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The Microcosmic Space Created by Sen Rikyū

Hayakawa Masao

A two-mat room with a ceiling height of 1.81 m (6 *shaku*) is probably the smallest architectural space possible to encompass human activity. It is astonishing, even from a worldwide historical perspective, that such minimal architecture has been in existence for four hundred years and has had an enormous impact on a nation's cultural history. In this respect, the tearoom "Taian" (lit., "Waiting Hut") at Myōkian temple is fascinating.

To describe it more accurately, the Taian is composed of a two-mat main room with a tokonoma which is 1.21 m (4 *shaku*) in width; a one-mat *tsuginoma*, or "next room," separated from the main room by two *taikobari shōji*¹ and having a 24.2 cm wide (8 *sun*) flooring plank on one side; and, beyond this, a one-mat service area (*katte*). (Fig. 1) Altogether, the Taian is only about ten square meters in area. It is attached to the main temple structure, and extends southeastward from the temple's *shoin*-style sitting room.² First-time visitors may wonder why this teahouse, appearing so compact and unpretentious from the outside, is a National Treasure.

Putting on sedge sandals at the veranda of the temple's *shoin*-style sitting room, the visitor walks along the stone path through the tea garden (*roji*) [see p. 7] and comes to the south side of the teahouse, where the area is covered by extended eaves (*dobisashi*). From there a stone water basin (*tsukubai*) can be seen to the right, and the entrance to the teahouse, the *nijiriguchi*, further ahead on the left.

待庵 妙喜庵

次の間
太鼓貼り障子
勝手

書院座敷

露地
土庇
蹲踞
躊躇口

¹ Sliding doors composed of a wooden framework, like that of *shōji*, covered on both sides with paper. "*Taikobari*" literally means "covered like a drum." This style of sliding door is characterized by its lack of an external border frame, and by its door pulls. The door pulls are formed by bringing a section of the paper diagonally inward.

² *Shoin*-style rooms are generally characterized by their formal use of square posts, floors entirely covered with tatami, and exterior perimeter of *shōji* screens. The *shoin* room at Myōkian temple serves as the temple's main hall (*hondō*). This hall was reconstructed during the Taishō era (1912–26), at which time major repairs were also made on the Taian tearoom.

Translated and adapted, by permission, from "Rikyū ga Kizuku Shugyoku no Shosekai" in *Fumetsu no Kenchiku 9, Myōkian Chashitsu 'Taian'* (Tokyo: Mainichi Shimbunsha, 1989). Photographs are by Okamoto Shigeo. Unless otherwise stated, footnotes are by the translator.

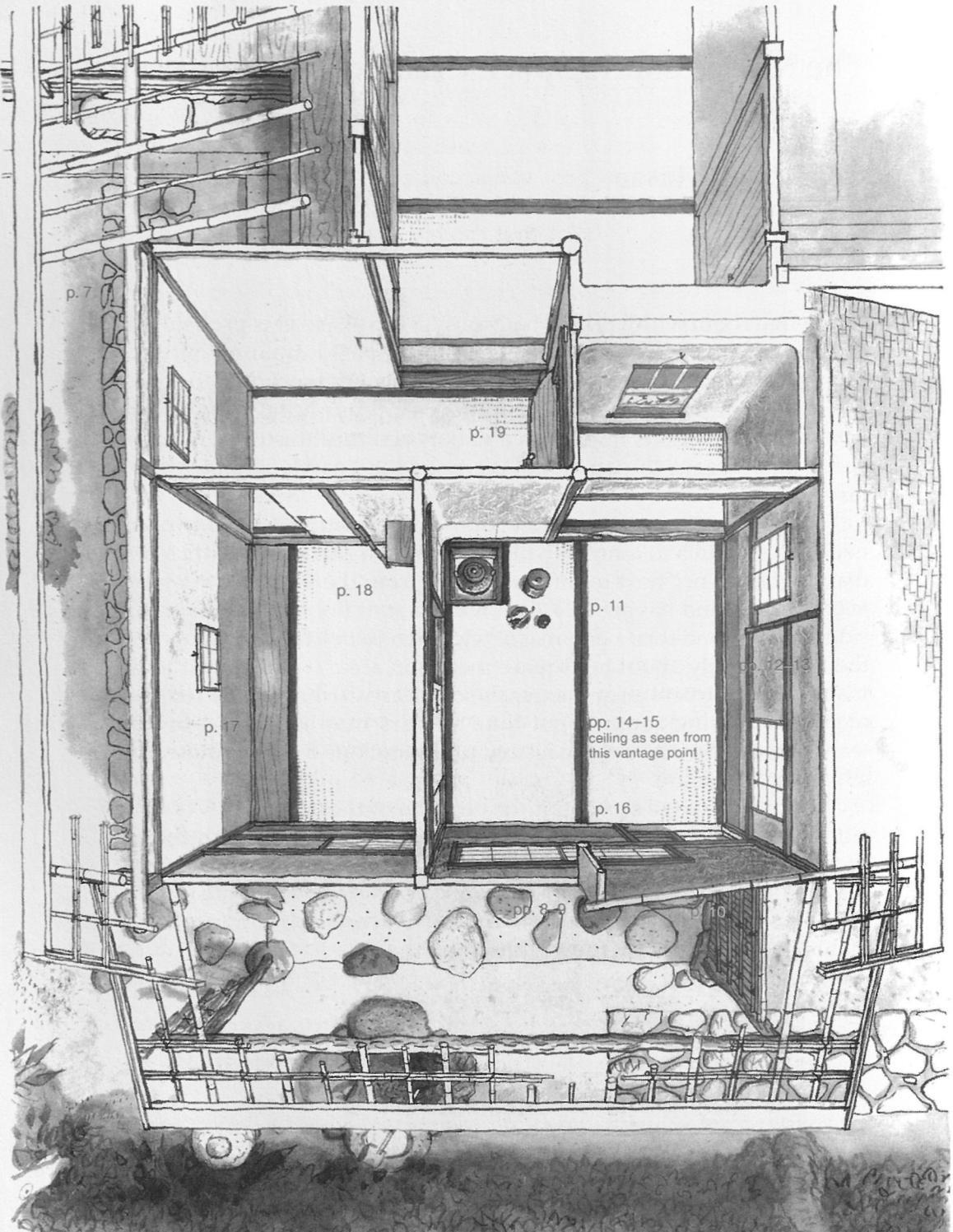


Fig. 1

Upon opening the wooden door of the *nijiriguchi* and peering inside, most every visitor is momentarily spellbound, struck by the visual impact of the extraordinarily austere, delicate yet coarse interior space of the Taian — a dramatic sight which the visitor hardly expects from the structure's plain and sedate exterior. [see pp. 8–9, 10]

It is the dark gray earthen walls, contrasting so sharply with the bright new tatami mats and the white *koshibari*³ paper running along the lower parts of the walls, that first catch the eye. Roughly plastered, with coarse straw exposed on the surface, the earthen walls have blackened with the passage of time. The tokonoma, directly opposite the *nijiriguchi*, has the same finish as these walls and, because its inner edges have been rounded, it seems to possess an uncanny depth.⁴ Light entering through the windows reflects irregularly on the alcove post (*takobashira*) and alcove rail (*takogamachi*), fashioned from logs and left with rough knife marks and knots exposed. [see p. 11]

腰貼

Opposite the white *taikobari shōji* doors on the left, which separate the main room from the *tsuginoma*, *shōji* window screens cover two small windows set apart in the right-hand wall, and create a delicately balanced composition as they softly refract the light entering from the *shitajimado* windows.⁵ The *koshibari* paper on this wall is dark blue and covers most of the lower part of the wall. The vertical mullion (*hōdate*) and the sills (*shikii*) and lintel (*kamoī*) for the *shōji* window screens intersect, forming a composition of dark brown lines which divide the wall into sections of beautifully balanced proportion. In its entirety, the wall gives the refreshing impression of a modern painting. [see pp. 12–13]

床柱 床框

The visitor might feel the strongest impact upon noticing the ceiling. The small 1 *tsubo* (3.3 m²) ceiling is divided into three parts: two rectangular, horizontal surfaces and the finished inside surface of the sloping roof. The two horizontal surfaces, one large and one small, meet perpendicularly and are made of thin slats girded by narrow bamboo poles. A plaque engraved with the Japanese characters 待庵 (Taian) is hooked to the small wall surface between the high and low ceiling levels. The three-dimensional ceiling seems to contribute much to the beautiful and intricate sense of composition of the entire room. [see pp. 14–15]

下地窓

方立

敷居 鴨居

Proceeding into the room, sitting at the place for the main guest near the tokonoma, and looking back at the *nijiriguchi*, one notices the

³ *Koshibari* refers to the paper pasted along the lower part of a wall. This papering is usually done on earthen walls to prevent crumbling of the wall and soiling of clothing when the wall is touched.

⁴ This type of alcove with rounded corners is called *murodoko* 室床, or "chamber alcove." — Author

⁵ *Shitajimado*, or "foundation window," refers to unframed latticework windows formed by leaving a portion of earthen wall unplastered, exposing the reeds or other lattice foundation materials used to reinforce the wall.

brightness of the two shōji screens over the large window above the rustic plank *nijiriguchi*. The wall, the planks of the door, the waist-high *koshibari*, the delicate lines of the shōji, and the lines of the sills and lintel holding the shōji screens — all the elements comprising this wall surface create a pleasant harmony. [see p. 16]

In its correlation with the intricate ceiling and the four walls which are each of a differing composition, the floor, consisting of two tatami mats — one for the guest (*kyakuza*) and the other for the host (*temaeza*) — has the appearance of utter simplicity. The black tatami border runs boldly through the center of the room, emphatically separating the spaces for the guest and the host. The sunken hearth (*ro*) in the corner of the host's tatami is a small, distinct square defined by wide borders, and plays a pivotal role in the three-dimensional composition of the room as a whole.

The one-mat *tsuginoma* with flooring plank is composed of relatively simple surfaces, perhaps partly because this room is not readily seen by guests. Nonetheless, the west wall, which faces the main room, has an interesting composition. It is a single plane without any division, simply having one third of the lower portion covered with *koshibari* paper, and, above that in the center slightly to the right, a small *shitajimado* window with a hooked-on shōji screen (*kakeshōji*). It has a charming air about it in contrast to the intense composition of each wall in the main room. [see p. 17] This wall, however, was not like this from the very beginning. Originally, there was a middle post (*nakabashira*) slightly to the left, and a window on the upper left. The wall appears to have been rebuilt around the end of the Edo period.

掛障子 中柱 吊棚 桐

There is a suspended shelf (*tsuridana*) in the corner of the wall separating the *tsuginoma* from the sunken hearth in the main room. This shelf is considered to have been here from the beginning. It is made of a thin board of paulownia wood (*kiri*) and is suspended from the ceiling by a thin bamboo pole attached to its outermost corner. [see p. 18]

To the north of the *tsuginoma* is the one-mat service area, having a small window on the west side and a three-tiered suspended shelf in the southeast corner. [see p. 19] Separated by a fusuma on the north side, the service area connects with the tatami-covered hallway of the main temple structure. The threshold of the main structure is one step higher than the level of the service area. This is one of the major reasons why this tearoom is believed to have been moved to its present location from another site. Furthermore, the post to which the three-tiered shelf is attached does not reach the ceiling, and there is a polished, worm-eaten log post on the border between this room and the main structure. These elements in the service area, though interesting, seem somehow unnatural and lead us to think that this tearoom may not have been built here originally.

An Expression of Wabi Aesthetics

Taian is said to be the work of Sen Rikyū (1522–91). But is this really true? And when was it completed? To date, no records have been found to answer these questions, and a number of theories have developed in an attempt to solve the mystery surrounding this tearoom. When Toyotomi Hideyoshi defeated Akechi Mitsuhide at the Battle of Yamazaki in 1582 (Tenshō 10),⁶ Hideyoshi is said to have ordered Rikyū to design a tearoom there. Another theory states that it was Kōshuku Shibō, then chief priest of Myōkian and also a chanoyu enthusiast in close contact with the tea masters of Sakai, who had Rikyū design a tearoom. At that time, Rikyū owned a house near the temple, and some people believe the tearoom was built on the premises of this house and was moved to its present location after Rikyū's death.

千利休

豊臣秀吉 明智光秀

功叔士紡

Which of the above theories, if any, is correct still remains uncertain. However, most agree that this tearoom is truly the work of Rikyū and was built around 1582, when Rikyū was in his sixties and had reached the height of his artistic maturity. It has been maintained down through the generations that this microcosm could not have been realized without the artistic genius of Rikyū, who played a leading role in developing the unique aesthetics of chanoyu and in popularizing chanoyu in the Momoyama period. No one but Rikyū could have created this architectural space.

Rikyū's way of tea centered around the wabi aesthetic. Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, whom Rikyū served as tea master, were both hegemons with a taste for extravagance during an age of lawless civil war. It was they who built Azuchi Castle and the Jurakudai mansion, respectively, during the Momoyama period, an epoch-making era in Japanese cultural history which witnessed a flourishing of exuberant artistic splendor. Rikyū strove for an ideal of beauty which lay at the other end of the artistic spectrum — simple, refined beauty; and his expression of this in terms of architecture was the *sōan* tearoom — that is, a tearoom in the style of a 'grass-thatched hut' — as represented by the Taian at Myōkian. From such contrasting extremes as the monumental scale of a castle versus a minimal space, and gold and azure wall paintings versus plain earthen walls, Rikyū strove to realize a beauty of a higher order. And, indeed, his achievement of this in the Taian was of an astounding level. In originating the *sōan* tearoom,

織田信長

草庵茶室

⁶ Oda Nobunaga (1534–82), a hegemon of the Azuchi period, came under attack by a mutinous retainer, Akechi Mitsuhide (1528–82), and was forced to commit suicide at Honnōji temple, Kyoto. Only thirteen days after Nobunaga's death, Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98), an ally and disciple of Nobunaga's, took revenge and defeated Mitsuhide at Yamazaki, in the vicinity of Myōkian temple.

Rikyū was able to realize his bold and novel ideas by the use of finely detailed artistic expression, demonstrating his wide-ranging genius.

However, comparing, for example, the interior space of the two-mat Taian room to the voluminous space which opened up vertically through the many stories of the donjon at Azuchi Castle, the extremely diminutive Taian room seems toy-like. Compared to the reception rooms and sitting rooms common to the *shoin*-style architecture of the Momoyama period — rooms which, like the tearoom, were designed for entertaining guests — Taian is so undersized that one imagines people in those days may have doubted the judgement of the designer.

Of course, the spacious reception rooms of eighteen mats or more which were in common use at the time did not suddenly give rise to Rikyū's idea to build a two-mat room. Takeno Jōō, who originated the *chanoyu* based on the *wabi* aesthetic, was Rikyū's mentor and, even before Rikyū's time, he had built a four-and-a-half-mat room for *chanoyu*. And Rikyū himself, abiding by his mentor's formulations, taught his apprentices that the four-and-a-half-mat tearoom represented the basic tearoom size.

The prototype of the four-and-a-half-mat room is considered to be the well-known Dōjinsai in the Tōgudō at the Higashiyama-dono (popularly known as Ginkakuji, the Temple of the Silver Pavilion), which was completed in 1486 (Bunmei 18), in the middle of the Muromachi period. In that this room represented the first appearance of a four-and-a-half mat room, it was of epoch-making significance in the history of Japanese housing. The Dōjinsai is also recognized as symbolizing the earliest stage in the history of the tearoom.

間 九間 一間々中

Japanese architecture in ancient times was built according to a unit of linear measure called "ken," or inter-post distance. Although the length of 1 *ken* was not standardized, approximately 6 *shaku* 5 *sun* (1.97 m) came to be used as the basic length of a *ken* in the houses of the mid-Muromachi period. When tatami mats began to be laid wall-to-wall in rooms, one square *ken*, or the area of two tatami mats laid side-to-side, came to be the prevailing measure of floor space, called "*ma*."⁷ The conventional eighteen-mat rooms called "kokonoma," or literally "nine-*ma*" rooms, were three *ken* square. This exemplifies that, as a rule, residential architecture was built based upon multiples of the *ken* unit. Yet the Dōjinsai was designed as a room one and a half *ken* square, a size referred to then as "ikkenmanaka," or something to the effect of "one *ken* plus mid-*ken*." The implementation of a unit smaller than the basic *ken* reflects that the Japanese were developing a keener, more detailed sense of architectural space. This marks a significant point in history.

⁷ "*Ma*" is written with the same character as "*ken*," 間. It is helpful to note that the length of a tatami is exactly double its width, and that it equals the length of a *ken*.

By Rikyū's time, therefore, it had apparently already been acknowledged that smaller rooms of four and a half mats were more appropriate than spacious rooms for chanoyu gatherings of a few people, as they fostered a warmer atmosphere. Here it should be emphasized, however, that Rikyū's two-mat room was not simply a miniaturized version of a four-and-a-half-mat room; it could not be designed as such, for, though the two are both square in shape, the functional character of a room two mats in area is totally different from that of a four-and-a-half-mat room.

Rikyū's Innovations

Rikyū manifested his remarkable ingenuity in many ways. The first was his conception of the *nijiriguchi* entrance. Although the entrance at Taian is slightly larger than the *nijiriguchi* seen on later-day tearooms, it is 78.8 cm (2 *shaku* 6 *sun*) in height and 71.5 cm (2 *shaku* 3 *sun* 6 *bu*) in width — just large enough to crawl through. The effect of entering a room by crawling through this type of entrance is striking in the sense that, to the person entering the room, the interior space appears to be more voluminous than it actually is.

The second was his technique of rounding the recessed wall corners to hide the posts. In the Taian, the corner where the sunken hearth is situated, as well as the tokonoma wall corners and even the tokonoma ceiling corners, have been rounded, making it difficult to accurately perceive the depth of the room. (Fig. 2)

The third of Rikyū's major innovations was the *shitajimado* window. The *shitajimado* window looks as if the underlying reinforcement of the earthen wall has been left exposed. Actually, the earthen material of the wall is plastered around the edges of an open window space instead of building a wooden frame around it. In this opening, reed shafts and bamboo are woven in a lattice pattern and then the ends of the reed and bamboo latticework are covered with more of the earthen wall material. (Fig. 3) A paper *shōji* screen is placed on the inside of the opening. This method allows windows of any size to be situated anywhere in a wall surface. By enabling free access to whatever amounts of natural light were necessary to alleviate the sense of confinement caused by unrelieved expanses of wall surface, this technique gave Rikyū the means to create a totally new kind of interior space.

Rikyū's fourth conceptual breakthrough had to do with his achievement of the optimal sizes for the Taian's interior elements. For four-and-a-half-mat tearooms, the sizes of such elements as the posts,



Fig. 2. Rounded ceiling corners of the *murodoko*-style tokonoma.

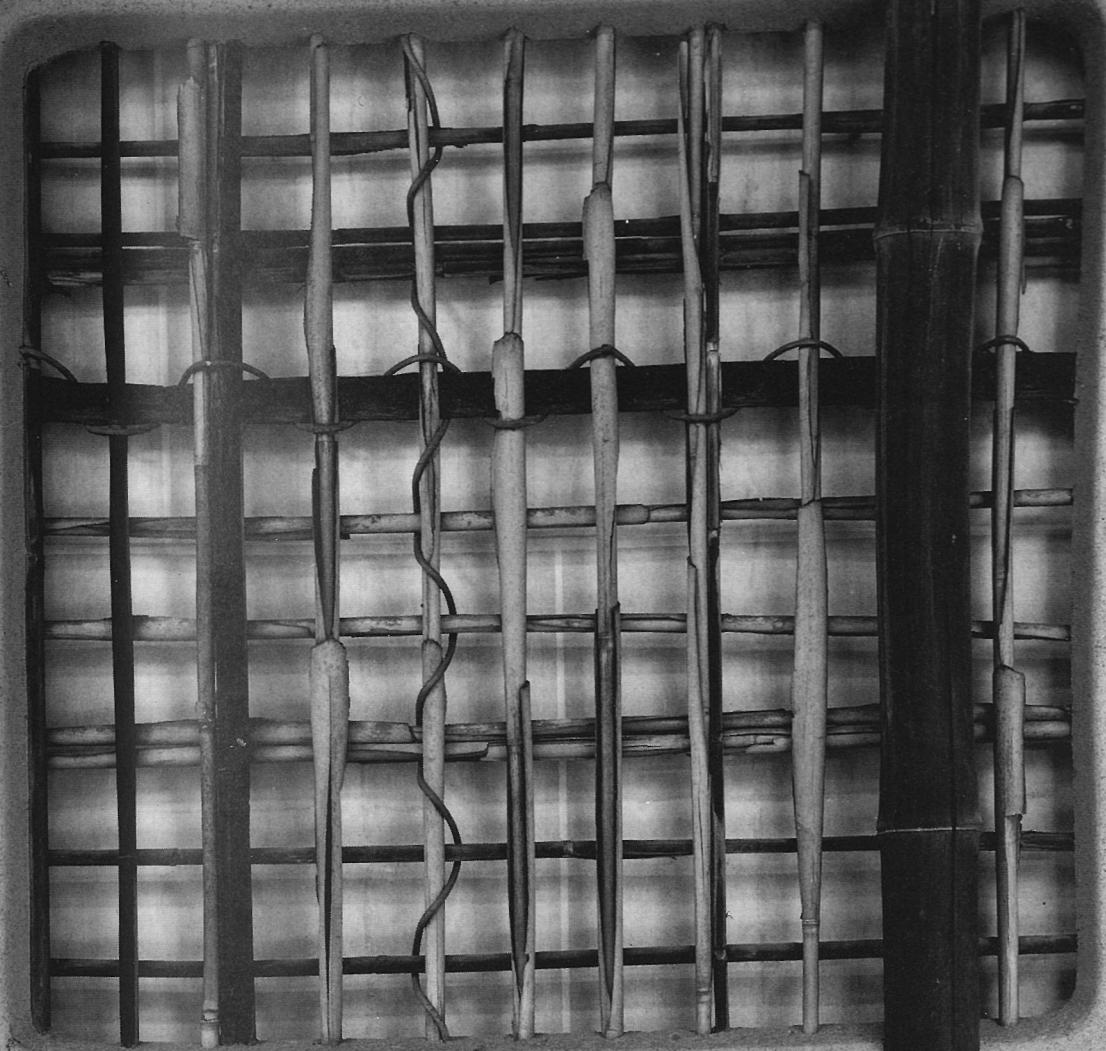


Fig. 3. *Shitajimado* as seen
from outside the building.



Fig. 4. Shōji made of
delicately crafted split
bamboo components.

lintels, and shōji stiles (*kamachi*) and muntins (*kumiko*) had generally been standardized by this time. If the same sizes were adopted for the elements in a two-mat room, however, the diminutive size of the room would be exaggerated. If, on the other hand, the sizes of the elements were proportionally reduced, the room would assume a light and awkward quality, like a scaled-down model. Choosing to do neither of these and seeking the limits of practicality and harmony led to the success of Rikyū's design.

For example, there is a physical limit to how much the diameter of a support post can be reduced. The smaller the size of a building, the greater the roof area each post must support. This is because there is a relative increase in the ratio of the area of the eaves to the number of posts. A post with its sides lightly planed but its corners left in their natural round state with bark intact (*menkawa-bashira*), or an altogether unprocessed log post is comparatively sturdy and at the same time appears thinner than its actual size. Rikyū took full advantage of these attributes and used them ingeniously.

面皮柱

Again, the sizes of the doors and windows in the Taian tearoom were determined through a subtle balance of practicality and visual effect, and then the detailed dimensions of their fittings were decided. As for the components of the small, papered shōji window screens in particular, those of a proportionally desirable thinness would have been hard to work with and would have been of questionable strength. Rikyū's solution was to have highly skilled craftsmen utilize straight-grained, good-quality wood or bamboo. (Fig. 4)

The fifth of Rikyū's innovations had to do with his consideration of colors. In contrast to *shoin*-style architecture which incorporated unfinished white cedar (*hinoki*) and walls of white plaster (*shikkui*), Rikyū's design favored Japanese cypress (*sugi*), Japanese pine (*matsu*), and Japanese hemlock (*tsuga*), and walls finished in earthy tones. Furthermore, he stained these woods and devised an original finish for the earthen walls. Writings on tea from later periods contain passages which variously describe Rikyū's style of design. For example, there is one which states, "Stain every element in a tearoom (*sukiya*); never use untreated wood." Another dictum states, "Darken the wall to create a wabi effect." However, descriptions in various writings on Rikyū's use of coloration are inconsistent; slight discrepancies exist between texts which describe Rikyū using darker tones, and those which claim that Rikyū considered the use of dark tones to be vulgar.

檜 漆喰
杉 松
梅

The techniques by which Rikyū achieved the colors that he desired are not clearly understood. More than likely, umber pigments consisting mainly of soot were dissolved in persimmon tannin or vegetable oil, or else lacquer, and this was painstakingly applied as a finish. The best color tone or glossiness of finish was probably carefully chosen

for each element in the room, so specifications for the finishes were not at all standardized.

The two-mat tearoom was realized by this series of astonishingly original and scrupulously ingenuous ideas. This creative process must have begun by reducing the four-and-a-half-mat room down to an analogous two-mat room size. But Rikyū persisted in looking for ways to create a not-so functionally practical yet perceptually comfortable room, and eventually went on to realize new concepts of beauty. Rikyū must have gone through numerous processes of trial and error in order to discover concrete methods of creating optical illusions which would divert attention from the smallness of the room. His determination finally led to the emergence of a unique minimal space that was totally innovative, profound, and austere.

The Origin of the 'Sukiya' Concept

The small-scale architecture of Rikyū's *sōan* style has been contrasted to the grand-scale architecture of the ornate Momoyama style associated with Nobunaga and Hideyoshi, and has always been viewed as the expression of the wabi aesthetic. Simplicity and tranquility, as expressed by the words "wabi" and "sabi," lie at the core of Rikyū's architectural principles. In fact, Rikyū's architecture, as manifested in the Taian, is on a par with palatial residences in terms of spiritual and technological value, and probably in financial terms as well. His was the creation of new artistic values. Rikyū points out, "A tearoom should be made crudely," a statement requiring contemplation before it is truly understood. This recalls two verses written long ago in the Nara period by Empress Genshō (r. 715–24) and Emperor Shōmu (r. 724–49), who were invited to the residential villa of Minister Nagaya-no-ō (Prince Nagaya, a grandson of Emperor Temmu; then Minister of the Left) in Sao (located in the north of Nara prefecture). The two verses, included in the *Manyō Shū*, are:⁸

This chamber built with barked wood
brought from the grove nearby,
and thatched with obana stems
shall stand a thousand years.

Empress Genshō

⁸ Translated by Honda Heihachirō in his *The Manyoshū* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1967). The cited poems are nos. 1637 and 1638, respectively.

We like this cottage built with trees
cut and from Mount Nara brought.
However oft we look,
it tires us not.

Emperor Shōmu

These verses depict a mountain villa of natural log construction with a thatched roof, which is being praised for its unique charm in contrast to the palaces in the capital. As a villa fit for an aristocrat of the highest position, one imagines that it is of the most exquisite construction. Yet the materials used for this villa were of the same coarse quality as those used by common people. Here one finds the source of two sets of values which prevailed in the 'graceful' architecture of the aristocracy. And therein lie the ancient roots of the *sōan* aesthetic.

The element of 'gracefulness' in architecture must have continued to grow alongside the tradition of poetry writing which was at the center of court culture. The world of poetry in the Middle Ages was characterized by the rise of *renga* (verse linking), which possessed the flavor of a polite accomplishment, and by an intellectual trend to long for freedom from worldly concerns, as represented by the poet-monk Saigyō (1118–90). At their residences, aristocrats erected structures — indeed, grass-thatched cottages (*sōan*) built in the manner of mountain-village hermitages — for the purpose of holding gatherings to enjoy *renga*. The poets who assembled at these country-style cottages hailed them as retreats in the midst of the city, or mountain hideaways.

Renga, a literary pastime of the aristocracy, quickly spread to the warrior class and the common people. A satirical verse included in the *Nijōgawara no Rakusho* [Nijōgawara Scribblings] (1334) describes how *renga* truly gained widespread popularity at that time. With this growing popularity, the element of playfulness in *renga* began to override its more refined aspects, whereby a category of light-hearted colloquial verse called *haikai* emerged. Riding on the same wave of popularity as group literature and other group pastimes, *chanoyu* also became extremely popular at the end of the Middle Ages. Common both to these literary activities and *chanoyu* was the idea of participating in an artistic pursuit as a group.

Although the origin of the word "suki," written 数寄, is not clearly understood, in essence the word means "to like," which is normally written 好き, and it may be that the 数寄 character combination was appropriated because it denotes "a gathering of many people." At any rate, as *renga* became popular, expressions such as "*uta-suki*" ("[to have a] liking for verses") or *sukimono* ("person/people with a liking") en-

二条河原落書

歌数寄
数寄者

tered the language. By the end of the Muromachi period, the word “*suki*” came to denote a person with a passion for *renga*. On the other hand, a person who was devoted to *chanoyu* was called *cha-suki*, that is, a person with a “liking for tea.” By the time Rikyū had perfected *chanoyu* and it was flourishing, “*suki*” came to signify *chanoyu*. Words which signified the place for *chanoyu* were “*chanoyu zashiki*” (“sitting room for *chanoyu*”) or “*kakoi*” (“enclosed area”). The word “*chashitsu*,” literally “tea room,” came into use much later, after the mid-Edo period. Rikyū is believed to have been the first to use “*sukiya*” to mean a place for *chanoyu*, and he may have used this word with the hope that the *chashitsu* architecture he had originated would be distinguished from other styles of architecture.

From Jōō’s time on, the artistic aspects of *chanoyu* were cultivated among the townspeople of Sakai. In the Momoyama period, the city of Sakai was unparalleled in its prosperity as the largest trade port. As a result of its exposure to European civilization via trade, this city also exhibited a great degree of interest in culture and, at the same time, possessed an abundance of financial resources. Nonetheless, the townspeople’s houses are believed to have been surprisingly small. To provide moments for the enjoyment of refined pleasures away from their business as merchants, many townspeople built rooms for *chanoyu* on tiny plots of land, and they referred to these as mountain retreats in the city, like the aristocrats’ *sōan*-style teahouses. The model for Rikyū’s concept of the *sukiya*, which he originated in the late years of his life, can be traced to the modest yet abundant life-style of the townspeople of Sakai.

Still, from what concept was it that Rikyū’s thinking evolved toward the creation of such a minimal space as is manifested in the Taian? Several clues to this mystery have been handed down to us in the form of legends. One points out that the idea for the *shitajimado* window was conceived when Rikyū was looking at the crumbling wall of a poor farmer’s house. The idea for the *nijiriguchi* entrance is said to have been inspired by the door of a boat which was tied to a wharf in Hirakata, Osaka. Though these explanations are attributed to Rikyū himself, their true source remains dubious, making it difficult for us to believe them outright. Another story speculates that Rikyū came up with the idea of a totally enclosed, minimal space after looking at the cabin of a Portuguese ship in the port of Sakai. This theory, similar to another, that the manner of sharing a bowl of tea with others was adopted from a Christian ritual, is very intriguing. Rikyū certainly possessed imaginative capabilities sufficient to give credence to such theories regarding his ingenious appropriation of the latest cultural contacts. Extending these speculations one step further, Rikyū would have been the most likely person to have designed the golden tearoom

of which Hideyoshi was so proud — a tearoom which was very European in its selection of brilliant colors.

The Influence of the Taian on Modern Architecture

After Rikyū's downfall, he was succeeded in his position as leader in the world of chanoyu by daimyō and warlords such as Furuta Oribe (1544–1615), Kobori Enshū (1579–1647), and Oda Uraku (1547–1621). Each of them was a master of chanoyu who had studied under Rikyū, and each exhibited a talent for architectural design, creating lasting examples of structures representative of the early Edo period.

古田織部
小堀遠州 織田有楽

Among these successors, Furuta Oribe designed a three-and-three-quarter mat tearoom (*sanjō-daike*) having an added space for the guest's attendants (*shōban-seki*). Furthermore, he incorporated many windows into this tearoom, to create a light-filled, lively atmosphere. Thus, he originated the so-called Ennan-style tearoom. Oribe's ideas also differed from those of Rikyū in regard to the manner in which chanoyu gatherings should progress, and this led to his formulation of a style of architectural layout in which a *kusari-no-ma*, or "linking room," and a *shoin*-style sitting room were connected to the tearoom.

三畳台目
相伴席

燕庵形式

鎖の間

忘筌 孤篷庵

密庵 龍光院

如庵

Along the same lines as Oribe, Kobori Enshū enthusiastically incorporated a series of innovations into the design of his tearooms. As seen in the Bōsen tearoom at Kohōan of Daitokuji temple, built by Enshū as his own temple, he created a dynamic architectural style distinctly different from Rikyū's *sōan* style by attempting to introduce the feel of a *shoin*-style sitting room into the tearoom. The finest example of his style is the Mittan tearoom, at Ryōkōin of Daitokuji. Enshū was a man of many talents. Due to his position as Commissioner of Public Works, he left a significant mark on Japanese architecture and gardens.

The best-known example of Oda Uraku's architecture is the extraordinary tearoom named Joan. Uraku experimented with a variety of new ideas, and, as seen in the daring yet beautifully balanced design of the Joan, he succeeded in establishing a unique architectural style.

In the early part of the Edo period, there were many other capable military leaders who were also masters of chanoyu, such as Hosokawa Sansai, Kanamori Sōwa, and Katagiri Sekishū. However, as for all the above-mentioned individuals, their thinking on chanoyu was restricted by their position as military leaders bound to a feudal system of government. For example, the utilization of the *daike* size of tatami for the host — that is, a tatami three-quarters the usual tatami size — suggested the host's reservation with regard to guests of higher rank than himself. Rikyū held onto the spirit of equality of all men and re-

garded chanoyu as a way of discovering truth, but his philosophy could not remain in the mainstream of the changing times.

Chanoyu also came to be enjoyed by members of the imperial court. This was occasioned by the Kinchū chanoyu gathering held in 1585 (Tenshō 13), when Hideyoshi presented Emperor Ōgimachi with an offering of tea, and appointed Rikyū to serve as chief of the tea preparations. Notwithstanding this, however, the primary cultural activity of the court centered around the writing of 17-syllable poems called *waka*. The era extending from the early Edo period to the Kan'ei period (1624–44) was a time during which the culture of the court flourished. Aristocrats such as Emperor Gomizunoō (r. 1611–29), his brothers Konoe Nobuhiro and Ichijō Ekan, Imperial Prince Hachijō-no-miya Tomohito (the uncle of Emperor Gomizunoō), and his sons, Imperial Prince Tomotada and Imperial Prince Yoshihisahō, along with abbots, tea masters, and artists engaged in lively cultural activities.

In terms of the architecture built by members of the court, their *sukiya*-style works are noteworthy. As represented by works ranging from the well-known Katsura Detached Palace built by Imperial Prince Hachijō-no-miya Tomohito and his sons, to the Shūgakuin Detached Palace by Emperor Gomizunoō, the teahouse at Fushimi Inari Shrine and the Tōshintei pavilion at Minase Shrine — both also believed to be the works of Emperor Gomizunoō — and the Shikantei pavilion at Nishikamo Villa, by Ichijō Ekan, many of the outstanding structures of this period which remain today are among the best examples of *sukiya*-style architecture ever to have been built. All of these examples of court architecture except for the Shōkintei pavilion at the Katsura Detached Palace belong to the category of teahouse architecture. But the austere world of tea that Rikyū had pursued elicited a proud and isolated existence which did not easily lend itself to the world of court culture. The teahouse architecture of the court aristocracy adopted Rikyū's *sōan*-style *sukiya* architectural techniques in material selection, design details, as well as other aspects. As a whole, however, the structures convey an exquisite ambience of airiness and flamboyance — qualities of a culture totally alien to Rikyū's *sōan*. As *sencha* (infused tea) became more prevalent in the latter part of the Edo period, there evolved a popular and light-hearted *sukiya*-style architecture which reflected the general characteristics of this aristocratic stream of teahouse architecture.

The spirit of Rikyū's architectural ideal, as epitomized by the minimal space of the Taian on the premises of Myōkian, was unfortunately not carried on by any true successor. But the tangible aspects of his architectural concepts, including design details and techniques, had an enormous influence on modern architecture. It is not an exaggeration to say that all groups of modern architectural structures described as being in the *sukiya* style have been influenced in some way by Rikyū.

After Rikyū, chanoyu masters strove to validate their unique ingenuity by designing their own tearooms, and soon it became a custom to designate tearooms as having been built according to the style (*konomi*/*gonomi*) of this or that master. In viewing architecture as an art, this trend was significant in that each designer was expressing his distinct individuality and originality. Nonetheless, never again did a person of such vigor and influence as Rikyū emerge after the early part of the modern period.



Translated by Misaki Atsuko

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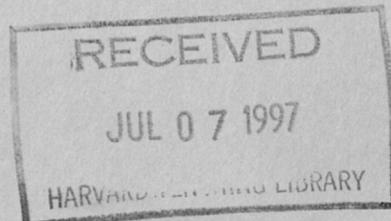
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