

did not need the institute to intensify her wish to excel in her craftsmanship; and, indeed, the institute was not a school of literary art, nor was she under any illusion that writing could be taught there. The real reason, and the only reason that lead Katherine Mansfield to the Gurdjieff Institute was less dissatisfaction with her craftsmanship than dissatisfaction with herself; less dissatisfaction with her stories than with the attitude toward life implied in them; less dissatisfaction with her own and contemporary literature than with literature.⁵⁸

The article is interesting in many ways, not least because of Orage's references to communications between himself and Mansfield in the months leading up to their decision to go to Fontainebleau, the epistolary evidence for which sadly no longer survives.

In this essay I have attempted to paint a picture of a young writer whose experiences had emboldened her, made her take risks even then, opened her up to the new, the different, always in her life seeking untrodden paths with, I would like to suggest, a copy of *The Book of Tea* deep in her subconscious, perhaps deep in her pocket – who knows? – to draw upon in the formation of philosophies to the end of her all too brief life. I'd like to leave the final word to Okakura: 'Meanwhile, let us have a sip of tea. The afternoon glow is brightening the bamboos, the fountains are bubbling with delight, the sighing of the pines is heard in our kettle. Let us dream of evanescence, and linger in the beautiful foolishness of things'.⁵⁹



Katherine Mansfield with a pot of tea and Japanese-influenced hairstyle. She's sitting at her work table at the Villa Isola Bella, Menton, France, in 1920. Photographer: Ida Baker. (ATL ref. 1/2-011985-F)