

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

This study has had three main goals: First, to show that *wabi* as an aesthetic and philosophical concept does exist in the Way of Tea (*chadô*), secondly, to indicate in concrete terms these characteristics of *wabi* in *chadô*, and thirdly, to show that familiar notions from the theory of literature should not be used in describing aesthetic and philosophical characteristics of *wabi* in *chadô*. I have also tried to show how aesthetic elements of Tea practice are related to the philosophical ideas articulated in classical writings on Tea.

First, my intent was to show that different kinds of *wabi* beauty exist not only in the rough and simple objects, as *wabi* is understood in previous studies (Section 6.1), but to ask: Where did these different forms of *wabi* come from and how did they develop? The answer has already been given: These different forms of *wabi* as aesthetics emerged from the philosophical basis of the *wabi* mind, which were combined with poetic ideas found in Teika's and Ietaka's poems (Section 5.2). These were given in *Nanpôroku* to illustrate Jô-ô's and Rikyû's senses of *wabi* in *chadô*. The historical development of Tea has also influenced this process: Shukô focused on the philosophical aspects of Tea, calling Tea 'a Way' (*michi*) in his letter called *Kokoro no Fumi*. The style of his Tea is described in *Yamanoue Sôjiki* using the metaphor of 'the snowy trees on distant mountains', suggesting the sense of austerity in his Tea. Jô-ô emphasised the aesthetic aspects of Tea and continued Shukô's tradition by developing it more towards the austere and modest *wabi* style, but also by infusing Tea with an element of luxury. Jô-ô believed that the basis of Tea studies is studying the old masters and learning the proper style (studying the great famed, luxurious utensils), which he called, *shôfûtei* (Section 3.1). Rikyû turned this learning process around by saying that learning should proceed from the *wabi* style to the formal style. This means that the true understanding of the luxurious utensils is attained only after one has reached the full comprehension of the modest and humble style (Section 3.2). Both Tea masters, Jô-ô and Rikyû, did not deny the existence of the luxurious *wabi*, even though the nature of their Tea was different. Jô-ô's luxury was more stable and calm, which he expressed indirectly by using shadows to diminish its brilliance. Rikyû's luxury, on the other hand, was more direct and possessed the sense of lightness and vitality based on a minimalist concept of subtle beauty (sections 4.5, 5.2, and 6.2.1).

My second aim was to show that the different forms of *wabi*, such as the luxurious *wabi*, golden *wabi*, chill calmness, austerity and absolute subtleness de-

scribing *wabi* as an aesthetic concept, are based on the realisation and true comprehension of the *wabi* mind; they can occur only if the state of *wabi* mind is attained. This state is an interaction between person, item and place. A person who has attained the state of *wabi* mind can choose and combine items suitable for the *wabi* style of Tea and can also select items illustrating the spirit of *wabi* on that occasion and in that place. In other words, a person may possess the *wabi* mind (*wabi kokoro*), but an item or a place may convey the *wabi* heart, the *wabi* spirit (*wabi kokoro*). Without the realisation of the *wabi* mind(heart), these are only expressions of a pitiful person or plain luxury and plain poverty in the outer appearance of the place or item.

In this study, it has been shown that the philosophical aspects of *wabi* focus on the idea of the *wabi* mind, which is also a necessary condition for the understanding of *wabi* beauty, the *wabi* spirit in objects. But what does this *wabi* mind really mean? It may sound like a complicated and abstract concept when it is described as cultivating one's mind through spiritual training in order to attain a higher level of consciousness, true understanding, and finally reaching the ultimate state of mind and becoming one with the original Buddha nature. In this state, all acts become natural and one has reached the absolute freedom of heart from the detachments of worldly affections for the true mastery in Tea. In practice, the *wabi* mind means the essential nature of the self that is found through spiritual training: living a modest life and being satisfied with one's life as such without having any desires for better conditions whatsoever. First of all, one has to possess a freedom from worldly matters in order to attain the freedom of the pure world of the Buddha. In between remains the spiritual training of everyday life (see Chapter 2 for details). Based on the *chadô*-related classical sources, I have set forth seven characteristics describing the *wabi* mind which are as follows: the absolute freedom of the heart (*jiyû*), straightforward heart (*jikishin*), candour (*shôjiki*), sincerity (*makoto*), the true nature of the Buddha (*busshô*), spiritual training (*shugyô*), and naturalness (*tennen*).

This raises a question: Why did these forms of *wabi* as an aesthetic and philosophical concept not occur in poetry, even though *wabi* was a term of poetry before it became a term of *chadô*? As a term of poetry, *wabi* was used mostly in negative connotations expressing melancholy, straitened circumstances in one's life, or desperate feelings because of unsatisfactory love affairs. The first clear change in the use of *wabi* in poetry occurred after it was introduced as a term of *chadô* through Bashô's poems, which turned the idea of poverty and straitened circumstances also to convey positive values (Section 5.1.2). Bashô's use of *wabi* seems, however, more like enduring or bearing the hardness of life than being satisfied with one's life as such. Even though Bashô admits insufficiency is he not

still bitter that life did not, after all, go as he wished?<sup>869</sup> In this sense, Bashô's *wabi* is close to the idea of *wabi* in Tea, yet it is not the same. Bashô's name is usually connected to his use of the word *sabi* in poetry (*Bashô's sabi*). After being adapted as a term of *chadô*, the word *wabi* came to possess philosophical and aesthetic meanings it did not have earlier in poetry. But it cannot be denied that the meanings of *wabi* in poetry may have been influenced by the meanings of *wabi* in *chadô* in its stoic asceticism and austerity.

The third aim of the study was to prove that *wabi* and *sabi* should be understood as separate terms in Tea. In previous studies in the field, *wabi* and *sabi* are used as a pair, *wabi-sabi* (sections 1.2.1 and 5.1.2), to describe primarily aesthetic values in Tea, but describing philosophical values as well, as found in Suzuki Dai-setsu's study *Zen and Japanese Culture* (1988). It has been shown in this study that *wabi* and *sabi* are both terms of literature and are closely related. Despite this relationship, *wabi*, not *sabi*, was adopted to be used to describe aesthetic and philosophical values in Tea during the time of the Great Tea Masters Shukô, Jô-ô and Rikyû. In Tea-related classics, *sabi* is used only a few times to illustrate a lonely place, the feeling of living in solitude (in *Nanpôroku*), or on one occasion as an opposite idea to the old and valuable utensils, describing something plain, simple and ordinary (in *Chawashigetsushû*). In this latter meaning, *sabi* is used in a sense similar to the meanings of *wabi* in other Tea-related classical texts. However, it seems to refer to the outer features, lacking the idea of *wabi* mind or *wabi* spirit in objects. This leads to the one great difference in the use of these two terms: *Wabi* may describe some characteristics of a person (*wabihito*), but *sabi* is not used in this kind of compound word because *sabi* is essentially a term of style (*fûtei*) or feelings. *Wabi* can be used as a term of style (*fûtei*) or feelings, but it also describes some spiritual and physical characteristics of a person.

Last, I would like to discuss the two well-known sayings in Tea by Shukô and Jô-ô, which are quite frequently used to describe *wabi* as an aesthetic concept. Shukô's sense of *wabi* in Tea is described in the saying 'it is fine to tie a praised horse to a thatched hut'<sup>870</sup> and Jô-ô's with the phrase that 'tea should also, in the end, resemble the style of cold, lean and withered' (*karekashikete samui*).<sup>871</sup> Both of these metaphors express the sense of *wabi* in Tea, but which one is more *wabi*-like?

For me, Shukô's words illustrate *wabi* in its original meaning (similar to the concept of *honsuki*, see Section 4.2.1.3), the idea of contrasting elements in Tea as

<sup>869</sup> See also Kurasawa 1992b, pp. 229-233. Kurasawa also sees that Bashô was not totally "free" from the idea of *wabi* conveying the ideas of insufficiency and lack of freedom in the hardness of everyday life.

<sup>870</sup> Yamanoue Sôjiki, p. 101.

<sup>871</sup> Yamanoue Sôjiki, p. 97.

well as the acceptance of owning and using famed Chinese tea utensils in addition to the native Japanese or other foreign (mostly South-east Asian) tea utensils, which were plainer, simpler, and more modest in their feeling and outer appearance. More *wabi*-like is, however, Jô-ô's idea of *wabi* conveying the feeling of 'cold, lean and withered' (*karekashikete samui*) in the style and in the outer appearance of Tea in general, which Rikyû developed into the form of Tea known today. In tea-rooms this means small and modest tea-rooms like three or one-and-a-half-*tatami* rooms with earthen walls and a thatched roof. In tea utensils, the fresh-water container called *Onioke* (Devil's Bucket) is one of the most representative items of this group of *wabi* utensils. The sense and style of 'cold, lean and withered' means not only plain simplicity or plain modesty in the choice of tea utensils or in the building materials for the tea-room, but also simplicity and modesty born of a true understanding of the *wabi* mind (the essence of *wabi/wabi no hon'i*) as explained in Chapter 2. Moreover, the Great Tea Masters' realisation of the *wabi* mind has opened our eyes also to see *wabi* beauty in the objects that were not traditionally included in the group of *wabi* utensils, such as the *sorori* type of flower vase (Plate 17a), or *tsurukubi* (Crane's Neck; see 4.3.2 or 4.4.2 and the Appendix, item no. 76). Other examples include Eitoku's painting called *Kaede*, Maple Leaves, and Hideyoshi's Golden tea-room with its astonishing use of gold and colours, but their form, lines and construction are very simple if you imagine them without colours. The use of gold is typical of Japanese Buddhist paintings, in which gold is used to separate this world from the other world, the Buddha world, which is one of the leading themes in explaining *wabi* as a philosophical concept (Section 2.3.5). In Chapter 6, I have described these forms of *wabi* and discussed some of their variations.

The given characteristics of *wabi* as a philosophical and an aesthetic concept do not represent the absolute truth, or the only possibility, but rather one way of thinking and analysing the matter based on the material used at this time and place. It also leaves an open road for further studies to continue this theme and to introduce a different way of considering the aesthetic and philosophical aspects of *wabi* in *chadô*, the Way of Tea.