Starting in 1824, over 100 villages of tea producers in a mountainous area of Shizuoka sued about 20 tea merchant organizers located in Sunpu in bakufu court in Edo. At issue were mercantile actions such as the levying of burdensome surcharges on tea shipments and undeserved delays in delivering tea to Edo. Little did the parties involved realize that the lawsuit would extend to 1859, thanks in part to the delaying tactics of both merchants and the bakufu courts. Despite these and other hardships, tea growers ultimately prevailed and were allowed to ship their tea freely to Edo. Contributing insights into the lives of tea growers, the machinations of merchant organizations (ton'ya), and the workings of the Edo court system, the tea incident of 1824 shows the grit and determination of Japanese peasants when faced with seemingly insurmountable odds.

Friday, March 13
3:00 - 4:30 pm
Tokioka Room (Moore Hall 319)