

Genji's Gardens: From Symbolism to Personal Expression and Emotion. Gardens and Garden Design in *The Tale of Genji**

by Mara Miller

I

Preliminary comments

Based on evidence from the novel called *The Tale of Genji*¹, one millennium ago Japanese gardens were assigned a new and complex task with regard to emotion, dispositions and states of mind (which together I will call "feelings"). Prior to that time, gardens were primarily socio-political spaces symbolizing mythic and religious beliefs. *The Tale of Genji*, arguably the world's first psychological novel, superimposed upon traditional garden spaces and practices new capabilities, showing how gardens could be used to reveal and/or express individuals' existent feelings, to evoke (elicit) new kinds of feelings, and to structure feelings in ways that become recognizable (to ourselves and to others) – and that can then be communicated. Gardens, as landscapes crafted by humans, carry out these functions as four-dimensional environments (they include the dimension of time); since *Genji* they have done so also in literature, paintings and prints, and now film.

This paper explores these four capabilities (the revelation, expression, evocation, and structuring of feelings), expected of gardens in *The Tale of Genji*. We begin with a brief description of the earlier type of garden, and then proceed to an explanation, with ex-

* Professors Doris Bargen, Richard Bullen, Monika Dix, and Arthur Thornhill read an earlier version of this paper and were kind enough to make valuable suggestions. Any mistakes of fact, interpretation or emphasis remain, of course, my own.

1. From now onward, I shall refer to the complete title *The Tale of Genji*, or simply to *Genji*.

amples, of five types of personal expression gardens from *The Tale of Genji*.

2

Background

2.1. The Heian period

The Heian period (784-1185), widely regarded as the epitome of classical Japanese culture, also marks a watershed in the history of consciousness, evident in literature, portraiture, and gardens. The Heian period occupies a pivotal position in Japanese history, a sort of divide between the ancient past and the future. On the one hand, it managed the assimilation of all that had gone before, integrating the nearly overwhelming waves of Chinese culture that had reached Japan from the 4th century on: Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, geomancy and *yin-yang* theory, political and legal and economic institutions, artistic styles, poetry, architecture, writing – while achieving a relative isolation from China that lasted several hundred years. On the other hand, the Heian period also provided a foundation for future generations to build on, rebel against, and generally use as a touchstone, a compass for defining what was “Japanese”.

Scholars had worked out the *kana* system, a set of graphemes based on Chinese characters but simplified in form and representing sounds (the syllables of the Japanese language), rather than ideas. Limited to a few dozen signs (rather than the tens of thousands of ideographs), they simplified literacy, and made it feasible to educate women – who soon became the most important writers in the native language, writing about personal life rather than official matters, and recording personal thoughts and feelings rather than transcribing (or imitating) the Chinese classics, Buddhist sutras, and philosophy. Literature, therefore, saw the emergence of several personal genres, particularly during the Fujiwara era (898-1185), the period during which men of the Fujiwara family served as regents, controlling the throne by marrying their daughters to young emperors. These new literary forms, many of which were written by women, included poetic diaries, the pillow book, and what turns out to be the world’s first psychological novel, *The Tale of Genji*.

ession gardens from *The Tale*

d

period

garded as the epitome of clas-
tershed in the history of con-
iture, and gardens. The Heian
panese history, a sort of divide
re. On the one hand, it man-
ie before, integrating the near-
lture that had reached Japan
, Taoism, Buddhism, geoman-
gal and economic institutions.
ing – while achieving a relative
l hundred years. On the other
a foundation for future gener-
enerally use as a touchstone, a
ese”.

ta system, a set of graphemes
lified in form and representing
(language), rather than ideas,
than the tens of thousands of
nd made it feasible to educate
important writers in the native
ather than official matters, and
ngs rather than transcribing (or
ist sutras, and philosophy. Lit-
of several personal genres, par-
-1185), the period during which
regents, controlling the throne
2 emperors. These new literary
by women, included poetic dis-
out to be the world's first psy-

In religion and literature, therefore, we see the emergence of new kinds of emphasis on personal experience, and most especially on personal feelings.

2.2. Murasaki Shikibu and *The Tale of Genji*

Written around 1000-10 by (Lady) Murasaki Shikibu (c. 973-after 1014), the fifty-four chapter *Tale of Genji* (the English translations run to eleven hundred pages) follows the love affairs and worldly vicissitudes of the eponymous prince Genji (son of the emperor by a lesser but favorite concubine) and his friends and lovers over the course of his life, and the lives of the next two generations of their descendants.

Murasaki wrote the novel while serving at court as an attendant of the empress Shōshi or Akiko (Jōtō Mon'in) (988-1074), the consort of Ichijō (r. 986-1011), mother of the emperors Goichijō and Gosuzaku, and the daughter of regent Fujiwara Michinaga.

The most important work of art of the Heian period, *The Tale of Genji* occupies a unique place in Japanese history and in world history, for five reasons. First, as the world's first psychological novel (or indeed novel of any type), it gives unparalleled knowledge and insight into the history of everyday court life, and with its focus on emotions, into the history of psychology – not only for Japan but in terms of at least some human universals. This history of psychology includes (but is not limited to) the history of emotions, especially love, *aware* (discussed below), longing, regret, guilt, shame, jealousy, lack of confidence, loneliness, sadness, anxiety and compassion.

Second, the novel was immediately recognized – by the most important man in Japan at the time, Fujiwara Michinaga (the father of the empress, and the regent during this time), among others – as beautiful and important, and became immensely influential over the next thousand years². It provided a source of undimmed artistic inspiration to

2. Miner, Odagiri, Morrell (1985, p. 206) relate that the important Kamakura-era poet/critic Fujiwara no Shunzei (1114-1204) declared at the *Ropyakuba! Utaawase*, an important poetry competition held in 1193, that «one could not be a poet without knowledge of *The Tale of Genji*». Both Shirane (1987) and Goff (1991) provide excellent introductions to the impact of *Genji* during the subsequent medieval period.

writers (directly by imitation, as we see with 20th century novelists Tanizaki, Kawabata, and Enchi, and indirectly, through the “anxiety of influence” and in other ways), as well as artists, architects, fashion designers, print-makers, cartoonists, videographers and graphic novelists.

Thirdly, its impact on Japanese culture was so profound that even politicians relied upon it to prove the legitimacy of their authority.

Fourthly, it is to my knowledge the world’s only example of a work by a woman that entered the mainstream of its culture immediately (during its author’s lifetime) and was never afterwards obscured or occluded by men’s anxiety and will to power. Within a Lacanian framework, it is the only case of a woman playing a major role in setting up the “Symbolic Order” (Miller, 1993a).

Finally, I have argued that this has resulted in a “gender-independent” co-subjectivity, that is, in the existence of a “Subject position” that is neither exclusively (historically) male, nor necessarily based on the physical or symbolic domination of an objectified Other.

2.3. *The Tale of Genji* and emotion

Since over twenty-five thousand books have been written about *The Tale of Genji*, a summary of the literature is beyond the scope of this paper. I will, however, summarize what is most relevant to us in the literature regarding emotion:

1. The novel is set within a Buddhist worldview (Tendai, an esoteric sect), albeit with strong and frequent incursions of Shinto, Confucianism, *yin-yang* theory, and *feng-shui*.
2. Attitudes toward emotion are overwhelmingly Buddhist, set within a framework of the Four Noble Truths, belief in karma (the efficacy of moral action in physical, social, legal, political and economic affairs; no uncaused effects, no action without effects) and in the self as an illusion. It recognizes the dangers of attachment and the value of escaping it. This presupposes individual action and responsibility, the importance of compassion, the possibility of human perfection, and finally – the possibility (based on the *Lotus Sutra*, among others) of Enlightenment for women.

3. Conversation with Professor Linda Chance, January, 2006.

20th century novelists directly, through the “anxiety of artists, architects, fashion designers and graphic novelists. The anxiety was so profound that even the legitimacy of their authority, the world’s only example of a mainstream of its culture immediate and will to power. Within a La- (a woman playing a major role filler, 1993a), resulted in a “gender-independence of a “Subject position” male, nor necessarily based on an objectified Other.

and emotion

have been written about *The* ure is beyond the scope of this at is most relevant to us in the

worldview (Tendai, an esoteric incursions of Shinto, Confu-

verwhelmingly Buddhist, set le Truths, belief in karma (the social, legal, political and eco-action without effects) and in dangers of attachment and the individual action and respon- the possibility of human per- ased on the *Lotus Sutra*, among

ince, January 2006.

3. “Aesthetic values seem to dominate ethical values. (I argue, however, that this is not an accurate reading and that Murasaki is keenly interested in ethics).”

4. “It presents Japanese versions of emotions such as love (Childs, 1999), and conforms to characteristically Japanese psychology of emotion, specifically regarding *tsurezure* (dependence) (Doi, 1971), *mitokoro* (self-other exchange) (Lebra, 1994), and *aware*.”

5. “*Aware* may be the single most important concept used by Murasaki. The term occurs one thousand eighteen times (Morris, 1964, p. 208), along with a variant *momono aware*, used in *Genji* fourteen times. It seems to be a distinctively Japanese version of Buddhist transience, a recognition of the beauty of the sadness of things, of inevitable transience (Miner, Odagiri, Morrell, 1985, p. 290 and *passion*) – a recognition that sadness is as valuable, even perhaps as pleasurable, as joy. It was identified by Motoori Norinaga (1730-1801), and traced by him directly to *Genji*, as the emotion or aesthetic or quality of attention that sets the Japanese apart from other peoples (Harp- er, 1971; Burns, 2003). Onishi Yoshinori (1960) makes a stronger claim, arguing that *aware* brings subject and object together not only aesthetically but on a metaphysical level, effecting a connection with the cosmic grief of the ground of Being.”

6. “There is a definite resonance with Freud’s theories regarding the Oedipal conflict, the power of the unconscious, the importance of dreams.”

7. “There is a character, Kashiwagi, with a speech, much like Hamlet’s, that is suggestive of an early recognition of the difficulty of the differentiation of the self (Miller, 2002, pp. 180-3).”

8. “As the product of a woman, *Genji* expresses both women’s voices – and therefore, perhaps a “female voice” – and expresses a “female gaze” (as well as a “male gaze”), particularly with regard to women’s desire, as exemplified in the description of Kashiwagi playing football (below).”

4. There are three reasons that the ethical dimensions of Murasaki’s thought have been de-emphasized: because her ethics do not fit into any of the ethical philosophies prevailing at the time, nor those of the West; because they focus on personal feelings and an ethics of care rather than on a moral code (see Miller, 2002); and because they would have challenged the patriarchy too much.

Murasaki relies heavily on gardens to carry the emotion of her scenes and characters).

3

**Terminology, the verbs:
"revealing", "expressing", "evoking", "structuring"**

3.1. "Revealing" and "expressing"

Before proceeding to the analysis of gardens and emotion in *The Tale of Genji*, let me set out my definitions of some fundamental terminology.

First, "revealing" and "expressing" are done in relation to emotions that already exist: the verbs refer to some means of communicating the pre-existent emotion either to outsiders or, conceivably, to the person who feels the emotion herself (as when we say: «I realized I was angry»). Revealing and expressing both denote actions that make already-existing phenomena evident, either to others or even (in certain cases) to ourselves. The difference between them lies in whether the person to whom they become evident (as opposed to the person doing the revealing or expressing) has prior knowledge of them or not. I may reveal my feelings to you (assuming you have not been aware of them), or express them, making them equally evident to you (assuming some degree of perspicacity on your part). Revealing may also involve bringing one's own feelings to consciousness.

Revealing and expressing may be either intentional or unintentional, conscious or unconscious, deliberate or unwitting – and as a result, both may be attributed (in English) not only to the person herself, but to her words or writing, actions, dress, etc., even against her conscious intentions (as Freud and subsequent depth psychologists in particular have noted). They may not, however, be attributed *in English* to a situation in other than a metaphorical sense.

This, however, seems to be precisely the distinction that Japanese arts reject with regard to feelings.

3. It is worth noting that the mid-twelfth century *Tale of Genji Illustrated Hand-copy* carries this even beyond what Murasaki does, although we cannot go into that here.

to carry the emotion of her

3.2. "Evoking", "eliciting" and "arousing"

"Evoking", "eliciting" and "arousing", by contrast, involve a change of feeling or state of mind, rather than bringing to consciousness something that already exists. While arousing signifies effecting the production of the actual feeling, evoking or eliciting emotions may mean creating the conditions in which a certain feeling either occurs as an actual experience, as a reminder of the possibility or of a previous experience of a certain feeling, or as an awareness of the nature of the feeling. Note that English has a different verb specific to arousing the basic (biological, perhaps universal) emotions such as fear and anger, namely "provoke". It connotes action by an outside agency, and seems also to be confined to negative emotions, and is rarely used for love or joy.

3.3. "Structuring"

Finally, by the "structuring of emotions" I refer to organizing feelings of various sorts into some sort of recognizable, even familiar, order, of a sort that can itself be communicated independently of the emotional content (happy or sad, angry...). Structure then, includes such elements as whether it is distinctively human or shared with other species or other kinds of beings (gods, angels, hungry ghosts?); localized within an individual or shared more broadly; discrete and isolated or melding into other feelings; easily recognizable by the Subject, or requiring decipherment; recognizable by others, and by what means, or hidden deep within the Self. The ways that arts, religion, philosophy, and lately psychology and their institutions structure emotions contribute to a common shaping of the experience of having feelings that is shared by many within a culture.

4

Terminology, the nouns

4.1. "Emotions"

By "emotions", I refer first to the kinds of basic feelings like love, joy, fear, anger, sadness, etc.; second, to the culture-specific variants on these emotions; and third, to the complex feelings composed of com-

binations of two or more emotions, or of emotions and attitudes toward them”.

4.2. “Dispositions”

“Dispositions”, on the other hand, is a broader category, including aspects of personal temperament, general orientations (either personal or cultural) such as spontaneity or optimism/pessimism, and sometimes propensities toward action. Also included are here complex feelings that include cultural or personal attitudes toward “basic” emotions, such as shame and guilt. It is on the level of disposition, for instance, that love between a man and a woman could be differentiated as the “romantic” love derived from medieval European courtly love, or the Heian type described by Margaret H. Childs as including an aspect of neediness or helplessness (Childs, 1999).

Of particular interest concerning Japan is the disposition referred to from earliest times as *aware* or *wowo no aware*. *Aware* has been defined as: «The deep feelings inherent in, or felt from, the world and experience of it. In early classical times “aware” might be an exclamation of joy or other intense feeling, but later came to designate sadder and even tragic feelings. Both the source or occasion of such feeling and the response to the source are meant» (Miner, Odagiri, Morrell, 1985, p. 290).

The «sadder and even tragic» aspect of *aware* is the result of the incorporation of Buddhist teachings, especially of the awareness of *mujo* (or *mujoikan*), defined as:

the inconstancy or transience of the phenomenal world [Skt. *anitya*]. The three characteristic marks of the Buddhist teaching (*sambhūti*) are (1) that all conditioned things are impermanent (*shogyo mujo* or *mujoikan*), as it is stated in the opening lines of the *Heike Monogatari* (*The Tales of the Heike*) and

6. I analyzed some of the philosophical issues regarding cultural variants of emotions and attitudes toward them as they are presented in Japanese art in Miller (2004). There is disagreement as to which emotions should be considered “basic” and how many there are. Certain emotions seem to be common to people around the world, and in many cases even to animals, for, as is widely recognized, they seem to have a biological basis, and are often recognizable, by ourselves and others, by means of the physiological effects they produce.

of emotions and attitudes to
ions”

a broader category, including
eral orientations (either per-
or optimism/pessimism, and
. Also included are here com-
personal attitudes toward “ba-
t. It is on the level of disposi-
nan and a woman could be dif-
ficed from medieval European
ned by Margaret H. Childs as
plessness (Childs, 1999).
span is the disposition referred
no aware. *Aware* has been den-
n, or felt from, the world and
s “aware” might be an exclau-
ut later came to designate sad-
ource or occasion of such feel-
meant» (Miner, Odagiri, Mor-
et of *aware* is the result of the
especially of the awareness of

omonal world (Skt. *anitya*). The
teaching (*sambōin*) are (1) that all
yo miō or *miōkan*), as it is stat-
awari (*The Tales of the Heike*) and

es regarding cultural variants of emo-
presented in Japanese art in Miller
otions should be considered “basic”
m to be common to people around
or, as is widely recognized, they seem
nizable, by ourselves and others, by

in the *Nirvana Sutra, Daibatsuzangyō* (2) that all phenomena are without
self or substance (*shokō muga...*); and (3) that the religious goal is the peace
of nirvana (*nehan jakujō*)... (ivi, pp. 290-1).

4.3. “States of mind”

By “states of mind”, finally, I refer in this paper to a set of special
states of consciousness, deliberately induced or cultivated over a long
period, often years or even decades, that are religious, philosophical,
or artistic in nature. There is a wide variety of these: they range from
the heightened tranquility, the sensitivity to sensory stimuli, and the
awareness of one’s surroundings that are characteristic of the tea cer-
emony, through the various states or degrees of personal cultivation
achieved by means of the many disciplines of self-cultivation devel-
oped by Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism, to Enlightenment
(*satori*) or salvation in the Pure Land Paradise.

With few exceptions, the range of “basic” emotions that gardens
are used to allude to or arouse is limited to the positive: joy, tran-
quility, peace, love, excitement, and sometimes the mild *frissons* as-
sociated with clandestine assignations of lovers and spies. The ex-
ceptions are modern and postmodern theme parks designed to
arouse fear, terror, and horror, and a remarkably few stories and il-
lustrations, mostly limited to labyrinths or mazes, and the works of
Hieronymus Bosch and Edward Gorey.

The Japanese cultivation of associations between gardens and un-
pleasant feelings such as loneliness and regret also carries strains of a
complex pleasure, that may be comprised not only of the pain but of
the positive memories, experiences and feelings underlying the pain
(the loss of which causes the pain), and of additional positive feelings,
namely the consolations one may feel by discovering one can endure
that loss and that pain, and/or that one can compensate for the loss
in some way.

5 Gardens

The new usage of gardens alluded to in the introduction marked a
shift from the previous Japanese understanding of gardens, which, al-
though it had indigenous roots as well, was based largely on models

imported from China. In that Chinese and earlier (pre-Fujiwara) Japanese view, gardens represented the country (both as countryside, the land itself, and the polity), and/or the cosmos. They functioned symbolically, and in ways we might call “objective”: that is, they had clearly identifiable “meanings” (especially referents of representations) that were meant to be understood in more or less the same way by everyone. According to garden historians, their meanings were essentially cosmic and social (Keswick *et al.*, 1978; Nitschke, 1993⁷).

5.1 Fujiwara-era innovations in gardens: the Byōdōin

During the Fujiwara period we can track a number of related changes in garden design and in the understanding of what that design meant to its viewers and designers or “gardenists”⁸. Among the most important was the creation of a new symbolic model for gardens and their pavilions: namely the Western Paradise of Amida, exemplified by the Amida Hall (*Amida-dō*), better known as the Phoenix Hall (*Hō-ō-dō*) at the Byōdōin. Mimi Yiengpruksawan has argued that the Byōdōin, along with the garden and its reflecting pond, its gorgeously decorated Buddha Hall, and its central image of Amida Buddha, was designed not simply to «represent» Paradise but to «provide effective means» to evoke in the viewer particular dispositions, or states of mind, in particular an “enlightened” state of mind or a disposition toward Enlightenment in one or another of the Buddhist senses. By giving the viewer an actual image of Paradise to impress in her mind and meditate upon, an image which she will later be able to visualize mentally even in the image’s physical absence, the garden

7. Even the very earliest Chinese textual reference to a royal pleasure garden, from a shamanic song written ca. 475 c. 901 in the southern state of Qi and collected in the *Song of Qi*, though it makes a distinctly personal appeal, does so with the aim of curing the emperor. (Keswick *et al.*, 2003, pp. 31–2).

8. “Gardenist” is a British term used to distinguish the designers and planners of gardens from “gardeners”, the men who actually plant, dig the holes, and carry the rocks.

9. The building was constructed as a villa on the river in Uji now half an hour south of Kyoto by the young Fujiwara Michinaga (901–27) around 1000. It was converted into a temple called Byōdōin by his son Yoritomi (904–1074), who also added the Amida Hall (completed in 1053), acknowledged by contemporaries to emulate Paradise. (Paine, Soper, 1981, pp. 35–6).

and earlier (pre-Fujiwara) country (both as countryside, the cosmos. They functioned “objective”; that is, they had fully referents of representation in more or less the same way. In any case, their meanings were essential. (1978; Nitschke, 1993)”).

gardens: the Byōdōin

is a number of related changes in what that design meant for artists. Among the most important symbolic model for gardens and the rise of Amida, exemplified by the Phoenix Hall at Byōdōin. Yengpruksawan has argued that the garden, with its reflecting pond, its gourd-shaped central image of Amida Buddha, is not «present» Paradise but to «produce» particular dispositions, a “lightened” state of mind or a desire for another of the Buddhist images of Paradise to impress in the viewer. In the absence of physical presence, the garden

reference to a royal pleasure garden, the southern state of Qi and collected personal appeal, does so with the garden.

English the designers and planners to plant, dig the holes, and carry

in the river in Uji (now half an hour ago, 960-1027) around 1100. It was son Yumichi (994-1071), who also acknowledged by contemporaries to

stimulates a particular state of mind instrumental to salvation. Thus the garden itself ultimately becomes both a site for and an instrument of Buddhist salvation (Yengpruksawan, 1995), and it does so by providing the means for establishing a certain state of mind/body. (It is beyond our scope here to discuss body/mind relations or identity, but virtually all East Asian philosophies consider body and mind to be more intimately related – or aspects of a single reality – rather than different and separable as in the West).

Yengpruksawan further argues that the Byōdōin – which was widely copied over the next several decades – was designed particularly for the salvation of women, who were of intense value for the Fujiwara family since it was by marrying their daughters to young emperors that the Fujiwara men attained control over the throne. (Unlike earlier Buddhist texts, the *Lotus Sutra* and other sutras of Mahayana Buddhism, the form that triumphed in China and Japan, held that women could become enlightened and reach salvation, or rebirth in Paradise, without having first to be reincarnated as men).

The four Buddhist Paradises described in various Mahayana sutras, and especially the *Western Paradise*, were designed to impress the listener/believer (or intended convert). The early painted versions that we can still see today, at Dunhuang, for instance, are indeed mesmerizing. Even today, in its inevitably decayed state, the Byōdōin and its pond and garden remain impressive. When its interior walls and ceiling were covered with brightly colored painting with gold decoration, it would have transported viewers to an altered state of consciousness.

5.2. Fujiwara-era innovations in gardens: *The Tale of Genji*

The Fujiwara Western Paradise gardens shifted attention from the topography of the real earth and nation, as it was linked by myth to religious and mythic realms, to a more purely idealized imaginary

10. Several meters high and nearly as wide, painted in dazzling pigments of semi-precious stones, the Paradise paintings at Dunhuang show a large Buddha flanked by bodhisattvas and monks, seated in elaborate palace pavilions, surrounded by celestial musicians, and entertained by dancers on terraces below them that are also decorated with flowers and offerings of fruit. The garden elements are ideal: flowering trees above and behind the figures, and a pond – with fishes, lotus flowers, and newly-reborn souls emerging from the lotus buds.

realm, and from the nation (and persons in their social roles) to the individual.

It was nonetheless similar to earlier models in that it represented an ideal or perfect place, and in being inter-subjectively constituted or even, in a certain sense, objective, rather than subjective.

The Fujiwaras' Byōdōin and its imitators may be the most visually impressive of the extant Heian garden innovations, and the best analyzed. But it is certainly not the only innovation in garden design of significance from the period. Literary evidence from *The Tale of Genji*, supported by later pictorial evidence, suggests five additional developments, in quite different directions:

1. Components of gardens are used to represent individual characters – in both senses, that is, as individuals in the story and also of those persons' characters (or temperaments).
2. The garden based on the natural landscape and the countryside of Japan becomes a representation of a particular section of the landscape (not necessarily literally represented!) that has personal significance for the gardenist. Ceases to function ideally, objectively, as it were, as a symbolic representation permitting the government's representative (the emperor) to exert symbolic dominance over a microcosmic representation. Instead it becomes representative of the gardenist's own personal experience and memory, and of his desire to show that experience to (or arouse it in) his viewers/guests. (While this paper does not address memory per se, it is of great interest to Murasaki and her characters.)
3. Gardens become a space for personal – or perhaps more accurately interpersonal – intimacy and for physical and emotional interactions (this probably happened in previous gardens, too – lovely female companions figured prominently in the description of the ill emperor's garden in the shamanic song from Qu in note 4 above – but it was rarely remarked).
4. Gardens serve as portraits of their owners, on five levels: social and economic circumstances (as important in their time as in ours); preferences, personality, character or temperament; karma or fate; physical health; and moods or emotions.
5. Finally, gardens clearly come to be "designed" to suit the personality, character, and temperament of their inhabitants.

Such usages of gardens for personal expression or self-expression, and their association with emotion and temperament, are some-

in their social roles) to the models in that it represented inter-subjectively constituted rather than subjective. Factors may be the most visual – innovations, and the best innovation in garden design – evidence from *The Tale of Genji*, suggests five additional ones:

- 1. represent individual characters in the story, and also of the landscape and the countryside of particular sections of the landscape that has personal significance for the viewer, as it were, as a symbol of the government's representative (the emperor) or a microcosmic representation of the gardenist's own personal life to show that experience to the viewer (this paper does not address the garden at Iwanojima and her characters.)
- 2. represent a personal – or perhaps more accurately, a physical and emotional interior – garden, too – lovely features in the description of the illness of the emperor (see note 4 above – see also note 5 above).
- 3. represent the garden owners, on five levels: social status; their place in their time as in ours; their personality; their temperament; karma or fate; their fate.
- 4. represent the garden as "designed" to suit the personal needs of their inhabitants.
- 5. represent the garden as a personal expression or self-expression of the gardenist, and temperament, are some-

thing we take for granted today. This is due largely to the development – and subsequent dispersal around the world – of the English landscape garden, or *jardin anglo-chinois*, in the 18th century and afterwards. Like the early Japanese and Chinese gardens, previous English and other formal European gardens, such as Hampton Court, Het Loo, and Versailles, had socio-political and cosmic agendas. They were used both to impress their audiences and to exemplify order in the world (whether that be the natural or social world) (Miller, 1993a, pp. 135–76; Baridon, 2008). But in the 18th century, English gardens were released from their more purely formal, objective and socio-political agendas. They began to be used to stimulate visual aesthetic and emotional reactions in the viewer, as well as to express highly individual associations and identifications of the owner, and often his or her political opinions as well – a set of developments explicitly associated by the gardenists and garden critics of the time with both personal freedom and political liberty.

We today take these sorts of associations for granted, for we have seen them used all over the globe. It is all too easy, therefore, to look at Heian gardens and take for granted both that they are doing what we expect them to do, and that we know just what it is that they do. It is important to analyze them in their own terms.

5.3. Gardens prior to the Fujiwara period

Gardens prior to the Fujiwara period had little to do with the types of gardens we associate with Japan today. Zen Buddhism, with its profound impact on landscape design, had not yet been introduced to Japan, so the famous "dry rock gardens" (*karensansui*) with rocks and moss on raked sand were yet to be imagined. The Tea Ceremony, with its cultivation of tranquility, guidance of visitors away from the troublesome world outside its gates, and its need for clear instructions of guests regarding which paths to take, was not developed until the late Muromachi and Momoyama periods, hundreds of years away. The elaborate stroll gardens familiar from the Edo and Meiji periods were even farther in the future.

Early Japanese gardens had at least two distinct origins, Japanese and Chinese. First are the prehistoric Shinto shrine precincts, native sacred spaces marked off by identifiers such as *torii* gates and twist-

ed reed ropes. Gunter Nitschke suggests that determinant factors in these early shrines and other sacred spaces include the encounter of the sea-faring Polynesian settlers with the actual land formations of the Japanese islands; the sacred archetype of Shinto; the territorial archetype *shrine*; the rock archetype: *tsukuro* and *tsukushi*; indigenous numerology and geomancy, and the agricultural archetype *shinden*. Interestingly, the basis of many shrines, especially those that have buildings, is their cleared, flat, rectangular fields, covered with pale sand or gravel (Nitschke, 1993, pp. 14-32¹¹). Similar flat, level, rectangles of pale gravel were also used as the base for the Japanese imperial palace – not exactly a secular space (given the emperor's traditional descent from the Sun Goddess Amaterasuōmikami and his ritual obligations), but still a space with profoundly different uses and users than the shrines per se. Such areas appeared prior to Chinese Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucianist influence; at the very least we can note that they are found at many of the large ancient shrines¹².

More mystifying is the fact that similar bases form the grounds (literally) of Buddhist temples, and not only in Japan but on the Continent. In all three countries the temples were built according to Chinese and Korean styles and techniques that were not used in Japan until the mid-6th century¹³, while the use of these flattened gravel rectangles had predated them by apparently hundreds, perhaps thousands of years.

These three types of social institutions, Shinto shrines, imperial palace, and Buddhist temples, all set within such similar spaces, were distinct in other respects – religiously, socially, politically, and artistically. Even the commonality of being “religious” spaces is more apparent to us than to them at the time, when there was no common

¹¹ Shinto shrines do not always have buildings. They may simply be a natural “stone” such as a rise or large rock, whose spiritual force (*ama no mihoko*) is felt. In those cases, the *torii* and/or *ema* may suffice.

¹² By “ancient shrines” I refer to the ones that use architectural styles that are non-Chinese. Interesting exceptions are the countless shrines, various buildings that are set on individual rocks, or trees, etc., where the surrounding space is, or “natural,” without the flattening and clearing described above.

¹³ Buddhism is seen as arriving in Japan in 552, with the gift of a gilt bronze sculpture from the king of Paekche, aka Kudara, in southeast Korea to the Japanese emperor Kimmei.

sts that determinant factors in places include the encounter of the actual land formations of the type of Shinto: the territorial archetypes *ishire* and *ucisaka*, indigenous agricultural archetype *shinden*, etc., especially those that have regular fields, covered with pale (20%). Similar flat, level, rectangular base for the Japanese imperial (given the emperor's tradition: Amaterasuomikami and his ritually profoundly different uses and was appeared prior to Chinese influence; at the very least we can see large ancient shrines¹⁴).

Similar bases form the grounds not only in Japan but on the Continent were built according to Chinese that were not used in Japan. Use of these flattened gravel recently hundreds, perhaps thou-

sions. Shinto shrines, imperial (within such similar spaces, were socially, politically, and artistically "religious" spaces is more apparent when there was no common

beliefs. They may simply be a natural ritual form, *ritsu*, is felt. In these cases

spaces that use architectural styles that are unmiss shrines without buildings that the surrounding space is left "natural" above.

connected with the gift of a gilt bronze mirror in southeast Korea to the Japanese

term such as "religion" that could encompass Buddhism and Shinto¹⁴. However various or distant their origins and uses, these flat graveled enclosed spaces did eventually make their way into the *kare-sansui*, or dry rock gardens now familiar from Zen temples, whence they have been appropriated by modern secular gardens the world over.

Once the Japanese began to study Chinese culture in the 6th century, however, they came under the influence of Chinese landscape design, building gardens in the imperial style influenced by Daoist mythology, notably the Isles of the Blest (*Hōrai-zan*, in Japanese); state Confucianism, and *feng-shui* (the Chinese form of geomancy, literally "wind-waters"); Buddhist beliefs, especially in the Pure Land (*Sukhavatī*, in Sanskrit, *Jōdo*, in Japanese); Sino-Japanese geomancy, and number theory, especially that focusing on odd numbers and the number three; and even Hindu cosmology, particularly the notion of the *axis mundi*, the sacred mountain Mt. Sumeru (*Shumisen*, in Japanese).

The various sets of beliefs and practices focused on different arenas, as it were: Daoism sought out the ultimate principles of the universe, Confucianism was interested primarily in the organization of the state and family (including the realm of the deceased ancestors), and *feng-shui* recognized the influences of local landforms and climate on human habitations and activities. But they all found ways of setting human life in harmony with the universe and local topography by means of its ordering and construction of the built landscape.

The earliest Chinese gardens were imperial, and therefore grand in scale and in purpose. They emulated a natural yet ideal landscape, with constructed hills and symbolic mountains, ponds and streams and waterfalls. They participated in the triple structure of many gardens worldwide: at once part of the natural landscape and representative of it – while simultaneously representing the cosmos as a whole.

So they were microcosms on two levels. On the one hand, they symbolized the whole country – for the purposes of the emperor and the rites he performed for the benefit of the country – the Confucian-

14. And indeed there was no Japanese term for the native religion until after the arrival of Buddhism, when Shinto came to seem like something in contrast with the new practices and beliefs.

ist side). At the same time, they symbolized the cosmos itself (the Daoist side). The “mountains and water” (the literal term for landscape, *shan-shui*, in Chinese and *yansui*, in Japanese) at once represented the mountains and rivers of China and the complementary principles of *yin* and *yang*, the female and male principles of Daoism. Given the sacred dimension of the imperial institution in China, such gardens could be considered another kind of sacred space (in addition to Buddhist temples, which they predated, and Japanese shrines, never of course built in China).

Japanese gardens – from the 6th or 7th century on up to the present – have borrowed heavily from the philosophy, symbolic vocabularies and designs of Chinese gardens. Like those of their Chinese models, the designs of Japanese gardens were based on Chinese philosophy and microcosm-macrocosm relationships, combining Taoist themes like “Islands of the Immortals”, Confucian values (including ideas of the good life), and a symbolic vocabulary of plants and animals: cranes and tortoise for immortality, evergreens for long life, etc. Utilizing mandalic forms and *yin-yang* and *fung-shui* theory, Chinese and early Japanese gardens served to orient the palace or, later, the household, to the five directions and to the cosmos as a whole. (The Japanese capital cities of Nara and Kyoto were also based on Chinese layouts, which were used in China for all capitals and palaces until the 20th century.) These gardens also connected the ruler to the country as a whole (in the case of palaces) and both court and household to society at large, physically, philosophically, and spiritually (Nitschke, 1993.)

5.4. Gardens in the Fujiwara period

Prior to the Fujiwara period, the gardens of wealthy Japanese were much like the Chinese emperor’s garden: ideal compositions of mountains and water; in Takei and Keane’s summary, «Heian-period gardens can be perceived as symbolic representations, on a reduced scale, of the larger world of the city and its environs»¹⁵. The buildings, in a style called *shinden-zukuri*, were the focal point. *Shinden-*

15. Takei, Keane (2001, p. 16). Not much physical evidence of Heian era architecture and landscape architecture remains today. Evidence is provided by written records, paintings, and archaeological investigations.

abolized the cosmos itself (the "ater" (the literal term for land-*wa*, in Japanese) at once repre- China and the complementary and male principles of Daoism. perial institution in China, such r kind of sacred space (in addi- predated, and Japanese shrines,

or 7th century on up to the pre- e philosophy, symbolic vocabu- ns. Like those of their Chinese ens were based on Chinese phi- relationships, combining Taoist s", Confucian values (including ic vocabulary of plants and ani- lity, evergreens for long life, etc. 12 and *feng-shui* theory, Chinese o orient the palace or, later, the to the cosmos as a whole. (The yoto were also based on Chinese r all capitals and palaces until the ected the ruler to the country as oth court and household to soci- , and spiritually (Nitschke, 1993.)

Fujiwara period

rdens of wealthy Japanese were garden: ideal compositions of eane's summary, «Heian-period ic representations, on a reduced and its environs»¹⁶). The build- *ts*, were the focal point. *Shinden*-

h physical evidence of Heian-era archi- today. Evidence is provided by written tifications.

zukuri (the term is a later one) were single-storey wooden post-and-lintel constructions, typically unpainted and unlacquered, raised up on wooden piles. (This latter feature is typical of many shrines as well, and thought of as comprising one of two characteristically Japanese styles of architecture.) As with most Japanese architecture, both earlier and later, there was an overall modular organization and symmetry, with the pairing of pavilions and halls on left and right as required by Chinese theory (Paine, Soper, 1981). Lacking permanent weight-bearing walls, their sliding doors opened onto verandahs overlooking the gardens.

The larger gardens encompassed the villas and were themselves nearly surrounded by the various walkways connecting pavilions. They included one or more ponds with islands, large enough for small pleasure boat excursions; indeed the water aspect was so important that such gardens have been dubbed *chisen shuyu teien* – literally "pond-spring-boating garden" (Nitschke, 1993, p. 48) (such boating excursions can still be experienced today at Daikakuji Temple in Kyoto when it opens for the autumn equinox festival *Shubun*)¹⁶. While both the philosophical and (apparently) experiential convergence of the garden with other forms of nature (outside the garden) found in early Japanese poetry makes it difficult to be certain, it would appear from descriptions of garden historians that these large villa gardens were designed for parties and excursions of various kinds rather than for purely individual (much less solitary) experience.

5.5. Gardens in the Fujiwara period as seen in *The Tale of Genji*

While Murasaki describes any number of boating parties, dances with costume and other such elaborate festive occasions in *Genji*, she also marks out a new territory for gardens: the personal and individual, and the intimate. Such lively large-scale garden parties can be contrasted with Murasaki's description of Genji's use of the garden

16. Daikakuji, the Byodoin, Kinkakuji (the Temple of the Golden Pavilion) and other famous Kyoto temples, originated as villas of aristocrats and warlords and were converted or donated to temples later.

in chapter 7, *An Autumn Excursion*: «Pleased with her success, Omyōbu delivered the note. Genji was looking forlornly out at the garden, certain that as always there would be silence» (Murasaki, 1976, p. 140).

The novel makes it clear that while previous designs and philosophies remained in effect, some completely different understandings of what gardens can and should be, as well as different motivations for designing them than operated in earlier literary gardens were also evolving. While we cannot be sure that these differences applied to actual as opposed to literary gardens, the early popularity of the novel suggests that Murasaki understood her audience, and they would have found her descriptions of gardens sympathetic. Whether this is because she was describing what were in fact already their practices or because she offered them new ways to think about themselves, their gardens, and their emotional lives, is impossible to determine here – and in any event it was probably both.

Murasaki offers five new ways of thinking about gardens in her novel, all of them using gardens to gain or offer insight into the personal domain rather than symbolic, religious, societal or cultural sphere.

5.5.1. Flowers and trees representing characters

The first indication that the new Fujiwara-era gardens were altogether more personally motivated, and more clearly related to characters' feelings, temperaments and desires than previous gardens, comes from the structure of the novel and the sobriquets given to various characters. While individuals at the time of course had personal names, these were rarely used; they would instead be referred to by a combination of rank and family name (of the husband or father in the case of women¹⁷). Since this confers a rather formal feeling entirely at odds with the intimacy of the events and relationships that were the focus of the novel, however, characters were frequently assigned sobriquets, and these were typically taken from a plant asso-

¹⁷ An analysis of Heian naming practices as they relate to developing sense of individuality and selfhood can be found in Miller (1997).

z: «Pleased with her success, as looking forlornly out at the would be silence» (Murasaki,

previous designs and philosophically different understandings as well as different motivations earlier literary gardens were all that these differences applied to, the early popularity of the stood her audience, and they gardens sympathetic. Whether hat were in fact already their new ways to think about them, onal lives, is impossible to de- probably both,

thinking about gardens in her in or offer insight into the per- religious, societal or cultural

representing characters

Heian-era gardens were alto- more clearly related to char- esires than previous gardens, and the sobriquets given to var- he time of course had person- would instead be referred to ame) of the husband or father ers a rather formal feeling en- events and relationships that characters were frequently as- cially taken from a plant asso-

as they relate to developing sense of ler (1997).

ciated with the person or with the seminal events in the chapter focusing on them: Yūgao or Evening Faces (the name of a flower), Lavender, Heartvine, Safflower Lady, Orange Blossom, Oak Tree; from a character's preference for some aspect of the garden, such as Akikononji (Likes Autumn), or from some other aspects of the garden (the Lady of the Locust Shell; Yūgiri, Evening Mist). These names and others focusing on events then became the names of the novel's various chapters: Butterflies, Fireflies, the First Warbler.

Such sobriquets function both as "signs" of (or simple references to) the person (or chapter) and, at other times, as symbols, in Carl Jung's sense, where the depths of their significance can be plumbed and elaborated¹⁸.

5.3.2. Domestic landscape gardens in the Heian and expression of personal preference

The Governor of Kii's garden, described in chapter 2 of *The Tale of Genji*, is in many ways a standard Fujiwara-style garden. But in contrast to garden historians' descriptions of Heian gardens (accurate though they be – as far as they go), Murasaki's description here focuses not on culturally symbolic aspects of the garden but on the personal choices made by the owner/gardenist and on the physical and emotional effects of those choices on the garden's visitors:

«The governor of Kii here», said one of Genji's men, pointing to another. «He has dammed the Inner River and brought it into his garden, and the waters are very cool, very pleasant...» (Murasaki, 1976, p. 38).

The east rooms of the main hall had been cleaned and made presentable. The waters were as they had been described, a most pleasing arrangement. A fence of wattle, of a deliberately rustic appearance, enclosed the garden, and much care had gone into the plantings. The wind was cool. Insects were

18. That such connections still operate in Japan today is shown by an anecdote regarding the recent death of the poet and novelist Sato Haruo (1882-1964), whose personal name means "spring". When the translator Val Vigieliño offered his condolences to Sato's close friend, poet Higuchi Daijaku (1892-1981), Higuchi replied: «At least he died in his season, right? (*Do mo, akete no toki ni, ni shunmatsuta...*)» (Conversation with Val Vigieliño, June 16, 2000).

humming, one scarcely knew where, fireflies drew innumerable lines of light, and all in all the time and the place could not have been more to his liking... (ivi, pp. 39-40).

The governor had more lights set out at the eaves, and turned up those in the room. He had refreshments brought (ivi, p. 40).

The underlying principles of the earlier Chinese type of landscape garden are clearly at work here. Yet the indigenous Japanese preference for the simple, the natural, the rustic is also integrated: in spite of its splendor and ambition of its waterworks, the garden is given a wattle fence. (Admittedly the wattle fence, an icon of simplicity, is redolent also of the Confucian virtues of such Chinese role models as Tao Yuanming [365-427], an icon of Confucian integrity and moral rectitude who was often depicted next to a wattle or picket fence, bending over his chrysanthemums he allegedly retired to cultivate.)

Also noteworthy is the fact that, as Murasaki presents it, the significance of this garden is less the landscape design or its symbolic significance than the experience, and specifically the sensuous impressions the visitors get: cool, pleasant, pleasing, and clean (synonymous in Japanese with "pretty"). The pleasures of such a garden are not exclusively visual, but tactile and aural as well. And their effects on the visitors are noted: «pleasant».

5.5.3. The Heian domestic garden as the site of romantic encounter

The description of Genji and his men's experience of the governor's garden just described provides a segue to another kind of personal experience: Genji's encounter with the governor's young wife and her younger brother. The garden here, as elsewhere, presages sexual attraction and intimacy, especially among those who otherwise would not meet.

This happens again in chapter 34: *New Herbs (Wakana)*, when Kashiwagi, the son of Genji's best friend, is playing football with Genji and friends in the inner part of Genji's garden. Kashiwagi accidentally catches sight of Genji's second wife, the Third Princess (Sannomiya), and falls in love with her, to disastrous effect. In addition to the formal features (an expanse large enough – and flat

ellies drew innumerable lines of
could not have been more to his

the caves, and turned up those in
ivi, p. 40).

ier Chinese type of landscape
ne indigenous Japanese prefer-
istic is also integrated: in spite
terworks, the garden is given a
fence, an icon of simplicity, is
of such Chinese role-models as
Confucian integrity and moral
xt to a wattle or picket fence,
allegedly retired to cultivate.)
s Murasaki presents it, the sig-
andscape design or its symbolic
l specifically the sensuous im-
nt, pleasing, and clean (synony-
pleasures of such a garden are
aural as well. And their effects

nestic garden
tic encounter

is experience of the governor's
ae to another kind of personal
e governor's young wife and her
s elsewhere, presages sexual at-
ng those who otherwise would

4. *Nete Herby (Wakana)*, when
riend, is playing football with
f Genji's garden. Kashiwagi ac-
cond wife, the Third Princess
er, to disastrous effect. In addi-
yanse large enough – and flat

enough – for a boisterous game of football, the overlapping of the pri-
vate garden of the ladies with the more open larger garden, and the
integration of ancient Japanese aesthetics – the cherry blossoms and
the insistence of the time of day and the season), we can also note the
repeated focus on personal enjoyment. The *italicized* sentences below
suggest the (visual and other) effects of the garden on the people
within, while **bold typeface** denotes the confluence of the garden
with nature outside the garden, which here again functions in many
ways like nature outside the garden:

The crown princess and her baby had gone back to the palace. Genji was in
her rooms, now almost deserted. The garden was level and **open where the
brooks came together**. It seemed both a practical and an elegant place for
football. Kashiwagi and the rest, some grown men and some still boys, rather
dominated the gathering. The day was a fine, windless one. It was late af-
ternoon. Kobai at first seemed to stand on his dignity, but he quite lost him-
self in the game as it gathered momentum.

«Just see the effect it has on civil office», said Genji. «I would expect
you guardsmen to be jumping madly about and letting your commissions
fall where they may. I was always among the spectators myself, and now I
genuinely wish I had been more active. Though as I have said it may not be
the most genteel pursuit in the world».

*Taking their places under a fine cherry in full bloom. Yūgiri and Kashi-
wagi were very handsome in the evening light. Genji's less than genteel sport
– such things do happen – took on something of the elegance of the company
and the place. Spring mists enfolded trees in various stages of bud and bloom
and new leaf.* The least subtle of games does have its skills and techniques,
and each of the players was determined to show what he could do. Though
Kashiwagi played only briefly, he was clearly the best of them all. He was
handsome but retiring, intense and at the same time lively and expansive.
Though the players were now under the cherry directly before the south stairs,
they had no eye for the blossoms. Genji and prince Horaru were at a cor-
ner of the veranda [...]. Yes, there were many skills, and as one inning fol-
lowed another a certain abandon was to be observed and caps of state were
pushed rather far back on noble foreheads. Yūgiri could permit himself a
special measure of abandon, and his youthful spirits and vigor were infec-
tious. He had on a soft white robe lined with red. His trousers were gently
taken in at the ankles, but by no means untidy. He seemed very much in
control of himself despite the abandon, *and cherry petals fell about him like*

a flurry of snow. He broke off a twig from a dipping branch and went to sit on the stairs.

«**How quick they are to fall**», said Kashiwagi, coming up behind him. «**We must teach the wind to blow wide and clear**».

He glanced over toward the Third Princess's rooms. They seemed to be in the usual clutter. The multicolored sleeves pouring from under the blinds and through openings between them were like an assortment of swatches to be presented to the goddess of spring. Only a few paces from him a woman had pushed her curtains carelessly aside and looked as if she might be in a mood to receive a gentleman's addresses. A Chinese cat, very small and pretty, came running out with a larger cat in pursuit. There was a noisy rustling of silk as several women pushed forward to catch it. On a long cord which had become badly tangled, it would not yet seem to have been fully tamed. As it sought to free itself the cord caught in a curtain, which was pulled back to reveal the women behind. No one, not even those nearest the veranda, seemed to notice. They were much too worried about the cat.

A lady in informal dress stood just inside the curtains beyond the second pillar to the west. Her robe seemed to be of red lined with lavender, and at the sleeves and throat the colors were as bright and varied as a book of paper samples. Her cloak was of white figured satin lined with red. Her hair fell as cleanly as sheaves of thread and fanned out towards the neatly trimmed edges some ten inches beyond her feet. In the rich billowing of her skirts the lady scarcely seemed present at all. The white profile framed by masses of black hair was pretty and elegant – though unfortunately the room was dark and *he could not see her as well in the evening light as he would have wished*. The women had been too delighted with the game, young gentlemen heedless of how they scattered the blossoms, to worry about blinds and concealment. The lady turned to look at the cat, which was mewling piteously, and in her face and figure was an abundance of quiet, unpretending young charm.

Yūgiri saw and strongly disapproved, but would only have made matters worse by stepping forward to lower the blind. He coughed warningly. The lady slipped out of sight. He too would have liked to see more, and he sighed when, the cat at length disengaged, the blind fell back into place. Kashiwagi's regrets were more intense. It could only have been the Third Princess, the lady who was separated from the rest of the company by her informal dress. He pretended that nothing had happened, but Yūgiri knew that he had seen the princess, and was embarrassed for her. Seeking to calm himself, Kashiwagi called the cat and took it up in his arms. It was delicately perfumed. Mewing prettily, it brought the image of the Third Princess back to him (for he had been ready to fall in love).

with a dipping branch and went to sit
Kashiwagi, coming up behind him,
and clear».

Genji's rooms. They seemed to be
light pouring from under the blinds
like an assortment of swatches to
be a few paces from him a woman
and looked as if she might be in a
Chinese cat, very small and pret-
ty. There was a noisy rustling
to catch it. On a long cord which
it seem to have been fully tamed,
a curtain, which was pulled back
even those nearest the veranda,
worry about the cat.

On the side of the curtains beyond the see-
ing of red lined with lavender, and
is bright and varied as a book of
red satin lined with red. Her hair
fanned out towards the neatly
feet. In the rich billowing of her
all. The white profile framed by
though unfortunately the room
in the evening light as he would
lighted with the game, young gen-
blossoms, to worry about blinds
look at the cat, which was mewling
an abundance of quiet, unpre-

but would only have made mat-
the blind. He coughed warningly.
He would have liked to see more, and he
felt the blind fell back into place,
could only have been the Third
with the rest of the company by her
had happened, but Yūgiri knew
embarrassed for her. Seeking to calm
it up in his arms. It was delicate-
the image of the Third Princess
in love).

«This is no place for our young lordships to be wasting their time», said
Genji. «Suppose we go inside». He led the way to the east wing, where he
continued his conversation with Prince Hotaru (ivi, pp. 581-4).

This is one of the most famous passages of the novel, and a favorite
among artists, for not only is it clearly identifiable (by the football
game and the cat, neither of which appears elsewhere), but it sets in
motion some of the most tragic events and haunting (literally and fig-
uratively) passages. Enclosed as it is and proper as it is intended to
be, this garden provides the site for events that ultimately prove both
transgressive and disastrous, as Kashiwagi eventually falls in love
with and seduces the Third Princess, Genji's wife, who becomes
pregnant and gives birth to a son whom Genji adopts – in spite of his
awareness of the child's true paternity – while Kashiwagi dies of re-
morse (but revisits his best friend Yūgiri after death) and the Third
Princess becomes a nun out of shame. The garden is not the fully do-
mesticated sphere it appears to be; it carries intimations of untamed
possibilities. At this point no one can imagine the future: all is joy and
youthful exuberance and full-bodied confidence and hope at the new
spring. Pictures of the Third Princess's garden after her retirement as
a nun, by contrast, function as emotional portraits of her sorrow (see
section 5.5.4).

The adaptation of a fairly standardized Chinese-influenced sym-
bolic garden to such sports and frivolities and simple bursts of emo-
tion could not be deduced from the descriptions of Heian gardens
from our garden histories, however. The grandeur and formality of
such large villa gardens is undercut by the informality and unpre-
dictability of the events Murasaki places there.

5.5.4. Gardens as portraits of their residents

Although residences were walled off from the street, the gardens of
villas, and especially the outer or front gardens, were visible over
walls and through gates. In *The Tale of Genji*, Murasaki carefully us-
es them to form a sort of portrait of the inhabitants.

Although gardens of many styles give themselves to being used as
a sort of self-portraiture – consider examples as diverse as Wang-
Quan, the villa and garden of Chinese poet painter Wang Wei (699-

739) and Alexander Pope's (1688-1744) Strawberry Hill – I don't believe gardens as self-portraiture is a factor in *The Tale of Genji*. For one thing, portraiture is only beginning to be developed in Japan, and self-portraiture lies far in the future. For another, insofar as self-portraiture is a type of self-expression (rather than, for instance, a need to show people what you look like), the need would have been satisfied by other artistic means: poetry, calligraphy, incense-blending, dress.

In some cases Murasaki's inhabitants almost fuse with their garden: «I went to see her again. The talk was open and easy, as always, but she seemed pensive as she looked out at the dewy garden from the neglected house. She seemed to be weeping, joining her laments to the songs of the autumn insects. It could have been a scene from an old romance» (Murasaki, 1976, p. 33).

Similarly:

A cold, wintry shower passed. The address was in Rokujō, near the eastern limits of the city, and since he had set out from the palace the way seemed a long one. He passed a badly neglected house, the garden dark with ancient trees.

«The inspector's house», said Koremitsu, who was always with him. «I called there with a message not long ago. The old lady has declined so shockingly that they can't think what to do for her» (ivi, p. 100).

Such garden portraits function on four levels. First, like conventional painted portraits in Japan and the West, Murasaki's literary garden portraits include the person's position in life, social class, and even "social capital" in much the same way we regard it today, that is, as a complex combination of birth, attained social rank, social connections, wealth and financial security, education, and "culture"¹⁰. Murasaki, like other Heian woman writers at court, was keenly aware of social differences. Even her teenage boys discussing the merits of various women in chapter 2 are aware of the differences among women as a dimension of social class. On the other hand, Murasaki does not take class as an automatic indicator of a person's real worth. In contrast to her contempo-

¹⁰ There is a clear parallel here with 18th century British portraits of upper class land owners, and even with 18th and 19th century paintings of American farms, but the Japanese case has less emphasis on property ownership.

744) Strawberry Hill – I don't believe that factor in *The Tale of Genji*. For one thing, to be developed in Japan, and self-portrait or another, insofar as self-portrait is other than, for instance, a need to represent a need would have been satisfied by calligraphy, incense-blending, dress, and garden portraits almost fuse with their garden. The talk was open and easy, as always, and he looked out at the dewy garden from the veranda, he was weeping, joining her laments. It could have been a scene from *Genji* (339).

The scene was in Rokujo, near the eastern gate of the palace the way seemed a little dark, the garden dark with ancient

flowers. The old lady who was always with him, «I have seen the old lady has declined so shockingly» (ivi, p. 100).

at different levels. First, like conventional garden portraits, Murasaki's literary garden portraits reveal social class, and even "social connections, that is, as a complex network of social connections, wealth, and culture" (10). Murasaki, like other authors, is fully aware of social differences, and uses garden portraits of various women in chapters to suggest women as a dimension of social class. It does not take class as an automatic factor. In contrast to her contempo-

rary British portraits of upper class women and paintings of American farms, but the ownership

rary Sei Shōagon (966?-after 1017), for instance, she seems aware of the chasms that may obtain between birth and ultimate cultural attainment: Genji's wife Sannomiya, the Third Princess, although a daughter of the Emperor, is intellectually, emotionally and artistically immature for her age, and rather boring, a person of no consequence in spite of her birth, and unable to keep Genji's attention, leaving her open to tragedy.

Beyond class and social position, Murasaki's garden portraits reveal personal qualities – what we might characterize as character, temperament and or personality. Like the many other arts that are important in *The Tale of Genji* – poetry, painting, dress, incense-blending and incense-recognition, calligraphy, paper selection, etc. – (and like clothing in the modern contemporary West), gardens reveal their subject's (owner's or maker's) artistic sensitivity, breeding (insofar as that is a reliable indicator of character) and refinement, the effects of one's education on character, and one's "cultural capital". In the following passage, the garden provides the inspiration and opportunity for an artistic encounter with romantic overtones (as described in section 5.5.3), but it also suggests the nature of its inhabitant:

One bright moonlit autumn night I chanced to leave court with a friend. He got in with me as I started for my father's. He was much concerned, he said, about a house where he was sure someone would be waiting. It happened to be on my way.

Through gaps in a neglected wall I could see the moon shining on a pond. It seemed a pity not to linger a moment at a spot where the moon seemed so much at home, and so I climbed out after my friend. It would appear that this was not his first visit. He proceeded briskly to the veranda and took a seat near the gate and looked up at the moon for a time. The chrysanthemums were at their best, very slightly touched by the frost, and the red leaves were beautiful in the autumn wind. He took out a flute and played a tune on it, and sang *The Will of Ayaka* and several other songs. Blending nicely with the flute came the mellow tones of a Japanese *kyōto*. It had been tuned in advance, apparently, and was waiting. The *kyōto* scale had a pleasant modern sound to it, right for a soft, womanly touch from behind blinds, and right for the clear moonlight too. I can assure you that the effect was not at all unpleasant (Murasaki, 1976, p. 31).

In addition, Murasaki's garden portraits convey even more personal qualities such as karma or fate, and physical health. This is clear from

a passage regarding the garden at Nijō of the character Murasaki, Genji's life-long partner and deepest love:

The Nijo mansion had been neglected and was somewhat run-down, and compared to the Rokujo mansion it seemed very cramped and narrow. Taking advantage of a few days when she was somewhat more herself, Genji sent gardeners to clear the brook and restore the flower beds, and she suddenly renewed expense before her made Murasaki marvel that she should be witness to such things. The lake was very cool, a carpet of lotuses. The dew on the green of the pads was like a scattering of jewels (ibid., p. 621).

To say that the garden is «neglected and [...] run-down» is to offer an objective description of the garden itself. But its condition, readers realize, mirrors that of Murasaki herself, who is very ill. The passage continues:

«Just look, will you», said Genji, «As if it had a monopoly on coolness. I cannot tell you how pleased I am that you have improved so». She was sitting up and her pleasure in the scene was quite open. There were tears in his eyes. «I was almost afraid at times that I too might be dying».

She was near tears herself.

«It is a life in which we cannot be sure
Of lasting as long as the dew upon the lotus».

And he replied:

«To be as close as the drops of dew on the lotus
Must be our promise in this world and the next» (*ibid.*).

The garden stands in for the lady herself. When Genji has the garden renewed, he is hoping to cheer her up, and even to have a beneficial effect on her health. Here it is not entirely clear whether the garden is a passive reflection of its inhabitant, or an active force on her, an anodyne. This is reminiscent (though not precisely parallel) to the effects of the garden in which the football game took place (in section 5.5.3), where the garden makes everyone so much more attractive.

But the garden also reveals the emotions or moods of the inhabitants, seen (I believe) as a natural concomitant of the combination of class and one's current position in the world:

Meobu reached the grandmother's house. Her carriage was drawn through the gate - and what a lonely place it was! The old lady had of course lived

ō of the character Murasaki, we:

d was somewhat run-down, and I very cramped and narrow. Takemewhat more herself. Genji sent re flower beds, and the suddenly ki marvel that she should be wit a carpet of lotuses. The dew on of jewels (ivi, p. 621).

It [...] run down» is to offer an elf. But its condition, readers ll, who is very ill. The passage

id a monopoly on coolness. I cance improved so». She was sitting open. There were tears in his eyes. t be dying».

«lotus».

the lotus
f the next» (ibid.)

If. When Genji has the garden and even to have a beneficial rely clear whether the garden, or an active force on her, an ot precisely parallel to the ef- ill game took place (in section ie so much more attractive. otions or moods of the inhab- omitant of the combination of world:

Her carriage was drawn through
The old lady had of course lived

in widowed retirement, but, not wishing to distress her only daughter, she had managed to keep the place in repair. Now all was plunged into darkness. The weeds grew ever higher and the autumn winds tore threateningly at the garden. Only the rays of the moon managed to make their way through the tangles.

The carriage was pulled up and Myōbu alighted.

The grandmother was at first unable to speak. «It has been a trial for me to go on living, and now to have one such as you come through the dews of this wild garden – I cannot tell you how much it shames me» (ivi, pp. 7–8).

Ultimately, like many good portrait paintings, the portraits that gardens provide of their denizens are simultaneously internal and external, personal and social, emotional and physical, psychological and economic. In most cases Murasaki does not analyze for cause and effect. The harmony between an inhabitant and her garden often seems coincidental – although clearly Murasaki does see a decline in economic circumstances and political events as “leading to” generally straightened, even depressed, social and psychological circumstances – and she posits no cases of the opposite type, where they lead to beautiful gardens. But for Murasaki, with her generally Buddhist outlook, and an often-affirmed belief in karma, what we might interpret as coincidence would not be accidental. In those cases where it is not the result of financial causes, it would be karma at work (and karma, of course, underlies even the instigating economic circumstances and political events).

All of this has important implications.

First, gardens are still a map of the microcosmic/macrocosmic relationship (as they were in pre-Fujiwara days) – but now, rather than being the macrocosm reduced to a scale visible by human beings, they are the individual’s personal situation and psyche, the inner world writ large, and made visible to others.

In addition, what may seem to us today a rather simple and naïve harmony between the early Japanese writers of the *Man’yōshū*²⁶ poems and the natural world is (largely) made more manageable, or plausible, by being visited on the reduced realm of the garden (which

²⁶ The *Man’yōshū* (Collection of Ten Thousand Leaves, compiled 750) is the first national poetry anthology.

falls, after all, under the control of actual people) rather than on the world as a whole. While Murasaki's novel can seem strangely modern, encompassing as it does such "modern" features as authorial asides, she is rarely ironic – at least, not about the relation between humanity and nature. But note that Murasaki is not above a certain irony with regard to the Confucian nature symbolism associated with gardens, using Chinese connotations for her own purposes, as when, in an ironic twist on the typical comparison of a Confucian gentleman to a bamboo, whose strength lies in bending without breaking in the wind, she applies it to a young girl fending off a rape:

But now his very splendor made her resist. He might think her obstinate and insensitive, but her unfriendliness must make him dismiss her from further consideration. Naturally soft and pliant, she was suddenly firm. It was as with the young bamboo; she bent but was not to be broken. She was weeping. He had his hands full but would not for the world have missed the experience (Murasaki, 1976, p. 43).

Thirdly, in and by means of the garden, one's emotions, then, become visible, to oneself and to others, and hence intelligible. They are assimilated to the realm of the natural, and established as of a larger order. And indeed many have written on the intimate connections the Japanese see between nature and emotion – associations that precede *The Tale of Genji* by hundreds of years.

The "realm of the natural", however, is by no means unproblematic, especially with regard to gardens, which are (as we saw, above) both "natural" and "civilized" or domesticated spaces (for the Japanese, as world-wide). The acceptance of the garden as "natural" indicated by the countless paintings, poems, and other works of literature where the artist/writer (and audience) responds to some aspect of nature in the garden without regard to its being part of a garden, or where it is impossible to tell if the subject of the work is in a garden or not.

On the other hand, in some cases Murasaki makes the distinction between garden and "wild" as above nature very clear: «Her Majesty seems to prefer the pine cricket. She sent some of her men a great distance to bring them in from the moors, but when she had them in her garden only a very few of them sang as sweetly for her as they had sung in the wilds» (ivi, p. 672).

tual people) rather than on the novel can seem strangely modern" features as authorial not about the relation between Murasaki is not above a certain ture symbolism associated with for her own purposes, as when, parison of a Confucian gentle- s in bending without breaking girl fending off a rape:

... He might think her obstinate and make him dismiss her from further ... she was suddenly firm. It was as is not to be broken. She was weep ... for the world have missed the ex

n, one's emotions, then, become hence intelligible. They are as- and established as of a larger or- on the intimate connections the tion – associations that precede trs.

ever, is by no means unproblem- is, which are (as we saw, above) nesticated spaces (for the Japan- of the garden as "natural" indi- ms, and other works of literature - responds to some aspect of na- s being part of a garden, or where f the work is in a garden or not. s Murasaki makes the distinction - nature very clear: «Her Majesty sent some of her men a great dis- rs, but when she had them in her ig as sweetly for her as they had

Gardens are able to provide the background for so much of *The Tale of Genji* because they articulate and negotiate the boundaries of Japan's oppositions: inside and outside, house and street (in the case of smaller establishments) or ladies' quarters and walkways or other shared spaces (in the larger villas and palace), private and public, secluded and open, dark and light, familiar and unknown, predictable and unexpected, female and male, *yin* and *yang*.

At the same time (finally), since gardens reveal the individual's position or situation, they serve to differentiate that individual's emotions from the emotions of others, the emotions that are thought to be naturally expressed in and by nature as a whole.

The "emotions" and/or dispositions gardens reveal, or illustrate, or express belong to the owner or designer of the garden, or, in a picture of a garden, of the person who is in the garden. They are not intended "primarily" to be those of the viewer of the garden, especially when it is in the form of a picture or is described or alluded to in prose or poetry. Yet Japanese gardens and literature, like other arts, like gardens in many other cultures, often take on themselves the project of emotional education, of "teaching" people how to feel – and what to feel, when to feel it, how to understand these feelings, etc.

5.5.5. Some gardens are designed to suit their owners' personality, character, and temperament

Finally, the many layers of resemblance or affinity between gardens and their inhabitants are not simply coincidental in *Genji*, nor an inevitable result of everyone's intuitive appreciation of "nature". Far from it, *The Tale of Genji* shows many cases of active garden designing – in accordance with one's own personal preferences, as we saw with the Governor of Kii (in section 5.5.2), and to suit the personality, character, and temperament of their owners²¹. An elaborate ex-

21. Nitschke has a different view of the significance of these four gardens, placing them within the earlier cosmological paradigm: «I am tempted to conclude from the above lines that the rules of geomancy governed not only the design of the capital and the imperial palace but even the gardens of the nobility, and that these, too, were intended to represent a sort of mandala, an image of the universe. The four gardens described in *The Tale of Genji* attained their fullest glory in their "own" season:

ample is found in chapter 38: *The Bell Cricket* (*Suzumushō*), which follows the aftermath of the tragic love affair between Genji's wife the Third Princess and Kashiwagi, whose origins we saw in the garden with the football game and the cat (section 5.5.3). After she gave birth to Kashiwagi's child, willingly adopted by Genji, and retired to become a nun against Genji's wishes, Genji built a garden for her:

Genji's feelings for the princess had deepened since she had taken her vows. He was endlessly solicitous. Her father [the former emperor] had indicated a hope that she might one day move to the Sanjō mansion, which he was giving her, and suggested that appearances might best be served if she were to go now.

«I would prefer otherwise», said Genji. «I would much prefer to have her here with me [at his Rokujō mansion], so that I can look after her and ask her this and tell her that – I would feel sadly deprived if she were to leave me...»

He spared no expense in remodeling the Sanjō mansion...

In the autumn he had the garden to the west of the main hall at Rokujō done over to look like a moon. The altar and all the vorive dishes were in gentle, ladylike taste...

Genji had autumn insects released in the garden moon, and on evenings when the breeze was cooler he would come visiting. The insect songs his pretext, he would make the princess unhappy by telling her once again of his regrets... She had hoped that she might now find a retreat of her very own, but she was not one to say so.

On the evening of the full moon, not yet risen, she sat near the veranda of her chapel meditatively invoking the holy name. Two or three young nuns were arranging flowers before the holy images. The sounds of the nunnery, so far from the ordinary world, the clinking of the sacred vessels and the murmur of holy water, were enough to induce tears.

Genji paid one of his frequent visits. «What a clamor of insects you do have!». He joined her, very softly and solemnly, in the invocation to Amitabha.

None was brighter and clearer among the insects than the bell cricket, swinging into its song.

in relation to the main palace, each faced the direction to which it is assigned with in the chart of the five evolute phases. The names of the gardens, indicating their geographical positions, no doubt acted as a helpful means of orientation within the labyrinthine palace complex.» (Nitschke, 1993, pp. 52-3).

22. Translator's note, p. 671: «The princess has rooms at the west side of the main hall of the southeast quarter, the garden of which is best in the springs».

the *Cricket* (*Nazunushi*), which follows the affair between Genji's wife from the origins we saw in the garden section 5.5.3). After she gave birth to Genji, and retired to be Genji built a garden for her:

opened since she had taken her vows. [the former emperor] had indicated the Sanjō mansion, which he was giving might best be served if she were to

Genji. «I would much prefer to have on], so that I can look after her and feel sadly deprived if she were to leave

ing the Sanjō mansion...

by the west of the main hall at Rokujō altar and all the votive dishes were

in the garden moor, and on evenings come visiting. The insect songs his happy by telling her once again of might now find a retreat of her very

if yet risen, she sat near the veranda holy name. Two or three young nuns images. The sounds of the nunnery, making of the sacred vessels and the induce tears.

«What a clamor of insects you do hearly, in the invocation to Amitabha. ing the insects than the bell cricket.

direction to which it is assigned with names of the gardens, indicating their helpful means of orientation within the 6, pp. 52-3).

ss has rooms at the west side of the main high is best in the springs».

«They all have their good points, but Her Majesty seems to prefer the pine cricket. She sent some of her men a great distance to bring them in from the moors, but when she had them in her garden only a very few of them sang as sweetly for her as they had sung in the wilds. One would expect them to be as durable as pines, but in fact they seem to have short lives. They sing very happily off in forests and mountains where no one hears them, and that seems unsociable of them. These bell crickets of yours are so bright and cheerful».

«The autumn is a time of deprivation.

I have thought – and yet have loved this cricket».

She spoke very softly and with a quiet, gentle elegance.

«What can you mean, “deprivation”?»

«Although it has chosen to leave its grassy dwelling,

It cannot, this lovely insect, complain of neglect».

He called for a *boto* and treated her to a rare concert. She quite forgot her beads. The moon having come forth in all its radiance, he sat gazing up at it, lost in thoughts of his own. What a changeable, uncertain world it is, he was thinking. His *boto* seemed to plead in sadder tones than usual (Murasaki, 1976, pp. 670-2).

The best known is the set of gardens Genji undertakes²³:

Genji had been thinking that he needed more room for the leisurely life which was now his. He wanted to have everyone near him, including the people who were still off in the country. He had bought four parks in Rokujō, near the eastern limits of the city and including the lands of the Rokujō lady. [...]

The new Rokujō mansion was finished in the Eighth Month and people began moving in. The southwest quarter, including her mother's lands, was assigned to Akikononmu as her home away from the palace. The northeast quarter was assigned to the lady of the orange blossoms, who had occupied the east lodge at Nijō, and the northwest quarter to the lady from Akashi. The wishes of the ladies themselves were consulted in designing the new gardens, a most pleasant arrangement of lakes and hills.

The hills were high in the southeast quarter, where spring-blossoming trees and bushes were planted in large numbers. The lake was most inge-

23. Three translations of the passage describing the building of the gardens at the Rokujo Mansion, by Arthur Waley, Edward G. Seidenstricker, and Royall Tyler, are available at <http://www.bopsecrets.org/gateway/passages/genji.htm>.

niously designed. Among the plantings in the forward parts of the garden were cinquefoil pines, maples, cherries, wisteria, *yamabuki*, and rock azalea, most of them trees and shrubs whose season was spring. Touches of autumn too were scattered through the groves.

In Akikonomu's garden the plantings, on hills left from the old garden, were chosen for rich autumn colors. Clear spring water went singing off in to the distance, over rocks designed to enhance the music. There was a waterfall, and the whole expanse was like an autumn moor. Since it was now autumn, the garden was a wild profusion of autumn flowers and leaves, such as to shame the hills of Oi.

In the northeast quarter there was a cool natural spring and the plans had the summer sun in mind. In the forward parts of the garden the wind through thickets of Chinese bamboo would be cool in the summer, and the trees were deep and mysterious as mountain groves. There was a hedge of mayflower, and there were oranges to remind the lady of days long gone. There were wild carnations and roses and gentians and a few spring and autumn flowers as well. A part of the quarter was fenced off for equestrian grounds. Since the Fifth Month would be its liveliest time, there were irises along the lake. On the far side were stables where the finest of horses would be kept.

And finally the northwest quarter: beyond artificial hillocks to the north were rows of warehouses, screened off by pines which would be beautiful in new falls of snow. The chrysanthemum hedge would bloom in the morning frosts of early winter, when also a grove of "mother oaks" would display its best hues. And in among the deep groves were mountain trees which one would have been hard put to identify...

There were elaborate walls and galleries with numerous passageways this way and that among the several quarters, so that the ladies could live apart and still be friendly.

The Ninth Month came and Akikonomu's garden was resplendent with autumn colors. On an evening when a gentle wind was blowing she arranged leaves and flowers on the lid of an ornamental box and sent them over to Murasaki. Her messenger was a rather tall girl in a singlet of deep purple, a robe of lilac lined with blue, and a gossamer cloak of saffron. She made her practiced way along galleries and verandas and over the soaring bridges that joined them, with the dignity that became her estate, and yet so pretty that the eyes of the whole house were upon her. Everything about her announced that she had been trained to the highest service.

This was Akikonomu's poem, presented with the gift:

«Your garden quietly awaits the spring.

Permit the winds to bring a touch of autumn».

in the forward parts of the garden
 wisteria, *yamabishi*, and rock azalea,
 son was spring. Touches of autumn

s, on hills left from the old garden,
 ar spring water went singing off in
 nfluence the music. There was a wa-
 m autumn moor. Since it was now
 of autumn flowers and leaves, such

cool natural spring and the plans
 ward parts of the garden the wind
 old be cool in the summer, and the
 rain groves. There was a hedge of
 emind the lady of days long gone.
 gentians and a few spring and au-
 tner was fenced off for equestrian
 e its liveliest time, there were irises
 es where the finest of horses would

wond artificial hillocks to the north
 y pines which would be beautiful
 r hedge would bloom in the morn-
 ve of "mother oaks" would display
 ves were mountain trees which one

leries with numerous passageways
 inters, so that the ladies could live

omi's garden was resplendent with
 tle wind was blowing she arranged
 mental box and sent them over to
 ll girl in a singlet of deep purple, a
 ner cloak of saffron. She made her
 is and over the soaring bridges that
 ie her estate, and yet so pretty that
 r. Everything about her announced
 service.

ned with the gift:
 ng.

"autumn».

The praise which Murasaki's women showered on the messenger did not at all displease her. Murasaki sent back an arrangement of moss on the same box, with a cinquefoil pine against stones suggesting cliffs. A poem was tied to a branch of the pine:

«Fleeting, your leaves that scatter in the wind.

The pine at the cliffs is forever green with the spring».

One had to look carefully to see that the pine was a clever fabrication. Akikonomu was much impressed that so ingenious a response should have come so quickly. Her women were speechless.

«I think you were unnecessarily tart», said Genji to Murasaki. «You should wait until your spring trees are in bloom. What will the goddess of Tatsuta think when she hears you belittling the best of autumn colors? Reply from strength, when you have the force of your spring blossoms to support you». He was looking wonderfully young and handsome.

There were more such exchanges, in this most tasteful of houses (Murasaki, 1976, pp. 382-6).

Garden historian Gunter Nitschke positions this garden within the mythic-symbolic gardening tradition of characteristic of pre-Fujiwara era gardens:

Murasaki's spring garden and Akikonomu's autumn garden suggest firstly that Prince Genji saw his courtly ladies as personifications of the qualities of their favourite gardens, and secondly, that he had built his palace in the form of a mandala, with the four gardens of his four favourite ladies corresponding to the cardinal point appropriate to the season (Nitschke, 1993, p. 52).

Taken together, however, the four gardens comprise a portrait of Genji himself, a portrait achieved through memory, as Haruo Shirane recognizes:

The four-garden, four-season Rokujō in which is established at the end of "Otome", also brings together the different threads of the prior narrative. Murasaki's quarter bears the "spring hills" and cherry trees reminiscent of the Northern Hills where Genji first discovered her in "Wakamurasaki". Hanachirusato's garden contains the orange blossoms and the "mountain villa" (*yamazato*) that Genji called upon during the Fifth Month in "Hanachirusato". Akikonomu's residence is decorated with the autumn fields reminiscent of her mother's home, the Nonomiya (The Palace in the Fields), which Genji visited during a melancholy autumn in "Sakaki". The

Akashi lady's winter garden is marked by pines and snow, which embodied her loneliness and sorrow in "Matsukaze" and "Usugumo". The various threads of Genji's past, hitherto separated, are physically and symbolically fused in the Rokujō-in and then recalled one by one as the four seasons elegantly unfold in the first half of the Tamakazura sequence, from "Hatsure" ([Chapter] 23) through "Miyuki" ([Chapter] 29) (Shirane, 1987, p. 192).

These passages show that in *The Tale of Genji* gardens were deliberately designed to please individuals, to portray them, and to serve as means for their personal development.

Kendall H. Brown, however, makes an even stronger argument: that certain aspects of a complex person like Genji could not be realized without reference to his garden, designed to help establish him as a certain kind of person, in this case, a poet-recluse (during his exile to Suma) along the lines of the Chinese poet Bo Juyi.

It has been frequently noted that the Tang poet Bo Juyi – the Heian culture hero par excellence and “the model of life itself” – served both in his life and in his literary creation as the model for aspects of Murasaki’s “Shining Genji.” [...]

For Murasaki and her contemporaries, Bo Juyi was more than the creator of verse; he was a symbol of the Chinese poet-recluse. In the Suma chapter, for instance, Genji’s residence-in-exile at Suma beach and his activities there resonate with the experiences of Bo Juyi. Murasaki adds references to the Japanese exiles Ariwara Yukihito (ca. 818-ca. 893) and Sugawara Michizane (845-903), but it is Bo Juyi who stands as the model for the transformation of Genji’s exile into a period of aesthetic reclusion. The physical appearance of Genji’s rustic “Chinese” (*shinjinza*) house – with plaited bamboo fence, stone stairs, pine pillars, and grass thatched roof – is very similar to Bo Juyi’s house below Mt. Lu. When Genji longs for distant friends in the capital, he quotes Bo’s poem *On the Evening of the Full Moon of the Eighth Month*. Upon the arrival of Genji’s retainer To no Chujo they drink a toast to Bo and quote his poem on reunion with his friend Yuan Zhen (779-839).

Murasaki is not content to have Genji merely live in a dwelling similar to Bo Juyi’s hermitage and recite his poems; she casts Genji in the garb of the ideal Chinese poet-recluse, spending his days in the refined pursuits associated with reputed aesthetic-recluses such as Bo. In one remarkable passage, Genji spends a day inventing games, playing the *go*, practicing calligraphy and painting, tending the garden, chanting sutras, writing poetry, viewing the moon and finally, chanting the verse of Bo Juyi. This conflation

pines and snow, which embodied "e" and "Usugumo". The various elements are physically and symbolically one by one as the four seasons elements sequence, from "Hatsune" (ter) 29) (Shirane, 1987, p. 192).

of *Genji* gardens were deliberately to portray them, and to serve as

es an even stronger argument: son like Genji could not be redesigned to help establish him as a poet-recluse (during his exile poet Bo Juyi).

et Bo Juyi – the Heian culture hero – served both in his life and in his Murasaki's "Shining Genji". [...] s, Bo Juyi was more than the Chinese poet-recluse. In the Suma exile at Suma beach and his access of Bo Juyi, Murasaki adds refer- (ca. 818-ca. 893) and Sugawara stands as the model for the trans-aesthetic reclusion. The physical *sanmochi* house – with plaited and grass-thatched roof – is very. When Genji longs for distant *On the Evening of the Full Moon* Genji's retainer To no Chujō they on reunion with his friend Yuan

merely live in a dwelling similar us; she casts Genji in the garb of his days in the refined pursuits as- ch as Bo. In one remarkable pas- playing the *genji*, practicing callig- chanting sutras, writing poetry, verse of Bo Juyi. This conflation

of aesthetic reclusion and the paradigmatic example of Bo Juyi is foreshad- owed early in the Suma chapter when Genji, preparing for life in exile, gath- ers those "simplest objects of rustic life" – a seven-stringed *genji*, scrolls of Daoist, Confucian, and Buddhist writings, and the *Collected Works of Bo Juyi* (Brown, 1999, pp. 31-2).

In this case, the house and garden comprise a portrait, in the old Chi- nese tradition discussed above, that gives meaning to activities that might otherwise seem random or superficial.

6

Discussion: gardens and emotion in *The Tale of Genji*

Based on literary evidence from Murasaki Shikibu's novel *The Tale of Genji*, it seems clear that as early as the middle of the Fujiwara era, around 1000-10, Japanese gardens began to be used for personal expression – that is, the revealing, expressing, evoking and structuring – of "feelings", including *aware* and other emotions, dispositions and personal states of mind. Gardens were serving as portraits of persons, and as keys to the emotions of scenes. In some cases they were used to represent the inner state, or state of mind, of their inhabitants, and then subsequent modifications were understood to effect a change in this state of mind/body.

Their grandiosity and symbolic function eroding – or set aside – in the novel, gardens are shown to be a site that allows for the devel- opment of personal self-consciousness that is as important for this purpose as the development of the *kana* syllabary in writing and of *waka* in literature per se. Gardens share with *hana* and *waka* the ca- pacities of extending women's abilities to express themselves and to transmit their expression beyond the spoken word, and, further, of encouraging men to express themselves in more personal, emotional, casual and indigenous ways.

Gardens become a privileged site for private experience, both solitary and interpersonal, and especially suitable for what we call "romantic" encounter. They achieve a synthesis of natural with do- mestic space, one that allows a person "at home" (in both senses of the term) to experience the natural world, and that makes possible on a daily basis the experience of *aware* that is most easily triggered by the perception of nature – even if it is most importantly under-

stood to apply to human being as well. If Motoori Norinaga is right in arguing that *aware* connects the perceiving subject through aesthetic experience with the – often natural – object of her perception and feeling, then the fact that gardens make it possible – and are recognized as making it possible – to have such moments on a routine and daily basis, to integrate them into everyday life, becomes an important step in the evolution of human consciousness. If Onishi Yoshinori is right in arguing that *aware* brings subject and object together not only aesthetically but on a metaphysical level, effecting a connection with the cosmic grief of the ground of Being (Onishi, 1960), then it is an important step in the progress of human development as well.

In these senses *The Tale of Genji* marks out new territory for gardens, for emotions, and for the utilization of gardens for expressing emotion in terms of both social space and personal space for the individual's own expression of emotion, and for the construction of interiority and self-consciousness.

Bibliography

- BARIDON M. (2008). *A History of the Gardens at Versailles*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia.
- BROWN K. H. (1999). *The Politics of Reclusion: Painting and Power in Momoyama Japan*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.
- BURNS S. L. (2003). *Before the Nation: Kokugaku and the Imagining of Community in Early Modern Japan*. Duke University Press, Durham.
- CHILDS M. H. (1999). *The Value of Vulnerability: Sexual Coercion and the Nature of Love in Japanese Court Literature*, in "The Journal of Asian Studies", 58, 4, pp. 1059-79.
- DOI T. (1971). *The Anatomy of Dependence*. Kodansha International, Tokyo.
- GOFF J. (1991). *Noh Drama and «The Tale of Genji»: The Art of Illusion in Fifteen Classical Plays*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- HARDER T. L. (1971). *Motoori Norinaga's Criticism of the Genji Monogatari: A Study of the Background and Critical Content of His Genji Monogatari Yama no Ogushi*. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor.
- HISAMATSU SEN'ICHI (1963). *The Vocabulary of Japanese Literary Aesthetics*. Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, Tokyo.
- KESWICK M. et al. (2003). *The Chinese Garden: History, Art and Architecture*. 3rd edition revised by A. Hardie. Harvard University Press, Cambridge (MA) (original edition 1978).

If Motoori Norinaga is right receiving subject through aesthetic – object of her perception like it possible – and are rec-such moments on a routine everyday life, becomes an im-m-n consciousness. If Onishi brings subject and object to metaphysical level, effecting a e-ground of Being (Onishi, progress of human develop-

rks out new territory for gar-on of gardens for expressing and personal space for the ind-for the construction of in-

y

lous at Versailles, University of

on, *Painting and Power in Mo-*

gaku and the Imagining of Com-

iversity Press, Durham.

by: *Sexual Coercion and the Na-*

, in "The Journal of Asian Stud-

Kodansha International, Tokyo.

Genji: The Art of Illusion in Fif-

ty Press, Princeton.

Genji Monogatari: A

Account of His Genji Monogatari

s, Ann Arbor.

of Japanese Literary Aesthetics,

, Tokyo.

in History, Art and Architecture,

rd University Press, Cambridge

KUTTERER W. (1988), *Themes, Scenes, and Tastes in the History of Japanese Gar-*

den Art, Gieben, Amsterdam.

LEBRA T. (1994), "Miyazaki": *The Cultural Idiom of Self-Other Exchange in*

Japan, in T. R. Ames, W. Dissanayake, Th. P. Kasulis (eds.), *Self as Per-*

son in Asian Theory and Practice, State University of New York Press,

Albany, pp. 107-24.

MARRA M. (1999), *Modern Japanese Aesthetics: A Reader*, University of

Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

MILLER M. (1993a), *Canons and the Challenge of Gender*, in "The Monist",

26-4, pp. 477-93.

ID. (1993b), *The Garden as an Art*, State University of New York Press, Al-

bany.

ID. (1997), *Voices of Japanese Selfhood: Japanese and Western Perspectives*, in

A. Douglas (ed.), *Culture and Self: Philosophical and Religious Perspec-*

tives, East and West, Westview Press, Boulder, pp. 145-62.

ID. (2002), *Ethics in the Female Voice: Murasaki Shikibu and the Framing of*

Ethics for Japan, in M. Barnhart (ed.), *Varieties of Ethical Perspectives*,

Lexington Books, Lanham, pp. 175-203.

ID. (2004), *Four Approaches to Emotion in Japanese Visual Arts*, in P. San-

tangelo (a cura di), *Emotion in Asia*, Università degli Studi di Napoli

"L'Orientale", Napoli, pp. 265-313.

MESER E., ODAGIRI H., MORRELL R. E. (1985), *The Princeton Companion to*

Classical Japanese Literature, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

MORRIS I. (1964), *The World of the Shining Prince*, Peregrine, London

(reprinted 1986).

MURASAKI S. (1976), *The Tale of Genji*, Heian-kyo (Kyoto), c. 1000-20, trans-

lated by E. G. Seidensticker, Knopf, New York.

MURASE M. (1983), *Emaki: Narrative Scrolls of Japan*, Asia Society, New York.

NETSCHKE G. (1993), *Japanese Gardens*, Taschen, Köln.

ONISHI Y. (1960), *Bigaku*, vol. II, *Bitobi-banchu Ron*, Kobundo, Tokyo (par-

tially translated by Marra, 1999), pp. 122-40).

PAINE R. T., SOPER A. (1980), *The Art and Architecture of Japan*, 3rd edition,