

商品と日常生活文化の受容と流入への警戒：
18世紀の茶

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Tea: Its Reception and Attempted Rejection in Eighteenth-Century Britain

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When something exotic intrudes into one's everyday life, we tend to expose things usually hidden untold. Tea in the eighteenth century as an increasingly important product transported from China by the dominant East India Company inspired enthusiastic panegyrics, cautious scepticism and outright rejection. Its astonishing growth is easily grasped by the sheer amount of the imports: 2 pounds and 2 ounces (962 grams) of tea was imported via Dutch East India Company in 1664, followed by 222 lbs in 1669, over 100,000 lbs in 1701 and 2,000,000 lbs per annum in the 1740s, apart from the considerable smuggled amount.

Tea was among the exotic goods, including coffee, chocolate, Chinese pottery and such fruit as pineapples and oranges, that attracted the attention of royals and aristocrats in the seventeenth century. As long as it was tasted by the few fortunate wealthy, it was just a matter of taste. At first its medicinal effects were emphasised and passion for health as well as ambitious mimicry of the middle classes and below helped to spread the tea drinking habits. It subsequently became one of the most influential goods to affect the everyday life in Britain and its steering in the world politically and economically.

This paper examines mainly two books and a few visual arts. One of the books by Thomas Short and one of the paintings by William Hogarth were done in 1730. The other book was published in 1756 by Jonas Hanway, an eccentric philanthropist. Thomas Short represents a well-balanced aplomb observer who tends to be a promoter although he is alert to the dangerous potentials of the popular produce coming from abroad. Hogarth, who is extremely good at capturing ways of the world, does not forget to include topical fashionable tea items in his works. Nevertheless, he is far from appreciating them as the centre of enjoyable domestic comfort. In the form of the epistolary discourse, Hanway argues against tea although he makes it clear that he is not opposed to the 'tea-drinking habit among the ladies in high society, two of whom his letters are addressed to. His argument is founded on the conviction that tea is against patriotism. Indeed, he insists on the dam-

ages tea brings about to the British people. Basically to him, tea is an addictive poison; it effeminates and weakens the military forces, drains out the wealth of the country, interrupts British people's industry, tyrannises over the free-born Englishmen and reduces the country's population. He attempts to appeal to the patriotic fervour in order to make people soberly aware of the dangers in health, finance and political situations. Tea had already firmly rooted in everyday life and Hanway's resultory discourse quietly attached to the travel writing failed to summon substantial force to go against the trend.