

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

**C***hanoyu*, which literally means "hot water for tea," is known in English as the tea ceremony and has as its objective a relaxed communion between the host and his guests. It is based in part on the etiquette of serving tea, but it also includes the aesthetic contemplation of landscape gardens, tea utensils, paintings, flower arrangement, and all the other elements that coexist in a harmonious relationship with the ceremony. Its ultimate aim is the attainment of a deep spiritual satisfaction through the drinking of tea and through silent contemplation.

It is a unique composite form of art, created through the refinement of the Chinese custom of drinking tea, and distilled with elements of Zen philosophy, which gave it various symbols and rituals. On a different level, the tea ceremony is simply an entertainment where the guests are invited to drink tea in a pleasant and relaxing room. The bonds of friendship between the host and guests are strengthened in the ceremony when the host himself makes and serves the tea.

Each tea ceremony is supposed to be a unique experience, with its own particular mood that can never be duplicated. An expression was coined by the well-known master of the fifteenth century, Takeno Jōō, who performed each tea ceremony reverently because he believed it was "the one chance in one's lifetime." His famous pupil, Rikyū, took the lesson to heart when he shaved off all his hair for one of his master's ceremonies, as a mark of respect for the occasion.

The tea ceremony borrowed much from Zen religion because the first tea masters were priests, who, since the fourteenth century, had exerted a marked influence on Japanese culture and social customs. They taught their followers that enlightenment can only be reached through Zen meditation, and the tea ceremony became a means of disciplining the mind. Thus the saying "tea and Zen are inseparable" was born.

In the sixteenth century, when the art was handed down to the general population, the tea ceremony enjoyed widespread favor. Everyone, from nobles to commoners, found in it the ideal means of relaxation