

Walter Pater

The Renaissance (London, 1893)



The presence that rose thus so strangely beside the waters, is expressive of what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire. Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world are come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and

how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed! All the thoughts and experience of the world have etched and moulded there, in that which they have of power to refine and make expressive the outward form, the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the mysticism of the middle age with its spiritual ambition and imaginative loves, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias. She is older than the rocks among which she sits; like the vampire, she has been dead many times, and learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas, and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary; and all this has been to her but as the sound of lyres and flutes, and lives only in the delicacy with which it has molded the changing lineaments, and tinged the eyelids and the hands. The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and the modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

Junichiro Tanisaki

The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi, translated by Anthony H. Chambers



A portrait now in the possession of the descendants of the Kiryu clan shows Terukatsu sitting cross-legged on a tiger skin, fully clad in armor with a European breastplate, black-braided shoulder plates, taces and fur boots. His helmet is surmounted by enormous, sweeping horns, like a water buffalo's. He holds a tasseled baton of command in his right hand; his left hand is spread so wide on his thigh that the thumb reaches the scabbard of his sword. If he were not wearing armor, one could get some idea of his physique; dressed as he is, only the face is visible. It is not uncommon to see likenesses of heroes from the Period of Civil Wars clad in full armor, and Terukatsu's portrait is very similar to those of Honda Heihachiro and Sakakibara Yasumasa that so often appear in history books. They all give an impression of great dignity and severity, but at the same time there is an uncomfortable stiffness and formality in the way they square their shoulders.

Historical sources indicate that Terukatsu died at the age of forty-two. He looks somewhat younger than that in this portrait, perhaps between thirty-five and forty. With his full cheeks and strong, square jaw, he is certainly not an ugly man, though his eyes, nose, and mouth are disproportionately large. All in all, it is a face worthy of an intelligent and self-assured leader. His eyes, open wide and glaring straight ahead, glitter angrily from under the peak of his helmet. Between the eyes and above the nose is a slight bulging of the flesh, cut horizontally by a deep crease so that it looks almost like a second, very small nose. Deep wrinkles run from either side of his nose to the corners of his mouth, giving him an irritable look, as if he had just chewed something bitter. He has a straggly mustache and goatee, in the fashion of the times.