



The Story of Chigusa: A Japanese Tea Jar's 700-Year History

Louise Allison Cort, Andrew M. Watsky

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This innovative book narrates the history of a single object--a tea-leaf storage jar created in southern China during the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries--and describes how its role changed after it was imported to Japan and passed from owner to owner there. In Japan, where the jar was in constant use for more than seven hundred years, it was transformed from a humble vessel into a celebrated object used in *chanoyu* (often translated in English as tea ceremony), renowned for its aesthetic and functional qualities, and awarded the name Chigusa.

Few extant tea utensils possess the quantity and quality of the accessories associated with Chigusa, material that enables modern scholars and tea aficionados to trace the jar's evolving history of ownership and appreciation. Tea diaries indicate that the lavish accessories--the silk net bag, cover, and cords--that still accompany the jar were prepared in the early sixteenth century by its first recorded owner.

Louise Allison Cort is curator of ceramics, Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. She received the 2012 Secretary's Distinguished Research Lecture Award, Smithsonian Institution, and the 2012 Koyama Fujio Memorial Prize for her research on historical Japanese ceramics. **Andrew M. Watsky** is professor of Japanese art at Princeton University. His book, *Chikubushima: Deploying the Sacred Arts in Momoyama Japan*, received the John Whitney Hall Book Prize (Association for Asian Studies) and the Shimada Prize (Freer and Sackler Galleries, Smithsonian Institution).

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