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Translating *Fūryū*, Reappropriating *Chanoyu*: Japan's Nation-Building, Imperialist Ambitions, and Meiji Modernization

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When Japan was forced to open its ports to the world in the mid-nineteenth century, it experienced an unprecedented influx of new knowledge as well as unfamiliar systems and institutions that were instrumental to Japan's political, economic, and social transformation. The process required substantial effort from intellectual and literary figures in translating and appropriating Western thought and practices, which irreversibly transformed some premodern concepts and practices.¹ This paper explores the process of conceptual rearticulation and the recodification of premodern arts and culture during the Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912). It discusses the reconfiguration of the relationship between the concept of *fūryū* 風流 (usually translated in English as 'elegance' or 'refinement') and the practice of *chanoyu* 茶の湯 (Japanese tea ceremony). During the late nineteenth century, the term "*fūryū*" was frequently employed in newspapers to

characterize *chanoyu*. However, from 1906 onward, there appears to have been a disconnection between the concepts of *fūryū* and *chanoyu*,² and an examination of the terms "*fūryū*" and "*chanoyu*" in the intellectual discourses and popular narratives during this period reveals that there was a reinterpretation of these practices and a subsequent reclassification within the context of modernizing Japan.

The development of the notion of *fūryū* in Japan was influenced by various social and intellectual factors. Originating in China and first appearing in Japan in the eighth century, *fūryū* historically implied artistic sophistication. The notion of *fūryū* first signified courtly elegance in poetry during the Heian 平安 period (794–1185). An evolution occurred in the intellectual world in the second half of the thirteenth century with the

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¹ In this paper, the term "premodern" refers to the era spanning from the late sixteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, while "early modern" denotes the nineteenth century preceding the 1868 Meiji Restoration.

² The investigation carried out here used the *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞 newspaper database but did not return any article using both the keywords *fūryū* and *chanoyu* after 1906. Jordan Sand uses the phrase "fast-and-dirty" to describe such a search because the *Yomiuri* database does not contain the full text of the original articles. As a result, to some extent, the numbers surely reflect the judgments of the researchers who compiled the database. However, as Sand points out, the index is extraordinarily thorough. Thus, the fact that the database does not return any article that used the words *fūryū* and *chanoyu* in the same place carries some significance. See Sand, "中流 / Chūryū / Middling."

emergence of the warrior class as a distinct social group, accompanied by the introduction of Zen Buddhism as the prevailing moral and intellectual framework for these warriors. This shift in cultural and intellectual paradigms resulted in the development of an added meaning of ostentatiousness (*basara* ぼさら) within the Japanese cultural landscape. The rise of commoner culture in the Tokugawa 徳川 period (1600–1868) introduced additional conceptual layers, such as playfulness and sensuality, to the discourse of *fūryū*. Nevertheless, the new tastes did not overtake the old ones; they coexisted in the Japanese literary, artistic, and cultural sphere.³

By the late Tokugawa period, *fūryū* as an aesthetic concept had shaped the taste and style of a wide range of literary and cultural practices, including *chanoyu*.⁴ Although the notion of sophistication changed over time and was multidimensional, two uses of the term “*fūryū*” stood out by the nineteenth century: one related to poetry, and the other to the world of popular entertainment. In the world of poetry, *fūryū* implied “the kind of literary freedom and dedication exemplified by Chinese and Japanese poet-recluses, and wanderers such as the famous haiku poet, Matsuo Bashō.”⁵ In the world of popular entertainment, *fūryū* was associated with the exaggerated grandeur of kabuki theater and sensuality in the pleasure quarters,⁶ and often appeared in the titles of popular prints—both visual and textual—suggesting the notions of flamboyance, eccentricity, or fashion.⁷

At this juncture, the term *fūryū* also began to be used as an umbrella concept representing a body of practice-based knowledge for cultured persons, especially

for the rising commoner class.⁸ The implementation of *fūryū* practices, which included performing and appreciating *noh* and *kyōgen* (independent comedic plays performed between two separate *noh* plays), composing *haikai* 俳諧 (comedic linked verse), participating in flower arrangement, incense appreciation, *chanoyu*, performing various musical instruments, playing *go* 碁 and *shōgi* 将棋 games, painting, calligraphy, and so on, served to facilitate the consolidation of the practitioners’ social network both within and beyond the confines of their social status.⁹ A significant proportion of *fūryū* practices were also labeled as the playful arts (*yūgei* 遊芸). Despite the exclusion of *fūryū* from formal or institutional knowledge systems outlined by the Tokugawa regime, which emphasized the study of neo-Confucianism and classical texts in literary Chinese and Sinitic Japanese, *fūryū* practices served as significant markers of individual cultivation.¹⁰ By the nineteenth century, the mastery of *fūryū* practices was regarded as a marker of personal development and refinement among the general populace. In this way, *fūryū* practices were marked by a sense of detachment—or liberation—from mundane worldly concerns and active political engagement.

Reappropriating *Fūryū* as a Literary Concept, circa 1880–1890

As a concept and a practice, *fūryū* was profoundly embedded in the cultural sphere of sophisticated intellectuals—samurai and non-samurai alike—in early modern Japan. As the notion of *fūryū* contained a sense of detachment, this Sino-Japanese aesthetic concept proved to be a suitable vehicle for literary practitioners seeking to appropriate new European notions of “liberation” or “freedom.” On 15 June 1882, the author Narushima Ryūhoku 成島柳北 (1837–1884) wrote an editorial for the *Yomiuri shinbun* 読売新聞 titled “*Fūryū no shugi* 風流の主義 (The principle of *fūryū*)”, in which he argued that the notion of *fūryū* “emerges from freedom. If one does not know the universal law of freedom, one is not qualified to discuss *fūryū*.”¹¹

3 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no jō*.

4 Ibid.

5 Mostow, “Modern Constructions,” p. 107.

6 In this article, the term “pleasure quarters” (*yūkaku* 遊郭 or *yūri* 遊里) refers to a licensed urban space designated for prostitution, as originally assigned by the Tokugawa shogunate. The existence of both licensed and unlicensed establishments providing sexual services was acknowledged, with the former being designated as “pleasure quarters,” and the latter as “unlicensed pleasure quarters” (*okabasho* 岡場所). The significance of pleasure quarters as a source of highly sophisticated cultural production has been the subject of earlier scholarship up until around the 1990s. Recent scholarship has redefined this type of urban space as part of the history of sex trafficking and gender discrimination. For a comprehensive overview of the extant scholarship see, for example, Hitomi, *Kindai kōshōseido*; Katō, *Yūkaku to chiiki shakai*.

7 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no jō*, pp. 359–61; Bell, “Learning, Play,” p. 108.

8 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no jō*, pp. 304–61.

9 Ikegami, *Bonds of Civility*; Nishiyama, “Chōnin no cha,” p. 204.

10 Suzuki, “*Nihonbungaku no seiritsu*,” p. 60.

11 Bokujō Gyoshi, “*Fūryū no shugi*,” *Yomiuri shinbun*, 15 June 1882. Bokujō Gyoshi is a pseudonym of Narushima Ryūhoku.

Narushima's earlier writings were appreciated as works of *fūryū*, and he as a man of *fūryū*, by his peers in the literary community. The word *fūryū*, in a conventional and contemporaneous sense, connoted aesthetic sophistication and carried a notion of detachment from worldly concerns. When the People's Rights Movement (Jiyū Minken Undō 自由民権運動, 1874–1890) was intensifying in the mid-1880s, being a man of *fūryū* implied a disinterest in politics, which was unacceptable to Narushima, and he insisted on associating the word *fūryū* with a sense of political freedom.¹² His editorial was written in defence of his apolitical writings by associating the aesthetic concept of *fūryū* with the People's Rights Movement.¹³

While extending the concept of *fūryū* to support his political position, Narushima's belief in the political freedom of individuals guided him to categorically reject a customary *fūryū* practice: namely, *chanoyu*. On 17 May 1883, Narushima wrote another editorial for the *Yomiuri shinbun*. In the essay titled "Chanoyu 茶の湯," he compared the practice of *chanoyu* with the experience of imprisonment. In his view, both imprisonment and *chanoyu* embodied the oppression of people's liberation by authorities because *chanoyu* "places constraint on people's fundamental freedom, that is, when and how much to eat and drink."¹⁴ Narushima's reference to *chanoyu* echoed the sentiment that was generally shared by the young, former middle- and lower-ranking samurai who considered the previous period to be the "evil" past, as stated in the Charter Oath of 1868, that suppressed their freedom and from which the new Japan—the country that they were now in charge of advancing—had to break away. When government officials drafted the Imperial Commission's document for international expositions in the 1870s and 1880s, they described *chanoyu* as a "diminishing practice."¹⁵ Narushima's statements were examples of an early Meiji intellectual's attempt to translate and reappropriate an early modern concept and practice in the transforming intellectual landscape that was dealing with a new political order. Narushima's disposition toward Tokugawa intellectual heritage was shared by younger literary practitioners.¹⁶ Although

Narushima's bold and unconventional conceptualization of the word *fūryū* did not replace customary meanings, his attempt to reappropriate the early modern notion of *fūryū* was followed by younger authors and literary critics such as Kōda Rohan 幸田露伴 (1867–1947), Kitamura Tōkoku 北村透谷 (1868–1894), Iwamoto Yoshiharu 巖本善治 (1863–1942), and Shimazaki Tōson 島崎藤村 (1872–1943) in the late 1880s and early 1890s.¹⁷

Kōda Rohan's literary debut occurred in 1889 with the publication of *Tsudandan* 露団々 (Dewdrops), followed by another short story titled *Fūryūbutsu* 風流仏 (*Fūryū Boddhisatva*)¹⁸ in the same year. Earlier scholarship has noted that the concept of *fūryū* was a defining feature of Rohan's output in the early stages of his literary career, though his thoughts on *fūryū* as a literary concept were not well elaborated.¹⁹ The notion of detachment from mainstream political activity, as encapsulated by the concept of *fūryū*, was interpreted as a form of liberty in *Tsuyudandan*.²⁰ In *Fūryūbutsu*, Rohan then defined *fūryū* as a space of imagination that is in contrast with reality.²¹ Rohan's use of the term *fūryū* needs to be historicized in the context of the intellectual efforts in the 1880s to redefine and reappropriate Sino-Japanese concepts and practices to apprehend modern European concepts. In this case, Rohan was trying to absorb the modern European concept of literature that emphasized the importance of the novel (*shōsetsu* 小説) as its central genre.²² In a letter to the

12 Kurita, "Kōda Rohan to mirai," p. 130.

13 Yanagida, *Meiji bungaku kenkyū* 4, pp. 427–28; Kurita, "Kōda Rohan's Literary Debut," p. 412.

14 Bokujō Gyoshi, "Chanoyu," *Yomiuri shinbun*, 17 May 1883.

15 Oshikiri, "Selling Tea."

16 Yanagida, *Meiji bungaku kenkyū* 4, p. 428.

17 Shimazaki Tōson and Kitamura Tōkoku were members of the literary magazine *Bungakukai* 文学界, which is known for its promotion and elevation of Romanticism into a full-fledged literary movement in the 1880s. Iwamoto Yoshiharu was a Christian critic and the chief editor of the women's education magazine *Jogaku zasshi* 女学雑誌.

18 The title is translated variously as "The Buddha of Art" (Donald Keene), "The Buddha of Elegance" and "The Love Bodhisattva" (Chieko Mulhern), and "The Icon of Liberty" (Kyoko Kurita). For further bibliographical information, see Kurita, "Kōda Rohan's Literary Debut," p. 410, n. 64; Toback, "Kōda Rohan's *Fūryūbutsu*," p. 269, n. 1.

19 Ishida, "Rohan no fūryū saisetsu," p. 18; Miura, "Rohan no 'fūryū' kan," p. 113.

20 Kurita's analysis of the notion of *fūryū* in *Tsuyudandan* as freedom from spiritual and temporal constraints is complemented by Baba's identification of the concept as embodying a deconstruction of logics based on everyday common sense, which she conceptualizes as Zen-like freedom. Kurita, "Kōda Rohan to mirai"; Kurita, "Kōda Rohan's Literary Debut"; Baba, "Jiyū' to iu shōō."

21 Hinuma, "Rohan 'fūryū' kō," p. 6.

22 In the European literary world, the concept of viewing literature as an artform and as imaginative fiction both in prose and poetry emerged in the eighteenth century. See Wellek, "What Is Literature," p. 20.

literary critic Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遙 (1859–1935) in July 1890, Rohan wrote:²³

Since I started my career as a writer... I have always tried to achieve *fūryū*... I was not afraid of being poor... I was determined to enjoy myself even when I was sad or worried. However, I found that the way to *fūryū* has been blocked by a large river without a ferryboat. I was sure that *fūryū* lies in the emotion based on reason (*shōri ni au jō* 正理に協ふ情). But I realized that I was not even close to *fūryū* after all. Even when you feel spiritually awake, there might still be a chance that it could fail. I find that my emotions could not reach the level of refinement (*bu-fūryū* 不風流). To begin with, all the novels I wrote up until now were anything but immensely *bu-fūryū*. I blame myself and feel sad about that. From now on, with this unsophisticated sensibility (*bu-fūryū shin* 不風流心), I am not sure if I could call a story of delusive creation (*masaku* 魔作) a novel. I lose my confidence and feel too scared to write. I can't believe that the letters I have written so far... are deceiving people by calling them a novel, resembling the stage that a magician creates and calling it the real world, and tricking the spectators.²⁴

This excerpt from the letter demonstrates that Rohan understood the concept of *fūryū* in a manner consistent with contemporary European conceptions of literature—a creative work entailing aesthetics. He continues, “*Fūryū* is a means of expression for that which comes to mind, without going beyond reason, and it shows the beauty of human emotions without any embellishment.”²⁵ Rohan employed the concept of *fūryū* to express an imaginative realm in letters. The thematic focus of *fūryū* is human emotion, but it must not be “deceptive” (*mōsō* 妄想), as he puts it. Rohan was trying to set distinctions between imagination and delusion, realistic writing and fantasy. In this context, *fūryū* denotes fictionality. Toward the end of the letter, Rohan urges, “Dear esteemed sir, unlike myself and my peers, you are a learned man. I humbly seek your valued insight regarding the perspectives of Western thinkers on this matter.”²⁶ Rohan was confronted with

unfamiliar literary concepts introduced by Shōyō in his *Shōetsu shinzui* 小説神髓 (The Essence of the Novel), namely the modern European notion of literature, prose fiction, and realism as a style of writing. Rohan understood the concept of imaginative writing by reappropriating the late Tokugawa concept of *fūryū* and incorporating it into a notion of fictionality and human emotions as its theme. Although Rohan did not expand on his ideas about *fūryū*, he continued to publish literary works with the title *fūryū*. The literary scholar Miura Masaki asserts that all of Rohan's works that include the word *fūryū* in their titles focus on the theme of sensual relationships.²⁷ This suggests that romantic relationships between men and women are primarily expressed in Rohan's exploration of human emotions as the thematic focus of *fūryū*. According to the literary scholar Okazaki Yoshie, the early modern concept of *fūryū* encompassed the notion of sensuality;²⁸ thus, it was a natural choice for him and his contemporaries to utilize the term *fūryū* when discussing their literary endeavors.

In 1891, Rohan published a short story titled *Fūryūgo* 風流悟 (*Fūryū* Enlightenment). Referencing *Fūryūgo*, Kitamura Tōkoku notes in *Waga rōgoku* 吾牢獄 (My Dungeon, 1892) that Rohan's *fūryū* creates a dungeon with the notion of romance (*ren'ai* 恋愛).²⁹ Rohan can enter and then exit the dungeon, because the romantic feeling is his literary creation. Tōkoku rejects the idea of *fūryū* because he himself is caught, put in the dungeon, and suffers for his romantic feelings in a dungeon built for him to die. He is willing to die. His feelings are the only thing stopping him from dying, but they also make him not want to live.³⁰ In contrast to Rohan's *Fūryūgo*, which was characterized by its focus on liberation from a profound attachment caused by the romantic feelings (*ren/koi* 恋) that constrict people,³¹ Tōkoku's short story prioritizes the experience of emotional suffering in the context of romantic relationships. In his essay “*Jinsei no fūryū o omou*” 人生の風流を懷ふ (Thinking of *fūryū* in life, 1893), Shimazaki Tōson also alludes to Rohan's *Fūryūgo*, proposing that *fūryū* symbolizes the infinite beauty of the universe. The essay states that “life

23 The letter was published in the *Hōchi shinbun* 報知新聞 on 21 and 23 July 1890 under the title “Zōka to bungaku” 造化と文学 (Creation and literature). Ishida, “Rohan no fūryū saishetsu,” p. 18.

24 Kōda, *Rohan no shokan*, pp. 14–15.

25 Ibid., p. 16.

26 Ibid., p. 19.

27 Miura, “Rohan no ‘fūryū’ kan” and “Tenmei e no ikō.”

28 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no jō*, pp. 359–61.

29 Kitamura, “Waga rōgoku,” p. 226.

30 Kitamura, “Waga rōgoku,” pp. 225–26.

31 Noborio, “Sakuhinron no shinshikaku,” p. 59.

is abundant with *fūryū*,” thereby highlighting the notion that life itself is instilled with this profound beauty. The concept of *koi* (romance) transcends the realm of mere sentiment, representing a profound and unparalleled emotional state. This phenomenon was theorized by Rohan as *fūryū* enlightenment (*fūryūgo*).³² As elucidated in his correspondence with Shōyō, Rohan understood the term “*fūryū*” to signify the imaginative nature of the modern European conception of the novel and its emphasis on the expression of human emotions. In response to Rohan’s sequential work with *fūryū* in its title, Tōkoku and Tōson elaborated the notion of *fūryū* into a more specific literary concept, articulating sensuality and romance and aligning with the prevailing literary movements associated with the *Bungakukai* that were distinguished by the emancipation of the self and the commitment to aestheticism.

These exchanges constituted an integral component of the movement that was underway among emerging literary figures of the period. They engaged in discourse on literary concepts and practices, exploring the potential to influence and transform Japanese society. Iwamoto Yoshiharu, a Christian-influenced educator and the chief editor of *Jogaku zasshi* 女学雑誌 (Journal of Women’s Education), one of the earliest major women’s magazines in Japan, was a central figure in a series of literary debates. From around 1889, Iwamoto was an active proponent in the discussion surrounding concepts such as *bungaku* 文学 and *shōsetsu*—corresponding to the Japanese concepts of literature and novel, respectively—and the role of literature and its practitioners, particularly from an ethical perspective, in transforming Japan.³³ Iwamoto’s article on *fūryū* was motivated by a similar objective of critiquing the reappropriation of premodern literary concepts. He asserted that the practice of *fūryū* was redundant in the era of reform, where productivity was a prerequisite for success. He also argued that during the Tokugawa period, although revolutionaries pursued *fūryū* activities, *fūryū* was driven by the absence of viable avenues for societal transformation, which was largely constrained by the political structure. Nevertheless, in Japan under the Meiji government, all individuals were expected to participate in the nation-building project. Iwamoto insisted that the notion of *fūryū* represented a

harmful remnant of the “feudal” (*hōken* 封建) system, in which aristocrats exploited the “peasants” (*hyakushō* 百姓). The *fūryū* sensibility was established in a sense of playfulness and a disregard for the country’s transformation. Notwithstanding the notion of *fūryū* persisting in shaping literary practice during the Meiji period, Iwamoto contended that *fūryū* literary traditions were not only pointless but detrimental to Japan’s future prospects. The *fūryū* sensibility, according to him, represented a superfluous vestige of the preceding era, a form of “socially irresponsible literary Bohemianism.”³⁴ A man who practised *fūryū* was irresponsible in the era of reform. Thus, Iwamoto concluded, *fūryū* must be abandoned for the nation’s sake.

Iwamoto’s critique of *fūryū* did not provoke further discussion on the idea of *fūryū* as a literary concept. Although the term “*fūryū*” has been utilized in the titles of literary publications since the early 1880s, it experienced a decline in popularity toward the end of the Meiji period. By the 1920s, the word was used infrequently in the titles of prose fiction.³⁵ Within the broader literary context, the concept of *fūryū* had not yet evolved into a distinct literary theme or established a unified interpretation that definitively transformed its premodern significance.³⁶

The term “*fūryū*” was employed to emphasize the literariness of creative writing when literary practitioners sought to adapt the European practice of writing novels by redefining Tokugawa-style prose fiction.³⁷ When these practitioners sought to adopt the modern European concept of literature—understood as imaginative writing—adapting it to their own indigenous literary practices, the notion of nonconformity or sense of emancipation embodied by the term “*fūryū*” appeared to be suitable for the conceptual foundation of creative writing. However, as time progressed, this underwent a contraction in meaning, ultimately denoting a literary theme focused on human emotions, specifically romantic relationships.

32 Shimazaki, “Jinsei no fūryū o omou,” p. 1.

33 Yagi, “Jogaku zasshi o shiza,” p. 2.

34 Iwamoto, “Fūryū o ronzu,” cited in Mostow, “Modern Constructions,” p. 107.

35 Okazaki, *Kindai bungei no bi*, pp. 24–26.

36 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no ge*, as summarized in Kurita, “Kōda Rohan’s Literary Debut,” p. 411.

37 Yanagida, *Meiji bungaku kenkyū* 4; Yanagida, *Meiji bungaku: Zuihitsu* 3.

Class, Gender, and *Fūryū* Practices

As previously stated, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the concept and the practice of *fūryū*—also referred to as *yūgei*—was embedded within the cultural lives of intellectuals, including both samurai and non-samurai. Despite the private nature of *fūryū* practices, proficiency in *yūgei* was regarded as a marker of an individual's intellectual sophistication. As Suzuki Sadami has observed, *yūgei* constituted a body of knowledge that complemented the formal learning defined by Tokugawa authority.³⁸ However, following the fall of the Tokugawa shogunate, there was a shift in the importance attributed to conventional knowledge and skills, including various *fūryū* practices. This phenomenon can be attributed to a period of significant intellectual transformation in the 1870s and early 1880s, which led to a notable decline in the prominence of neo-Confucianism and the textual studies of Chinese and Sinitic Japanese. Furthermore, for progressive social reformers such as Narushima, *chanoyu*, one of the essential *fūryū* practices of the Tokugawa period, was deemed intolerable, despite attempts to reconceptualize the premodern Sino-Japanese notion of *fūryū*.

In contrast with the strong criticism cast by Narushima, *chanoyu*—as both a practice and a body of knowledge—played a key role in the refashioning of the social order, especially in constructing a new class consciousness among the modern aristocracy in the 1870s and early 1880s.³⁹ *Chanoyu* gatherings organized by politicians and high-ranking government officials were frequently reported in the newspapers, thus showcasing the significance of *chanoyu* in the social life of the ruling elite. The news of the efforts of antiquarians and government officials at the Bureau of Museums in preserving *chanoyu*'s material culture informed newspaper readers that *chanoyu*-related artefacts were valuable assets for the government's state-building operations.⁴⁰ Even Narushima, who expressed a strong aversion to *chanoyu*, acknowledged the significance of the material aspect of *chanoyu* for Japan under the new regime.⁴¹

However, when *chanoyu* was associated with the notion of *fūryū* and a male protagonist, the concept of *fūryū* denoted a sense of uselessness. A series of articles

published in the *Yomiuri shinbun* between 9 and 11 September 1880 concerning an extramarital relationship between a *chanoyu* instructor and a young woman illustrated this point. The primary protagonist, Tsuneshichi 常七, was a forty-nine-year-old former samurai who “lived a life of *fūryū* doing nothing but *chanoyu*.”⁴² It was determined that, given his unemployment, the most pragmatic option would be to pursue a career in the instruction of *chanoyu*. However, the timing was not conducive to such “leisurely amusements” (*yūgei*), and Tsuneshichi found himself unable to attract enough pupils to generate sufficient revenue. Nevertheless, there was no need for concern on his part. He had a “chaste wife” and a “dutiful son” who looked after him. One day, a young woman named Chiyo 千代, a former prostitute (*yūjo* 遊女) and now concubine (*mekake* 妾) of a wealthy shop owner in the neighborhood, enrolled in Tsuneshichi's tea class and became a boarding pupil. Tsuneshichi became involved with Chiyo, and they later ran away and started an eatery together.⁴³ In this series of articles, Tsuneshichi, a *yūgei* master and a man of *fūryū*, is considered to be of little use or competence within a rapidly changing society.

This perspective was echoed in a cartoon published at the same time in *Marumaru chinbun* 團團珍聞, a widely read illustrated magazine renowned for its wit and satire. In Kobayashi Kiyochika's 1886 illustration titled “The Seven Leisurely Persons of the Bamboo Grove” (*Chikurin no shichikanjin* 竹林の七閑人), the teaching of *chanoyu* is depicted as a profession that had “no business” in the age of “human dispensation.”⁴⁴ The characters illustrated herein encompassed five *fūryū* activity professionals, namely, a noh theater music performer, a go game player, a *haikai* poet, a comedic storyteller, and a *chanoyu* master, in addition to two women associated with the pleasure quarter. During the Tokugawa period, these seven professions were represented by the aesthetic concept of *fūryū*. The illustration drew parallels between them and the *Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove* (*Zhulin qi xian* 竹林七賢) of the Jin 晉 dynasty (266–420 BCE); these seven celebrated scholars from ancient China were referenced as *fūryū* in the Tokugawa literary world. While the Seven Sages were held in high esteem, the Seven Leisurely Persons were

38 Suzuki, “*Nihonbungaku*” no seiritsu, pp. 61–62.

39 Oshikiri, *Gathering for Tea*.

40 Ibid.

41 Bokujō Gyoshi, “*Chanoyu*,” *Yomiuri shinbun*, 17 May 1883.

42 *Yomiuri shinbun*, 9 September 1880.

43 *Yomiuri shinbun*, 11 September 1880.

44 Kobayashi, “*Chikurin no shichikanjin*,” p. 530.

regarded as being of little practical use within the current societal context, which was governed by “human dispensation”—a novel system of governance underwritten by a legislative body. Consequently, practitioners of *fūryū* arts were now disrespected. It could be argued that the depiction of the “useless” *fūryū* masters in the popular media were a key indicator of the cultural decline of *yūgei*.

Fūryū practices, as a body of structured knowledge, were of no use to an able man. However, when these practices were associated with women, they were subject to different expectations, especially concerning the cultivation of young women in modernizing Japan. At the inception of the Meiji period the Japanese government implemented a series of educational reform programs that included the introduction of mandatory primary education for both boys and girls on a national scale. However, a significant divergence of opinion among parents and guardians emerged concerning the educational curriculum for girls in the 1870s and the early 1880s, because many considered the new formal schooling system to be “too progressive,” especially those parents and guardians in mid-sized regional cities who preferred to teach their daughters customary Tokugawa subjects, such as *chanoyu*, flower arrangement, and traditional musical instruments.⁴⁵

The government-led educational reforms, which entailed the introduction of a Western schooling system and educational concepts, were met with resistance due to their apparent disagreement with the needs of society. However, the government’s various reforms gradually resulted in a significant transformation in the skills, knowledge, and attributes required for the ideal woman in modernized Japan. In 1892, the *Yomiuri shinbun* organized a competition for women with the goal of recognizing and celebrating their achievements and contributions to society. The competition encompassed sixteen distinct categories, with several fields of expertise formerly considered integral components of the *fūryū* arts subjected to separate categorization. These arts encompassed *waka* 和歌 (a type of verse that consists of 31 syllables), novels (*shōsetsu* 小説), music,

dance, calligraphy, and painting.⁴⁶ In the Tokugawa period, these literary and aesthetic accomplishments were grouped under the arts of *fūryū*. However, in the context of this competition, the broader range of literary and aesthetic skills mentioned above are excluded and the *fūryū* arts are defined more narrowly, referring only to *chanoyu*, flower arrangement, and incense appreciation, which are grouped together as a single category. Furthermore, it is important to note that, despite being instructed in—and at times proficient in—*chanoyu*, as demonstrated in the following section, women associated with the pleasure quarters were not eligible to participate in the category of the *fūryū* arts.⁴⁷

In this competition, Uesugi Katsuko 上杉かつ子 (1855–?), a renowned tea master in Tokyo, won the top prize in the *fūryū* arts category. She was regarded as someone who could “move beyond worldly things and find deep peace.”⁴⁸ This idea of *fūryū* was about being calm and not being bothered by the material world. It appears that the Tokugawa concept of *fūryū*, which emphasized the urban commoner aesthetics of popular entertainment, such as the exaggerated grandeur of kabuki theater and Edo-style sensual pleasure, became less prominent in the modern press. Furthermore, contrary to the case of Tsuneshichi previously discussed, Katsuko, a female *fūryū* practitioner who guided hundreds of disciples, did not relinquish her social responsibilities and was considered to be a respectable person.

This competition of “talented women” indicates that the world of *fūryū* practices was changing. The premodern *fūryū* arts gained an autonomous status and they were reclassified according to the modern intellectual and cultural divisions—*waka* poetry, calligraphy, music, or dancing were separately labeled—while flowers, tea, and incense were merged into a single category and marked as *fūryū*. Moreover, although a sense of detachment from the material world was a defining feature of the notion of *fūryū*, the modern *fūryū* came with social

45 *Yomiuri shinbun*, 28 June 1883; “Atami dayori” 熱海だより, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 15 November 1887. Parents were more comfortable with the extension of the Tokugawa-period teaching for girls which included basic literacy skills, sewing, and some of the *fūryū* arts, such as *chanoyu* and shamisen music. See Corbett, *Cultivating Femininity*, p. 140.

46 The remaining categories encompassed proficiency in education, foreign languages, religion, needlework, as well as the expertise in midwifery. In the end, three women were selected for each category. Short biographies of some of those who won first place were published in *Yomiuri shinbun* and later included in a book titled *Meiji keishū bitan* (Impressive Stories of Accomplished Women of the Meiji Period) edited by Suzuki Kōjirō in 1892.

47 “Fūryūka tōsensha Uesugi Shōka joshi” 風流家当選者上杉小華女史, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 24 March 1892.

48 “Jūroku meien tōhyō boshū kōkoku” 十六名媛投票募集広告, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 1 March 1892.

contributions. The late Tokugawa notion of *fūryū*—literary dedication in the world of poetry or an exaggerated grandeur and eccentricity in the domain of popular entertainment—was minimized, if not totally diminished.

The “modern” *fūryū* arts were increasingly regarded as a socially acceptable skill set, particularly for women, as evidenced by their frequent appearance in home education manuals for girls published by various publishing houses from the early 1890s. However, within the policymaking and educational discourse, there was indecisiveness on the integration of the *fūryū* arts into formal education. This evident tension prompted the government to incorporate society’s aspirations while marginalizing the *fūryū* arts by allocating them to extracurricular activities.⁴⁹

At a different level, the mismatch between the ideals of social reform and socioeconomic realities could also be seen in the red-light districts during the 1870s and 1880s. Vocational schools were established in various red-light districts in conjunction with other social reform movements. The objective of these schools was twofold: first, to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of prostitutes and geisha; and second, to teach them practical skills. The first such institution was established in Kyoto in 1872, when business proprietors of the Gion 祇園 pleasure quarter proposed the opening of a vocational school for women of the quarter. In the proposal submitted to the municipal government, emphasis was placed on the necessity for these women to cease their engagement in “the evil custom of the past” (*jūzen no heifū* 従前の弊風) in order to avoid ruining their lives, as asserted in “the time of civilization and enlightenment” (*bunmei kaika no toki* 文明開化之時). The institution was founded for the purpose of providing prostitutes and geisha with the opportunity to pursue legitimate enterprises (*seigyō* 正業) and gain financial stability.⁵⁰ The institution was referred to as *jokōba* 女紅場 (pronounced as *nyokōba* in Kyoto), a workshop-style establishment that prioritized instruction in “women’s arts” (*jokō* 女紅, or *nyokō*), while also imparting fundamental education to its students.⁵¹ Another pleasure quarter district in Kyoto, Shimabara 島原, established a similar girls’ vocational

school in the following year, almost simultaneously with Gion. As demonstrated by educational historians Sakamoto Izumi and Sakamoto Chieko, an increasing number of proprietors in the pleasure quarters of Kyoto and other cities were establishing girls’ vocational schools. The initial objective of these institutions was to encourage prostitutes and geisha to leave the sex industry. However, due to the financial decline experienced in the 1880s, some schools were dissolved, some merged with girls’ secondary schools (in which case only the handicraft courses survived), and some changed their aims and goals.⁵²

In contrast to the training in traditional crafts, the modern *fūryū* practices, including *chanoyu*, flower arrangement, and *go* games emerged as the preferred subjects at vocational schools located within the pleasure quarters. Prostitutes were engaged in *chanoyu* lessons in the Shinagawa 品川 (Tokyo) pleasure quarter, a notable red-light district.⁵³ In the Yoshiwara 吉原 (Tokyo) district, *chanoyu* was a subject taught alongside fundamental literacy and numeracy skills at the level of primary education.⁵⁴ A vocational school at the Wadami 和多見 pleasure quarter in Shimane Prefecture also incorporated *chanoyu*, flower arrangement, and other playful arts (*yūgei*) into its curriculum.⁵⁵ Geisha in Osaka were expected to acquire the skills favored by the ruling elite at the time, ranging from playing the Chinese moon lute (*gekkō* 月琴, Ch. *yueqin*), a newly introduced stringed instrument, to mastering the game of *go*. It was brought to the attention of the proprietors of the pleasure quarter businesses that their geisha were reluctant to engage in the practice of *chanoyu*. As not all individuals had the financial means to cover the tuition fees and other miscellaneous expenses, proprietors of commercial teahouses took the initiative to incorporate *chanoyu* classes into the curricula of vocational schools.⁵⁶

The relationship between the pleasure quarter, high-ranking prostitutes, and *chanoyu* was not a recent phenomenon. In the popular literature of the late Tokugawa period, both the interaction in the pleasure

49 Oshikiri, *Gathering for Tea*, p. 7.

50 Kyōtofu, “Shimogyōku dai 15-ku nyokōbagata ni gaijō seito kyōdō kisoku o sadamu.”

51 Sakamoto and Sakamoto, *Kindai joshikyōiku*, pp. 16–22.

52 Ibid., pp. 147–53.

53 “Tōkyō yūkaku no kinkyō” 東京遊廓の近況, *Chōya shinbun*, 9 February 1879.

54 *Yomiuri shinbun*, 17 January 1882.

55 “Wadami yūkaku ni shōgi gakkō” 和多見遊郭に娼妓学校, *San’in shinbun*, 30 August 1886.

56 “Geiko no matcha,” *Jogaku zasshi* 1, p. 7.

quarter and the practice of *chanoyu* were frequently depicted as *fūryū*.⁵⁷ This Tokugawa literary legacy pertained to the romanticized notion of the pleasure quarter, cultural sophistication, and the *fūryū* arts continued in the early Meiji period. The protagonists of this literary legacy, however, seem to have undergone a transformation from prostitutes to geisha. The opening line of an article in the *Yomiuri shinbun*, titled “Fūryū na geisha” 風流な芸者 (*fūryū* female performers), states in reference to high-ranking prostitutes: “Although there is a comedic verse that says, ‘all of the courtesans’ arts are [displayed] in the alcove,’ few of them these days possess artistic skills, and the decoration of the alcove seems to have become plain.”⁵⁸ In the late Tokugawa period, popular literature focusing on the activities in the pleasure quarters claimed that high-ranking prostitutes or courtesans were trained in various *fūryū* arts, and that their waiting rooms were filled with the equipment of various *fūryū* arts.⁵⁹ The article posits that the phenomenon of cultured prostitutes is no longer extant:

In comparison, the number of those who make their living as female performers has recently increased. Smart ones noticed that they could not survive by routinely singing celebratory songs and folklore ballads with a *shamisen*...female performers must work on their entertainment skills to amuse and impress their patrons...

One of the skills that the female performers and business owners of the district of Kagurazaka 神楽坂 in Tokyo chose to make their customers happy was *chanoyu*. A twenty-nine-year-old teahouse owner named Kurihara Oetsu 栗原おえつ, known to everyone as the “woman shogun” (*onna shōgun* 女將軍) of the Kyūyūtei 求友亭 teahouse in Kagurazaka, invited an instructor of the Senke 千家 tea tradition named Katō 加藤. As her nickname suggested, she had power over her neighborhood and started a trend where everyone in the area began learning *chanoyu* under Katō’s guidance. After obtaining a certificate of mastery in *chanoyu*, Oetsu and her peer proprietors rented a nearby Buddhist temple and organized a *chanoyu*

gathering. After that, they played games of *go*, which they had also been learning.

In the late Tokugawa period, popular literature emphasized the material aspects of *chanoyu*, especially the symbolic and financial value of tea utensils. The emphasis was placed on the provenance of tea caddies or tea bowls rather than on the preparation of tea itself.⁶⁰ In contrast, the tea house proprietors and geisha depicted in the “Fūryū na geisha” article demonstrated a greater interest in cultivating in-depth knowledge of *chanoyu* and in its performance. The *fūryū* practices, or *yūgei*, and the idea of cultural sophistication attached to them, appeared to have survived in the pleasure quarter culture. However, the association between the *fūryū* arts and the pleasure quarter was more directly profit-oriented in the 1870s and 1880s, and *chanoyu*’s reference to *yūjo* and geisha became more explicit, in contrast to the popular literature of the late Tokugawa period.

For men, the mastery of the *fūryū* arts, including *chanoyu*, was depicted as being of little practical use in the era of reform. Especially for an able man, it was considered to carry no benefit. For female entertainers and business proprietors in the pleasure quarter, however, learning *chanoyu* (and some of the *fūryū* practices) was culturally acceptable and profitable, perhaps even more so than training in womanly arts. However, the achievements of women engaged in the pleasure-quarter profession were not publicly acknowledged, as demonstrated in the *Yomiuri shinbun*’s talented women’s competition in 1892. Furthermore, within the broader female demographic, the position of the *fūryū* practices remained ambiguous. The *fūryū* arts retained their relative popularity among parents and had an acknowledged usefulness as a set of skills, but the government marginalized them in the school curriculum at the end of the nineteenth century.

Fūryū and the Concept of Edo

The aesthetic concept of *fūryū* was multidimensional, and its significance underwent a process of evolution over time. As shown in the preceding section, the endeavor of literary practitioners to incorporate the

57 Okazaki, *Nihon geijutsu shichō 2 no jō*, pp. 338–51.

58 “Fūryū na geisha,” *Yomiuri shinbun*, 22 October 1884.

59 Nishiyama, “Yūri,” p. 287; Nishiyama, *Yūjo*, p. 145.

60 Kashima Misato explores the significance of tea utensils in Edo-period popular literature. See Kashima, “Tsūgen Sōmagaki.”

idea of imaginative writing into customary literary practices highlighted the sense of nonconformity and the notion of emancipation entailed in the term *fūryū*. This concept is understood to denote a sense of liberation from perceived constraints in the realm of materiality, whether it be worldly desires, material concerns, or mainstream politics. Under the Tokugawa regime, the realm of materiality was characterized by a rigid social structure. By contrast, during the early years of the Meiji period, the prevailing constraints were characterized by fluidity due to the state-led nation-building project, underpinned by the centralization of authority, and all individuals were expected to participate. This movement drew considerable inspiration from the Western system, most notably in the politico-legal sphere. This was driven by the objective of transforming Japan into a nation that would be regarded as “civilized” enough for the revision of the unequal treaties that had been signed by the previous regime. The initial and most visible goal was to dismantle the socially stratified and politically fragmented Tokugawa order and build a unified state by implementing a constitutional monarchy and an electoral parliament modeled on those of the West. By 1890, the Japanese government had achieved both objectives, followed by the implementation of the Civil Code in 1896. This new political and legal system entailed the establishment of a modern nation comprising subjects who were bound by obligations to the state and who were granted opportunities for popular participation, albeit exclusively for men who possessed substantial property.

By the close of the nineteenth century, it had become evident that the expectations and aspirations of Japanese society were more-or-less solidly defined. The political and societal institutions that emerged in the aftermath of the Meiji reforms gave rise to a new social order and norms and the establishment of a uniform culture from which perceived constraints arose. Meiji modernity became a source of new constraints from which emancipation was required. In contrast, the collective memory of the Tokugawa past became the embodiment of that which had been lost forever and provided a place of refuge. The emergence of nostalgia towards the Tokugawa period can be theorized as a symbolic construction of “Japan before modernization”—and, in particular, before Westernization, which, as Gluck has argued, began in the 1870s and persisted until the 1890s.⁶¹ Intellectuals and literary figures—including Nagai Kafū 永井荷風 (1879–1959),

Kuki Shūzō 九鬼周造 (1888–1941), Yanagita Kunio 柳田国男 (1875–1962), and Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 (1873–1961)—used Edo as a refuge from the alienation of modern life.⁶²

In its initial phase of conceptualization, the symbolic “Edo” was regarded as obsolete and in need of abandonment. From the 1910s through to the 1930s, a significant resurgence of interest in the symbolic “Edo” occurred in response to widespread disillusionment with modernity in Japan. Although this resurgence reached its zenith in the 1930s, already at the beginning of the twentieth century, the modernity that was introduced by the Meiji reforms was being questioned. This helped to form renewed characteristics of the aesthetic concept of *fūryū* that were closely connected with the sense of nostalgia. On 30 November 1902, the *Yomiuri shinbun* published an article on an elderly tea master named Okada Koson 岡田胡孫. The article, titled, “Katami no tsuridana: rōō no fūryū” 紀念の吊棚：老翁の風流 (A hanging shelf as a memento: The old man’s *fūryū*), stated:

Both good and bad, the things of the past feel somehow gracious. The memento has unparalleled taste.... There is a hermitage named Muchō-an in Shitaya. It is a quiet residence placed outside the worldly realm and the master of the hut is Okada Koson... a master of Sekishū school *chanoyu*.⁶³

Okada was an eighty-two-year-old man known by everyone in the neighborhood as the retired owner of a tobacco shop called Sumiyoshiya. A money exchanger just before the Meiji Restoration, he had been unwittingly involved in a fraud case and was imprisoned in 1865 when he was forty-three years old. While he was in prison, he saw a shelf made from a demolished barrel for storing sake reinforced with bamboo hoops stretched with warm water. He thought that the shelf conveyed a sense of *fūryū*. After he was released from prison, he moved to his residence in Shitaya and assembled a shelf that resembled the shelf he had seen in the prison using a dried bonito barrel that he had received as a present in prison and kept for no particular reason. He hung it on the south side of his living room, recalled

61 Gluck, “The Invention of Edo,” p. 269.

62 Ibid., pp. 270–71.

63 “Kinen no tsuridana: Rōō no fūryū,” *Yomiuri shinbun*, 30 November 1902.

his days in prison, and embraced the serenity of his life under imperial rule.

Here, the concept of *fūryū* is outlined by the “distinguished taste” of an old master who found beauty in a junk object that was usually considered useless and without aesthetic value. Okada held an aesthetic appreciation for objects of no practical use, which he connected with the turbulent era of the Tokugawa downfall. Despite Okada’s assertion that the prevailing imperial regime was significantly superior, he nevertheless exhibited an emotional connection to the Tokugawa era. Following the replacement of the Tokugawa political and social order with the Meiji system, Meiji modernity became an embodied constraint, and the conceptual Edo became a place of emotional liberation. The concept of *fūryū*, thus, had evolved into an aesthetic awareness characterized by a sense of nostalgia associated with the symbolic “Tokugawa period.”

There was also an economic factor at play. The industrial growth that characterized late nineteenth-century Japan resulted in the emergence of a new business sector.⁶⁴ The shift in economic structure appears to have initiated a transformation in the relationship between *fūryū* arts, the mastery of these arts, and economic activity. In a *Yomiuri shinbun* article, Toyoda Sōmu 豊田草無, previously a low-ranking shogunate officer working in the Office of Construction, was highlighted as a teacher of *fūryū* arts—*chanoyu* and flower arrangement—to geisha and prostitutes in the Yoshiwara pleasure quarter. This endeavor proved to be both engaging and successful.⁶⁵ While teaching the arts of bygone days, Toyoda enjoyed a modern lifestyle: he was dressed in the latest fashion, with gold-plated accessories, and rode in a chauffeured rickshaw. However, according to the article, he was vulgar and lacked dignity. Toyoda asserted that the *fūryū* practices that had flourished in the preceding regime could be valuable assets if “updated.” The article further described him as a “new-type” (*tōsei-fū* 当世風) *fūryū* instructor with an annoying personality. Regardless of his success in monetizing his expertise, the reporter perceived his financial interests as unseemly for an instructor of refined artistry. In contrast to the depiction of Toyoda as a dishonourable and unprincipled individual, a different article portrayed another master of *fūryū* art,

Honma Tomiichi 本間富一, as a *fūryū* man of integrity.⁶⁶ Despite his mastery in the field of flower arrangement, the article states that he selected to pursue a career as a tile craftsman. The notion of disinterest in or emancipation from worldly concerns—in the case of modern society, success through monetary gain—persisted in the concept of *fūryū*, which can be interpreted as an anti-modern sentiment.

***Fūryū* Practices and the Rise of the Notion of Japanese Art in the Western Framework of Fine Art**

With the evolving political and economic environment, the social significance of the concept of *fūryū* underwent a transformation. This change was precipitated by the successful implementation of the modern politico-legal and economic system modeled on the West. Second, victory in the Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) resulted in Japan’s emergence as an imperialist power in Asia. The Japanese elite’s self-consciousness regarding the modern Japanese nation, and the notion of cultural authenticity, was evidently demonstrated in how the elite viewed their past. By the early twentieth century, the concept of the “national” had emerged within a variety of humanities disciplines. Consequently, the “official” and “national” narratives were shaped in the fields of literature, history, and art history. A compelling example of this phenomenon can be found in *Histoire de l’art du Japon*, a compilation of Japanese art commissioned by the Meiji government that was curated for the Paris Universal Exposition of 1900. In the preface, the president of the Imperial Museum, Kuki Ryūichi 九鬼隆一 (1852–1931), asserts that the Japanese arts were no longer the concern of just one nation, Japan, but of an entire region, Asia. In Japan, “all the remains of the ancient oriental art were safeguarded” and the country was obliged to guard Asian treasures. A history of the Japanese arts “contains the very history of the Orient.”⁶⁷

Within this framework, *chanoyu* assumed a pivotal role in the articulation of the aesthetic identity of modern Japanese state. *Histoire de l’art du Japon* explains that the practice of *chanoyu* has contributed to the

64 Gordon, *A Modern History of Japan*, pp. 123–26.

65 “Kuruma Sōshō” 俤宗匠, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 11 November 1904.

66 “Kakuretaru fūryūjin” 隠れたる風流人, *Yomiuri shinbun*, 15 November 1906.

67 Kuki Ryūichi, “Preface,” pp. xiii–xiv, cited in Oshikiri, “Selling Tea,” pp. 205–206.

development of the Japanese art industry since the mid-fifteenth century. It also asserts that the tea ceremony is a crucial component of Japanese art history—an indispensable element of the historical development of “the Orient.” This “official” narrative of Japanese art stated that the development of *chanoyu* was encouraged by Ashikaga Yoshimasa 足利義満 (r. 1358–1408), the eighth shogun of the Muromachi 室町 bakufu and an activity that was highly praised as noble and refined, with various artistic dimensions. Initially, objects imported from Korea, China, and beyond were preferred by the elite.⁶⁸ However, Yoshimasa’s interest in tea stimulated sophisticated tastes among the ruling elite, which prompted the domestic production of art objects.⁶⁹ The interest in *chanoyu* was passed on to Toyotomi Hideyoshi 豊臣秀吉 (1536–1598)—one of three military leaders who effectively unified Japan at the end of the sixteenth century—and advanced the ceramic industry. Moreover, it was Korea—the peninsula in which Hideyoshi launched military campaigns during his time as regent—that aided the artistic development of pottery making, especially the decorative painting of ceramic work.⁷⁰

The “official” narrative, which was produced to showcase the history of Japanese art at an international exposition, suggested that the practice of *chanoyu* provided critical aesthetic codes for the historical development of Japanese arts and material culture. In *Histoire de l’art du Japon*, the culture of *chanoyu* was highlighted as a source of Japanese artistic principles embodying the spirit of the age.⁷¹ The historical role and theories of *chanoyu* were reappropriated to complement the Japanese Empire’s ambitions in the international arena. Furthermore, the “official” narrative replicated and perpetuated the Western paradigm of arts and culture. The emphasis on authorship was underscored by the individual identification of the craftsmen responsible for the design of the ceramics. At the same time, the graphic components—such as the painted decoration on the front of the tea bowl—were considered a constituent of fine art, and their privileged status was confirmed through the dedication of a description of the drawings on tea bowls. By contrast, tea bowls themselves were considered ceramic objects, and were classified as items

of decorative art, a category regarded as possessing a subordinate status in accordance with European art theory.⁷² The authors of this booklet were aware of the European systems of categorization. Moreover, the official history emphasized that the historical development of Japanese artwork transcended national boundaries, incorporating artistic techniques and elements from its neighbours that were now under the self-proclaimed guardianship of the Japanese Empire. In this manner, *chanoyu* was depicted as a historical practice that encompassed all facets of Asian material culture. *Chanoyu* and its aesthetics were a national tradition, yet its material culture was transnational. The practice of drinking matcha, which involves the consumption of tea brewed with a special powder made from finely ground green tea leaves, was introduced to Japan from Song 宋 (960–1279) China. The advent of novel technologies by Korean potters advanced the quality of the craftsmanship; artefacts originating from Southeast Asia—such as Swankhalok (*sunkoroku* 宋胡録) wares—were highly prized in tearooms. Japan’s imperial ambition is evident in this endorsed history, which clearly outlines the cultural hierarchy between Japan—the guardian capable of preserving all historic artworks while producing new ones—and the subordinate, the rest of Asia, which had lost the ability to sustain its artistic heritage. In this “official” narrative, *chanoyu* had now become a central element of the Japanese state’s aesthetic imperialism.

By the 1910s, the Meiji Restoration leaders’ project to make Japan a strong and wealthy country with a capitalist industrial society had been accomplished. *Chanoyu* had become recognized nationally and internationally as the source of the nation’s aesthetic taste.⁷³ In the country’s “official” historical account of artistic production, *chanoyu* is depicted as a practice that encompasses all aspects of Asian material culture. *Chanoyu* and its history demonstrated a capacity for adaptability in relation to modernity and imperial Japan, thereby contributing to the nation’s imperialist future. In contrast, the concept of *fūryū* was viewed as a poetic and aesthetic awareness overshadowed by nostalgia and anti-modern sentiments and employed to criticize the nation’s culture during its modernization process. When considered through the lens of the nation-state, certain cultural

68 Commission impériale du Japon, *Histoire de l’art du Japon*, p. 168.

69 Ibid., p. 144.

70 Ibid., pp. 185–86.

71 Ibid., p. 172.

72 Oshikiri, “Selling Tea.”

73 Ibid.

elements served as “suppliers of usable national parts,” while others were consigned to oblivion.⁷⁴ The history and practice of *chanoyu* were Japan’s “usable national parts” in the broader framework of its modern colonial empire. To support the national interest and its imperialist ambition, modern *chanoyu* diverged from the principle of *fūryū*, a concept exemplified by non-conformist attitudes and a nostalgic sentiment that critiqued modernity. From this perspective, the relationship between *chanoyu* and *fūryū* needed to be redefined. The concept of *fūryū* could no longer be utilized to characterize *chanoyu*, and the use of *fūryū* to characterize *chanoyu* appears to have ended.

Conclusion

The dissolution of the association between the concept of *fūryū* and the practice of *chanoyu* in the Meiji period highlighted how premodern arts and culture were conceptually rearticulated and recodified. The facilitation of this process was influenced by a multitude of political, social, and intellectual factors. First, the introduction of new knowledge systems from Western nations, coupled with the adoption of Western thought and institutions by the state and intellectuals, resulted in a significant reorganization of *fūryū* practices within the institutional learning system. Second, the Meiji state’s modern state-building project transformed how the elites perceived the country’s past, which eventually led to the reappropriation of the historiography of *chanoyu*’s material culture. The contemporary endeavor to establish a nation engendered a collective sense of belonging to an irrecoverable past. The concept of *fūryū* was characterized by its ambiguity and capacity for interpretation, thereby facilitating the incorporation of a nostalgic sentiment for a bygone era. Third, the nation’s imperialist ambitions selectively mobilized Japan’s premodern concepts and practices. As discussed in this article, *chanoyu*’s historical and transnational connection with continental Asia, which manifested in its material culture, was particularly useful in claiming Japan’s cultural guardianship over its Asian neighbours. Conversely, the notion of *fūryū* proved to be incongruent with the state’s objectives. The nostalgic sentiment encapsulated in the notion of *fūryū* found expression in

the works of anti-modern authors who challenged the Westernization of Japanese society. Consequently, the disassociation between the term *fūryū* in conjunction with *chanoyu* reached its conclusion toward the close of the Meiji period.

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