CHAPTER FIVE

CHANOWY IN HAKATA:
ZEN, KARAMONO AND THE RECEPTION OF TEA CEREMONY

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Introduction

Hakata has prospered since ancient times as a gateway for various foreign cultures, and it was through this port that tea and Zen were introduced to Japan. Foreign trade allowed Zen sects to flourish, and Zen training temples played a central role in the dispersal of whisked tea (matcha) customs as the culture of tea ceremony (chanoyu) developed. Against this historical background, two wealthy merchants and tea masters, Shimai Sōshitsu (1539–1615) and Kamiya Sōtan (1551–1635), made their names in Hakata during the transition from the medieval to the early modern era.

This chapter begins by considering how the culture of tea ceremony was accepted in Hakata before the arrival of Sōshitsu and Sōtan. The opening section reviews the historical character and geographical conditions that formed the background for the emergence of these two merchants as noted men of tea (sukisha) with a deep understanding of tea culture. The following sections then examine Hakata chanoyu culture by tracing their

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2 Nanpōroku was discovered by Tachibana Jitsuzan of the Fukuoka domain in the early modern era and the Nanbō Ryū (or Nambō Ryū) school subsequently flourished there, while Takatori ceramic ware was also produced in the domain. In the modern era this became the foundation of the activities of tea man (suki) Matsunaga Jian. It was through this connection that in 1979 the Matsunaga Memorial Hall in Kanagawa Prefecture donated the Matsunaga Collection of 249 items to Fukuoka City and these are now held at Fukuoka Art Museum. TN: There has been much debate on the authorship of Nanpōroku. It appears that Rikyū’s original notes were collated by Nanbō Sōkei and decades later these were allegedly discovered by Tachibana Jitsuzan, although much of the text is now thought to be a combination of Jitsuzan’s work and other tea treatises. In Hakata today there is a Nanpō Ryū school (centred on Engakuji) in addition to the Nanbō Ryū School (centred on Kushida Shrine). See Matsuoka Hirokazu, Nanpōroku to Tachibana Jitsuzan [Record of the South and Tachibana Jitsuzan] (Fukuoka: Kaichōsha, 1998).
careers respectively, and also their associations with the Kamigata culture (around Kyoto and Osaka) in the Kinai region. Sōtan Nikki, the diary that Kamiya Sōtan compiled from 1586 onwards, provides an extensive historical record on chanoyu in Hakata, but the scarcity of earlier reliable material has meant that the situation before this date remains largely unclear. As a result, existing studies tend to focus on Sōshitsu and Sōtan without providing an overall view of how tea ceremony developed in medieval Hakata. As far as possible, this chapter explores the chanoyu environment already there before they appeared on the scene.

The Introduction of Tea and Zen and the Diffusion of Chanoyu Culture

The Introduction of Tea and Hakata Zen

It was Myōan Eisai (Yōsai, 1141–1215) who transmitted Rinzai Zen from China, but by introducing tea seeds to Japan he also made an important contribution to the history of the ‘Way of Tea’ (sadō). The seeds he brought back became known as Iwagami tea, after the place where he planted them on the slopes of Mount Sefuri to the south of Hakata. It is not clear, however, whether this was after his first trip to Song China (1168), or his second stay there (1187–1191). The exact location where they were planted is also not confirmed, although there is a monument in front of the Rinzenji temple on the southern slopes of Mount Sefuri with an

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3 Shimai-shi nenroku is often used in relation to Shimai Sōshitsu, although he did not write this himself and it was compiled after his death. While this contains some elements not found anywhere else, further research is needed to verify whether or not these are based on a reliable source.


5 TN: In addition to the Eisai narrative, tea is thought to have been introduced to Japan previously by monks such as Saichō (767–822) and Kūkai (774–835) on their return from studying in China. In 815, Emperor Saga gave an order for tea to be grown around Kyoto so that leaves from the annual harvest could be presented to the court as tribute. William Theodore De Bary et al. (eds.), Sources of East Asian Tradition: Premodern Asia (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), p. 815.