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**IDENTITY, IDENTIFICATION, AND TEMPERAMENT IN
EMBLEMATIC PORTRAITS OF EDO JAPANESE
LITERATI ARTISTS TAIGA & GYOKURAN:
A PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF
THE MING-QING LEGACY***

'It would, however, be misleading to overlook the distances imposed, not only across but within cultures, by distinguishable conceptions of selfhood and individuality and alternative functions of portraits.'—Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits 1600-1900*.¹

18th-century Japan saw the emergence of several new developments in the field of portraiture that challenged both portrait conventions and the understanding of what it meant to be a significant person.²

The most obvious of these innovations were several new types of portraits of and for the middle classes. But though they were middle class (a



Mikuma Katen 三熊北顯: 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran in their Studio', woodblock from the book *Kinsei kijin den* 近世奇人傳 (1787). Spencer Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. Reproduced by permission.

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¹ Vinograd 1992, p. 1.

² In a sense, of course, this is tautological, or a 'vicious circle': only significant people are chosen for portraiture, and one becomes significant if one's portrait is painted. Thus the selection of new types of sitters for portraiture by artists, such as Rembrandt's or Hals's workers, is an indication that standards are changing, and also helps to usher in those changes.

phenomenon new to the Edo period, at least on that scale), the subjects of these portraits are hardly 'ordinary people;' they comprise, rather, an emerging elite of artistic and intellectual interest, even distinction. Whereas traditional portraits were commissioned by an in-group that was part of the 'establishment' (family, the court or temple), the new works were not commissioned by the establishment³—indeed often not commissioned at all, but were the inspiration of the artist himself⁴ or (in the case of prints) his publisher.

In addition to the new types of Subjects depicted, the new portraits also explore new stylistic territories: new compositions, formats, media, and sizes; new conceptions of line and shape, of models and precedents; new approaches to motion, action, gesture, expression; new uses of color and ink; new settings for dissemination and display. The best known of these new portraits are the Ukiyo-e 浮世絵 -style kabuki 歌舞伎 actors and 'beautiful women' (*bijin* 美人) of the gay quarters (and a rare few poets or Ukiyo-e artists).

Fewer, less famous, but equally interesting, are portraits of poets, scholars, and artists of (and in) the emerging *haiga* 俳画 and literati (aka Nanga 南画/南, 'Southern School painting,' or Bunjinga 文人画 (Ch. *wen-ren hua* 文人画, 'literati painting') styles.⁵ Visually and thematically *haiga* & literati portraits are quite similar: calligraphic ink painting on paper, with optional light color (although they are sometimes reproduced in woodblock print, a paradox that echoes Ukiyo-e woodblocks' continued complex dependence upon brushwork). The *haiga* and Nanga artists and audiences overlap to some extent; the differences are a) subject-matter, and b) the extent to which they draw from native versus literati Chinese traditions for their poetic forms, compositions and understanding of brushwork.

Like those in Ukiyo-e style, Nanga and *haiga* portraits depict not only new classes of Subject but depict new types of identity and identification, in-

³ There are cases where a member of the establishment commissioned portraits of 'outsiders,' for example, for reasons of sexual interest.

⁴ All the portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran discussed here were made by men.

⁵ From here on I will use the Chinese term exclusively for the Chinese painting, either Nanga or Bunjinga for the Japanese movement created from it, and 'literati' to signify both.

deed new values and new conceptions of the person. For in these portraits, beyond the formal, physical and social changes just mentioned, there is another 'deeper' change beneath the surface—effected by means of the changes evident in that surface: a shift in what we might call the 'subject-matter' of the portrait.

This paper has five interrelated objectives. First, relying on a body of portraits of the literati artists Ike(no) Taiga 池(野)の大雅 (1723-76) and Tokuyama 徳山 (aka Ikeno) Gyokuran 玉蘭 (1727 or 28-1784) it outlines some innovations in Japanese literati portraiture during the early modern period (mid-Edo: 18th and 19th centuries), which include expansions of the Subject to include his or her working and living environment, be it a garden, studio, or shop. Second, it introduces to Japanese art history an important new body of theory regarding portraiture, particularly the categories 'emblematic' and 'imaginary,' developed by Richard Vinograd in his pioneering *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits 1600-1900*,⁶ and situates Edo Japanese portraiture by means of its compass. Third, in so doing, it clarifies certain Ming and Qing contributions to Japanese literati portraiture. Fourth, it attempts to account for the particular charm or even compelling force of certain portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran, best done (I believe) with the assistance of that theory. Finally, it analyzes the changes evinced by these portraits with regard to Japanese attitudes toward emotions/states of mind, conceptions of the person, and the ways portraits were used in the 18th and 19th centuries, with particular attention to issues of moral authority, the erotic, and the relations between the depicted sitter and the audience.

There are at least seventeen extant portraits of Taiga and/or Gyokuran, in at least eight separate sub-genres (depending on how you count). They will be discussed not in chronological order but according to the type of composition, in general from most traditional to most innovative and radical, the most important being Taiga's self-portrait with a patron (No. 3) and the portraits of the couple in their studio (Nos. 10 and 11). They are (with * signaling a new portrait sub-genre):

⁶ Vinograd 1992.

Type Artist/ Title (Collection, Publication)

A. Formal lineage painted portraits of Taiga (alone) by his successors:

1. Geppō Shinryō 月峯辰亮 (1760-1839)⁷ and
2. Aoki Shukuya 青期夙夜;⁸

*B. Self-portrait of Taiga with a patron/friend:

3. Taiga: 'Dialogue between Mikami Kōken 三上孝軒 and Ike Taiga';⁹

*C. An informal *haiga*-like painting of Taiga and Gyokuran as a couple among a number of important cultural figures (an update, as it were, on the Kamakura-period poet-portrait handscrolls

4. Tomioka Tessai 富岡鉄斎 (1836/7-1924): 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran' on 'Some Japanese Eccentrics and Recluses' (1868).¹⁰

*D. An illustration of Taiga with his friends Kō Fuyō 高芙蓉 and Kan Tenju 韓天寿 traveling to mountains:

5. Anzai Unen 安西雲烟 (dates unknown): 'Journey to the Three Peaks,' from *Kinsei Meiga Shoga-dan (Talks about Famous Paintings of Recent Times)* by Anzai Unen (printed book, 1831).¹¹

*E. Taiga's Handprint on a haiku, in three versions:

6. The original haiku calligraphy, written 'in the early spring of 1772 as Taiga was beginning his fiftieth year... 'playfully "sealed"...with his handprint, the five digits representing the decades of his life thus far;'

7. Twelve woodblock prints made from that original for his friends who wanted a copy;

8. An 1804 reissue from one of those prints.¹²

⁷ Takeuchi 1992, figure 52.

⁸ Takeuchi 1992, figure 53.

⁹ Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music; Fischer 2007, plate 80.

¹⁰ Cahill 1969, plate 1.

¹¹ Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library.

*F. A portrait of Taiga in his fan shop:

9. Tomioka Tessai: 'Taikadō, Taiga's Fan Shop';¹³

*G. Portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran in their studio:

10. Mikuma Katen 三熊花顛: 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran in their Studio,' woodblock from the book *Kinsei kijin den 近世畸人傳*;¹⁴

11. Tomioka Tessai: 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran in their Studio.'¹⁵

*H. Portrait of Gyokuran (alone) at her desk painting, in Ukiyo-e style:

12. Katsushika Hokusai 葛飾北斎 (1760-1849): 'Gyokuran' from *Retsujo byakunin isshu 列女百人一首 (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Heroic Women)*, 1847 (printed book).¹⁶

*I. Portraits of the teashop, and their studio and its garden or grounds:

13. Miyazaki Yūzen 宮崎友禪 (act. Early 18th c.): 'Matsuya Teahouse in Gion Shrine,' from *Kaji no Ha 梶の葉 (Leaves of Kaji)*, woodblock print;¹⁷

14. Noro Kaiseki (1747-1828), *Ike Taiga's House*, 1792;¹⁸

15. Geppō Shinryō 'Makuzugahara, Taiga's House,' hanging scroll ink and colors on paper;¹⁹

16. 'The Taigadō' from 'Shui miyako meisho zue' 拾遺都名所圖會 (1787) (preface dated 1787) (Takeuchi 1992, fig. 57).

*J. A landscape portrait of Gyokuran:

¹² Fischer 2007, fig. 10, now in the Taiga Art Museum Collection of Kyoto Prefecture; the sequence is reported in Fischer 2007, p. 11.

¹³ Property of Mary Griggs Burke; in Fischer 2007, Fig. 2.

¹⁴ Takeuchi 1992, fig. 54.

¹⁵ Takeuchi 1992, fig. 55.

¹⁶ Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library; Fischer 2007, Fig. 12.

¹⁷ Fischer 2007, fig. 13; Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library.

¹⁸ Fischer 2007, fig. 15; Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives.

¹⁹ Takeuchi 1992, fig. 56.

17. Tessai: Gyokuran making tea under the pines on the grounds of Gion shrine (date unknown).

This study analyzes these portraits in order to discover what their makers—and presumably their audience—found valuable about them as artists and as people, in the expectation this will deepen our insight into the ways the portraits functioned, into the contemporary Japanese understanding of the literati ideal, and into what that Japanese version of the ideal had in common with its Chinese models. All of these sub-genres except the first (the formal lineage painted portrait) are new—at least to Japan; one of the new sub-genres, the depiction of a person's garden as a portrait of the person himself, is entirely derived from China.

Given that there are almost no previous portraits of visual artists (of any school), this is an astonishing number. I will argue that the sheer number of types of portrait made of a personage can be understood as one measure of the figure's social or cultural importance. By this criterion, (a stringent one) the husband and wife Ike Taiga and Gyokuran, can be judged to have seized the artistic imagination to an extraordinary extent—and indeed the imagination of the general public, since so many of these appeared in printed books, that is, were mass-produced for relatively large audiences.

In terms of 'interiority' or inner realities, we see in these portraits two features that are new: the more-or-less permanent or characteristic range of the sitters' states of mind that we call temperament or character, and in some cases, the functioning of emblematic portraiture that calls forth an identification with the sitter on the part of the viewer.

I. Japanese Portraiture²⁰

Virtually all Japanese painted portraiture of the Heian (794-1185) through Edo (1615-1868) periods falls into one of four categories, immediately rec-

²⁰ By 'portrait' in this paper I mean a representation of a person (or small group of closely-related persons) where the person himself is the focus, as opposed to, for instance, illustrated scrolls narrating the life of a person, where focus is equally on the events and the narrative; these could, obviously, be considered a form of portraiture, but they are not under discussion. [See Dix 2007.]

ognizable by composition, which coincides with subject matter.²¹ These are 1) the subject seated on the floor or low dais, cross-legged (if male) or with legs under her (if female), providing an over-all triangular composition, (by far the most common);²² 2) a Zen 禅 master or abbot (*chinzō* 頂相), seated on a chair; 3) a general on a horse; 4) 'Poetry Immortals' (*kasen-e* 歌仙絵). The first three are typically on hanging-scrolls, the latter in hand-scroll format. Corresponding to these differences in format and composition is a theoretical distinction (not necessarily invariable): the first three are what Vinograd calls 'effigy' portraiture, the fourth 'imaginary.'

'Effigy' portraiture is based on first-person observation of the sitters by the artists or on second-hand descriptions by people who knew them. Effigy portraits, which include sub-genres such as ancestor portraits, religious leaders, and the like, are of the elite (abbots, generals, *daimyo* 大名, etc.), based on alleged and perceived physical resemblance. (Note that this is a broader use of the term 'effigy' than is sometimes used; the term is sometimes restricted to works that are used to stand in for the actual person in some social or spiritual or especially ritual sense; in such cases actual body parts are sometimes incorporated.) Traditional Japanese effigy portraits convey a congeries of the Subject's physical and social features: appearance (resemblance), rank and social status.²³ Equally important, they imply something about his state of mind and spirit as these can be disclosed in posture and facial expression. This latter quality is what Richard Vinograd calls, for Chinese painting (where it is closely related to rank and social status), 'decorum.' 'Imaginary' portraits, on the other hand, are of individuals never seen by the artist. (The earliest *kasen-e* were painted centuries after the poets died, so within this genre, the identity of the subject necessarily has little to do with physical resemblance.)

²¹ There are, of course, important and well-known exceptions, notably the Shōtoku Taishi 聖徳太子 flanked by attendants, and the 13th-century 'Portrait of Myōe Shōnin 明恵上人 attributed to Jōnin in the Kōzanji (Kyoto).

²² A wide range of such portraits from the Hosokawa Family is illustrated in Lubarsky :1992.

²³ The exclusion of *kasen-e* from the effigy paradigm is largely the result of historical circumstance: poets did not achieve the social distinction that made portraiture appropriate until the Kamakura 鎌倉 period, by which time many of the most illustrious had been dead for centuries and no longer available for direct observation.

Note on Terminology

Although in many (even most) cases, the subject of a portrait overlaps with or is identical to its 'sitter,' here I would like to distinguish the sitter from the Subject (capital 'S')—and both from the subject (small 's') or subject-matter of the work. Regardless of nation, culture or 'school,' the subject-matter of a portrait is generally understood to be the sitter (in some sense or other; that's just by definition what we mean by a portrait). A sitter is nearly always understood as both a physical person and a social personage. This notion of personage is close to that of the *persona*, but as '*persona*' sometimes carries the connotation of a deliberate or at least self-conscious creation, and even, in English-language literature, of a falseness or deception, I avoid that term. 'Sitter' is merely a convenient locution, adopted so as not to commit us ahead of time to a particular understanding of the nature of human subjectivity or of the social projects the portraits attempt or achieve. A sitter does not necessarily sit to have a portrait made; portraits are frequently made from memory, from another portrait (as in Tessai's studio portrait of Taiga, below), or from third-party description, so the sitter's collusion in the portrait should not be assumed. (And of course the 'sitter' may also be standing, lying down, or moving.)

By 'Subject' (capital 'S'), I refer to the person as a center of his or her own subjectivity, which may or, especially in the case of Japan, may not be limited to the 'ego' or the Subject-as-identified-with-a-single body.²⁴

II. Three Aspects of Subject-matter in East Asian Portraiture: Person, Personage, Decorum/State of Mind

Subject matter in portraiture is usually complex, because persons (in the conceptions of most societies) *are* complex, and in addition, the portrait not only depicts a person but also conveys the society's (artist's, audience's, viewers') sense of why that person matters, what is important about her. At the very least, then, we may distinguish two levels. The first is the person or personage (by the latter term I mean not only the unique historical and biological individual, but especially his social significance, whether political,

spiritual, military, artistic, etc., with rank and role. The second is her or his significance (why that person matters); in the case of *kasen-e*, for instance, the poetry itself and the voice of the poet, which are often indicated by a quoted poem.

In East Asia, these two latter dimensions, the social personage and significance, are conveyed not only through clothing and other material indications of rank, but far more importantly by visual indicators of what Vinograd refers to as '*decorum*.' This *decorum* is certainly physical, including as it does both facial expression and demeanor (posture but also styles and even speeds of moving in cases where motion is implied, as with mounted warriors). But more importantly it is what we might call state of mind—a congeries of experiential, spiritual and mental qualities of attention. Whatever may be the case in China, in Japan the state of mind represented in portraits is an amalgam of Buddhism and Confucianism, a visual analog of Enlightenment, and suggestive of intense mental focus. (Remember that the ideal for rulers is more deeply influenced by Buddhism in Japan than in China, given the synthesis of Buddhism and Confucianism in Shotoku Taishi's (574-622) 聖德太子 Constitution (*Kenpō Jūshichijō* 憲法十七條) of 604 C.E. Thus Buddhism may be said to have wider ramifications in Japan than in China, where it was less pervasive of secular and governmental domains.)

1. Person

Generally, the physical person of the sitter is often (but not always or necessarily) conveyed through what we see as 'resemblance' or verisimilitude.²⁵

2. Personage

Generally, the social personage may perhaps be conveyed through resemblance, but other dimensions also come into play: clothing, setting, companions (friends, family, servants and other attendants, pets) and other elements of the '*mise-en-scene*'), social placement of the finished portrait, artistic style and medium, etc. (The fact that the sitter may be painted in costumes s/he has never worn in real life, or in settings s/he was never in, suggests that the per-

²⁴ There is a whole literature on this as it plays out in Japan; see for example, Miller 1997, 1998.

²⁵ Brilliant 1990.

sonage is less dependent upon resemblance than is the person.) The personage of the sitter is usually portrayed as a Subject but may be shown as an Object. In many cases, as with monks and abbots, the Subjectivity is at the crux of the social personage; in other cases (some prostitutes or call-girls or models) the personage is to be conveyed through their objectification. In other cases, such as Ukiyo-e portraits of women who are courtesans or prostitutes, the sitter may be show as both Object and Subject at once, or (as in Kenji Mizoguchi's 溝口健二 and Kei Kumai's 熊井啓 films) as an Object who is coming to recognize herself as a Subject, or struggling against others' insistence on her objectification.

These two dimensions of the portrait, physical person and social personage, are themselves complex and subtle; within a given society they change over time, and may also overlap: the shorn head of a Buddhist nun or priest indicates a position within society at the same time as it conveys the physical appearance. And of course portraits are also occasionally made with the sitter portrayed as someone they are not; as Vinograd shows, an emperor may be portrayed as a Daoist priest or Buddhist deity.²⁶

Partly as a result, the physical person and the social personage are sometimes very difficult to disentangle, especially for the original intended audience or commissioners of the portrait, who may in any case have no motivation to distinguish them—and indeed the confusion of the two aspects of a person is often the point of a portrait, especially an 'effigy' type such as a *chinzō* or ancestor portrait.²⁷

3. The Subtleties: Decorum/ State of Mind/ Moral Authority

Presumably the subject matter may at times be nothing more than the person and/or personage depicted. But often there is something more at stake, a third dimension of subject-matter, intangible yet making itself felt through both intangible and/or formal features of the portrait. Depending on the genre and the artist—and the sitter himself—this may be something purely personal (a quality of suffering, anxiety or fear), or personal and philosophical (a certain kind of awareness, such as is found on the face of the Zen priest Ikkyū

Zenji 一休禪師 (1394-1482), or the sense of the dignity of the person we see in Rembrandt's portraits of ordinary people). Such aspects of the sitter's inner reality might consist of emotions, as in many portraits of Kabuki actors depicting them in theatrical roles; states of mind, like the detachment of a meditating figure or the compassion of some Buddhist priest portraits; temperament or character; and various aspects of what we today lump together as the 'psychological.'

3.a. Decorum and States of Mind

Or it may be an additional aspect of the social personage. In classical East Asian portraits, the most important aspect has traditionally been the sitter's state of mind, both comprised and the product of self-disciplined composure. Traditional portraits of members of the elites had shown not only the sitter's appearance but also, at least as important, his ability to conform to certain widely-shared cultural and/or religious ideals. Any individual who participated in elite culture to the point where she deserved a portrait did so not only in virtue of behavior and actions, and adherence to a set of beliefs or principles manifest in daily life, but also through his or her state of mind, and this state of mind was an integral part of the portrait, as it was of the Subject depicted. In East Asia, this 'inner' reality has been enormously important, and indeed seems the most important point of most classic Japanese portraiture: no decorum or self-disciplined composure, no portrait. (Although this does not entail that the sitter actually had the requisite state of mind, only that he must be shown to have had it.)

Vinograd's use of the term 'decorum' puts the emphasis on the physical and social dimensions of the person—his point, but not mine. The advantages of Vinograd's way of conceiving this personal quality that is such an important aspect of the East Asian portrait is that it emphasizes a) the physical and behavioral dimensions, b) the objective verifiability (at least so it seems to observers in the sitter's social circle), and c) the tacit social contract between the sitter and society. The disadvantages are that it underplays the moral and ethical dimension (see 'Moral Authority,' below) and what we might call the subjective element: the Subject's state of mind, as if all that mattered was that the sitter behaved properly and obeyed conventions.

In classical Japanese portraiture this state of mind differed somewhat depending on one's position in society: masterful and self-disciplined control and composure in the case of nobility, warriors, and shoguns, and detach-

²⁶ Vinograd 1992, figs. 41, 42.

²⁷ Vinograd 1992, pp. 10-22 & *passim*

ment, compassion, or some other version of enlightenment (humor, anxiety) in the case of Buddhist monks and abbots. But these two varieties of state-of-mind also share a great deal, based on their shared grounding in Buddhist and Confucianist philosophy. And note that these two philosophically distinct kinds of state of mind, composure on the part of the secular elite and enlightenment on the part of the spiritual elite, are not necessarily distinguishable—either artistically/visually, or in the minds of the viewers; indeed the confusion of the two kinds of state of mind in the viewer's mind, facilitating the attribution of moral authority, may be part of the point—an objective and an effect—of such portraits.

Although they inhere in a Subject, these states of mind are not purely subjective. They are 'objective,' in several senses: 1) at least in Buddhism, the experience of enlightenment in one person a) does not vary over time (assuming time to exist, which arguably it does not in enlightenment), and b) would be indistinguishable from that of another person, and so are not 'subjective;' 2) while notoriously difficult to describe verbally, they seem to be perceptible to others,²⁸ and so are not purely the purview of the individual Subject, any more than the color of one's hair is. (Because they wouldn't necessarily have been kept philosophically distinct by the portrait audience, I am conflating two common Japanese senses of enlightenment.)

3.b. Moral Authority

In classical East Asian formal portraits, moreover, the moral authority of the sitter may be as important as the person himself. All the first three types of sitters (parents, rulers and generals, abbots) had moral authority; arguably the point of creating *kasen-e* was to elevate poets to similar strata.²⁹ In Japan this moral authority is conveyed by the position of the body, typically seated on the floor in a position derived from meditation, but also used at court. The face has an expression of stolid composure, also, surely, derived from Buddhist visual arts and Buddhist attitudes toward emotion.³⁰ The sitting position

²⁸ This is the assumption upon which validation of another's enlightenment is made in Zen.

²⁹ The invention of the genre is attributed to Fujiwara no Nobuzane (1177-1265), whose branch of the politically powerful Fujiwara clan sought respect through literary accomplishment.

³⁰ Akiyama 1964, 1976. He presents his theories translated into English in a video on *The Tale of Genji* put out by Films for the Humanities. Miyeko Murase 1983 discusses them in her analysis of this scroll, pp. 66-7.

gives the figure a triangular composition, and the fact that a triangle is the most stable of geometric figures suggests a further subliminal reinforcement for this composition type, since metaphorical stability is greatly prized in both Buddhist ethics and Confucian social philosophy. The stability of a physical triangle also suggests a further motivation for the triangular composition found in certain East Asian figure groups: when the central figure is a Subject of social importance, he or she is likely to be flanked by two (or four) shorter attendants. (This is common whether the importance is religious, as in Buddhist triads; political, as in portraits of the emperors by Yan Liben 閻立本 (Jp. En Rippon, d. 673) and the famous anonymous portrait of Shōtoku Taishi with two attendants, possibly princes; or cultural, as in some portraits of courtiers.) The triadic figure grouping also bespeaks the inherently social, as opposed to divine or personal, nature of political and moral authority in Confucian East Asia, where moral authority is never either purely personal (as it is in the case of Socrates) or divine.

III. Nanga/Bunjinga Portraiture and Its Subject Matter

Nanga portraits, which began to be made in the late-18th-century, have immediate formal and thematic precedents in the imaginary portraits of *haiga* (a visual correlate of the poetic form *hokku* [*haiku*]), which originated about a century earlier (mid-sixteenth century, almost at the beginning of the *hokku* movement) and were often painted by the poet on the same paper as a poem.³¹ Although *haiga* compositions are notably less elaborate, both *haiga* and *Nanga* depend on fluid spontaneous inkwork, eschewing both elaborate, saturated color and precise artistry. *Hokku* is an indigenous development within poetry, but as in much Chinese *wen-ren hua*, imaginary portraits of important poetic and spiritual predecessors comprise an important sub-genre.

The Subjects of *Nanga* portraits, on the other hand, were often artists, and *living* persons, although 'portraits' of famous scholars and poets of the past were also painted, expanding the tradition developed during the Kamakura era of 'immortal poets.'

Like traditional portraits of the elite (and unlike most of the contemporary *Ukiyo-e* portraits of commoners), many of the *Nanga* portraits are painted

³¹ Addiss 1995, p. 14.

(rather than printed by woodblock).³² In addition to their innovations in style and subject matter, these Nanga portraits evince a deeper shift as well, a shift in interest away from the predictable, easily recognizable and duly authorized mental states, decorum, and authority of classical formal 'effigy' portraiture. In these new portraits, beyond major changes in there is another 'deeper' change (referred to earlier): a shift in one aspect of what we might call the 'subject-matter' of the portrait, from the Subject's state of mind to his or her character and/or personality, which show a different conception of the person, with new forms of identity and identification, and permit new forms of relationship or identification with the Subject.

This double shift, in subject matter and in the relationships of portrait and audience, is indicative of emblematic portraiture as opposed to the theretofore proto-typical East Asian 'effigy' portraits.³³

Significantly, if Vinograd is right, this should simultaneously also effect changes in the type of relationship the viewers (including the artist creating the portrait) have (and are expected to have) with the Subject.

While owing a great deal to centuries-old indigenous genres such as *kasen-e* and their underlying conceptions, the new Nanga artist portraits thus also show extremely clear evidence of Ming and Qing culture, which they knew from imported paintings, from a few Chinese artists and traders, and from books. (Taiga and Gyokuran's painting teacher listed titles of twelve Qing painting manuals he thought were essential for artists.³⁴) Most important for painting are styles and types of brushwork and composition, and themes; for portraiture, the Qing influence is seen in addition in their use of the physical surroundings, and especially the studio and the garden. They evince interest in what can be known about the Subject's actions and preferences—'taste,' if you will—suggestive of personality and character so beloved of

Chinese, Korean and Japanese literati, and revealed through actions, objects and environment (in addition to the posture, facial expression, and clothing of effigy portraiture). Through the portrait (as indeed by other means as well—through their own artwork, through their writings, through stories about them, both oral and printed in accompanying texts³⁵) we come to know the Subject—who is now (in mid-Edo) coming to be conceived, as Takeuchi shows, 'as someone whose experiences were worthy of appreciation.'³⁶

A crucial innovation is that in emblematic portraiture we come to know the Subject, as opposed to being already confirmed in an already-constituted social relationship (of family, *deshi* 弟子, student, protégée, vassal, etc.). And as we come to know them—through their portraits, through their own painting and calligraphy—and by other means, we find ourselves confirmed as persons whose experience also matters; confirmed in our own sense of ourselves, in our identity as individuals belonging in some sense to this very powerful but somewhat inchoate and unsteady enterprise of being a literatus.

IV. Portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran

In her book *Taiga's True Views: The Language of Landscape Painting in Eighteenth-Century Japan*, Melinda Takeuchi reproduced and briefly discussed several portraits of the famous *bunjin* and literati artist Ike(no) Taiga.³⁷

Two of the portraits Takeuchi presents include his wife Gyokuran. Gyokuran, like Taiga, with whom she studied, was a Nanga painter, poet and calligrapher, although her painting showed also an influence of the different aesthetic of the Rimpa 琳派 school,³⁸ and her poetry was in the native *waka* 和歌 tradition rather than the Chinese more popular with the Nanga artists. Gyokuran and Taiga both studied *waka* with Reizei Tamemura 冷泉為村;³⁹

³² The most famous example is the portrait of Takami Senseki 鷹見泉石 (1785-1858), by Watanabe Kazan 渡辺草堂 (1793-1841), a 19th-century hanging scroll in color on silk in the Tokyo National Museum. See <http://web-japan.org/museum/bunjin/bunjin02/bunjin02.html>; <http://www.inm.go.jp/en/servlet/Con?pageId=D01&processId=01&colId=A9972> According to The Virtual Museum of Traditional Japanese Arts, 'Takami Senseki (1785-1858) was a senior advisor (karo) of the Koga domain, and was known in Edo as a Dutch studies (*rangaku*) scholar.'

³³ Vinograd 1992.

³⁴ Kinoshita in Fischer 2007, pp. 65-74.

³⁵ The stories are related in virtually all literature on the *bunjin* and translated in Takeuchi 1992, Fischer 2007.

³⁶ Takeuchi 1992, xiii.

³⁷ Takeuchi 1992.

³⁸ Miller 1976. Kinoshita's essay replaces Miller 1976 and Fister 1988 as the most extensive discussion of Gyokuran's life and poetry in English (in Fischer 2007).

³⁹ According to the Reizei family's 1766 list of new pupils Kinoshita in Fischer 2007, p. 41

her mother Yuri 苺合 and grandmother Kaji 梶 were also published *waka* poets.⁴⁰

A. Formal lineage painted portraits of Taiga (alone) by his successors

1. 'Portrait of Taiga' by Aoki Shukuya (Taigadō II, ?-ca. 1802).⁴¹
2. 'Portrait of Taiga' by Geppō Shinryō (Taigadō III, 1760-1839).⁴²

As mentioned, portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran differ from typical Japanese portraits in that they were not commissioned by any of the age-old Japanese social institutions that were usually responsible for commissioning portraits (family/clan, court, temple). The two most conservative, formal portraits of Taiga, to be sure, were lineage portraits, painted by his successors, Aoki Shukuya, and Geppō Shinryō (Taigadō III) and, like most Chinese and Japanese formal portraits, are memorial in purpose. They are part of a larger effort, by Geppō, Aoki and others among his friends and students, to commemorate Taiga, pass on his style, create a lineage (and, surely, secure a market for work in his style, although as literati they would not have described it that way).⁴³

These two lineage portraits show the classic understanding of formal Japanese portraiture and its relation to the person. In both, Taiga sits in formal costume, and in a relaxed version of the formal pose that had been used since the Heian period to indicate the sitter's spiritual cultivation—albeit sometimes conflated with social rank or literary distinction. In conformity with traditional formal portraits, there is no background, and nothing but his sword and clothing suggests rank or anything about him and his situation in life. In a certain sense this is a Buddhist reduction of the person: the man himself, with few accoutrements. He is easily recognizable by his facial features.

His facial expressions in the two paintings, however, suggest two very different moods, also underscored by posture, and by the style or mood of the manner of painting. Geppō's, which is a far looser, more informal work, al-

⁴⁰ *Kaji no Ha* (Mulberry Leaves, Kyoto, 1707) and *Gion no Sanjo* 嵯峨三好, in which Gyokuran's work was also included.

⁴¹ Takeuchi 1992, figure 53.

⁴² Takeuchi 1992, figure 52.

⁴³ Takeuchi 1992, pp. 74-80.

most a sketch, suggests inner amusement and gentleness, while Aoki's more formal, precise painting conveys a more austere absorption or inner reverie. Neither has the Buddhist/Confucian composure of a formal secular portrait; this emphasis on the internal mood and temperament is, however, familiar from Buddhist portraits as early as the Heian period.

*B. Self-portrait of Taiga with his patron and friend

3. Taiga: 'Dialogue between Mikami Kōken and Ike Taiga (c. 1762).'⁴⁴

Self-portraits by Japanese artists are rare (and this is Taiga's only one⁴⁵), as are effigy portraits of two Subjects;⁴⁶ here again, Taiga carves out new artistic territory. Mikami Kōken (1722-1798) was a samurai and Confucian scholar, as well as Taiga's patron (he evidently owned several scrolls by Taiga) and—based on the warmth and witty familiarity of Taiga's original poem inscribed at the top—friend. The poem alludes to a literary gathering held in 845 by the Chinese poet Bo Juyi 白居易 (772-846), and thus asserts a shared identity with the Chinese literati as well as each other. Taiga's brushwork is looser even than Geppō's in the portrait just described; as the master, he can allow himself more eccentricity than his student—although the smudges are only on the figure of himself, not of his higher-ranking friend. Mikami has a twinkle in his eye as he extends his hand for the scroll Taiga offers; Taiga's expression is very intent.

*C. *Haikai*-like painting of Taiga and Gyokuran on a hanging scroll, as a couple among a number of important cultural figures:

4. Tomioka Tessai (1836/7-1924): 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran' on 'Some Japanese Eccentrics and Recluses' (1868).⁴⁷

An ink drawing of Taiga and Gyokuran by Tomioka Tessai (1836/7-1924), a later artist who admired the couple enormously, is located at the bottom right of his hanging scroll showing *Some Japanese Eccentrics and Recluses*. Although they differ stylistically, this and two other portraits by

⁴⁴ Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music; Fischer 2007, plate 80.

⁴⁵ Fischer 2007, p. 412; biographical information about Mikami Kōken is from the same source.

⁴⁶ Previous portraits of two Subjects are usually in the imaginary genre, of Buddhist or Daoist immortals, Japanese poetry immortals, and the like.

⁴⁷ Cahill 1969, plate 1.

Tomioka Tessai (discussed below), might also be considered lineage portraits in a sense, since Tessai considered himself in Taiga's lineage.

Tessai studied with a painter in Taiga's lineage, and clearly was deeply impressed not only with Taiga but with the couple, for he painted them several times, alone and together. Although Tessai was born six decades after Taiga's death, the lack of opportunity to paint them from life would not have been an obstacle, for the work finds its place within a dual tradition of imaginary portraiture: both the literati tradition of imaginary portraits of eccentrics and historical exemplars of virtue, and the much older (in Japan) native tradition of *kasen-e*, the courtly ink-painting handscrolls depicting classical poets originating in the Kamakura era. As a successor in Taiga's line, he would have seen the portraits; Odakane Tarō 小高根太郎 relates that searching out portraits and copying them when possible, as he did with Sen no Rikyu 千利休, was important to him.⁴⁸

Tessai's scroll can be considered a playful update or reinterpretation of the *Thirty-Six Immortal Poets*.⁴⁹ Like painters of the Kamakura poet-portraits (and subsequent works in this sub-genre), Tessai identifies the subject by an inscribed name. Such scrolls also might include a poem quoted as is the case here. Identity is underscored by dress, which reveals the subject's sex (rarely an issue in Chinese literati portraits), social status and sometimes official rank. The person's character is conveyed through deportment, posture.

The hanging-scroll format of 'Some Japanese Eccentrics' is unusual for immortal poets, but it is very close stylistically as well as in theme to 'Thirty Figures' by the Nanga painter Ki Baitei 紀樺亭 (1734-1810) with calligraphy by Kounan Setsuko (n.d.)⁵⁰ The Edo period saw the extension of the popularity of this theme from the nobility to the middle class; it even appeared in

⁴⁸ Odakane relates an anecdote suggestive of Tessai's commitment to verisimilitude where available: "... on the occasion of a commemorative exhibit honoring the famous Tea Master Sen no Rikyu, Tessai deliberately went to the *tokonoma* 床の間 (an alcove in which hanging scrolls are displayed), took down the portrait of the master and promptly began to copy it. Although the watchmen shouted at him in protest, he blithely continued, oblivious to their remonstrations until he had properly completed the task, whereupon he took the portrait in hand, hung it in its original place, and imperturbably went about his own affairs." Odakane 1965, p. 28.

⁴⁹ See, for example, Japan Society 1990, plates 6-14.

⁵⁰ Two panels, ink and color on paper, in the Shōka Collection. Addis 1995, Cat. No. 15.

such unlikely formats as printed books such as *The Thirty-Six Immortal Women Poets in Color Prints* (*Nishikizuri onna sanjuurokkasen* 錦摺女三十六歌仙) published in 1801 in Ukiyo-e woodblock format.⁵¹

Fusions of Identity

Traditional (classic) *kasen-e* foreshadow the fully emblematic portrait. In my view, there is in *kasen-e* (both traditional and Edo-style) a remarkable (though usually unremarked) type of collective identification, a fusion of the two (sometimes three) persons—the sitter/Subject and the painter and calligrapher (who may or may not be the same individual). This occurs because the viewer absorbs—and is intended to absorb—a sense of the Subject from the qualities of the painted or written line, as much as from the representation or the poem. We read it as if the Subject herself were creating the portrait. An analogy is drawn between the qualities of the painted and written lines on the one hand and not only the sitter (and her work) but her Subjectivity, her sense of interiority, on the other.

Something similar was just seen in the lineage portraits by Taiga's immediate successors: the more formal portrait, with the more formal facial expression and view of the sitter's state of mind, is painted in the more formal style, while the version that lets the sitter's individuality shine through in his facial expression and shows him in a more relaxed moment is similarly executed in a looser sketchier style. Such a correlation between the Subject and the artist and/or calligrapher are often taken for granted, especially by art historians, especially by those of East Asian art, where calligraphy and calligraphic brushwork in painting are recognized as deeply dependent upon the artist's temperament, self-cultivation, interiority, subjectivity. But it deserves analysis, especially as the conflation of the two (or three) different persons (artist(s) and sitter) may yet be further extended—in the imagination of the viewer, at least—to include the viewer as well.

It has been argued that, in viewing (appreciating) calligraphy, the viewer recreates in imagination the movements of the brush, which can be read (give the nature of calligraphic brushwork) in the image left on the paper. This is also, of course, the movement of the calligrapher's body—and not just the

⁵¹ Pekarik 1991. A copy is in the Spencer Collection of The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

arm and hand but, in virtue of the demands of the brush and of calligraphy as an art, of the entire body—the lungs, the musculature—as transformed through decades of self-cultivation practices necessary to become a calligrapher.

It is likely, therefore, that as the viewer mentally recreates the motion of the brush in her appreciation of the calligraphy and image, associating it with what she knows of the sitter/ Subject (based on knowledge from reading the sitter's poems and viewing her paintings, from reading the legends and historical accounts, etc.), there is something akin to the artists' own participation, a collective identification with the Subject transpiring in the viewer as well.

Such posited correlations between portrait painter, subject and the style of execution may be buttressed by an observation of Vinograd's regarding a posthumous group portrait of Chinese *wen-ren*, 'Venerable Friends' by Xiang Shengmo 頂聖謨 (1597-1658) and Zhang Qi 張琦 (active mid-17th century), that also suggests a deep identification between (among?) the artist(s), subjects and audience of such imaginary portraits:

...in a special way this was an imaginary portrait, because (only two of the five subjects) were still living when it was painted. The painting then takes on the aspect of an asserted claim to a privileged cultural relationship, as well as a probable nostalgic re-creation [in Tessai's case, an original creation—] of friendships severed [or in Tessai's case, prevented] by time and circumstance.⁵²

Such works are, in other words, complex occasions for the construction of a sense of shared identity, in several directions. While collective identity is a phenomenon well attested in other areas of Japanese society by social scientists, it has been less studied in history and criticism of the arts (with the exception of film).⁵³

⁵² Vinograd, p. 40. Square brackets are mine.

⁵³ Davis 1996, is the ground-breaking work in this area. Psychoanalyst Daniel M. A. Freeman has studied the Ukiyo-e images of mothers and children from the point of view of shared identity and its inculcation in children by mothers, but this work, though presented at conferences, has not yet been published.

***D. An illustration of Taiga with his friends Kō Fuyō and Kan Tenju traveling to mountains:**

5. Anzai Unen (dates unknown): 'Journey to the Three Peaks,' from *Kinsei Meiga Shoga-dan* (*Talks about Famous Paintings of Recent Times*) (printed book, 1831).⁵⁴

This print shows Taiga in his physical and social context. It might seem to be only tangentially related to his art-making—but of course, if Takeuchi is right, this matter of going directly to the landscape to see it for oneself is at the heart of the matter. It fits the Chinese sub-genre Vinograd calls the 'event portrait,' showing a Subject in an activity that has become legendary: in 1760 Taiga and his two literati friends were discussing Mt. Fuji, and on the spur of the moment decided to go see it. They set off on a journey of three months without further ado, and ultimately visited Hakusan 白山 and Tateyama 立山 as well as Fuji 富士.⁵⁵ The picture conveys their friendship, their interests, and their spontaneity, and is thus a portrait of personality and of a source of inspiration for their art, more than of appearance.

***E. Taiga's Handprint on a haiku, in three versions:**

6. The original haiku calligraphy, written 'in the early spring of 1772 as Taiga was beginning his fiftieth year... 'playfully "sealed"... with his handprint, the five digits representing the decades of his life thus far;

7. Twelve woodblock prints made from that original for his friends who wanted a copy;

8. An 1804 reissue from one of those prints.⁵⁶

Handprints are one of the earliest symbolic works made by human beings; they are found among the Palaeolithic cave paintings in Europe. In Japan handprints of famous people are extremely rare; I know of only one other, an 1854 memorial portrait by an unknown artist of Ichikawa Danjūrō 市川團十郎 VIII supported by his father Ichikawa Ebizō 市川海老蔵 VII as he dies after ritually disemboweling himself.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library; Fischer 2007, fig. 6.

⁵⁵ Their departure and journey are described, and the resulting travel diary with sketches by Taiga analyzed, in Takeuchi 1992, pp. 37 ff.

⁵⁶ Fischer 2007, fig. 10, now in the Taiga Art Museum Collection of Kyoto Prefecture; the sequence is reported in Fischer 2007, p. 11.

⁵⁷ Keyes 1989, pp. 16, 18-19 and fig. 34.

Literati painters, eccentrics especially, were known for using parts of their bodies as 'brushes' to apply ink, so why not the whole hand? The handprint, moreover, is especially intimate; it is not surprising that twelve of Taiga's friends wanted a copy. Like calligraphy, it captures the body at a specific moment; unlike calligraphy, it reveals little of the personality beyond the eccentricity of such an unusual gesture.

***F. A portrait of Taiga in his fan shop**

9. Tomioka Tessai: 'Taikadō, Taiga's Fan Shop.'⁵⁸

In spite of Chinese literati ideals of amateurism in painting, both Gyokuran and Taiga painted fans to make a living.⁵⁹ A woodblock print portrait of Taiga looking out from his fan shop (opened in 1737)⁶⁰ is innovative in showing the sitter in his proper environment—the physical context of his daily life, and part of burgeoning Kyoto commercial culture to which the Kyoto guidebooks attest. In so doing, it plays upon an analogy with another new sub-genre of portrait, the Ukiyo-e actor portraits that depict the actor either on stage or in the green room. It is more radical than they, however—venturing onto ambiguous territory, in that the shop is not precisely the main arena for the artist, as the stage is for the actor. And it risks an ambivalent response, given that literati artists were not supposed to be professional—and indeed in the case of Taiga and Gyokuran their lack of business acumen, their financial insouciance, were legendary—and part of the basis of their appeal.

At the same time, however, the ambiguity is not just in the portrait but in the circumstances of the shop (and its self-advertisement); Fischer points out that

a calligraphy couplet composed and brushed by Matsumuro Shokyo hung in Taiga's shop, proclaiming that new Chinese-style landscapes were being painted on Japanese-style fans. Matsumuro (1692-1747) was a priest at

the Matsunoo Shinto shrine and a noted personage in Kyoto circles of Chinese studies. The fact that his calligraphy hung in Taiga's establishment meant that the young artist was already recognized as a talent by important cultural figures.⁶¹

***G. Portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran Together in their Studio by Katen and Tessai**

10. Mikuma Katen: 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran in their Studio,' woodblock from the book *Kinsei kijin den* (1787), Figure 1;⁶²

11. Tessai: 'Ikeno Taiga and his Wife, the Artist and Poet Ikeno Gyokuran in their Studio,'⁶³ and

***H. Portrait of Gyokuran (alone) at her desk painting, in Ukiyo-e style:**

12. Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849): 'Gyokuran' from *Retsujo byakunin issu* (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Heroic Women), 1847 (printed book).⁶⁴

Two additional emblematic portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran in their studio are surprisingly alike: a woodblock print by their contemporary Mikuma Katen from *Kinsei kijin den*, and a much later ink drawing by Tomioka Tessai aptly called 'Portrait of Taiga and Gyokuran.' Tessai's drawing was based on an illustration from the Tomioka version of the *Ike Taiga kafu* 池大雅家譜 (*Records of the Ike Taiga Lineage*), the text of which was based on the memoirs of Taiga's student Kimura Kenkadō 木村兼葭堂 (1736-1802) and written up by his son after Kenkadō's death.⁶⁵

In Katen's and Tessai's portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran in their studio, self-cultivation takes a form entirely new to Japanese portraiture: showing the subjects a) in action, rather than in the formal posture used in meditation and social audience, b) at their home, c) surrounded by the accoutrements of their avocations, and d) together as loving partners.

It is virtually unknown for Japanese portraits to show their sitters in recognizable rooms or with the objects with which he or she surrounds himself

⁵⁸ Property of Mary Griggs Burke; Fischer 2007, Fig. 2.

⁵⁹ The relative wealth of biographical accounts by contemporaries has been updated and collated by Kyoko Kinoshita in Fischer 2007. This supplements the previously most thorough account in English in Takeuchi 1992 based on their near-contemporaries Rai San'yō 嵯山 崋 (1780-1832) (translated and published by Watson 1976), Ban (aka Haru) Kōkei 伴 蒿 猷 (1733-1806), and Ueda Akinari 上田 秋 成 (1734-1809), and from Senzō Mori 森 宗 三 1936a, pp. 51-69 and 1936b, pp. 108-122, on whom I relied upon in my master's thesis (Miller 1976).

⁶⁰ According to the *Ike Taiga Kafu*, of Kimura Kenkadō (1736-1802); Fischer 2007, p. 14.

⁶¹ Fischer 2007, p. 15.

⁶² Takeuchi 1992, fig. 54.

⁶³ Takeuchi 1992, fig. 55.

⁶⁴ Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library; Fischer 2007, Fig. 12.

⁶⁵ Takeuchi 1992, pp. 2, 75, 77.

in daily life—rare enough to call out for explanation. Here the almost shocking divergence from conventional portraiture is doubly motivated. First, it bears eloquent testimony to the importance of self-cultivation in Bunjinga. Second, it established the two works as 'emblematic' portraits. (See below.)

In these two double portraits the pair's actions, relaxed postures, casual dress, and crammed studio speak volumes. So different are they, not only from works discussed above but from most of the history of Japanese portraiture, that they require a substantially different approach. Fortunately Vinograd's recent theoretical categories for such portraits, derived from his study of Chinese portraiture of the Ming and Qing periods, provide the necessary theoretical framework, . the action or event portrait, and the emblematic portrait. Of the latter he argues:

...A prime Chinese example is the anonymous Portrait of the Painter Ni Zan 倪瓚 ([his] Figure 6) from the fourteenth century, in which the artist is portrayed as an actor set on the stage of his own painting style. He is surrounded by emblems of his interests and personality that are entirely performative or tangible, rather than alluding to an invisible interpretive structure. The emblematic portrait is thus involved with the social person and with public roles, including images of artists, scholars, officials, and occasionally monks and emperors in informal guises. Emblematic portraits may include carefully descriptive representations of the sitter, sometimes executed by portrait specialists as part of a collaborative effort, but there is an additional reference to a context of action, profession, or role.⁶⁶

This describes the content, import —and functioning— of these two portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran exactly.

The Studio: Objects

The studio is replete with the accoutrements of the scholarly artistic life, thus illustrating both their temperaments and the centrality of artistic self-cultivation in their lives.

Susan Hanley has documented and analyzed the increased wealth of the middle class in the Edo period, and the corresponding increase in furniture,

dishes and other household utensils, and other material possessions.⁶⁷ This material wealth appears in the visual arts of the time as a new fascination with the beautiful items of visual culture; textiles, ceramics and other stylish objects turn up not only as the background of paintings and prints, but increasingly, as the primary subject matter (as on Ukiyo-e paintings of kimono hanging on racks).

Here, however, the objects are not gorgeous; they are not important in themselves, but as evidence they provide of interests and talents of the portraits' Subjects. Katen similarly shows Taiga and Gyokuran playing a biwa 琵琶 and a koto 琴, surrounded by paintings and calligraphy, books open and closed, a ceramic jar with a broken lip, scrolls, inkstone, etc. On the table in front of Taiga is a finished calligraphy, a brush-holder full of brushes, and a stack of books with two figurines perched precariously on top. Behind Gyokuran a large round 'moon window' (an overt Chinese reference, far from unknown in Japan but not common, either) opens to the garden, with arrowroot (*kuzu* 葛) vines winding around fragments of a lattice.

Tessai, too, show us a profusion of accoutrements of successful artists: paintings finished and unfinished, musical instruments, scrolls, books, brushes and inksticks. Gyokuran's koto has been stood on end for storage, for this time she is painting a fan; the table behind it again holds books open and closed. More open and closed books lie at Taiga's knees, to his proper left; he plays a shamisen 三味線, with his inkstone and blank roll of paper on the floor before him; his brushes lie scattered higgledy-piggledy. To his right is the small fire enclosure with a tea kettle; several cups are strewn around the room on the floor, along with more books, fan paintings, and scrolls. A trellis lies above their heads, with more vines (unidentified).

The arts of poetry, calligraphy, painting and music, and the self-cultivation that is both their pre-requisite and their result, are at the core of literati personal and social life. They are integral to literati social interactions of all kinds, and they reveal the innermost person—thoughts, feelings, temperament, character, predilections, taste—to friends and, through the evidence of their representations within the portrait, to viewers who did not know them

⁶⁷ This to such an extent that new forms of furniture (the chests called *tansu* 箱) were devised—and purchased—to hold clothing and bedding, and many households began to build small storage sheds (*kura* 蔵) on their property just to hold the possessions that were out of season and not in use. Hanley 1997.

⁶⁶ Vinograd 1992, p. 12

personally but come to feel they do, and to identify with the portraits' Subjects. Katen's and Tessai's inclusion of these accoutrements underscores that the literati values and language of China were equally pertinent in Japan.

Tessai utilized the elaboration of objects in the studio as a way to establish the character and importance of the Subject many times. The 1969 catalog *The Works of Tomioka Tessai*, for instance, shows nine paintings with Chinese scholar-poets in their studios, eight of whom are identifiable (usually by inscription). They were all of course unknown to him, most having been dead for centuries. These paintings differ from the usual anonymous scholar's huts (many of which are, however, also in evidence in the catalog, along with three painted objects with scenes of scholars' huts)—not only in having identifiable Subjects, but in the profusion of scholarly/artistic implements and in the elaboration of the studios themselves.⁶⁸ 'Lu T'ung Sampling Tea,'⁶⁹ for instance, shows the Chinese scholar sitting at his desk with three rolls of white paper, a large inkstone two (or possibly three) brushes, a *qin* wrapped in its damask cover, a dragon-shaped paperweight, a water pot, and a bundle of six or eight scrolls wrapped in red and tied together with a yellow ribbon. Toward the side of the desk are a large basket of fruit and a ceramic pot (celadon glaze) full of orchids. The tiles of the floor are painted in (!); a servant brings him tea on a small red tray. Through the window behind him one can see the plants, trees, rocks of the garden. This runs completely counter to the thousand-year Chinese and centuries-old Japanese tradition of depicting scholars' studios as minimally as possible.

Not a single object in either Katen's or Tessai's portrait pertains to any aspect or function of life other than literati interests. Nothing is symbolic in any other sense.⁷⁰ Even the broken-lipped jar bespeaks the famed literati drunkenness (often required to do one's best poetry). Even the tea cups and kettle – -which might seem to be nothing more than utensils of everyday liv-

⁶⁸ These are catalog Nos. 21 'Lu T'ung Sampling Tea,' 24 'Snail Hut of Chao Hsien,' 25 'Su Tung-p'o 蘇東坡 Pats His Stomach,' 26 'Reading Books, Fixing One's Resolve' (with a poem by mid-Tang Dynasty scholar Han Yu 韓愈), 27 'Huai-su Writing on Banana Leaves,' 28 'Zen Master Ming Ts'an 明燦 Eating Potatoes,' 34 'Su Tung-p'o Brewing Tea,' 35 'Selling Books from a Boat' No. 45 'The Hidden Abode of Mi Fu 米芾' is identified by name but seen from a great distance.

⁶⁹ International Exhibitions Foundation 1968-69, no. 21.

⁷⁰ It is questionable whether such usages in fact constitute symbolism or allusion/evocation.

ing—remind us of famed historic examples. Tessai's portraits of Lu Tung and 'Su Tung-P'o 蘇東坡 [Su Dongpo] Brewing Tea'⁷¹ are but two examples; like Taiga and Gyokuran's friend Aoki Mokubei 青木木米, Tessai, his wife Haruko 春子 and his mentor and colleague Ōtagaki Rengetsu 大田垣蓮月, made tea implements themselves.⁷²

As early as the 12th-century *Tale of Genji Illustrated Handscroll* (*Genji Monogatari Emaki*), Japanese painting had celebrated visual arts as subject matter as well as for its intrinsic visual interest. Paintings, calligraphy, gardens and architecture established general background, provided information regarding the narrative, and helped to identify episodes. Beyond that, they established the taste, 'cultural capital,' and personal accomplishments of the persons in the pictures; gardens especially were used to amplify the emotional tenor of a scene.⁷³ These last tendencies were revitalized in the 18th-century Ukiyo-e of the gay quarters.

Various modes of vision and visuality, especially as encoded within artworks, from Italian Renaissance perspective through Song landscape painting, Edo period prints and 20th-century Japanese film, have been shown to serve their viewers as cognitive and ideological models, 'teaching' them to see the world and their place in it, assigning (or refusing them) them particular Subject or object positions.⁷⁴ In the case of Taiga and Gyokuran, who are assimilating/ reworking Ming and Qing painting to Japanese purposes, and are inventing new ways both of seeing and of living (and making a living) as artist-poets, the relationships their portraitists have posited for them with their own finished and unfinished work—works that comprise the evidence of their new ways of seeing the worl—cannot be taken for granted, or assumed to function along the lines of previous painting.

The Studio: Arrangement

At least as significant as the types and plenitude of the objects surrounding the Subjects is their arrangement. Clearly Gyokuran and Taiga were no

⁷¹ International Exhibitions Foundation 1968-69, nos. 21 and 34 respectively.

⁷² International Exhibitions Foundation 1968-69, nos. 52, 57, 58, 59.

⁷³ Akiyama Teruzaku 1964, 1976.

⁷⁴ Davis 1996, Miller 1998, Screeck 1999.

interior designers; placement of objects within the studio is haphazard at best, with paintings overlapping each other at all angles, statuettes perched precariously on a stack of paperback books at the edge of a table, unread books lying open, and cups and books all over the floor.

Takeuchi rightly reads into this further evidence of their temperament, speaking of their 'happily cluttered household' and its 'jovial disarray.'⁷⁵ In both Katen's and the first of Tessai's portraits, the helter-skelter studio itself is an extension of the character, general state of mind, and current mood of the two artists.

On the one hand, this couple is simply too busy with painting, calligraphy, and music to bother with cleaning up. But in addition, such lack of concern for the petty and bothersome details of everyday life is a traditional virtue of the cultivated Chinese gentleman in the tradition of the Confucian scholar as well as the Buddhist/Daoist mystic. Both the artists themselves, and their friends, other Japanese literati who modeled themselves on Chinese literati, were famous for their literati lifestyle,⁷⁶ and Taiga and Gyokuran were especially renowned as eccentrics who happily deviated from the confining norms of Tokugawa society. Taiga's successors (the artists who painted these pictures), the publishers who printed the several woodblock books, and even, surely, the purchasers of the books also cultivated these virtues. Tessai, for one, is known to have shared the propensity to disorder:

There was a quality of nonchalance and disorder about Tessai that contrasted sharply with the meticulous Kenzō 謙藏 [his son]. He invariably wore his kimono in a sloppy, disheveled manner, and his sash hung loosely as if it were about to come undone.... Furthermore, his studio was invariably in a state of impressive disorder, with books and supplies piled high everywhere so that there was nowhere to step. Throughout his lifetime, Tessai diligently collected diverse sorts of information such as abstracts and selections from various kinds of books, and clippings and advertisements from newspapers, on which he jotted his reminiscences, tree leaves or other natural specimens he had picked up during his travels, and representative sketches. The whole was a bewildering assemblage of diverse materials which defied any orderly system of arrangement, the necessity of which the old man obviously did not see anyway. Strangely

enough, there was a harmonious, collage-like beauty about it all, a metaphysical order based on the vitality, unlimited interests, and unerring eye of the true painter.⁷⁷

Whether he emulated Taiga or, perhaps, sharing a similar temperament, he turned to them as models or support, Odakane's comments suggest a possible affinity of temperament or aspiration between Tessai and the two Edo artists he drew so many times. He was, like them, a Nanga painter, calligrapher and poet, and identified himself as an heir to Taiga's succession; Bishop Sakamoto Kojo 坂本光淨 writes that Tessai 'felt a mysterious affinity with this colorful personality [Su Dongpo, aka Su Shih 蘇軾], who stands at the beginning of the whole tradition of scholar-artists in the Far East, as Tessai stands at its end (discounting a few predecessors and survivals).'⁷⁸ Taiga was thus his direct connection with this rich tradition of eccentrics going back to Su.

This is clearly the functioning of emblematic portraiture, an increasingly important sub-genre in China during the late Ming and early Qing periods:

Emblematic portraits may be defined as images oriented to the contemporary social and cultural milieu of the sitter that embody a complex personhood, comprising aspects of temperament, role, and behavior. Emblematic portraits were explicitly concerned with issues of interpretation and convention. A central issue in portrait criticism had to do with whether the focus of interest resided in the replication of a likeness or instead in what the portrait revealed, exposed, expressed, or disclosed in the way of personality, character, mentality, or fated destiny. This is another way of approaching what for the Chinese and for most portrait traditions was the crucial point of classification and evaluation of portraits, the ability to convey some inner and intangible core of temperament through the outer forms of appearance....The emblematic portraitist is encouraged to observe the subject in varied and informal situations and to seize characteristic attitudes and features as revelatory devices....⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Takeuchi 1992, p. 75.

⁷⁶ Graham 1990.

⁷⁷ Odakane 1965, p. 31.

⁷⁸ International Exhibitions Foundation, 1969, plate 25; Odakane 1965, p. 64. For Tessai's works on Su Dongpo, Maeda 2004, chapter 7. Today this affinity no longer seems mysterious.

⁷⁹ Vinograd 1992, p. 11.

Vinograd's description of the functioning of emblematic portraits in China in applies equally to Tessai in Japan:

The motivation for surrounding the sitter with public emblems of status, interests, and talents may have been a reaffirmation of group affiliation. In addition, there were usually more or less explicit claims to culturally valued possessions—of talent and taste, good breeding, or character—that made the emblematic portrait the site of active cultural or social assertions rather than a simple reflection of appearance or identity.⁸⁰

Literati, The Body, and the Erotic

A second surprise in Katen's and Tessai's studio portraits is the Subjects' high level of activity, more typical (in Japan) of a general or an actor. Katen's shows both playing musical instruments; significantly, both are Japanese (although the Chinese *qin* was the instrument of choice of fellow *bunjin* and Taiga's sometime collaborator Yosa Buson 与謝蕪村). In Tessai's drawing, Taiga is again playing an instrument (what looks to be a round version of the usually-square *samisen*) while Gyokuran applies her brush to a fan, her beloved *koto* leaning against a wall and a teakettle on the brazier.

Painting, calligraphy, poetry and music are the so-called Four Accomplishments of Confucian self-cultivation; the breadth of their artistic education plays a huge role in distinguishing literati from professional artists. As in warrior portraits, the artist-scholars are caught in the middle of the characteristic actions that define them as both social and psychological beings.

These actions also might be said to verge on the narrative. Vinograd discusses the anecdotal implications of actions in some of the *wen-ren* portraits by Zeng Jing 曾鯨 (1564-1647), pointing out in particular the effect of a sense of instability that the suggestion of motion affords an image. (Such instability runs counter to the decorum based on stability—physical and mental, literal and metaphorical—of a traditional idealized Chinese or Japanese Subject.) Given the many anecdotes in circulation during their lifetimes and after, it makes sense to accord portraits of sitters like Gyokuran and Taiga visual suggestions of the actions so prevalent in the written record. The Japanese portraits do not, however, go to the extremes of the (admittedly few) Chinese

⁸⁰ Vinograd 1992, p. 13.

portraits in which unusual deeds or eccentric moments are depicted; Taiga and Gyokuran had quite a few such moments written down, but with the exception of the illustration of the trip to the Three Peaks, no one (so far as I know) ever depicted them. Rather, these are typical actions, gestures, conveying a new role for artists/literati.

But there is something else going on here. Taiga and Gyokuran were famous for their spontaneity and their casual lifestyle. Their spontaneity, so evident in his mountain-climbing trip with his friends, and their refusal to stand on ceremony are caught by the artists' rendition of the haphazard arrangement of paintings and objects (on which more, below).

But beyond these renowned traits of temperament, Taiga's half-open kimono in Katen's, and Gyokuran's bare toes in Tessai's, suggest both the accessibility of a modern-day snapshot or cell-phone photo, the sitters' utter relaxation, and even more startlingly, the physical, even sexual, intimacy between the couple, doing what they love with the romantic partner with whom they share so much. Katen has the two facing slightly in toward each other; although Gyokuran's posture is explained by the need to lean over the *koto* when playing, it is also read as a leaning in toward Taiga. Her husband faces the viewer (with a genial smile) but is also slightly turned toward her. In both images, their feelings for each other come through very clearly. In fact, what we have in these three double portraits is something radically new in Japanese society: the visual depiction of erotic attachment between a married couple.

Marital devotion is a topic that had already been mined in poetry for over a millennium (since before the *Manyōshū* 万葉集, late 8c.), and in fiction at least since *The Tale of Genji* 源氏物語 (ca. 1000 C.E.).⁸¹ Married erotic attachment between *fictional* characters had also occasionally been depicted (*Genji Monogatari Emaki* 源氏物語絵巻 'Illustrated Scroll of the *Tale of Genji*'). But while erotica in general had a long history in the visual arts, it had typically focused on attraction outside of marriage. During the Edo, the fascinations of visual erotica, especially of the gay quarters, provided vibrant markets for booksellers, printers, and artists—the new middle class had an insatiable desire for inexpensive erotic art. But again, the new work drew on the attractions between lovers outside of marriage. The deep attachment between real life husbands and wives had rarely—perhaps never before—been

⁸¹ This is in sharp contrast with the great literary loves in the West, which are nearly always outside of marriage, and points up the unusual strength of women in Japan

caught in pictures. Note too that in the interval between the creation of these two images, Gyokuran had been transformed in the popular imagination into a typical beauty of the time, both eroticized and powerful, by Katsushika Hokusai's portrait from *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Heroic Women* (1847), in which she is shown seated at her writing desk, her poetry floating about her.

Understanding ancestral portraits as belonging to an original context of ritual performance, and emblematic portraits as the site of active social claims, brings the issue of the event status of Chinese portraits into focus⁸² and suggests a further motivation for Tessai's fascination with Taiga and Gyokuran.

Tessai, like Taiga, had a close relationship with a woman who was an artist, his wife, Haruko 春子; like Taiga and Gyokuran, Tessai and Haruko collaborated on artwork.⁸³ In addition, Tessai had an unusually close friendship with another artistic woman, his sometime mentor Rengetsu. (Some have suggested they were lovers, but this is not the generally accepted view.) Among the Edo *bunjin* there were a number of married couples who were also both artists. Still, the prevailing paradigm of marriage in Japan in the Edo period and even in Tessai's lifetime (he died in 1924) did not include shared interests or temperamental similarity. Tessai, therefore, may well have welcomed the anecdotal and artistic evidence of such intimate literati partnerships (as, indeed, some Americans familiar with the *bunjin* did in the late 20th century). If so, this suggests one way that Vinograd's emblematic portraits may function in the life of their viewers and artists—offering moral support and exemplars for emulation.

Tessai, I submit, would have found the pair *simpatico* not only because of their art and their intelligence and the range and depth of their resources, but also because of their casual, carefree approach to life and, above all because of their relationship, well remarked upon by their colleagues even in print. I

⁸² Vinograd 1992, p. 13. He continues, 'The modern habit of viewing portraits out of context as finished art objects encourages a focus on the static qualities of portraiture and obscures the no less fundamental aspects of the portrait-making act. Portraiture is especially liable to this kind of oversight, because the specialized practice of portraiture did not achieve the same cultural status, and associated interest in the creative act, as other genres of painting' (p. 13). This applies equally to Japan.

⁸³ International Exhibitions Foundation 1968, plates 57, 59, 64.

suspect he used them as a role model for constructing a new kind of ideal male-female relationship, upon which to model his own relationships with both his wife Haruko and his mentor and friend Rengetsu.

The combination of moving figure and dense context takes Katen's and Tessai's images of Gyokuran and Taiga to the edge of certain narrative portraits, such those Tessai painted later showing famous scenes from the life of his hero Su Dongpo.⁸⁴ In contrast to Tessai's historical narrative portraits, however, the faces here are recognizable—if somewhat idealized. Gyokuran, a known eccentric, was reported, for example, not to have shaved her eyebrows—a detail not shown in Katen's print but one that speaks eloquently of her independence and lack of interest in presenting herself as a beauty.⁸⁵

The 'events' chosen for celebration, moreover, are scenes from daily life—painting and playing musical instruments at home. This suggests how important Taiga's and Gyokuran's exemplary lifestyles must have been to their contemporaries and followers.⁸⁶

Garden Elements in the Studio

In this context, the fact that in Katen's portrait elements of the garden are seen through the 'moon window' (a Chinese architectural form relatively uncommon in Japan), and intrude into the studio itself from a lattice-like partial 'roof' in Tessai's, is significant.

In both cases the plants are vines; visually, they echo the curves of the figures themselves, the soundboxes of Taiga's musical instruments (though not Gyokuran's koto), and the fans Gyokuran has painted in Tessai's sketch, softening the images considerably. This contributes to the comfort the viewer feels with the works—and therefore with their Subjects. It facilitates the viewer's sense of relationship with them; the works might otherwise be dominated by the right angles of the tumbling hodge-podge of paintings and the profusion/ confusion of too many tiny objects. The twining vines underscore the vitality and movement of the two human figures. They also effect a

⁸⁴ Cahill 1972, no. 25.

⁸⁵ She may have been following the example of the eccentric 'Young Lady Who Loved Insects' from the classical story translated by Umeyo Hirano 1963.

⁸⁶ Takeuchi 1992; Fischer 2007.

continuity between the environment in which Taiga and Gyokuran paint and their literati subject matter (landscapes and Confucian symbolic plants) that embraces the two artists—a visual analog, perhaps, of their erotic relationship as a couple.

Conclusion: Portraits in Their Studio

This very strong sense of the couple, their temperaments and even their emotions (their affection for each other, for instance), so convincingly conveyed by the portraits is certainly echoed by their contemporaries' written accounts. But the portraits bring a special intimacy to our perception, and bring the viewer into an apparent relation with the portraits' Subjects.

I. Garden Portraits: The Garden as the Person

13. Miyazaki Yuzen (act. Early 18th c.): 'Matsuya Teahouse in Gion Shrine,' from *Kaji no Ha* 梶の葉 (*Leaves of Kaji, Kaji's Poems*), woodblock print.⁸⁷

14. Noro Kaiseki (1747-1828), *Ike Taiga's House*, prior to 1792.⁸⁸

15. 'Makuzugahara 真葛原, Taiga's House' by Geppō Shinryō (1760-1839);⁸⁹

16. 'The Taigadō' from 'Shui miyako meisho zue' (preface dated 1787).⁹⁰

Gyokuran's mother Yuri had owned a tea shop, taken over from her mother, the poet Kaji, and a spot intimately associated with both her daughter and her future son-in-law, who may have met there. This tea shop is represented in the book of Yuri's first published book of poetry, *Kaji no Ha*. The illustration, by Miyazaki Yuzen, suggests the close association between poetry and place, but as it dates from eighty or more years before the florescence of fascination with artists' lives and homes, it shows the grounds only—no people; as it is situated at the edge of Gion Shrine, it is a public area at that; there is little of personal interest.

Almost as impersonal is an abbreviated 1792 sketch by Noro Kaiseki of 'Ike Taiga's House.' Here only the building is shown. Even the plants and pathways have been eliminated, although the master himself is shown as a tiny anonymous scholar seated in front of a hanging scroll of calligraphy in

⁸⁷ Kanbara Bunko, Kagawa University Library; Fischer 2007, fig. 13.

⁸⁸ Fischer 2007, fig. 15; Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives.

⁸⁹ Hanging scroll in ink & colors on paper; Takeuchi 1992, fig. 56.

⁹⁰ Takeuchi 1992, fig. 57.

the room on the far right. The sketch itself is small (18.2 x 24.2 cm); the building occupies perhaps one-sixth of the composition (over a third of the space is now occupied by a 1792 colophon by a subsequent owner describing the property and Taiga and Gyokuran's lives together);⁹¹ Taiga occupies perhaps one-tenth of the area allotted to the house—about the size of the first character from his name in the inscription at upper right—but in ink that is far more diluted and less commanding. While portraying an actual individual, in circumstances that are personally revealing, its reticence says more about Kaiseki than Taiga.

Takeuchi tells us that 'professional artists' houses do not frequently appear as subjects in Japanese art, but Taiga's residence Makuzugahara was so famous and attracted so much attention that a number of renditions of it survive.⁹² Two illustrations of the studio and its garden, Geppō's *Makuzugahara, Taiga's House*, a hanging scroll in ink & colors on paper (75.5 x 51 cm), and *The Taigadō*, from the wood-block print book mentioned above, *Shuui miyako meisho zue*, show the studio from the outside and without either of the inhabitants.

In the context of literati art, pictures such as these, of studios and studies of artists and scholars, function as a form of portraiture, albeit one that had heretofore been distinctively Chinese.

⁹¹ Translated by Kyoko Kinoshita in Fischer 2007, p. 18.

⁹² Takeuchi 1992, p. 75. Primary sources give conflicting information about the date of Taiga's move to Makuzugahara. The *Heian jinbutsu shi* 平安人物史 of 1768, for example, gives Taiga's address as Chion'in Fukurochō 知恩院袋町 and Gyokuran's as Gion-Shimogawara 祇園下河原 (where Makuzugahara was). See 'Heian jinbutsu shi' *Bijutsu kenkyū* 美術研究 53 (May 1936): 218-19. Some have suggested that Taiga and Gyokuran had temporarily separated. Taiga's address in the 1775 edition is listed as Gion-Shimogawara, the same as Gyokuran's. See 'Heian jinbutsu shi' *Bijutsu kenkyū* 54 (June 1936): 262-63. The most probable explanation is that the *jinbutsu shi*, devised for the purpose of finding artists at work, listed the address of its worthies' atelier, not that of their private residence. A surviving document circulated by Taiga announcing his move to the precincts of Shinpukuin 真福院 is, unfortunately, undated; it does, however, contain the important information that meetings (of the Taiga Society?) would continue to take place at Fukurochō (Matsushita, *Ike Taiga*, p. 78). Taiga probably maintained the Fukurochō address as an atelier, but it may be that by 1885 he became too infirm to continue going there. Both Gyokuran's teashop and Chion'in Fukurochō were a short walk from Makuzugawara. Takeuchi 1992, note 125, pp. 181-182.

The History of Personal and Impersonal Gardening in Japan

In Japan, the idea of interpreting a garden as an image of the inner temperament and tastes of their occupant dates back to—and probably originated with—Murasaki Shikibu's 紫式部 *The Tale of Genji* (1000-1020 C.E.),⁹³ a passage from the contemporaneous *Sakuteiki* (*Notes on garden making*) by Tachibana no Toshitsuna makes the same point:

...considering the suggestions of the owner [of the garden], you should create by exercising your own aesthetic sense [*fuzei*].⁹⁴

Later illustrations of that text expand on the expressive capabilities of the garden, most strongly in the mid-twelfth-century *Illustrated Handscroll of the Tale of Genji*. (Later versions such as those by the Tosa seem to present more diluted, generalized and generally accessible versions of the gardens.) Outside of the *Genji* tradition, there are few if any pictures of non-generic gardens, that is, those presenting as evidence of the taste and character or personality of a particular person.⁹⁵ In general, the garden as an intensely personal statement seems not to have flourished in the visual arts. (The composer Toru Takemitsu 武満徹 (1930-1996) referred to this quality of old Japanese gardens when he said 'They don't exclude people.'⁹⁶) This is not by any means to say that intensely personal gardens were not created, merely that they were rarely depicted.⁹⁷ Rather, Japanese gardens as represented in art present an open-armed, all-embracing parcel of landscape virtually indistinguishable from a bit of landscape outside the garden's fence—a section of

⁹³ Miller, in preparation.

⁹⁴ This translation is Graham Parkes' modification of Wybe Kuitert's 1988; in Berthier 1989, 2000. See also Shimoyama 1976.

⁹⁵ This is in spite of the fact that we know some patrons continued the *Genji* tradition of building gardens meant as personally expressive. Yet the fact that the two best-known examples, the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu 足利義満 (1358-1408), and Prince Hachijo Toshihito 八条宮 輝成 (1579-1629) and his son who built Katsura c. 1630, were both working with direct allusions to *Genji*, suggests that this was a single strand within the broader tapestries encompassing Japanese gardens and pictures of gardens. For Yoshimitsu's use of *Genji* see Shimpei 2005.

⁹⁶ Quoted in the video *Dream Window*.

⁹⁷ Christie's auctioned (ca. 2003-5) a (pair of?) six-panel screen(s) depicting one of the Ashikaga shogun's gardens in great detail

land along a riverbank, a piece of meadow.⁹⁸ One might even ask whether one of the points of such paintings is not to conflate art (or architecture) and nature, the built environment and the natural (even, perhaps, still wild, at least in the imagination) environment and the agriculturally shaped landscape, to conflate these terms, to render the human effects on the landscape invisible so that the opposition between human beings and 'nature' (or divinity) so cruelly apparent to other cultures, might ride more lightly upon human awareness.

In any case, these 'outer' domesticated landscapes, among which we may include those parts of temple and shrine precincts that are open to casual wandering (although not, by my definition, the Zen and other temple gardens specifically set up as gardens, which are invariably walled) are not necessarily any more 'natural' than the inner garden. Similarly, the inner (fenced-in) personal garden may not present itself as especially artificial, artistic or personal, but as almost spontaneously occurring, as if unshaped by particular individual consciousness.

The History of Personal and Impersonal Gardening in China

The Chinese, on the other hand, by the time of our pictures of Taiga and Gyokuran's garden, had for over a millennium been in the custom of reading the garden as an image of its specific proprietor/ designer, and this Chinese form of visual (as opposed to literary) portraiture, in which a picture of garden or estate constitutes the portrait of its inhabitant/designer/owner,⁹⁹ would have been familiar to the *bunjin* from their study of Ming and Qing paintings and books.¹⁰⁰ Of course it presupposes the ability of ink painting (like calligraphy) to express the spirit, temperament, and even mood of the painter.

The long handscroll painted by the artist-poet Wang Wei 王維 (699-760) provides the earliest example.¹⁰¹ It gave rise to this way of understanding

⁹⁸ This is, of course, a deliberate fiction or illusion.

⁹⁹ The use of a garden to constitute an image of a person in literature can be clearly seen in Murasaki Shikibu's novel *The Tale of Genji* (ca. 1000-1020); see Miller 2007.

¹⁰⁰ The *bunjin*'s ravenous appetite for Chinese books has been well known for decades; the list of books accessible to them, with an up-to-date analysis, is in Kinoshita, in Fischer 2007.

¹⁰¹ http://images.google.com/images?imgurl=http://expositions.bnf.fr/chine/images/1/c12_0bis.jpg&imgrefurl=http://expositions.bnf.fr/chine/aretel/4/5.htm&h=171&w=184&sz=13

gardens as portraits because of the extremely high regard in which Wang Wei was held (and the concomitant desire to see ‘him,’ to be in relationship with him), combined with the dearth of paintings by or of him. Even before Wang Wei there was in China a tradition dating back to Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (?303-?361) of men of integrity retiring to their country estates to escape corruption and other unpalatable political practices. This tradition was coupled with the use of historical exemplars as a way of transmitting social and religious values, and with the Chinese use of encounters with portraits for ‘events of recognition, identification, and psychic or imaginative captivation’ which ‘could be the most effective vehicle for the intrusion of personal ambitions and aspirations into the world of visual art accessible to the nonartist’ (in Vinograd’s felicitous phrases).¹⁰² This understanding of gardens as symbolic and/or emblematic portraits was continued in countless paintings of the Lanting 蘭亭 (Orchid Pavilion) poetry party, of Tao Yuanming 陶淵明 (365-427) and his chrysanthemums, of Wang Xizhi watching geese at his lakeside pavilion (and being inspired by their flight to invent cursive calligraphy).¹⁰³ Taiga was familiar with these subjects from Chinese paintings, art theory and criticism, and frequently painted them; he seems to have been particularly fond of the Lanting.¹⁰⁴

By the Ming, the painting of gardens had become a form of portraiture in and of itself; gardens were also used extensively as the background for commissioned portraits of Ming merchants.¹⁰⁵ And by the early Qing, this way of making oneself and one’s inner proclivities apparent to outsiders (as well as confirming them to oneself, of course) had become important enough that Kang Xi 康熙 commissioned copperplate engravings of his literati-style garden the *Bishu shan-quan* 避暑山莊/避暑離宮/熱河行宮, at Jehol 熱河 northeast of Beijing, for distribution to Han Chinese notables in the south of China—I believe as a form of portrait of him (Miller, forthcoming).

[&hl=en&start=17&tbnid=XnwWDWQYLUwCJM:&tbnh=95&tbnw=102&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dwang%2Bwei%26svnum%3D10%26hl%3Den%26lr%3D%26sa%3DG](#)

¹⁰² Vinograd 1992, pp. 14 and 13.

¹⁰³ There is one by Qian Xuang in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

¹⁰⁴ Takeuchi 1992, plate 51.

¹⁰⁵ Cunas 1996.

In this context, although they are equally fascinating for what they show of middle-class, albeit educated and artistic, gardening at the time, the gardens must be taken as portraits of the two *bunjin* who live there.

Taiga and Gyokuran’s Garden

The pictures of Taiga and Gyokuran’s gardens show little affinity with the landscape gardens of Buddhist temples (none at all with *karesansui* 枯山水, the dry rock gardens of Zen), with the gardens used for tea ceremony, or with the stroll gardens derived from ancient China and its Daoist mythology—all of which, as gardens supported by institutions and/or extremely wealthy individuals, would have been entirely beyond Taiga and Gyokuran’s financial means. Takeuchi guides us through the sketch of the garden:

Geppō’s drawing of Makuzugahara shows a building located within a spacious fenced compound. Directions are indicated around the four edges.¹⁰⁶ To the west, an entrance faced Shimogawara Street. Immediately upon entering that gate, the visitor encountered a picturesque arched gate made of braided bamboo. Geppō explains that ‘guests coming to see Taigadō would pass in and out of this gate. Attached was a shingle inscribed ‘Please come in, all passersby are welcome.’’ (The infamous urinal is not in evidence.) A secondary entrance lay near the flower garden to the south, opening to the road to the Sōrinji 雙林寺.¹⁰⁷ In the center, south of the woven bamboo gate, were two plots filled with ‘unusual’ flowers. Tea plants were planted beneath the plum trees to the east.

The house itself was a one-story, three-room affair. In front of the east room hung Taiga’s curtain inscribed ‘foyer’ (*genkan* 玄関). Geppō labeled this room the Taigadō (Taiga’s hall; like many artists, Taiga was known by the name of his studio. The grandly named Taigadō consisted of a tiny four-and-one-half-mat room (roughly 2.7 by 2.7 meters). Next to the Taigadō is the Kattankyo 葛覃居 (Arrowroot vine dwelling). Kattan 葛覃 was one of Gyokuran’s artistic names. The Kattankyo, a six-mat room (approximately 3.6 by 2.7 meters), seems to have been the couple’s living

¹⁰⁶ The positioning of north at the top, felicitous for the Western viewer, is inconsistent with Japanese practice at that time.

¹⁰⁷ The temple where, Takeuchi informs us, the Saiga Society (Taiga Shachō 大聖社) in 1787 erected the memorial hall also called the Taigadō 大聖堂.

quarters. In front of the Kattankyo, Geppō drew and labeled an arrowroot vine. The west room, labeled 'House of Wakamatsuya's assistant Touemon,' was evidently occupied by someone unrelated to Taiga and Gyokuran.

The plot in front of the plum grove is labeled 'White sand' where 'on fine days he judges [*mitomeru* 認める/見とめる] large-scale works.' Perhaps Taiga set up screens and sliding doors here in clement weather, for it is difficult to envisage him creating them in the cramped quarters of the Taigadō. Between the plot of white sand and the house are a little pond, miniature pines, and wisteria. As Geppō depicted it, Makuzugahara seems to be the perfect idyllic spot for Kyoto's most-beloved bohemian couple. Not everyone found it romantic, however. According to one description, 'The tatami 畳 were so ripped that you caught your feet in them, and the paper windows were broken by wind and rain, and not repaired.'¹⁰⁸

Note the prominence of bamboo and plum, typical literati symbolic plants, the 'Four Gentlemen'—pine, bamboo, chrysanthemum and plum—and the 'Three Friends of Winter', pine, plum and bamboo. Bamboo inevitably carries a reference to the Song poet Su Dongpo, who considered them the perfect subject for scholars' painting, and said of them, 'Better food without pork than life without bamboo.'¹⁰⁹ this would have further enamored the garden to Tessai, who particularly identified with Su. Together, in spite of their long history in Japan, the bamboo and plum signify again the artists' shared allegiance with Chinese literati.

The wisteria, on the other hand, bespeaks a separate identification, though one with an equally dense literary and historical lineage. It appears frequently in Edo art, but connects Gyokuran and Taiga with the Yamato-e tradition and native Japanese literati forms (again, even shades of the *Tale of Genji* as well as the emerging folk painting Otsu-e).

The tea plant and kuzu (arrowroot), on the other hand, are idiosyncratic, rarely appearing in paintings, gardens or literature. They are thus almost without cultural or artistic connotation other than what Gyokuran herself provides. Tea had begun to appear in art by and for the townsmen. (It was the celebrated product of Uji 宇治, for instance, and thus would be associated

¹⁰⁸ Takeuchi 1992, pp. 75-6, 78; Suzuki Susumu 1974, p. 43.

¹⁰⁹ Keswick 1980, p. 177.

with that town in otherwise tea-deprived paintings such as Aoki Mokubei's 青木木米 'Morning Sun at Uji'¹¹⁰ and the 'Bridge at Uji,' in the most famous anonymous Momoyama version.¹¹¹

The house takes its name, *Makuzugahara*, 'field of pure kuzu vines,' (or 'just a field of kuzu vines'),¹¹² from kuzu ('arrowroot'), which Gyokuran used as a sobriquet; she also used the arrowroot as a motif in poems. Thus both the house itself (through its name) and the pictures allude to Gyokuran as a painter, as does Katten's portrait of them in the studio, discussed above, in which kuzu is the vine entering through the window.

Kuzu 葛 is even less pretentious. As Takeuchi points out, 'The character is read both *kattan* かつたん and *kuzu* くず and appears in both *Makuzugara* and *Kattankyo*,'¹¹³ thus Gyokuran and Taiga were making much of it deliberately.¹¹⁴ Yet it was not one of the plants customarily celebrated in literati art (or other art, for that matter); in fact, although also used for medicinal purposes and basketry, it was best known as a food crop (in use in the Kyoto area by the twelfth century and a commercial crop since 1600). While the incorporation of plants used for food and other practical purposes has a long history in China,¹¹⁵ this deliberate flaunting suggests both eccentricity and a wry humor.

The Pictures of Taiga and Gyokuran's Garden

The two pictures of the studio and garden are triply motivated. Like Katen's double portrait discussed above, the *Shuui miyako meisho zue* 拾遺都名所圖會 (1787) was printed as part of a guidebook to Kyoto, an economic enterprise supporting the burgeoning proto-tourism industry that also encouraged an ever-widening interest in Japanese culture on the part of the

¹¹⁰ Cahill 1972, pl. 41.

¹¹¹ At the Nelson-Atkins Museum.

¹¹² The title is written in hiragana rather than Chinese characters, so only the phoneme is indicated, not the meaning.

¹¹³ Takeuchi 1992, Note 126.

¹¹⁴ In Japan, however, where it has natural enemies that prevent it becoming the pest it is in America, it would have had less threatening connotations than in the U.S.

¹¹⁵ Clunas 1996.

new middle classes (ever-widening in terms of a) the types of person to whom it would have appealed, b) the range of cultural events or products celebrated, and c) the media in which they appeared, starting with printed books in the 17th century and moving through art, education, and travel).

In addition, a celebration of the lives of historic exemplars of Confucian, Buddhist, and Daoist values was itself a way to participate in the culture of China and Japan. The modes of celebration and participation were various, and depended on one's talents and finances as well as education and class. Although they most frequently included reading and viewing the exemplars' works, writing or painting in the style of an exemplar, painting pictures of them, and most importantly emulating them oneself, this last required a knowledge of them that could be expanded by travel to their homes.

This is (third) because, while the absence of the artists is undoubtedly a concession to the realities of the time—both occupants by that time being dead—pictures of the artist-poets' garden also function as a form of portraiture in and of themselves, just as Wang Wei's did.

*J. A landscape portrait of Gyokuran:

17. Tessai: Gyokuran making tea under the pines on the grounds of Gion shrine (date unknown).

In addition to his fascination (and identification) with Taiga, Tessai was clearly deeply impressed with the couple. But Gyokuran, too, seems to have captured his imagination, for he painted a third portrait of Gyokuran, without Taiga. (She outlived him by eight years.) This one, which I was privileged to see in person but have never seen in print, seems to come from his mature period, and is ablaze with the energetic, expressionistic brushwork for which he is famous. It shows Gyokuran sitting under pine trees on the grounds of Kyoto's Gion Shrine (near where they lived). She is making tea at an outdoor brazier, and her back is toward the viewer.¹¹⁶

We know that Tessai took likeness very seriously at times. His painting of Taiga and Gyokuran in their studio is based on a portrait from the *Taigadō Kafa*, most likely painted by an acquaintance who knew them, even if not during their lifetimes. But the depiction of a portrait Subject from behind is a

¹¹⁶ I saw this painting in a private collection in Kyoto about November of 1977 or 1978. Unfortunately I have lost track of it. I would be deeply grateful if anyone can provide information as to its whereabouts today.

long-established convention in Japanese portraiture, dating back to Kamakura black-and-white ink painting portraits of famous poets. Indeed, so unimportant are facial features in this genre that the subjects are frequently turned fully away from the viewer (especially but not always when they are women). (The conviction that deportment, clothing, and other features of a subject's 'style' convey who they are as well as do facial features persists to this day, and can be seen in Kurosawa Akira's 黒澤明 opening shot of the eponymous hero of *Yojimbo*.) Such portraits are very revealing of character, for they show what the person has been able to make of herself, as opposed to what is clearly seen as the relatively uninteresting "givens" of biology.

V. Discussion: Quantity of Portrait Styles as a Measure of the Importance of the Subject

As enjoyable as they are individually, taken as a group the portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran are significant for their variety, for their innovations (in function, style and subject matter)—and for their sheer quantity. In fact, the quantity alone leads to a new line of reasoning.

One way of measuring the importance of a cultural figure is by the number of different types of portrait created to accommodate her image: the sheer number of types of portrait made of a personage can be understood as one measure of the figure's social or cultural importance. (Others would be the size and cost of any single portrait, the care with which it is made, the prominence of its display, the number of reproductions, etc.)

In European Christianity, for example, the overwhelming importance of Jesus Christ is indicated by the existence of several separate subgenres: not only a) individual imaginary iconic portraits, but also b) the stations of the cross, c) crucifixions, d) the nativity, e) narrative scenes from the life, and f) additional portrayals alleged to derive from events subsequent to his life: the visions of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque showing his heart pierced with thorns and bleeding, for instance. Christ's mother Mary's special significance is indicated, similarly, by the dual traditions of iconic (imaginary) portraits and special 'scenes from the life,' such as the nativity, the annunciation, and the assumption, as well as her presence in the Stations of the Cross. (Being relatively unimportant, saints are usually each given a single identifying act and/or with distinctive iconography that severely restricts the artistic composition.) Analogously, in Buddhism there are a number of separate sub-genres

of depictions of the Buddha: the timeless Buddha meditating (but still often recognizable as a specific metaphysical manifestation by posture, top-knots, etc.), the historical Buddha preaching at Deer Park or on Vulture Peak, the jataka tales, scenes from the life of Shaka 釈迦, the Western (or, less commonly, other) Paradise, etc.

Most important historical persons are portrayed in at most two versions, the formal portrait and, if they are highly elite, perhaps an informal portrait (or two) as well; before modern times (defined here politically and culturally as the past two hundred and fifty years or so) these were rarely reproduced (reprinted). Yet some figures expand outside this typical pattern. The 7th-century imperial regent and supporter of Buddhism Shōtoku Taishi can be shown a) as a typical iconic portrait, b) in the famous Chinese-style formal 'emperor' style triad with a smaller figure (son or minister) on either side in the collection of the Imperial Household, and c) in scenes from the life (in his case, usually many together within one picture plane and not arranged along a single narrative line). The early Heian-period Japanese (female) poet Ono no Komachi 小野小町 has devoted to her three distinct (non-resembling) portrait types: the individual portrait, usually as one of a sequence of important poets, derived from the Kamakura-era poet-portrait scrolls; the 'seven Komachi,' scenes from her life as it developed into legend during the Middle Ages; and the nine stages of death of her death based on Chinese Buddhist poems. In addition, individual artists may on occasion create new representations, as in Utamarō's 歌麿 Ukiyo-e print of Komachi with Ariwara no Narihira 在原業平 in a romantic embrace.

Generally speaking, in both East and West, each of these *types* of portrait, accruing over time around an extraordinarily important individual, will undergo countless individual one-of-a-kind recreations, each manifestation of which can be recognized as a token of its type of sub-genre (to use Charles Peirce's terminology). And any of these individual instances may subsequently be reproduced—by intention and in limited numbers from the beginning, as with Utamarō's and other artists' wood-block prints of Komachi, and now infinitely, by photography, film and videography. (Especially in religious cases of religious art, reproductions may be endlessly recreated as *tableau vivants*, limited-edition cast sculpture, or mass-produced figurines as well.)

One of the surprises of the proliferation of portraiture during the Edo period, then, is the emergence of portraits of artists, living or recently dead—that is, not yet quite legendary—and in so many types.

The Portrait and the Invention of New Modes of Being a Person

Takeuchi's interest is in the new roles and even definitions of the artist that Taiga managed to create, as he 'set out to transform himself into a cultivated man along the lines of the Chinese literatus, or *wen-ren*.' Taiga was a master painter and calligrapher, and one of the co-inventors of Japanese literati painting, still in its infancy. But as Takeuchi shows, he also invented new forms of experience by the way he traveled (and painted and wrote about his travels and the places he'd been), developed new ways of seeing Japan (especially the *meisho* 名所, places famous for their beauty), and transformed the ways artists captured the Japanese landscape. In Takeuchi's summation,

Paintings of famous places, called *meisho* 名所絵, had long played a venerable role in Japanese culture. Assembled largely from imagery borrowed from the tradition of court poetry rather than being created from the artist's direct experience of the site, 'famous-place paintings' in the classical tradition were intended to evoke set emotional responses from the viewer. In contrast, Taiga's topographical scenes differed so greatly from what came before that a new word, *shinkeizu* 真景図 ('true-view picture'), was coined for them. Rather than rely on codified convention, *shinkeizu* manipulated the language of received painting traditions, in concert with empirical experience, into a form capable of expressing the artist's feelings and experiences. In painting *shinkeizu*, artists claimed to transcend techniques of brush and ink to reach the essence of the landscape, and they endeavored to convey that essence as it was filtered through their individual character and experiences. Although Taiga's *shinkeizu* constitute less than a tenth of his landscape paintings, not only were they highly valued during Taiga's lifetime, but they played a seminal role in the developing critical literature on Nanagata in the decades immediately succeeding Taiga's death.¹¹⁷

There is a complex (quadruple) shift here effected by Taiga. First, as argued by Takeuchi, he transformed the possibilities of landscape painting—

¹¹⁷ Takeuchi 1992, pp. xiii-xiv.

and therefore of seeing landscape, i.e., the country. And I would argue, since the Japanese have long stressed the dense and intricate relationships they've constructed between the land itself, the nation, and collective and personal identities, this could and did carry huge implications for the modernization process.¹¹⁸

Second (again as Takeuchi shows), Taiga changed the both the locus and the focus of emotion associated with landscape art, from the conventionally dispersed (throughout history and a wide range of poems and *meisho* serving as cultural touchstones), to more specific and spontaneous emotions to be revealed by the (new) individual artist. This focus on individual emotion is one of the innovations accomplished by nearly all portraits of Taiga and Gyokuran. (The exceptions would be the pictures of his shop, which, however, assert another of his innovations, his commercial success as a literati artist.)

One can certainly argue that personal emotion and personal experience have always been important and valued in both China and Japan—but also always warily, often contained or restrained, strongly marginalized, associated with 'extraordinary men,' or eccentrics (*kijin* 奇人, Ch. *yipin* 异品/異品/逸品) —many of whom literally retired from society in one way or another.¹¹⁹ Taiga and Gyokuran's inclusion in the book called *Kinsei kijin den* asserts the broader perception of participation in this lineage, while the fact that it was mass-produced argues for a newly broadened audience for information about such people.

In so doing, (third) Taiga became one of the most important artists constructing the new Japanese literati culture. While he, his wife, and his colleagues had access to a variety of Ming and Qing art works (mostly not terribly good) and books about painting and calligraphy (much better, and a wider variety), and while they participated as fully as possible in the literati life along Chinese lines, studying the classics and connoisseurship of antiquities, writing poetry, painting, traveling, playing music, practicing tea ceremony, herbalism, dance, and so on, there were major differences between them and the classic Chinese literati ideal. Chief among these was the *bunjins'* lack of

¹¹⁸ Some have argued that the process of politically reinterpreting the landscape through painting was continued—to different effect—by his portraitist and third-generation successor Tomioka Tessai. Maeda, however, is not convinced. See Maeda 2004.

¹¹⁹ Shimada 1961, 1962, 1964; Nelson 1983. See Maeda 2004, chapter 8 for a discussion of Tomioka Tessai and the lineage of eccentricity.

participation in government. Japanese *bunjin* were not scholar-officials; they made their living as artists.

This fact, as much as the shift documented by Takeuchi regarding the new importance of the artist's emotions, changed social expectations about artists—and paved the way for the fascination of the public with the new artists, which fed (and was fed by) the new market for artists' portraits and guidebooks to artists' studios.

Thus (fourth) the portraits not only provide information, satisfy people's curiosity about these new ways of feeling and of being in the world, provide access to a new range of cultural exemplars. (And in Confucian -and Buddhist- cultures exemplars are especially important.) But because of the kind of portraits many of them are—specifically emblematic portraits—they provide means to imagine oneself in relation to the artists. So while Taiga and Gyokuran transformed the way people understood artists (and 'eccentrics' or 'extraordinary people)—his audience could also transform the ways they understood themselves. The new portraits provide means of extending the relationships of the Subjects of the portraits to themselves through identification.

These new roles and definitions are interesting because of the ways they focus the individuality of the person. Historically and socially, they play a significant role in the construction of the foundations of modernity during Japan's early modern period, upon which Japan was able to draw in its construction of full modernity a century and more later. On this view, it is not only Japan's famed work ethic and self-discipline that made modernization possible (and so quickly), as Robert N. Bellah convincingly argued;¹²⁰ in addition, as is implicit in Takeuchi's description of Taiga 'as someone whose experiences were worthy of appreciation,' there were already major components of individuality and self-cultivation in place.

In conclusion, Edo portraiture differed from earlier in many ways: in its choice of middle-class subjects, especially actors, courtesans and artists, its focus on facial expression as well as costume and other objects of the newly-available material culture, its exploitation of action and new possibilities for posture and comportment. Subjectively, this illustrates a shift from the earlier preoccupation with classic values of Buddhist 'detachment,' and Confucian

¹²⁰ Bellah 1985 (1957). These personal characteristics of the Japanese are, of course, in addition to such larger social and economic factors as the beginnings of a money economy, an increasing middle class, urbanization, large-scale literacy, etc.

self-cultivation-in-the-form-of-self-discipline (the exclusive purview of the elites), and explores not only state-of-mind and emotion and feeling, but the complex emotions and character or temperament of the new middle class.

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