of age.²⁶ Written as though in response to a question posed by an interlocutor, a tactic Naosuke would adopt for some later writings, *Letter on the Way of Tea* offered a multi-faceted apologetics for *chanoyu*. This rhetorical approach was not unique to Naosuke, but was modelled upon other early modern texts that similarly present information in the format of an imagined dialogue, an approach that conferred discursive authority by dint of its resemblance to the reporting of actual dialogue.²⁷

Naosuke presents his argument from multiple perspectives, alternately stressing tea as a means for enjoyment, a method for cultivating of personal character, and as a pastime uniquely suited to warriors, even those of limited material means. Naosuke’s *chanoyu* apologetics were in part a reaction to the continued condemnation of tea by some factions of warrior society that considered tea frivolous, some domains even banning retainers from tea altogether (tellingly,

²⁵ Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 25. The *Juroken* tearoom is still extant at Umoregiya. The entire Umoreginoya site is now open to tourists.

²⁶ The place name “Toganō” in the title is a referent for a tea-growing region near Kōzanji temple in the northwest portion of Kyoto. Myō-e (d. 1223), a priest of the Kozanji temple in northwest Kyoto was said to have been given tea seeds by the Rinzai Zen priest Eisai (d.1215). Tea was thereafter cultivated in the Togano-o region, which was said to have a climate particularly suited to the crop. Tea from this region became known as *Togano-o cha*. Later, tea plants were transplanted to Uji south of Kyoto prior to spreading to multiple locations across the archipelago. See Mori, *Ii Naosuke*, 53.

²⁷ Eric Rath suggests that *Talks on Sarugaku (Sarugaku dangi)*, a text in which artistic discourse is presented as a dialogue with the playwright Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443), is one such example.

such restrictions were rarely applied to the daimyo himself).²⁸ Naosuke's discourse countered such critiques, acknowledging the pleasurable aspects of tea while stressing the serious, foundational principles that supported his view of tea praxis as a valid mode of spiritual discipline.

In the *Letter on the Way of Tea*, Naosuke defined the purposes of tea praxis in three ways, "for reality, for harmony, for relaxation." Ultimately, he writes, tea is just as relevant to the cultivation of a warrior as military training: "Whether one rules over one's own spirit here in the (tea) room, or takes up the bow, in either case this shall prove of assistance." In analyzing this passage, historian Mori Yoshikazu characterizes Naosuke's approach as one which values the "way of both civil and military arts."²⁹ Naosuke's process of self-cultivation was thus one that exhibited a conscious balancing of his military and artistic identities. His perspective in *Letter on the Way of Tea* reflects an early stage of his career when his training in the Yamaga school of martial arts was nearing completion. Living in seclusion, his attention divided between military studies and tea, Naosuke conceptualized *chanoyu* as one component in balancing his dedication to personal cultivation with thwarted political ambitions. As the years passed and no official position was forthcoming, *chanoyu* increasingly represented an alternate career path in its own right.

In the tenth year of his residence at the Hikone villa, Naosuke announced his intention to establish his own branch of the Sekishū school in the opening lines of a treatise entitled *Primer* (*Nyūmonki*, 1845). He wrote, "Insofar as I know that the true path [of tea] is not being followed,

²⁸ For example, Tokugawa Nariaki (1800-1860), the ninth daimyo of the Mito domain (modern Ibaraki prefecture), banned his retainers from *chanoyu*, but exempted his own household from this restriction. Nariaki himself not only did tea but maintained a special kiln in his gardens for firing teabowls, some of which he presented as gifts. See Kikue Yamakawa. *Women of the Mito Domain: Recollections of Samurai Family Life*, trans. Kate Wildman Nakai. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001, 79.

²⁹ Mori, *Ii Naosuke*, 54.

I shall advance my way to the wise and shall not include the foolish.”³⁰ Naosuke’s statement of his intention to inculcate the wise while excluding the foolish marks the *Primer* as a text intended by the author for public dissemination. It was, in effect, a recruitment call for the branch school of the Sekishū tradition that Naosuke had announced his intention to found. The transmission of variant versions of both this text and his later didactic tea manifesto *Collection for a Tea Gathering (Chanoyu ichieshū)* indicates that by the late 1850s, at least a few of Naosuke’s writings were in fact in limited circulation among his contemporaries and disciples, an audience almost exclusively comprised of warriors of comparative rank.³¹

The *Primer* also served as a discursive outlet for Naosuke’s desire to address the problem of “worldly tea.” Naosuke viewed the *chanoyu* of his era as a corruption of the “original teachings.” In the *Primer*, Naosuke wrote that he would “put a stop to error and correct the original, in so doing I will establish my own branch.”³² As previously noted, the founding of individual branches was particularly common within the Sekishū school. It was a tea lineage which set the precedent for the transmission of teachings directly from teachers to students, regardless of the blood connection of either party to founder Katagiri Sekishū (though the initial training of acolytes often proceeded under the supervision of figures hailing from various branches of the Katagiri family prior to establishing offshoot branches under their own names). Naosuke’s ambition to establish his own branch within the larger Sekishū lineage was an act that he repeatedly portrays in his text as one of “correction” or “rectification.” It was also a means by which he sought to affirm linkages to earlier tea masters and to the larger scope of tea history,

³⁰ From *Nyūmonki*. [Primer, 1845], in *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*. Vol. 1, ed. Isao Kumakura. Hikone: Hikone-jo Hakubutsukan, 2002: 125.

³¹ The existence of three versions of “Primer” also hint at Naosuke’s intention for this text to circulate, since the presumed oldest version is copied in Naosuke’s own hand in *kanbun* without annotation, whereas later version include *yomikudashi* annotation and *okurigana* appended, seemingly to aid readability. *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, Vol. 1, 326.

³² *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, Vol. 1, 125.

consistently placing a special emphasis on his fellow practitioners among the warrior elite. Naosuke's discursive focus on warrior tea was not accidental, since as the son of a powerful daimyo he also claimed authority supported by his membership in that social estate.

Naosuke's class-based worldview in the *Primer* envisioned his own tea praxis as the natural culmination of the lineage of warlord tea masters. The *Primer* lists six earlier figures whom he considered as his guides to tea study as a portion of the text's larger explanation concerning why Naosuke has decided to found his own branch of the Sekishū school. Of these six, four are warlords: Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa, Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, and Katagiri Sekishū.³³ Later, in four genealogies of tea traditions he compiled in the late 1850s, Naosuke again invoked the names of these progenitors of warlord tea, appending the names of figures such as the Sekishū branch founder and the warlord Matsudaira Fumai (d. 1818).

(Re)writing warrior tea history

Naosuke's scholarship into tea history demonstrates his focus on affirming a central place for warriors within *chanoyu* history.³⁴ Building upon the perceived decline in the status of the Sekishū school that Matsudaira Fumai had sought to correct a half-century earlier, Naosuke expressed his interpretation of *chanoyu* as a discipline especially, even exclusively, suited to members of the warrior status group by asserting the importance of warrior leaders wherever they appeared in his revisions of tea genealogies. Naosuke's genealogies traced the transmission of *chanoyu* through the successive generations of teachers in both his own Sekishū school and in

³³ In this 1845 text, Naosuke lists (in order) Ashikaga Yoshimasa (here referred to as Higashiyama-dono), Murata Jukō, Sen Rikyū, Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, and finally Katagiri Sekishū. Ii Naosuke. *Nyūmonki*. [Record of Entering the Gate, 1845] Isao Kumakura, ed. *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*. Vol. 1 Hikone: Hikone-jo Hakubutsukan, 2002: 125; 336.

³⁴ As he had not yet achieved daimyo status at the time that many of these texts were written, Naosuke's vision by necessity included warriors of good breeding but ambiguous status.

those of competing schools.³⁵ As source material, his lineages drew heavily from the two-volume *Genealogy of Tea Masters Past and Present (Kokin chajin keifu)* by Sekishū tea master Suzuki Masamichi, published in 1832.³⁶ Suzuki's first volume traced tea lineages from "ancient" masters such as Murata Jukō, Sen Rikyū and disciples considered to be within the combined lineage of Rikyū, including figures such as Oda Uraku, Hosokawa Sansai, Sugiki Fusai, Yamada Sōhen and Koshin Sōsa. The second volume focused on branches of warrior tea including daimyo practitioners such as Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, and Katagiri Sekishū.

In contrast, Naosuke's genealogies of tea practitioners modified the model presented in Suzuki's originals, undoing and "correcting" the separation of warrior tea masters from the more established "ancient" lineages. Naosuke's revised "ancient" lineage presented a new lineup proceeding from Murata Jukō to Takeda Jō'ō, Rikyū and his "direct disciples," a group in which Naosuke includes Oda Uraku, Hosokawa Sansai, Yabunouchi Chikushin, and Nanbō (also known as Nanpō), the putative (and probably invented) author of the *Record of Nanpō (Nanpōroku)*.³⁷ In Naosuke's reconstructed nomenclature, the Sen family is divided along generational lines. Sen Rikyū, his sons Dōan and Sōan, and his direct disciples (including many prominent warlords) are collectively termed the "former Sen house," whereas later generations of the restored Sen family line commencing with Rikyū's grandson Sen Sōtan and the "three Sen houses" founded by Sōtan's sons (Urasenke, Omotesenke and Mushanokōjisenke) are treated

³⁵ These included the "Genealogy of Tea Masters in the Sekishū and Enshū Schools" (*Sekishū-ryū Enshū-ryū chajin keifu*) the "Genealogy of Ancient Tea Masters" (*Koryū chajin keifu*), "Genealogy of the Former Sen House Tea Masters" (*Mae no Senke chajin keifu*) and "Genealogy of the Latter Sen House Tea Masters" (*Nochi no Senke chajin keifu*). *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, Vol. 2, 77-123; 333.

³⁶ Masamichi Suzuki. *Chajin keifu* [A Genealogy of Tea Persons, 1832]. Publisher unknown. NCID: BA73314772.

³⁷ Alternately titled the *Record of Nanpō* or the *Southern Record*, the *Nanpōroku* is a text purporting to be a collection of oral teachings by Rikyū but in fact composed in the late seventeenth century by Tachibana Jitsuzan (1655-1708) and published around 1686. Most tea scholars now consider its origins specious and dismiss its claims to represent an account preserved by an otherwise unknown disciple of Rikyū named Nanpō.

separately under the heading of the “latter Sen houses.”³⁸ The categorical distinction Naosuke made between Rikyū’s heritage and the “latter Sen houses” represented by Sōtan and his sons posited a break in the Sen lineage, drawing the authority of the contemporary Sen schools into question.

Naosuke’s deliberate rearrangement of tea lineages constituted a re-centering of warrior practitioners into tea history by marginalizing the contemporary Sen schools, which were propagated from the late seventeenth century forward through hereditary bloodlines originating from three of Sen Sōtan’s sons. Whereas Suzuki’s 1832 model asserted the centrality and dominance of the three Sen schools (and to a lesser extent, the Edosenke school) in nineteenth-century *chanoyu* praxis, Naosuke’s bold reshuffling of key figures expressed a vision of tea which asserted the central place of warlord tea masters and identified members of the Sekishū school as the true heirs to Rikyū’s legacy and its correct transmission. In this respect, Naosuke’s discourse echoed larger trends in National Learning and Neo-Confucian scholarship that framed contemporary reform as a return to unsullied, original ideals. Naosuke echoes this gestalt when he claims that his efforts would fulfill the intention put forth in the *Primer*, to “set right the original transmission” – that is, by effectively placing warriors in an ascendant position in tea hierarchies, Naosuke created a version of tea history that mirrored ideal models of the contemporary Neo-Confucian social hierarchy, another construct in which warriors occupied the top position.³⁹

Naosuke as chanoyu didact

³⁸ *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu* Vol. 2, 334.

³⁹ “Nyūmonki” in *Shiryō Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, Vol. 2, 125.

Scholarship in tea history was an essential component of Naosuke's corrective vision. Beyond his genealogies, Naosuke's instructional writings cited numerous tea texts considered authoritative during his lifetime, evincing the author's thorough familiarity with their contents. Around 1844, Naosuke authored a work that functioned as a compendium of tea lore culled from a variety of earlier sources. Entitled *Tea Stories for a Leisurely Evening (Kanya chawa)*, the text relates stories of earlier tea masters including Rikyū, Furuta Oribe, Hosokawa Sansai, Kobori Enshū, Oda Uraku and others.⁴⁰ His inclusion of many warlord tea masters in this work reaffirmed the important place of warlords in the history of tea practice and emulated earlier anecdotal collections such as Chikamatsu Shigenori's *Stories from a Tearoom Window (Chaso kanwa)*, published 1804).⁴¹

Moving beyond the transmission of anecdotal narratives, in later works Naosuke dispensed his own advice for tea practitioners in a series of texts produced between 1848 and 1857, a period which also corresponds to his protracted correspondence with Katagiri Sōen (1774-1864). Sōen was a high ranking (*hatamoto*) retainer to the Tokugawa and a direct descendant of founder Katagiri Sekishū through Sekishū's illegitimate eldest son, Shimojō Nobutaka (d. 1716). The main thrust of the correspondence was preserved by Naosuke in a manuscript entitled "A Complete Record of Questions and Answers with Teacher Sōen (*Sōen sensei chadō kikigaki zen*).⁴² Much of the instruction offered in Naosuke's textual corpus can be tied to these epistolary exchanges with Sōen, a man whose authority on tea matters Naosuke respected. Naosuke's instructional works also exhibit the influence of two other texts considered seminal to the Sekishū tradition, *Three Hundred Precepts of Sekishū* and *Record of Nanpō*.

⁴⁰ "Kanya chawa" in *Ii Naosuke shiryō*, Vol. 1, 13-52.

⁴¹ Chikamatsu Shigenori. *Chaso kanwa* [Stories from a Tearoom Window, 1804], ed. Toshiko Mori, and trans. Kozaburo Mori. Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle, 1982.

⁴² "Sōen sensei chadō kikigaki zen" in *Ii Naosuke shiryō*, Vol. 2, 53-76; 331.

Naosuke repeatedly cites *Record of Nanpō* in his *Collection for a Tea Gathering* (*Chanoyu ichieshū*, 1857), a text in which the reader encounters seven extended notes offering instructions prefaced by the words, “In the *Nanpōroku*, it says...”, written in Naosuke’s own hand.⁴³ In contrast, only two such annotations in *Collection for a Tea Gathering* reference the authority of the “Sen families,” a reference not to founder Sen Rikyū (who is also mentioned frequently in combination with the passages attributed to the *Nanpōroku*), but to what Naosuke dismissively had termed the “later Sen houses” in his aforementioned genealogies – the Sen lineages beginning from the time of Rikyū’s grandson, Sōtan.⁴⁴

Unlike the narrative stance of the earlier *Primer*, which sought to recruit disciples to his own tutelage, the didactic texts Naosuke produced following his designation as the Hikone heir in 1846 seem to be addressed to known disciples as instructional aids to the mastery of specific techniques and sequences of tea procedures. This suggests that by this juncture, Naosuke had gathered a significant group of disciples around him. The presence of an undated record in the Ōkubo family recording Naosuke’s bestowal of tea names upon sixteen individually named disciples, seems to support this claim.⁴⁵

In addition to the aforementioned *Questions and Answers with Teacher Sōen*, Naosuke also produced procedurally-oriented works such as 1852’s *Order of Tea Gatherings for Our School* (*Tōryū chaji keiko shidai*). The *Order of Tea Gatherings* offered tea practitioners instruction in the finer points of tea procedure for a variety of seasons and social situations. Among these didactic works, there are several which attest to the author’s particular interest in

⁴³ Katsuhisa Toda. “Chanoyu ichieshū ni miru nochiiri no aizu,” in *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, ed. Isao Kumakura. Tokyo: Kokusho, 2007, 74.

⁴⁴ For more on Sen Sōtan, see Chapter Three. “Chanoyu ichieshū,” in *Ii Naosuke shiryō*, Vol. 1, 30, 34, 35, 41, 51, 52, 54, 57.

⁴⁵ Kumakura, *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, 27.

the proper approach to the *kaiseki* meal which accompanied a full formal tea. Indeed, Naosuke authored four separate treatises on *kaiseki*, some of which included detailed illustrations. Tanimura suggests that not only was Naosuke's preoccupation with *kaiseki* a "particular characteristic" of his tea practice, but that his fascination with the topic intensified with the passage of time.⁴⁶ The most comprehensive statement of Naosuke's evaluation of the *kaiseki* meal can be found in the *Explanation of Kaiseki (Kaiseki no ben)*. In this text, as in so many of his other instructional writings, Naosuke consistently defaults to the interpretation of tea ritual popularized by the *Record of Nanpō*. In *Explanation of Kaiseki*, Naosuke emulated the former text's use of the characters "warming stone" for writing the word *kaiseki* during a period when many other tea texts, including Kawakami Fuhaku's *Notes of Fuhaku (Fuhaku hikki)*, and Katagiri Sekishū's *Three Hundred Articles* (another text in which Naosuke was well-versed) continued to favor alternate terms which were generic referents for "meal" (such as *zen* or *meshi*), or to write *kaiseki* with the characters which simply denoted a "gathering."⁴⁷ As the *Record of Nanpō* offers no explication of the term, Tanimura has suggested that Naosuke's method of writing *kaiseki* with the "warming stones" ideographs was a deliberate, personal choice intended to express his own desire to "emphasize the spirit of Zen Buddhism" with regard to the tea meal.⁴⁸ This was also in keeping, Tanimura suggests, with his understanding of the preparation and partaking of both tea and the accompanying meal as actions akin to exercises in spiritual self-improvement.⁴⁹ Written with the ideographs for "warming stone," the term *kaiseki* is often said to signify the purported practice of Zen priests to place a heated stone in their surplices, ostensibly to aid in staving off the privations of cold and hunger which attend their

⁴⁶ Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 143.

⁴⁷ The *Nanpōroku* employs "warming stone" (懷石) for "*kaiseki*" only three, and in combination with other terms such as *ryōri* (cuisine) and *chauke-ryōri* (meal for tea).

⁴⁸ Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 142.

⁴⁹ Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke shūyo to shite*, 6.

religious training.⁵⁰ In contrast, the homophonic term written as “gathering” is a secular term which carries no such suggestions of spiritual sustenance.

These texts on *kaiseki* have exerted considerable influence on a general perception of Naosuke’s tea as deeply informed by Zen Buddhism, which is an overstatement of fact, as described below. What remains clear is Naosuke’s propensity to employ spiritually-charged language in the description of both procedural and philosophical approaches to tea, a topic to which this chapter shall presently return.

A delayed entry into political life

Naosuke’s brother Naomoto died in 1846 and was quickly succeeded by another elder brother, Naoaki. Following Naomoto’s death and Naoaki’s ascension to daimyo, Naosuke was summoned to Edo and designated as the new Ii heir, a position which compelled him to remain away from Hikone for a time in Edo. Despite his elevation in status, Naosuke faced considerable challenges during this period. Naoaki is said to have isolated Naosuke from Ii family vassals and kept his younger brother chronically short of funds. Naoaki’s unexpected death in 1850 resulted in Naosuke’s succession to the Ii family leadership as the sixteenth-generation daimyo of Hikone.⁵¹

Although he had been a longtime tea practitioner by 1850, it was only after he became lord of Hikone that Naosuke began to keep formal records of his tea gatherings. While his writings yield few clues concerning what prompted the shift, they indicate that Naosuke

⁵⁰ Although often repeated, this etymology is not attributed to any authoritative historical source.

⁵¹ Naosuke was the fourteenth son of Ii Naonaka (1766-1831), the thirteenth-generation lord of Hikone in the Ii family line. By 1846, all of Naosuke’s elder brothers with the exception of Naoaki (1794-1850) and Naomoto had entered other daimyo families or those of prominent vassals. Naomoto died in 1846 and Naoaki took power, designating Naosuke as his own successor. Naoaki’s death in 1850 catapulted Naosuke to the family headship. See Kumakura, *Ii Naosuke to chanoyu*, 12.

recognized the potential of tea gatherings to serve as a venue for political interaction. Surviving records detail more than one hundred seventy gatherings, spread across more than three decades, which Naosuke attended. Of these, Tanimura Reiko has selected the forty-four records detailing occasions at which Naosuke served as host for special scrutiny, asserting that with Naosuke coordinating all aspects of the gathering in the host's role, these forty-four occasions are those most likely to reflect his personal philosophy of tea. Tanimura further subdivides her sample of forty-four by the type of guests present. Fellow warriors comprised the dominant group. Daimyo or warriors of lower rank were present at a total of thirty-one of the forty-four gatherings. Tea specialists were present at thirteen gatherings (often sent from Edo Castle to accompany fellow warlords) and members of the Buddhist clergy on an additional six occasions.⁵²

Tanimura's analysis posits that Naosuke's tea gatherings between 1851 and 1860 (the year of his death) show an evolution from a "quiet gathering among friends" to a more politicized attitude toward tea. She cites the case of his final tea gathering, staged against the backdrop of the Ansei Purge (1858-1860) and the overarching political maelstrom in which Naosuke was embroiled after becoming great elder in 1858.⁵³ Tanimura argues that Naosuke's tea gatherings had begun to function as one setting for the expression of political sentiment, allowing the tea room to become "a site of political networking" in an age when political lines were being redrawn in a wholly new manner.⁵⁴ But writings which predate Naosuke's elevation

⁵²Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 144; 147.

⁵³ The Ansei Purge (*Ansei no taigoku*, 1858-1860) is named for the Ansei era. Naosuke was promoted to tairō in the fourth lunar month of 1858, and immediately began a major purge of more than one hundred nobles and warrior-officials who opposed the bakufu decision, led by Naosuke, to ratify the 1858 Harris Treaty and open Japan to trade with Western powers. Spanning the fifth to the seventh years of the Ansei era, the purge dismissed leading daimyo from shogunal office, forcing them into retirement and in some cases placing them under house arrest. Some court nobles were also targeted and compelled to give up political office. Some pro-imperial activists were executed. Naosuke was widely criticized for these actions, and they are considered by historians to comprise the primary motive for his March 1860 assassination at the hands of pro-imperial Mito loyalists who ambushed him at Edo's Sakurada Gate.

⁵⁴ Tanimura, "Tea of the Warrior," 147.

to warlord status in Hikone reveal that his tea activities had a political function from the very beginning.

The broadening of Naosuke's tea circles over time was a natural outgrowth of his growing visibility in political circles between 1850 and 1860. The arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry in the coastal waters of Edo Bay in 1853 was the crisis which propelled Naosuke's entry into national politics. That year, he forwarded a proposal concerning how the bakufu should deal with the demands from the United States, arguing that Tokugawa leaders should capitalize upon their connections to Dutch traders and attempt to buy time to prepare against the eventuality of American invasion. He also advised that Nagasaki should remain the sole port open to foreign trade. Naosuke's recommendations fell on deaf ears as Senior Councilor Abe Masahiro (1819-1857) capitulated to pressure and signed the Treaty of Kanagawa in March 1854, thus ending Japan's national seclusion and opening the additional ports of Shimoda and Hakodate to American trade. Incensed by Masahiro's (1819-1857) actions, Naosuke led a coalition of fellow hereditary warlords in toppling Masahiro from power in the early autumn of 1855, and replacing him with Hotta Masayoshi (1810-1864). Three years later, Masayoshi fell from favor following an ill-advised attempt to seek the emperor's approval for the pending Harris Treaty, the thirteenth Tokugawa Shogun Iesada (1824-1858) named Naosuke to the position of great elder in June of 1858.⁵⁵

As asserted above, long before he assumed political office, Naosuke had conceptualized tea as a key site for the development and expression of warrior rule. Key evidence of this attitude is provided by a short treatise entitled "Tea and Governance" (*Chadō to seidō*, 1846) written at about the time of Naosuke's designation as clan heir. Ostensibly composed in reply to the

⁵⁵ Unwell, Iesada died two months after making this appointment.

question of whether or not *chanoyu* could offer any help in the business of governing the country the text takes the format of an extended question-and-answer dialogue. “Tea and Governance” is a brief, but important representation of Naosuke’s thinking. It is therefore all the more curious that this essay has received scant attention from many prominent tea historians.

As early as the composition of *Primer*, Naosuke’s tea philosophy demonstrates a shift away from personal concerns toward a more public stance – from a personally-oriented tea praxis to “tea pursued as a member of the warrior class.”⁵⁶ This shift finds its full expression in *Tea and Governance*. In the text, Naosuke advanced a vision of tea pursued in the service of creating “sound warrior bodies” most capable of effective governance. Echoing Matsudaira Fumai’s 1770 manifesto “Useless Words” (*Mudagoto*), in which Fumai claimed that tea offered an effective aid to rule, “Tea and Governance” makes the connection between the discipline of *chanoyu* and the work of governing explicit, assuring the reader that if one was to devote him or herself to the way of tea assiduously “even for a period of only two years,” the activity would “yield assistance in the governance of the realm.” Unlike Matsudaira Fumai’s earlier conception of tea as a pastime uniquely appropriate for warlords, however, Naosuke’s views concerning the social benefits of tea practice are more egalitarian. “Tea and Governance” argues that *chanoyu* offers benefits for all members of society, regardless of social status:

In the current way of tea, there is not one whit of difference, from those who are high above the clouds all the way down to those laboring in the fields. There is nothing unsuitable about this, as they are all truly participating in the same way. Moreover, this path is one which can be enjoyed by rich and poor alike.⁵⁷

Naosuke thus extended his recommendation of tea as an exercise in self-cultivation well beyond the warrior classes, a sentiment his later writings continued to express even after his

⁵⁶ Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke shūyo to shite*, 67.

⁵⁷ *Ii Naosuke no shiryō*. Vol 1, 114.

ascent to high political office. In the third month of 1858, the same year he was designated great elder, Naosuke wrote, “Insofar as tea gatherings are an activity which can help oneself personally, they are of benefit to members of all four social estates: warriors, peasants, artisans and merchants.” Naosuke uses the composite term *shi-nō-kō-shō* to describe the fundamental structure of the early modern social order, proceeding from the samurai (*shi*) at the top of society down through the other social status groups, including farmers (*nō*), artisans (*kō*), and merchants (*shō*). Naosuke’s rhetorical insistence that *chanoyu* was unparalleled in securing the “overall health of the realm” posited the trickle-down benefit of a warrior rulership informed by “tea law” (*chahō*).⁵⁸ Despite this cursory appearance of egalitarianism, however, Naosuke’s philosophy was still deeply informed by the realities of the late Tokugawa class divide. His acknowledgement that tea could benefit members of all social estates must be read through the framework that Naosuke himself applied: tea praxis offered the most public benefit when pursued by the ruling classes through “tea law,” the benefits of which would eventually reach the rest of Tokugawa society through a trickle-down effect.

The limited scope of philosophy of inclusiveness can be observed in his approach to the gendered nature of early modern tea praxis. Unlike his peers, Naosuke occasionally welcomed women into the traditional male confines of the tearoom. While radical for his time, Naosuke’s inclusion of women cannot be said to be egalitarian. Women were guests (although never the principal guests) at only two of the forty-four tea gatherings he hosted between 1851 and his death in 1860.⁵⁹ Moreover, in accordance with contemporary notions of propriety, the women known to have participated in tea gatherings with Naosuke were limited to the female members of his own household (his wife, daughters, and mother-in-law), and always with Naosuke himself

⁵⁸ “*Chadō to seidō*” in *Ii Naosuke no shiryō*, Vol. 1, 116.

⁵⁹ Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke shūyo to shite*, 147.

in attendance as a mitigating presence. Nevertheless, the fact that women were present at all identifies Naosuke's attitude as progressive for the period.⁶⁰

Naosuke's limited inclusion of women in the tearoom seems to have been influenced by the precedents set by an earlier tea master in the Sekishū school, Ōguchi Shōō (1686-1764) author of *A Handbook for Women's Tea* (*Toji no tamoto*, 1721). Ōguchi's text advanced the radical and singular idea that not only could women act as hosts for the tea ceremony, but their training in the art should address all of the same issues of the history and philosophy of *chanoyu* as that of serious male practitioners.⁶¹ While Naosuke does not seem to have fully endorsed Ōguchi's point of view, the tea activities of his female family members suggest that Naosuke's views on the matter were nonetheless more progressive than those held by most male tea practitioners of his era. His mother-in-law, for example, sought direct instruction in Sekishū-style *chanoyu* from a female member of the Katagiri family, apparently with Naosuke's full blessing.⁶² The direct engagement with tea praxis realized by Naosuke's female family members suggests that gender norms around tea praxis were slowly shifting, at least among some high-ranking daimyo families.

Collection for a Tea Gathering (Chanoyu ichieshū)

⁶⁰ Naosuke's mother-in-law is said to have studied tea with the wife of a member of the Katagiri family and is also credited with the production of several facsimiles of Naosuke's own writings. His daughters Yachiyo and Tase are also said to have acted as hosts for some gatherings according to Tanihata Akio. See Tanihata 2007, 173.

⁶¹ *Ōguchi Shōō: josei chanoyu no susume* [Ōguchi Shōō: The Advancement of Women's Tea]. Kumakura Isao, ed. Kyoto: Miyaobi Shuppansha, 2013, 17; 27.

⁶² Women in single-gender communities like Buddhist convents were sometimes dedicated tea practitioners, but as a rule they did not found branch schools or even take disciples in the manner male practitioners did. As Rebecca Corbett and Etsuko Kato have noted, early modern texts treated tea training for women as merely as one form of social etiquette. Learning the basic techniques and deportment necessary to tea (rather than the mastery of the art itself or an exploration of its spiritual connotations) was one means by which commoner women could achieve social mobility either through advantageous marriages or being placed in service to elite families. See Rebecca Corbett. "Learning to be Graceful: Tea in Early Modern Guides for Women's Edification." *Japanese Studies* 29:1, 82. See also Etsuko Kato. *The Tea Ceremony and Women's Empowerment in Modern Japan: Bodies Re-Presenting the Past*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2004, 62.

One year before he became great elder, Naosuke completed a text entitled *Collection for a Tea Gathering* (*Chanoyu ichieshū*, 1857). Identified by historian Paul Varley as a “major classic of tea ceremony literature,” *Collection for a Tea Gathering* is considered Naosuke’s greatest contribution to the canon of tea literature, even though the text remained understudied until the postwar period. In addition to Naosuke’s long correspondence with Katagiri Sōen, the source material for *Collection for a Tea Gathering* draws heavily and overtly upon *Record of Nanpō*, a text now widely regarded as a late-seventeenth-century forgery, but one that during Naosuke’s lifetime was considered an irreproachable and authoritative account of Rikyū’s tea philosophy and practices. Paul Varley, for example, notes that the *Collection* was intended to reflect, “the sentiments of Sen no Rikyū . . . as presented in the *Nanpōroku*.”⁶³

Completed roughly seven years after Naosuke became the lord of Hikone, *Collection for a Tea Gathering* is both a practical guide to tea procedures and etiquette and a philosophical rumination on *chanoyu* ideals. Organized into twenty-three chapters, the *Collection* is thematically arranged, first addressing general philosophical stances toward tea praxis and then proceeding to describe proper behavior for host and guest(s) for more than twenty discrete stages of a full tea gathering. Two manuscripts of the text survive, one preserved in the Ii family and a second copy preserved in the Ōkubo family, who were retainers to the Ii.⁶⁴ The Ii copy of *Collection for a Tea Gathering* is undated, but the Ōkubo copy bears a colophon dated to the eighth month of the fourth year of the Ansei era (1857). Naosuke is known to have returned to Hikone from Edo in the fifth month of 1856, and it seems that the text may have been completed

⁶³ Varley, “*Chanoyu*: From the Genroku Epoch,” 185-187.

⁶⁴ The Ōkubo family remains the caretakers of the Umoriginoya to the present, now overseeing its administration as a tourist attraction.

during his sojourn in his home province. Due to the high degree of fidelity between the Ii and the Ōkubo manuscripts, 1857 is the date generally accepted for the text's completion.⁶⁵

Two phrases that have come to encapsulate Naosuke's tea philosophy appear widely in the *Collection*, "one meeting, a single time" (*ichigo ichie*) and "seated alone in meditation" (*dokuza kannen*). Each concept is accorded a full chapter. "One meeting, a single time" traces its origins to a similarly-worded phrase in Yamanoue Sōji's late-sixteenth century tea diary, but its conventionally accepted definition is often instead attributed to Naosuke.⁶⁶ In the *Diary of Yamanoue Sōji* (1578), the author writes, "Even under normal circumstances for tea, from the time that [guests] enter through the tea garden until they exit, it is as if this gathering can occur only once."⁶⁷ Naosuke's *Collection* condensed the latter portion of Yamanoue's statement "as if this gathering can occur only once" (*ichigo ni ichido no kai*) into the pithy four-character phrase *ichigo ichie*. Naosuke's contraction plays upon the succinct parallelism of "one" (*ichi*), replacing the noun "meeting" (*kai*), with its euphonious alternate reading of "e" in the new phrase, *ichigo ichie* ("each meeting, only once").

Naosuke embedded the phrase in the *Collection's* opening stanza, explaining that the text is intended for readers wishing to learn the proper comportment for a tea gathering from "start to finish," writing:

This book deals with the handling of a gathering for *chanoyu*, giving in detail the knowledge necessary for both host and guests from start to finish. For this reason I have entitled it *Ichie shū* ... Great attention should be given to a tea gathering, which we can speak of as 'one time, one meeting'. Even though the host and guests may see each other very often socially, one day's gathering can never be repeated exactly. Viewed this way, the meeting is indeed a once-in-a-lifetime occasion. The host ... must in true sincerity take the greatest care with every aspect of the gathering and

⁶⁵ "Kaidai," in *Shiryō Ii Naosuke*, Vol. 1, 323.

⁶⁶ Varley, "Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch," 187.

⁶⁷ "Kaidai," in *Shiryō Ii Naosuke*, Vol. 1, 323.

devote himself entirely to ensuring that nothing is rough. The guests, for their part, must understand that the gathering cannot occur again and, appreciating how the host has flawlessly planned it, must also participate with true sincerity. This is what is meant by ‘one time, one meeting’.”⁶⁸

Naosuke’s outline for the purpose of the *Collection* in the passage above stresses the necessity for both hosts and guests to have some knowledge of the proper comportment and order of ceremonies. As justification for this “great attention,” Naosuke proffers the notion of the singularity of each tea gathering via the phrase “one time, one meeting.” Appreciation of the host’s efforts requires not only for the guests to possess sufficient knowledge of *chanoyu* to recognize gestures made in terms of the decoration of the tearoom, the state of the garden, the presentation and composition of the accompanying meal and sweets, and the assembly of the required utensils for the occasion, but also to acknowledge fully the ephemeral quality of the moment. For Naosuke, this combination of mental preparation and a heightened awareness of the transience of the experience constitute “true sincerity” on the part of the guest in receiving the ministrations of the host.

A later passage entitled “seated alone in meditation” illustrates Naosuke’s imagined ideal for the host’s comportment following the departure of the day’s guests.

After host and guests have expressed their feelings of regret [that the ceremony has ended] and after the final farewells have been said, the guests depart through the tea garden. They do not call out in loud voices, but turn silently for one last look. The host, moved, watches them until they are gone from sight. It would not do for him to rush about closing the ... doors, for this would make the day’s entertainment meaningless. Even though it is impossible to see the guests returning to their homes, the host should not put things in order quickly. Rather, he should return quietly to the setting of the tea gathering and, crawling through the *nijiriguchi* [door], seat himself before the hearth. Wishing to speak a while longer with his guests, he must wonder how far they have gotten on their ways home. This ‘one time, one meeting’ has come to an end, and the host reflects upon the fact that it can never be repeated. The highest point of a tea meeting is, in fact, to have a cup of tea alone at this time. All is

⁶⁸ As translated in Varley, “*Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch*,” 187. My alterations to Varley’s translation appear in parentheses.

quiet, and the host can talk to no one but the kettle. This is a state in which nothing else exists, a state that cannot be known unless one has truly attained it oneself.⁶⁹

Whereas the concept of “one time, one meeting” applied equally to both host and guest(s), in this passage Naosuke seems to reserve the experience of “seated alone in meditation” for the host, upon whose planning and execution the success of the gathering ultimately depend. The lyrical nature of passages such as the one above accounts in large degree for the disparate amount of attention paid to *Collection for a Tea Gathering* among all of Naosuke’s works. Scholars have been particularly drawn to the contemplative portrait of a wistful tea master quietly meditating on the details of a recently concluded tea gathering in the solitude of an emptied tearoom. Much has been made of the Buddhist resonance perceivable in the catchphrases *ichigo ichie* and *dokuza kannen*, (and also his aforementioned choice in ideographs for *kaiseki*) but there is little evidence from Naosuke’s life to suggest that his engagement with Buddhism was extraordinary in nature.

Like many men of his generation, Naosuke did study Zen in his youth, but he does not appear to have taken a Buddhist name or to have undertaken any unusual level of religious discipline. The tendency of scholars such as Paul Varley to describe Naosuke as “much influenced by Zen” and to define his tea in “quietistic, contemplative terms” emerges from a tendency to include spiritually-charged language in his written discourse.⁷⁰ For example, Naosuke’s dualistic vision of “correct” and “impeded” paths pervades essays such as 1846’s “Tea and Governance,” as do frequent references to *chanoyu* in terms of “tea law” (*kissa no hō* or *chahō*) employing the same ideograph used to designate Buddhist doctrine (*hō*).⁷¹

But the religious language in Naosuke’s tea discourse is most often employed not in the service of spiritual instruction so much as it is in the name of erecting a political validation of

⁶⁹ Varley, “*Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch*,” 187-188.

⁷⁰ Varley, “*Chanoyu: From the Genroku Epoch*,” 187.

⁷¹ Mori, *Ii Naosuke*, 55.

the value of *chanoyu* to a faltering Tokugawa state. If, as Tanimura Reiko asserts, the thrust of Naosuke's tea philosophy turned away from a means for personal introspection and became increasingly oriented to Japanese society writ large—across the boundaries of class and even gender—then we can see why Naosuke could assert, as he does in “Tea and Governance” that the application of “tea law” will naturally result in a society characterized by peace and tranquility. The blending of religious and secular language and concerns in Naosuke's discourse suggests that he himself perceived little divide between his identity as a man of tea and as a statesman.

The perceived rift between the two faces of Naosuke referenced by some historians is more a product of the temporally disjointed trajectory of scholarship on Naosuke's life than it is the expression of a worldview. Ironically, at the time he wrote this passage in 1846, Naosuke could not have envisioned how unsettled a political maelstrom in which he would find himself embroiled ten years hence.

Naosuke as great elder, 1858-1860

Less than a year after the completion of *Collection for a Tea Gathering*, Naosuke's life changed radically when he was appointed as great elder for the Tokugawa regime on the twenty-fifth day of the fourth month of 1858. This appointment put Naosuke at the national helm during a particularly tumultuous epoch, witness to both the threat to national sovereignty represented by Consul-General Townsend Harris and the gradual disintegration of shogunal control, growing resistance to shogunal policies emanating from domains such as Satsuma in Kyushu, and Naosuke's purge of political adversaries from 1858 onward.

Among the challenges Naosuke faced during his short but eventual political career was a major factional clash over the issue of shogunal succession. This clash pitted the Mito faction's support for Tokugawa Nariaki against the Nanki faction's backing of Tokugawa Yoshitomi (of Kii province). In backing the Nanki faction, Naosuke unwittingly provided the impetus for his own later assassination at Edo's Sakuradamon Gate on the third day of the third month of 1860.⁷²

Reconsidering Naosuke's legacy

Most likely by dint of necessity, Naosuke's tea activities also seem to have dropped off precipitously after he assumed the duties of great elder. Although his writing and editing of manuscripts related to tea continued into this period, the new demands on his time (and the pressing nature of the multiple political crises he was charged with managing) may have impeded his ability to arrange or attend tea gatherings. The final entry in his record of tea gatherings for 1857-1858 is dated just five days after he was named to the post and no entries appear thereafter (which is not to say that further gatherings did not occur, just that no records of them have been found).⁷³ The sudden dearth of records at this juncture is less an indication of a waning interest on Naosuke's part than an indication of the scale of political crisis in which Naosuke found himself embroiled upon assuming his post in Edo.

Historian Ōhara Kazuo declares that a full assessment of Naosuke's legacy can only leave us "startled" by Naosuke's "true level of skill" in both the political and cultural arenas. In counterpoint, when considered across the span of the forty-five years of Naosuke's lifetime, it is not his final two years as great elder which truly define him, momentous as they may have

⁷² Tanimura, *Ii Naosuke shūyo to shite*, 4.

⁷³ This record is the final one included in the "Junkai mizuya-cho" in *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu shiryō*, Vol. 2, 199.

been.⁷⁴ Rather, it is the three decades of dedication to the practice, and the developing philosophy, of warrior tea which are the primary hallmarks of Naosuke's historical legacy. It is tempting to wonder what form Naosuke's further tea activities may have assumed if his life had not been cut short by assassination at the age of forty-five.

The same accident of history which allowed this fourteenth son to become heir to the Ii family's fortunes led to Naosuke's placement at the nexus of Japan's crisis of international diplomacy and ensured his place in the narrative of Japan's history. In terms of the daimyo tradition of tea, a group in which Naosuke clearly viewed himself as a member, his career presents a suggestive contrast to that of the seventeenth-century tea master Kanamori Sōwa. Unlike Naosuke, Sōwa was the eldest son and designated heir to the Kanamori clan's lordship of Takayama, but his desire to pursue an artistic life centered upon tea in Kyoto caused him to renounce his position, handing over his birthright to a younger brother. If Sōwa declined to occupy his destined place in the political order in favor of tea, Naosuke may be said to have selected it as an alternate career in lieu of the expectation, as a fourteenth son, that he would attain a political office. In both cases, these warrior elites crafted identities centered upon tea. Sōwa declined to rule but maintained close and beneficial ties to his family in Takayama. Conversely, Naosuke viewed his engagement with tea as a personal discipline with public applications – a form of artistic self-cultivation which ultimately made him better prepared to serve the needs of the state.

Naosuke's involvement with the ratification of the reviled Harris Treaty and in the related dispute over Tokugawa shogunal succession reveals him as an independent thinker much in the same manner demonstrated prior to his entry into political life. Long before Naosuke was

⁷⁴ Ōhara, *Ii Naosuke seishinkai ni yoru*, 24.

clan heir or a daimyo, he audaciously posited his own name at the end of a list of tea masters beginning with Rikyū, passing successively through warlord tea masters such as Oda Uraku, Oribe, Enshū, Fumai, appending his own name to the end of the list. The same hubris which allowed Naosuke to declare his intention to found a new branch of the Sekishū tea lineage at the age of twenty also informed his contentious decision to accede to American demands to open Japan to trade.

Historian Mori Yoshikazu notes that as the daimyo of Hikone, Naosuke applied his political vision to the tea gatherings he hosted for fellow warlords, maximizing the potential of the tearoom as a space in which to forge new connections and affiliations.⁷⁵ It is perhaps equally possible to claim that the self-confidence Naosuke projected in his persona as tea master carried over to his political activities, as did the relationships he had cultivated through *chanoyu*. The historiographical imperative mandating the treatment of Naosuke as some sort of Janus figure, split into two disparate personalities is both manufactured and unnecessary. The rich textual legacy Naosuke produced merits more research, and that now that materials are more readily available that will surely emerge with time.

In the scope of the overall arc of the development of warlord tea, Naosuke's case presents a curious dénouement. While his late entry into political life is not entirely without precedent (Enshū, for example, was not born a warlord), the delayed nature of Naosuke's ascent to power means that for him, tea was initially an alternate path to politics since his access to the latter was impeded by his position as a younger son. His aspiration to found his own branch of the Sekishū school was a way of carving out a niche for himself in lieu of one that was ready-made by virtue of birthright. Able to devote himself fully to the art for more than half of his lifespan, Naosuke's

⁷⁵ Mori, *Ii Naosuke*, 2.

vision of tea was not informed by the need to validate his artistic acumen insofar as his relative seclusion left him with few to impress, let alone the financial resources to do so. Unlike Oribe, Enshū, or Sekishū, his tea skills and knowledge were not initially employed in the service of the regime or a shogun. His disciples were, by and large, lower in rank than himself. And although he seems to have regarded the daimyo Matsudaira Fumai as a model, he did not share Fumai's obsessive interest in the collection and cataloguing of famous art objects and rare tea utensils. His lack of position and financial resources until the age of thirty-five ensured that these common facets of life as a daimyo tea master remained unavailable to him until after 1850.

Once he became a warlord and his material resources increased, Naosuke did indeed emulate the actions of his predecessors, collecting rare tea objects and hosting lavish tea gatherings at which his treasures were conspicuously displayed. One gathering on the eighteenth day of the ninth month of 1854 indicates that Naosuke entertained three Buddhist clerics with a one-day marathon of four successive teas held in four separate locations around his Edo estate (two teas in a single location would have been standard). In each chamber, priceless treasures such as a calligraphic single-line scroll written by the Zen priest Musō Soseki (d. 1351) were displayed.⁷⁶ Such an over-the-top gathering certainly does not seem in easy accord with the notion of the host “sitting alone in meditation.”

Like earlier warlord tea masters, Naosuke referenced Rikyū as an authority on *chanoyu*, but his desire to link himself to the validating figure of Rikyū also manifests in different ways. Whereas Hosokawa Sansai and Furuta Oribe could claim personal connections to Rikyū, seventeenth century tea masters such as Kobori Enshū and even Sekishū himself made these connections on the basis of philosophy rather than acquaintance. For Naosuke, living more than

⁷⁶ Kumakura, *Ii Naosuke no chanoyu*, 25-26.

two centuries after the death of Rikyū, the need to stake a claim to Rikyū's legacy remained compelling but not paramount – and certainly did not require him to disavow his warrior identity. Indeed, Naosuke repeatedly reveals himself as an advocate for warrior tea through his assertion of the Sekishū tradition as the only “correct” transmission of Rikyū's intent. Unlike earlier daimyo tea men, including Sekishū himself, Naosuke also places diminished emphasis on the notion of “rustic tea” (*wabi-cha*). The term appears only rarely in his writing, perhaps as a means of further collapsing the putative distinction between daimyo tea and the “*wabi* tea” to which the Sen family traditions laid a primary claim. It is telling that Naosuke's own discourse favors the term “thatched-hut tea” (*sōan-cha*) to “rustic tea,” a substitution that Naosuke seems to feel connects him more directly with Rikyū. His rejection of the claim to authority forwarded by the three Sen-family schools in Kyoto and the Edosenke house in the warrior capital, the so-called “later houses of Sen,” asserts that his scholarship, and his social status as a warrior, trumped the claims of Sen descendants to represent the true intentions of their ancestor. Perhaps for Naosuke, the “later houses of Sen” also represented a commercialization of tea instruction from which he wanted to distance himself.

Ultimately, Naosuke's tea matters not only due to the wide-ranging textual record he left behind, but also because it illustrates that even as Japan's ruling warriors found themselves confronting the threat of foreign imperialism and a weakening hold on social control, for some among the daimyo, *chanoyu* remained a discipline which provided an outlet for enjoyment, for self-expression, and even for the articulation of political ideology. Tea certainly served all of those functions for Naosuke at various points in his life, and given his complex and deep relationship with tea praxis, re-integrating his contributions to tea discourse into his larger historical legacy enriches both tea history and the grasp of the larger social history of the late

Tokugawa era. Naosuke was not a tea master who became a statesman, but rather a man whose ability to lead was developed and exercised in the tearoom long before a political platform presented itself.

Conclusion: Toward a Holistic History of Warlord Tea

This project originated with an interest in the career of Kobori Enshū, one of the central figures examined in Chapter Three, and one of the warlord tea masters concerning whom a most prodigious amount of Japanese scholarship has been published. Due to his many contributions to tea praxis, Enshū's name was familiar to amateur tea practitioners such as myself, but he was not just a tea master. His fame is equally, if not more, widespread among students of traditional Japanese architecture and landscape design. Early explorations of Enshū's various influences upon cultural history soon revealed that warlord tea praxis was inextricable from the sense of lineage defined officially by master-disciple relationships and (unofficially) determined by connections drawn through artistic affinity. As the research developed, it became clear that Enshū's career alone could not be fully understood outside of the larger history and tradition of warlord *chanoyu*, of which Enshū was simply one iteration out of so many. When further research turned up no such long-range studies of warlord tea praxis, this project's scope suggested itself as a means to fill an apparent gap in the current scholarship. The protensive exegesis presented by this dissertation addresses the need for a more complete historical understanding of warlord tea in early modern Japan.

This dissertation has identified and challenged the persistent tendency in current historiography to evaluate warlord tea as a mode outside of the main field of historical tea praxis. The evidence presented in the preceding chapters provides compelling support for the contention that warlord tea praxis is a concern central both to the larger scope of both tea history as well as the broader cultural history of the early modern period. Supported by seven primary case studies of warlord tea masters – Hosokawa Sansai, Furuta Oribe, Kobori Enshū, Kanamori Sōwa,

Katagiri Sekishū, Matsudaira Fumai, and Ii Naosuke – and augmented by many other ancillary figures, the evidence presented here supercedes the limited analysis accorded to warlord tea masters in previous scholarship. By considering warlord tea across the *longue durée* of the Tokugawa period, this dissertation challenges the topical biases and flawed historicity of dominant historiographical narratives, advancing a revised and augmented roster of historical actors whose roles have been hitherto underappreciated.

Chapter Two addressed the misguided and ahistorical application of Rikyū, the Sen schools, and/or the rustic tea aesthetic as imposed standard(s) for the evaluation of warlord tea masters, illustrating that there was no operative notion of “orthodox tea” during the lifetimes of unification-era tea masters such as Furuta Oribe and Hosokawa Sansai. Evidence drawn from the writings of Sansai and Oribe demonstrated that both men consciously referenced their personal connections to Rikyū long after their teacher’s death in 1591, but they did so in the service of developing and furthering their own visions for tea praxis, including innovations and alterations entirely of their own invention. Later accounts which praise or castigate such figures with regard to their fidelity to Rikyū are shown to be politically-motivated constructions of the “Rikyū revival” movement, tied to the rise of professionalized tea specialists who found themselves in competition with warlord tea masters for disciples, patrons, prestige and income during the latter half of the seventeenth century.

The consideration of the problematic notion of “orthodoxy” continued in Chapter Three with the examination of the warlord tea masters Kobori Enshū, Kanamori Sōwa and Katagiri Sekishū. The participation of Enshū and Sōwa in the tea salons which formed around Kyoto and Edo during the mid-seventeenth century revealed that although the careers of warlord tea practitioners could develop in various ways, they tended to share common modes for the

expression of cultural authority and expertise. These included the design of tea spaces, the appraisal of tea objects, collaboration with artisans, and the instruction of disciples who would carry on and propagate their tastes and philosophical vision for tea praxis. As described in the diary of Hōrin Jōsho and others, warlord tea practitioners facilitated many of these activities through their connections to outside groups such as the nobility and the Buddhist clergy who populated the “aesthetic publics” they had a hand in creating.

Chapter Three demonstrated how “second-generation” warlord tea masters such as Kobori Enshū, Kanamori Sōwa, and Katagiri Sekishū moved beyond the apparent need to validate themselves via reference to Rikyū or other earlier practitioners, instead articulating (and marketing) their individual “brands” of aesthetic taste (*konomi*) in tea objects, spaces, procedures, and philosophical orientations. The case of Katagiri Sekishū provided one example of how warlord tea masters engaged with tea history and successfully adapted the vocabulary of rustic tea to their own specific needs, evidence which directly challenges the flawed dialectic which attempts to place rustic tea in conflict with warlord tea. Finally, Kanamori Sōwa’s rejection of his formal role within the Tokugawa system raises useful questions concerning the role (and limits) of social status in fostering a tea master’s success.

During the mid-eighteenth century, the downward dissemination of *chanoyu* as a pastime into lower classes had significantly diminished its appeal to warriors as a marker of social status. Chapter Four documented the elitist thinking expressed in the discourse of eighteenth-century warlord tea practitioners such as Matsudaira Fumai, whose dismay over the popularization of tea among the lower classes reveals his innate desire to create a tea oligarchy comprised solely of the military elite – the one social status group that he felt possessed sufficient intellectual rigor and moral stamina to safeguard the art from vulgarity. Fumai’s attitudes reflect the Neo-Confucian

ideals in vogue during his lifetime, applying them to his interpretation of *chanoyu* as an exercise in scholarly endeavor and self-cultivation best reserved for the ruling class. His treatise “Useless Words” advances his ideas that in its proper *métier*, *chanoyu* would serve to guide the ruling classes to more effective and benevolent leadership. Fumai’s work to research and catalog famed tea utensils that he considered a part of the cultural legacy of *chanoyu* mirrored the spirit of scientific inquiry and preoccupation with classification that characterized his times and also became another basis for his classist claims to tea as the proper preserve of the warrior intelligentsia.

Fumai’s interest in tea praxis as a form of training for government service is echoed by the later writings of the statesman Ii Naosuke concerning tea and statecraft. Chapter Five takes measure of warlord tea practice on the cusp of modernity, using the case of Naosuke to illustrate how Tokugawa functionaries understood the application of tea to the problematic business of national governance at a time of national crisis. For Naosuke, *chanoyu* began as a means to distinguish himself in obscurity, and later became a comfort to him in weathering harrowing times while at the helm of a faltering bakufu government.

As the historian John W. Hall observed, although the early Tokugawa status system was a “dynamic creation,” the system increasingly rigidified over time.¹ Likewise, the early freedom observable in warlord tea praxis likewise slowly gave way to a slow process of ossification in which the innovations of warlord auteurs such as Furuta Oribe and Kobori Enshū were undermined (and Hosokawa Sansai was lauded) by a newly conservative ideology which sought to resurrect the ghost of Rikyū and assert the Sen family’s authority over the entire field of

¹ John Whitney Hall. “Rule by Status in Tokugawa Japan.” *Journal of Japanese Studies*, Vol. 1. No. 1 (Autumn 1974): 48-49.

chanoyu as the art gained in popularity. While the case of Kanamori Sōwa suggests that warlord tea both depended upon and yet could exist at a distance from, the political status, the career of Katagiri Sekishū revealed that even at the center of the Tokugawa state, warlord tea practitioners could and did embrace the values of rustic tea, albeit reinterpreted through their own interpretive lens.

As warlord tea entered a period of decline with the advent of the eighteenth century, reforms initiated by Matsudaira Fumai and, later, Ii Naosuke, increasingly sought to define a distinct niche for warlord *chanoyu* in the world of proper governance and scholarly record-keeping. These latter case studies demarcate the evolution of warlord tea praxis away from the use of tea as a *means* to cultural and political validation in the seventeenth century toward a later consideration of the art as the proper preserve of elite warriors, qualified by virtue of their *de facto* power to reform a tea praxis they judged as degraded by the entry of common persons. While living in obscurity at the Bogwood Villa, Naosuke had used tea as a means to assert his personal legitimacy, but after he became the lord of Hikone, his views on tea assumed a greater sense of class privilege.² At the terminus of the warlord tea continuum, Naosuke sought to find balance between these two views, his philosophy balancing a respect for the legacies of earlier tea masters with a sense that tea had to continually reinvent itself, perhaps in tandem with the circumstances of practitioners, in order to survive.

The same need for reinvention can be said to apply to the historiography of early modern tea. Recent decades have uncovered a tremendous amount of new primary-source material that scholars are only now beginning to explore in depth. Manuscripts housed in difficult-to-access collections and archives are beginning to appear in published or digitized forms. Such

² An impulse modeled, for example, by Naosuke's unconventional invitation of women into the traditionally male preserve of the early modern tearoom

developments mark the present as an especially exciting time for scholars to work on tea history. This dissertation represents a single, modest instance of the sort of new scholarship which is certain to proceed from the continued study of these materials.

Epilogue

One need look no farther than popular culture to find evidence of a growing interest in tea history, and specifically in warlord practitioners, among the general public. Sometimes this occurs in tandem with new examinations of Rikyū in popular media. For example, “Ask This of Rikyū” (*Rikyū ni tazuneyō*, directed by Tanaka Mitsuotshi), a new film on Rikyū and his close associates among the warlords was released in January 2013 in Japan, quickly setting off a whirlwind of media interest in Rikyū’s warrior contemporaries, with particular interest focused upon the warlord Takayama Ukon (1552-1615), a tea practitioner and disciple of Rikyū’s who was banished to the Philippines in 1614 as a result of his Christian faith.¹

Increasingly, however, warlord tea practitioners are appearing as the main attraction in new media productions. In 2005, Yamada Yoshihiro published the first of a fourteen-volume graphic novel manga on the life of warlord tea master Furuta Oribe. *Hyōgemono: Tea for Universe, Tea for Life*. The books eventually ran to more than twenty reprintings. In 2011, the Japanese broadcasting agency NHK (*Nihon Hōsō Kaisha*) optioned *Hyōgemono* as an animated series running for thirty-nine episodes.² The debut of the program sparked significant interest in Oribe in Japan and abroad (fan-subbed versions of the anime in English have been available online since at least 2012), even prompting the publication of books written by prominent Japanese tea scholars which were published and promoted with covers bearing the title of and

¹ A news graphic published in the February 8, 2014 edition of the *Asahi Shinbun* asked, “Was Sen Rikyū a Christian?” (Sen Rikyū: kuritso-kyōju datta?). The graphic visually surrounding an artist’s portrait of Rikyū with drawings of his “seven sages,” the group of warlords out of which the graphic surmises five (including Hosokawa Sansai and Furuta Oribe) may have been secret Christians. There is no historical evidence which supports Sansai or Oribe being Christians, although Sansai’s wife Gurasha (Gracia) was a known convert. Ukon’s Christianity, on the other hand, is not in doubt, as he documented in his writings, which are also confirmed by Jesuit documents produced in Japan. As of 2015, Vatican was considering the future beatification of Ukon as a Catholic saint. For more on Ukon, see Johannes Laures. “Takayama Ukon: A Critical Essay.” *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 5 No. 1 (January 1942): 86-112.

² *Hyōgemono: Tea for Universe, Tea for Life*. <http://www9.nhk.or.jp/anime/hyouge/> Web. Accessed 30 August 30, 2015.

images from the manga, such as Yabe Sei'ichirō's *Hyōgemono: Furuta Oribe-den* [Warped Thing: History of Furuta Oribe].³

Renewed interest in Oribe has sparked art events such as the “Chanoyu Oribe-tique,” a fall 2013 group exhibition which made use of the *Hyōgemono* branding to promote a show of new tea utensils of radical design commissioned from artists drawing upon the manga and anime (as well as the historical figure of Oribe) for inspiration. Held at the Isetan department store's Shinjuku branch in Tokyo, the event drew large crowds.⁴ A new art exhibition on Oribe, featuring many *meibutsu* and other artifacts associated with him (including his letters), opened in Tokyo in August 2015. It will travel to Nagoya and Kyoto during 2015 and 2016. The exhibition title is provocative, asking “Who is this Oribe who surpassed Rikyū?” (Rikyū ni koeta Oribe to wa?)⁵

The assertion of a warlord tea master's ascendancy over Rikyū's legacy expressed by the exhibition title above would have been almost unimaginable just a decade ago. Such trends suggest that the time is now ripe for further historical scholarship on warlord tea masters, and it is my hope that this dissertation marks one more contribution to that greater effort.

³ Sei'ichirō Yabe. *Hyōgemono: Furuta Oribe-den* [Warped Thing: History of Furuta Oribe], ed. Tadachika Kuwata. Tokyo: Diamond-sha, 2010.

⁴ “Chanoyu Oribe-tique”. <http://sara-ya.com/Oribetique.html>. Web. Accessed 30 August 2015.

⁵ Information on the exhibition appears on the website for Tokyo's Yushima Tenjin shrine, on their event page. <http://www.yushimatenjin.or.jp/pc/houmotu/index.htm> Web. Accessed 30 August 2015.

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