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GENDER, THE BODY, AND DESIRE  
IN THE NOVELS OF NATSUME SÔSEKI (1867-1916), FOCUSING ON *MEIAN*

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For  
*il miglior fabbro*  
—Dante's *Purgatorio* xxvi, 117

## Abstract

This dissertation employs categories of analysis that previously have been under-appreciated, ignored or unapplied in Sôseki studies—gender, the body, and desire—both for textual explication and to examine the intrapersonal relationships in the novels of Natsume Sôseki (1867-1916), with emphasis placed on his final, uncompleted work, *Meian* (Light and Darkness, 1916). Instead of presenting literary representations of prevailing Meiji ideological positions such as *risshin shusse* (rising in the world) entrepreneurship and success scenarios for men or *ryôsai kenbo* (good wives, wise mothers) domestic scenarios for women, Sôseki focuses on erotic triangles which expose gender difference and gender inequalities of Meiji-Taishô Japan. Investigation of fictional erotic triangles also reveals the possibility of homosocial desire in an age when discourse was increasingly antithetical to non-normative expressions of male-male desire. Sôseki's gender representations frequently invert conventional gender expectations with his depictions of passive males and women desiring mastery over the male, and these depictions in turn are mapped and analyzed throughout the novelist's brief ten-year career as a novelist. Foucault's observation of the body—where local social practices are linked up with organization of power—assists in our better comprehending the formation of gender identities and the development of a national subject. Always embodying a historical moment, Sôseki's novels open a window onto gender conflict, further the historicization of gender concepts, and finally suggest the possibility, in some cases, of resistance to gender/role stereotyping, as well as narrativize the author's personal ambivalence toward Western egalitarianism of the sexes.

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## Note on the Texts and Synopses

The following Japanese texts and English translations are used in the body of this dissertation, in the Notes and Works Cited. Japanese citations are from *Sôseki zenshû* (SZ, Complete Works) 34 vols. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957). English citations are from the translations below.

*Kusamakura* (Grass Pillow, 1906) SZ 4:5-127. *The Three-Cornered World*, trans. Alan Turney (London: Peter Owen, 1965). In this haiku novel, a world-weary painter records his poetic journey in the mountains where he encounters at a hot-spring inn a woman with a mysterious past, O-Nami.

*Gubijinsô* (Wild Poppy, 1907) SZ 5:5-316. Unavailable in English translation. An overwrought novel in which the proud, beautiful, and wealthy heroine, Fujio, is felled by the shock and shame of rejection by Ono, who instead marries Sayoko, the daughter of his old teacher Kodô-sensei to whom he is more devoted.

*Nowaki* (Autumn Wind, 1907) SZ 4:187-328. Unavailable in English translation. A *tendenz* novel in which the impoverished, tubercular aspiring writer Takayanagi uses the gift of one-hundred yen from his rich friend Nakano to publish a manuscript written by a former teacher Shirai Dôya, idealist and man of principles, who is unable to make a comfortable living from his writing.

*Kôfu* (The Miner, 1908) SZ 6:5-199. *The Miner*, trans. Jay Rubin (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1988). A young man who has run away from home relates in *skaz* style his journey and his experience working in a mine.

*Sanshirô* (Sanshirô, 1908) SZ 7:5-242. *Sanshiro*, trans. Jay Rubin (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977). A *bildungsroman* about twenty-three-year-old Sanshirô, who, arriving in the capital fresh from the provinces to attend Tokyo University, ponders his role in a new world and its inhabitants, including the seductive Mineko.

*Sorekara* (And Then, 1909) SZ 8:5-253. *And Then*, trans. Norma M. Field (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). Young gentleman of leisure and aesthete, Daisuke had allowed his friend Hiraoka to marry Michiyo, the girl they both loved. Realizing the depth of his love for Michiyo, now sick and neglected by Hiraoka, Daisuke wants her back. Hiraoka consents but forbids him to see her until she recovers. Daisuke's father, who has other marriage plans for his son, disowns him. The novel ends with the world spinning in flames around Daisuke.

*Mon* (The Gate, 1910) SZ 9:5-200. *Mon*, trans. Francis Mathy (London: Peter Owen, 1972). Guilty of past transgressions, Sôsuke and O-Yone live in near poverty but relatively happily. Sôsuke had stolen O-Yone's heart, which belonged to Yasui, a trusting friend. Hearing of Yasui's return from Mongolia, Sôsuke seeks refuge in a Zen temple but finds no solace or enlightenment.

*Higan Sugi Made* (Until After the Spring Equinox, 1912) SZ 10:5-277. *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond*, trans. Ochiai Kingo and Sanford Goldstein (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1985). Point-of-view novel told in six stories from the perspective of young Tagawa Keitarô. "Sunaga's Story" relates Sunaga's tormented love for Chiyoko who loves him and at the same time despises him.

- Kôjin* (The Wayfarer, 1913) SZ 11:5-335. *The Wayfarer*, trans. Beongcheon Yu (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1969). Ichirô doubts the fidelity of his wife, O-Nao, and urges his brother Jirô to test her. To break the domestic impasse, an old friend, H, takes Ichirô on a trip and reports back that Ichirô is earnest but believes himself to be God and speaks in German, revealing his descent into near-madness.
- Kokoro* (Heart/Mind, 1914) SZ 12:5-234. *Kokoro*, trans. Edwin McClellan (Chicago: Regnery, 1957). Idle intellectual Sensei has lived a wasted life, guilty over having stolen the beloved of his best friend, K, who commits suicide. In a long, confessional suicide note to his student, Sensei asks that his secret not be revealed.
- Michikusa* (Grass on the Wayside, 1915) SZ 13:5-230. *Grass on the Wayside*, trans. Edwin McClellan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). An autobiographical novel of the dreary life of Kenzô, besieged by his wife O-Sumi and set upon by brothers, sisters, and foster father, all wanting money from him.
- Meian* (Light and Darkness, 1916) SZ 14(*jô*):6-262 and 15(*ge*):4-239. *Light and Darkness*, trans. V. H. Viglielmo (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972). The marriage of Tsuda and O-Nobu is threatened when Kobayashi and others begin dropping hints about another woman. Tsuda departs on a trip to rendezvous with the woman in question, Kiyoko, his former fiancée.

## P r e f a c e

According to UMI (formerly University Microfilms, Inc.), “The first American Ph.D. program was initiated at Yale University in 1860, with requirements that included at least one year of study on campus, an examination, and a dissertation based on original research. The first recipient was James Morris Whiton, whose dissertation in Latin on the proverb ‘Brevis vita, ars longa’ was accepted in 1861. Handwritten, it was six pages long.” The first English-language dissertation on Natsume Sôseki was written by V. H. Viglielmo at Harvard in 1955. Typed on onionskin to yield carbon copies, it was 150 pages long. Nine dissertations in English on some aspect of Sôseki have appeared over the years since then, including most recently Angela Yiu’s “Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sôseki,” (Yale University, 1992) and Reiko Abe Auestadt’s “Natsume Sôseki’s *Kôjin* (The Wayfarer) and *Meian* (Light and Darkness) Reconsidered,” (University of Oslo, 1994). Auestadt includes *Meian* in her focus, whereas Yiu does not, mentioning it only to introduce Sôseki’s *kanshi* (poems in literary Chinese). Oddly, there has been no dissertation or book-length treatment in English on *Meian* as of this writing.

Sôseki has not been ignored in Japan, of course, where he remains a publishing phenomenon. The nineteen nineties in Japan, in fact, witnessed a Sôseki boom, with twenty to thirty books and two to three hundred scholarly articles on Sôseki being published every year according to Ishihara Chiaki, editor of *Sôseki kenkyû* (Sôseki Studies), on the occasion of the inaugural issue in 1993 [see my selected bibliography for examples]. My dissertation, I hope, will return the focus to *Meian* to help correct the absence of scholarship on the classic of Sôseki’s oeuvre. Unfortunately, many Western scholars themselves (most notably, Keene, McClellan, and Seidensticker) have produced much of the “bad press” on *Meian*.<sup>1</sup> Even Norma Field, consummate translator of *Sorekara* (And Then), asks the rhetorical question, Will Sôseki ever be known abroad?

The more Sôseki the “critic of civilization” (Etô’s phrase) prospers, the more the artist suffers. One hundred years from now, will the struggling artist who grappled with the perennial questions of the universe, whose answers can be reduced neither to ethical values nor to socio-historical concerns—will that artist be remembered? Will he ever be known abroad?<sup>2</sup>

To balance the rhetoric of those doubtful of Sôseki's place in world literature, or, more specifically, *Meian*'s place in the Sôseki canon (or its place in the whole of modern Japanese literature, for that matter), Susan Sontag is on record as saying it is a neglected classic of twentieth-century fiction. It should be obvious from my dissertation as well, that I consider *Meian* not only the premier novel of Sôseki's works (the largest cast of characters, the broadest depiction of class differences, the most scintillating dialogue), but also a candidate for the most important novel of modern Japanese literature. My question is not "Will he ever be known abroad?" but "What can I possibly add to the cottage industry of Sôseki scholarship?" As T. S. Eliot has pronounced on the difficulties of writing fresh, engaging studies on Shakespeare, "All we can hope for is to be wrong about Shakespeare in a new way." I hope I am not wrong in my examination and textual explication of Sôseki novels, but I do maintain that my application of the relatively new categories of analysis, gender, the body, and desire, might produce some fresh insights into his fiction in general and *Meian* in particular.

This dissertation is not a lifework (not a *shôgai no jigyô* 生涯の事業 or *raifuwaaku* ライフワーク, as the Japanese are fond of saying)—not a *Habilitationsschrift* or *thèse d'état*—but rather an extended study of the novels of Natsume Sôseki, a unique contribution, it is to be hoped, to the ever-expanding research on the life and fiction of Natsume Sôseki. My writing, however, focuses exclusively on the fiction of Natsume Sôseki and *not* on his life. I give sparse plot summaries, if any, and have very little to say about his life (please see my annotated bibliography for *sakkaron* 作家論 [studies on the author] and biographies); my emphasis is on *shôsetsuron* 小説論, a study of his novels. My methodology for the textual analysis of Sôseki's novel is interdisciplinary, with some approaches applied more rigorously than others (history, social science, psychology, new historicism, cultural materialism), comparative (a parallel reading of Sôseki's Meiji-Taishô novels with Victorian and other Western novels), and also incorporating the ethnographical "thick description" of Clifford Geertz.

To the reader who feels overburdened by a preponderance of epigraphs, I defend this practice with the example of Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), a great collector of *aperçus*, who conceived of an ideal work consisting entirely of quotations, "one that was mounted so masterfully that it could dispense with any

accompanying text.”<sup>3</sup> Accompanying text is the indispensable core over which hangs the sometimes enlightening, sometimes extraneous aperçu.

Finally, I can make no apology for beginning Chapter 2 with Tsuda’s anal probe, and for focusing on anality for much of the chapter, because that is how Sôseki chose to commence his novel. Not for lack of trying, I could discover no textual evidence of the kind of anality that Sedgwick probes in the writing of Henry James, for example. But Inoue Hisashi has imagined Sôseki’s illness in *Wagahai wa Sôseki de aru* (I am Sôseki, 1982) gradually working its way out of the body in this manner:

岡田：とにかく、頭、目、そして胃。それからオシリ。病気が段々に下へさがってきていらっしゃる。すなわちこれは先生のお体を住処にしている病気の親玉がついにオシリから外へ追い出されつつあるという証拠です。けっこうなことじゃございませんか。

Okada: “Anyway, head, eyes, and stomach. And then his anus. Illness has gradually worked its way downward. In other words, this is proof that the boss of the illness which has inhabited Sensei’s body is just continuing to push it outward from his anus. Is this not a wonderful thing?”<sup>4</sup>

Inoue ends his fantastic drama with Sôseki, still alive but suffering. We launch into Chapter 2 in a hysteron proteron movement, beginning with the end, with Sôseki’s last novel, confronting Tsuda’s behind.

## Introduction

After establishing a theoretical framework for gender, the body, and desire in Chapter I, I examine the significance of disease in Chapter 2 together with the metaphorical operations of fissure, blindness, and the gaze. I interpret the scene in the examination room of *Meian* as the *donnée*, as Henry James's "the speck," and Barthes' *punctum* (in his study on photography): it is the seed, the gesture, the kernel which contains the essence of the novel. I attempt to thematize three seemingly disparate elements—fissure, blindness and the gaze—into a unified w/whole. The latter two may be reduced to the same binome, *meian*, to signify visibility. Tsuda's fissured body (and fissured, divided self) may not be visible to the people around him but they respond to the "disease" they see, his manifest egoistical behavior on the one hand (in the eyes of O-Nobu and Kobayashi) and his uxorious behavior on the other (in the eyes of Mrs. Yoshikawa and O-Hide). From the moment Tsuda goes under the scientific gaze of the doctor in the opening chapter, the surveying of one individual by another never stops but continues through the final scene of Tsuda's "spying" on Kiyoko. In varying degrees of "readability," characters are "scoped" and opened to the critical eye of others. Modern surveillance (abhorred by Sôseki in the person of the ever-present detective) is at once the instrument that probes social ills and constitutive of the evils it seeks to expose. Tsuda's diseased body mobilizes the cast of characters in various ways around him, but *their* bodies are also marked, scoped, and read. Mrs. Yoshikawa's girth ("as wide as a door") embodies her bourgeois values, her wealth of flesh symbolizing her financial wealth. O-Nobu's restlessness is her own undoing, Kiyoko's condition of convalescence amplifies her quiescence but masks her recalcitrance.

In Chapter 3 Sôseki's epiphanic moments do more than express the author's nuanced views on ekphrasis; they reveal gender representations that are a skewed version of reality, an idealized, aestheticized vision of women. The placing of women on a pedestal betrays their actual position in society: subservient to men, defined by their roles in marriage. The epiphanies of Botchan, Sanshirô, the artist in *Kusamakura*, and Tsuda are not the celestial visions they appear to be but a means of empowerment over women, rendering the female object momentarily lifeless as a painting, to come alive only when activated by the male gaze. Always the object of desire, the passivized female enlarges the male, while yet appearing larger than life herself (O-Nami, Mineko). The paradoxical aspects of women and the disconnect between the vision and

the reality as produced in male-generated epiphanies in fact communicate that women such as Mineko and Kiyoko are as much bundles of contradictions as are men such as Sanshirô and Tsuda (at least the sexes are equal in this). Since epiphanies are gendered (the male gaze and the male vision of the beatific female), gender hierarchies are temporarily skewed with the elevated placement of woman but righted when the male again controls the vision by concretizing the image into a painting to be remembered.

Erotic triangles as discussed in Chapter 4 demonstrate the inherent inequality of love triangles (what I think Sôseki is saying about unbalanced affection in all relationships) and why love, once *always* hierarchical but now in the form of *ren'ai*, bearing the promise of an equal partnership in love, still remains in its fictional representation an unbalanceable geometry. The male-male bond at the base of the triangle as depicted in at least four Sôseki novels (see fig. 6) further upsets the equilibrium of the erotic triangle (though still a triangle and still in disequilibrium). Lacking the vocabulary of former expressions of male-male desire, especially that formulated by Saikaku (or denying himself the utterability of that tradition) the conservative (even Confucian) moralist Sôseki encoded male-male desire in erotic triangles in which the conventional structure of two men vying for the attention and affections of the female love object is displaced by homosocial desire between the two men. In many ways, my analysis may seem merely to substitute Sedgwick's "homosocial" for Doi's "latent homosexuality" which he observed in his earlier psychological study of Sôseki's male characters. What Doi's brand of Freudian analysis does not take into consideration, however, is the changing social discourse on modern love (*ren'ai*) and its foreclosure of previous acceptable (to some) notions of male-male love (*nanshoku*).

Chapter 5 begins with a comparative analysis of the Victorian New Woman and the Japanese New Woman. Sôseki's depiction of Mineko as an "Ibsen woman" preceded the first Japanese performance of Ibsen in Japan by two years. The New Woman, a popular topic of debate in Japan in the first decade of the twentieth century, is also treated by Sôseki in his characters Fujio, Mineko, and O-Nobu, which I discuss in this chapter. The madonna/whore complex, a male bifurcation of women into two discrete categories, I then explore in Sôseki's literary representations of Osan/Koharu and sacred woman/dangerous woman. Chikamatsu's Osan/Koharu is two women united as one, whereas Sôseki's sacred women/femme fatale is

one woman divided into two (in the characters of Botchan's Madonna, Mineko, and O-Nobu). Female characters can be the sacred woman to be worshiped and simultaneously the femme fatale to be feared. Geisha largely disappeared from Sôseki's fiction (but remained an important literary topic to his contemporaries) as he focuses more and more on the quotidian of domestic life and the problem of marriage. Kobayashi's deliberate misidentification of "ladies" as "geisha" might be read as Sôseki's *ketsubetsu* with the genuine geisha of former times. "I think any woman's a geisha if she just wears pretty clothes," Kobayashi says, largely to provoke Tsuda. But his comment, however sarcastic, also points out the constructed nature not only of geisha but of woman in general. Furthermore, Kobayashi's musing over whether there is such a class as a "gentleman" also manifests the social construction of gender roles. Not satisfied with her wifely duties only, O-Nobu desires to obtain her husband's absolute love by playing both wife and lover. The epiphanies of women as being in an exalted position are counterbalanced with the aspect of the dangerous woman. Sôseki's women are contrasted with Tanizaki's and characters in Victorian New Woman fiction to expose the author's talent and limitations in his own depiction of the modern woman.

Chapter 6. The Marriage Problem is central to both Meredith and Sôseki, and neither author allows his female protagonist to define herself outside of marriage. But at least Meredith allows them some happiness in marriage. Diana has the will to stand up to Sir Willoughby and break off their engagement (later to marry Vernon), and her successor, Laetitia, accepts Willoughby's hasty proposal, but on her terms. "But he had the lady with brains!" Meredith closes the scene. "He had: and he was to learn the nature of that possession in the woman who is our wife." The authorial "our" suggests that on the marriage question, we (menfolk) still have much to learn from the lady with brains. Mineko too, who toys with Sanshirô's affection and who appears as an "Ibsen woman" to the young university students, must marry in the end—and, we assume, become less of an independent spirit and more of a wife. Both Meredith and Sôseki focus on the domestic scene as the proper sphere of women. Because marriage is a site of conflict, not one of domestic bliss, for both authors, marriage will continue to be the battleground of the war of the sexes. In the end, erotic triangles are not easily disentangled, if ever. The only way out is a truce, resignation, or stalemate (O-Nobu, O-Yone), madness (Ichirô) or death (Fujio, Sensei, perhaps Takayanagi as well).

In Chapter 7 I consider the fate of Sôseki's male characters, attempting to triangulate between what I identify as three important keywords in defining them: success, *flânerie*, and continental wanderers. These three disparate aspects bring into relief a profile of the typical Sôseki protagonist (always male). First, we never see him working; he is member of the *kôtô yûmin*, Sôseki's neologism for the idle intelligentsia (Tsuda, however, does not belong to this category). Success for the most part is not ungraspable but something to be avoided. The continental wanderer, pursuing a future in the colonies contrasts with the immobilized, paralyzed protagonist. The immobilized protagonist may not lift a hand to work, but he does move on occasion. Men are often shown wandering or walking together in nature. I attempt to link metaphorically wandering with deviation and consider the significance of deviance and degeneracy in Sôseki's novels. Measuring success also requires an assessment of fitness and health as well as what is man's proper sphere—all related Sôseki themes which are intertwined with the topics of my triangulation.

Finally, my reading of Sôseki in, at times, postmodern terms may appear to be a singular exercise for a modernist work and for an author who died almost eighty-six years ago. But I maintain that there are postmodern touches evident in, for example, his use of aporias, textual indeterminacies, lack of closure, emphasis on process, decenterings, parody, and pastiche. I have read Sôseki postmodernistically at times in my misprision (Bloom's word for misreading), willfully, perhaps, trying to be wrong in a new way, reading his texts both as being inextricable from their historical moment and reading them ahistorically as inhabiting our contemporary moment. Sôseki's texts stand up to repeated misprision. Future students and scholars will persist in finding new ways to identify and describe the numerous meanings, significations and nuances (however "deferred" or "unstable" they may be) in texts that continually challenge, perturb, delight, confound, amuse, dismay, entertain, bewilder, captivate, provoke, divert, uplift, and mystify.

Chapter 1  
Theorizing Gender, The Body, and Desire

I wish I had been born a man.  
—Fujio in Natsume Sôseki's *Gubijinsô*

The home seems to me to be the proper sphere of man. And certainly once a man begins to neglect his domestic duties he becomes painfully effeminate, does he not? And I don't like that. It makes men so very attractive.

—Gwendolen to Cecily in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Gender, the body, and desire have always been a part of literature in the broadest sense, even a necessary part, since all categories of human characters are gendered (masculine or feminine according to appropriate cultural codes unique to a specific time in history but *not*, gender theorists and feminists remind us, an essential category of human nature), have a body (or *are* a body, leaving aside disembodied souls), and possess appetites and desires (are an embodiment of desire). Students today are taught that literature speaks gender, race, and class. And as careful readers we must pay heed to the cultural and ideological assumptions that produce these distinctions. We have always read gender, the body, and desire in literature, even if unconsciously, but only recently have we begun to historicize these terms, question their universal meaning and ideological assumptions.

Oscar Wilde plays with the notion of gender in/stability when he has Gwendolen in *The Importance of Being Earnest* upset gender expectations by placing the man in the home, in charge of domestic duties (not in the work-force, as the breadwinner) and finding him all the more attractive for his effeminate disposition. The English gentlemen of one hundred years ago, especially the English epicene (in Camille Paglia's term), would be out of place in American society of the twenty-first century. In need of a court in our "classless society," over which to reign and display his aristocratic and dandified tastes, he would be reduced to a mere fop. Not only are gender codes and their signifying system different across time and culture, but body images and notions of ideal body representations visibly, corporeally change over time as well. Genji visiting our modern world would be astounded by the changes in the human body over the past one thousand years but so likewise would the *fin-de-siècle* English gentleman be astounded: the plasticity of the human form, sculpted by body-building, augmented by cosmetic surgery, altered by beauty and health regimes, modified by piercing, tattooing, scarring, branding. Beauty regimes and body modification

exist in all cultures, but what has changed significantly about the body is not so much body alteration and body modification but a concept of subjectivity in terms of corporeality, a model of subjectivity not of depth but of surface. Refiguring the body as the center of discourse and analysis, in the words of Elizabeth Grosz,

helps to problematize the universalist and universalizing assumptions of humanism, through which women's—and all other groups'—specificities, positions, and histories are rendered irrelevant or redundant; it resists the tendency to attribute a human nature to the subject's interior; and it resists tendencies to dualism, which splits subjectivity into two mutually exclusive domains.<sup>1</sup>

French feminist Luce Irigaray also posited a subjectivity based on anatomy. In her article, “When Our Two Lips Speak Together,” she develops an alternative discourse based on female genitalia, of “two constantly touching and retouching lips.”<sup>2</sup> French feminist theory may be far removed from Sôseki's fiction, but bodies in Sôseki's fiction do figure in his characters' subjectivity (Tsuda's body and his subjectivity, in particular). Not sexual difference—which Irigaray saw as the “issue of our time”—but sexual in/equality seems to be the issue of Sôseki's fiction and his times. A reevaluation of women's roles during the Meiji/Taishô eras was accompanied by modern scientific evaluation of the body. Grosz goes on to point out how the body has been defined by science: “The body has thus far remained colonized through the discursive practices of the natural sciences, particularly the discourses of biology and medicine.”<sup>3</sup> It is possible to observe these discursive practices in operation in Meiji/Taishô Japan, which had embraced Western science and technology, absorbed Western literature, obtained world recognition as victor in the Sino-Japanese [1894-5] and Russo-Japanese Wars [1904-5], making it appear, on the surface at least, identical in many ways to its Western neighbors. Like its Western neighbors, Japan also turned to Western science and medicine to redefine concepts of sex, health, and the body.

The young newly-weds Tsuda and O-Nobu, for example, in Sôseki's last novel *Meian*, appear to be a thoroughly modern couple with modern marriage problems. Tsuda requires medical attention and the couple's understanding of his “disease” and its treatment are also thoroughly modern (a doctor examines the patient, gives a diagnosis, and performs a simple operation in his clinic). Furthermore, they even enjoy a Western-style breakfast together in the clinic. Yet to view this modern couple who live alone in their own

house, (not with their parents), and who, the husband at least anyway, effortlessly slip in and out of Western dress (and who seem to inhabit a similar modern metropolitan life depicted in the novels of Henry James) in the light of today's condition of gender roles and gender status would obviously be misguided. Acceptance of Western science and medicine were deemed necessary for national progress, but other changes such as the transformation of traditional gender roles and gender hierarchies would be slow in coming. This tension that is evident in the transition from traditional to modern forms an ever-present and often remarked upon element of Sôseki's writing—and for that reason is still consulted today as a record of Japan's problems in facing modernization.

As Konishi Jin'ichi has described Japanese literature, the new is added to the old without eliminating the old. Western science and medicine displaced some native practices, yet many old forms and traditions remained intact, both in Japanese literature and Japanese society. The fiction of Natsume Sôseki is an insightful way of observing this process of transition: Western in form, modern in its sensibilities, yet containing many unresolved problems of modernization, Sôseki's novels have become touchstones for Japanese readers who continually return to his work to examine these problems afresh (the problems of modernity, of individualism, of sexual equality). I have taken Karatani Kôjin's historicizing project in *Nihon kindai bungaku no kigen* (Origins of Japanese Literature, 1980, translated 1993), in which he brackets the terms *kigen* (origins), *kindai* (modern), *bungaku* (literature), and *Nihon* (the state), tagging them as ideological constructs, as a critical model for my examination of the "analytical categories" of gender, the body, and desire, bracketing them in the same way. Karatani's framework, from the first chapter to the "Afterword," is built on Natsume Sôseki: "Now the book which opened with a consideration of Natsume Sôseki as a theorist ends with a discussion of Sôseki as a creative writer."<sup>4</sup>

If literature echoes history and culture, it also shapes society, holding up a mirror of idealized and romanticized notions for appropriation and reflecting the contemporary cultural conventions at the same time. Genji of course no more represents the modern Japanese male than the English epicene represent today's British male subject, and no more than Hamlet embodies the universal human condition. Bearing this in mind, we will look for the contingencies of gender in our discussion and challenge the universal.

Sôseki, one of Japan's first critics of English literature, famously questioned early in his academic career the universality of Shakespeare. And if we followed his line of reasoning today we would question, for example, the validity of Harold Bloom's sweeping manifesto *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, reading and observing not a portrait of a universal man but a particular creation of Renaissance England, possessing specific characteristics and attitudes distinctive to an age. This then is the task at hand: to historicize gender and the body, and to acknowledge the complexities of human difference and human desire. We recognize Sôseki's fictional characters as "modern" but also must make allowances (explanations) for the intervening eighty-five years of cultural change and diversity.

As with all concepts in postmodern discourse, gender is to be problematized. Once we recognize gender as a basic problem, not as a given or an essential category, but as a cultural idea forged in history, we can turn the critical lens of gender (even as Sôseki begins *Meian* with a metaphor of the critical lens) onto the author's representations of masculine/feminine, identities, values, difference. In doing so, reading gender is not only beneficial to women (challenging a concept of "universal man" that overlooks half the world's population), but also to men. "Feminists have recast the issue of women's relative identity as equally an issue for men," says Myra Jehlen, "who, upon ceasing to be mankind, become, precisely, men. Thus gender has emerged as a problem that is always implicit in any work."<sup>5</sup> Reading the implicit gender problems in Sôseki's fiction is a responsibility I am prepared to shoulder, but when Jehlen extends the task to encompass race and class, the labor becomes intensive. "It is logically impossible to interrogate gender," she says, "to transform it from axiom to object of scrutiny and critical term—without also interrogating race and class" (Jehlen, 272). The lens of gender widens the circle of concerns, and as dutiful readers we are also then alerted to class problems (particularly salient in the interpersonal relations of *Meian*), and even to race. In an attempt to delimit my subject, I have largely eliminated discussion of class and race. At first blush, race problems would not seem to be a concern of Sôseki's. He explores no racial conflicts in his fiction, after all, but the introduction of the *tairiku rônin* in many of his novels, the continental wanderers, men who seek their fortunes in Japan's colonies, brings home the subject of race and national identity.

Gender studies have a host of issues and concerns, of course, and many of them are still debated today: difference, *écriture féminine*, genre. If gender determines everything, as some feminists argue, then the very value systems and language structures out of which literature is produced must also be examined. “Sexuality and textuality,” according to Elizabeth Abel, “both depend on difference.”<sup>6</sup> Is there a difference between masculine and feminine writing? Is there such a thing as *écriture féminine*, as Hélène Cixous, who coined the term (“women must write through their bodies”), and other feminist theorists (Kristeva, Irigaray) contend? Even if this term is dismissed as “essentializing” women (to deconstruct: if the feminine is constructed in local social contexts, how can an overarching concept operate across cultures?), less easily dismissed are arguments about gender-related writing strategies. Does women’s writing differ in subject matter, vocabulary, narrative structure, characterization, and genre preference? The novel, for example, has been described as a female genre, as plainly put forth by *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*:

Feminists debate whether the female preference for the novel is based on its realism or on its subjectivity, and whether there is a distinction to be made between these notions. In general women writers tend to be more holistic than men. While male writers seem more interested in closure, women writers often respond with open endings. Feminine logic in writing is often associational; male logic sequential. Male objectivity is challenged by feminine subjectivity.<sup>7</sup>

These are particularly interesting assumptions as regards Japanese literature in general and Natsume Sôseki in particular. Murasaki Shikibu (fl. ca. 1000) was probably the first woman writer to exhibit a genre preference for the “novel,” and in doing so gave Japan and the world the earliest example, the greatness of which relies both on its realism and the author’s subjectivity. Murasaki does not seem interested in closure, but neither does Sôseki for that matter. Was Kawabata Yasunari (1899-1972), who is known for his preference for the associational, writing *écriture féminine*? As an instantiation or challenge to these assumptions, Japanese literature is typically left out of the discussion, one that in the past has been narrowly Anglo- and Eurocentric.

Elaine Showalter has argued that no “sex-specific” language exists, so that the differences in male and female speech can only be formulated in terms of style, strategies, and contexts of linguistic performance.<sup>8</sup> But the case of Japanese literature surely stands as a glaring exception to the view that argues against difference between the writing of men and women. In Murasaki’s day, “male written language” (*otoko-te*,

male hand) was Chinese, the exclusive domain of the educated, elite male courtier, writing in the public sphere; “women’s written language” (*onnade*, female hand), was not Chinese but *yamato kotoba* (vernacular Japanese) written in *kana*, a flowing script, produced not in the public arena but in the private and personal sphere. The female hand gave rise to an efflorescence of Japanese literature during the Heian period (794-1185) that included not only the world’s first extended prose narrative, *Genji monogatari* (The Tale of Genji, ca. 1000), but the creation of a new prose genre, *nikki bungaku* (diary literature). *The Tosa Diary* of 935 by Ki no Tsurayuki (ca. 872-945) complicates the discussion of gender and genre because in order to explore feminine subjectivity in the medium of a woman’s hand, *yamato kotoba*, he felt compelled to assume the persona of a woman. Tsurayuki’s bold literary experiment does not discount the possibility of *écriture féminine* but only opens the possibility that it need not be the exclusive domain of women.

Women’s dominant position as writers of *monogatari* diminished, however, and after the Kamakura period (1185-1333) the literary presence of any major woman writer all but faded until the emergence of Higuchi Ichiyō (1872-1896) in modern times. The problem of “women’s writing,” female subjectivity, the formidable task of a woman’s trying to write in a male literary establishment, were thematized in Sōseki’s early novel *Gubijinsō*, the novelist’s first work serialized for the newspaper *Asahi shinbun*, after he resigned his prestigious teaching post as lecturer in English literature at Tokyo Imperial University to take up writing professionally. The topics of gender/genre, women’s writing, and subjectivity remain continuing concerns for many feminists today but when Sōseki treats these very topics in his *Gubijinsō*, contemporary feminist literary models and approaches often seem to lack interpretative power. When and why Western literary criticism is inadequate in explicating Sōseki’s texts will also be an ongoing question addressed in my discussion.

The wealthy, beautiful, and proud heroine of *Gubijinsō* is Fujio (藤尾 literally, “wisteria tail” or “trail”), also referred to as “Murasaki no Onna,” the woman of purple, because she was fond of wearing that color. The “lavender connection” also indicates the heroine’s namesake, Murasaki Shikibu. She is the woman who writes. Fujio, an uppity woman (a sexist term for women who do not consider themselves to be subservient to men), was talented, but strong-willed and arrogant. In the end, Sōseki had to kill her: “I want

to kill the woman and be done with it,” he wrote in a letter of 1907.<sup>9</sup> Why does Sôseki feel compelled to kill Fujio, *when nothing in the story justifies Fujio’s death*? This is Minae Mizumura’s question in her article “Resisting Women—Reading Sôseki’s *Gubijinsô*,” which has informed my discussion of the novel. Fujio’s father wants her to marry Munechika but instead she toys with the affection of Ono, who is obligated to and eventually does marry Kodô-sensei’s daughter Sayoko. Fujio and Ono are worldly, self-assertive and intent on their own interests. Fujio suddenly falls ill and dies upon discovering that Ono has indeed married Sayoko. Like so much of Sôseki’s later fiction, *Gubijinsô* traditionally has been read as a moral tale on the perils of egoism. Fujio’s character will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters in our discussion of the new woman and Sôseki’s debt to Meredith’s *The Egoist*.

Fujio’s relevance to our discussion of gender is the relationship between sexuality and textuality. Her only crime was her desire to love and be loved, and as we know from Sôseki’s novels in general, *love is a sin*, especially love that is selfish and egotistical. But the author has also established an allegory in which Ono’s choice between Fujio and Sayoko is allegorically posed as Japanese literature’s entanglement between Chinese and Western literature [I have diagrammed this allegory, Mizumura’s interpretation, in Fig. 1.]. Kodô-sensei is Ono’s teacher of the Chinese classics and Ono is Fujio’s teacher of English (together they are reading *Antony and Cleopatra*). The allegory underscores Sôseki’s own position as a novelist who, in seeking to create “Japanese literature,” was torn between Chinese and English literatures as models. Gender and genre come into play when one considers the ultimate outcome of the introduction of Western novels, as “the undoing of the basic premise of Japanese literature: the separation between the ‘masculine’ (Chinese and public) and the ‘feminine’ (vernacular and private) that was institutionalized with the invention of the ‘female hand’” (Mizumura, 35). Sôseki’s favorite literary arts included both the Chinese classics and other ‘masculine’ forms, Mizumura points out, such as “haiku, *rakugo* (comic stories), and *yôkyoku* (Noh chants), as opposed to the ‘feminine’ forms such as *waka* (thirty-one-syllable poems), *jôruri* (drama songs), and *nagauta* (dance songs).” The novel as introduced to Japan at the end of the nineteenth century was seen as a gender-neutral genre, enjoyed by both men and women, thereby upsetting this masculine genre/feminine genre binarism. Fujio’s real crime then is her desire to inhabit the same world as men; “it is because she evokes those women writers who, no longer confined to the sphere of the ‘female

hand,' try to write in the newly created sphere of the novel, where the separation between the 'feminine' and the 'masculine' is no longer valid" (Mizumura, 35) Another way of interpreting Fujio's "vexing" position may be her desire to reclaim the novel in keeping with her namesake, Murasaki no Onna, and to return it to its historical origin as a female genre amid the all-male *bundan*, literary establishment.

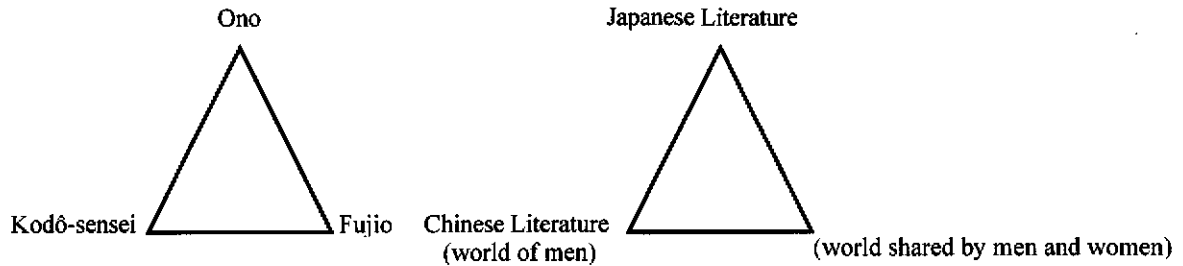


Figure 1. Erotic Triangles of Desire in *Gubijinsō*

The triangles in Fig. 1 appear symmetrical but in reality are skewed toward the male-male side of the relationship, which we will discuss later. Fujio eventually is excluded by the bond between Kodō-sensei and Ono. Fujio embodies not only the sexuality/textuality and gender/genre problems that are important to feminists but real problems of women in society, women who desire to step outside a subservient role and encroach on the world of men. Writing two decades after *Gubijinsō*, Virginia Woolf repeated Fujio's gender/genre predicament, criticizing the way her own career was impeded by nineteenth-century images of ideal womanhood as unselfish and pure, and by taboos against expressing female passion which prevented her from "telling the truth about [her] own experiences as a body." Writing differences for Woolf were based not on women's psychological make-up but their position in society. Modern feminist critics celebrate Woolf's efforts to dismantle essentialist notions of gender, to displace fixed gender identities (that would be alien to Sōseki who, as we shall see, held largely traditional, conservative attitudes about women's position in society). Sōseki was able to create strong-willed women in his fiction and place them in complex situations that called attention to their struggle but unable or unwilling to liberate them and give them the full measure of freedom they desired. Sōseki's other women to be examined here—Mineko in *Sanshirō*, O-Nobu and Kiyoko in *Meian*—all fail to find full acceptance, to experience growth, and transformation fully.

**The Body.** The importance of the body in literature—its centrality, its realistic corporeality—parallels and accompanies the rise of the novel in the West, with its realistic depictions of the individual in society and the material world. Realism is found in the details, the things and commodities of material culture, and the body, itself a commoditized object in capitalist economies, becomes increasingly important in literary narratives and literary history. The body has always had a place in literature, but the modern novel offers the most developed presentation and realistic descriptive representations. Yet only recently has the body become a topic of literary study. Jehlen's essay on gender was included in the first edition of *Critical Terms for Literary Study* (1990), and one on desire by Judith Butler was anthologized in the second edition of 1995, but neither edition has anything to say about *the body*. Casebooks and handbooks on contemporary literary theory are not likely to include essays on the body, but on the other hand no detailed commentary on feminist theory, gender studies, or queer theory is likely to disregard this important aspect of postmodern criticism.<sup>10</sup> It is not what the body does (human action and behavior are seemingly unclassifiable —though that is precisely what sociologists, and sociology of the body, attempts to do) but rather what is done to the body. In all postmodern discourse on the body, Foucault's concept of power and the body are brought to bear: "the body [is] the place where the most minute and local social practices are linked up with the large-scale organization of power."<sup>11</sup> Foucault's concept of "the meticulous rituals of power" is located (localized) in the body. As he states in *Discipline and Punish*, "Power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs."<sup>12</sup> And because the body is always embedded in economic strata, it has both utility and productivity. It becomes possible to make men work efficiently and productively only after they have been "caught up in a system of subjection (in which need is also a political instrument meticulously prepared, calculated and used); the body becomes a useful force only if it is both a productive body and a subjected body." (Foucault, 26) These are the two key concepts I will use in analyzing the *ningen kankei* (interpersonal relations) and power relations in Sôseki's fiction: the body as the site of power relations in modern society together with the productive/subjective body.

In his book *The King's Two Bodies*, Ernst Kantorowicz describes the dual nature of kingly corporeality, indicating the possibility of multiple bodies:

[The King] has not a Body natural distinct and divided by itself from the Office and Dignity royal, but a Body natural and a Body politic together indivisible; and these two bodies are incorporated in one Person, and make one Body and not divers, that is the Body corporate in the Body natural, et contra the Body natural in the Body corporate.<sup>13</sup>

Multiple bodies and a similar ideological language are also present in the Meiji Emperor, who has a Body natural and a Body corporate, a mystical incarnation of the body politic (*kokutai*), and as seamless as those of medieval kings. Multiple bodies in Sôseki's fiction need to be acknowledged and examined as well. Just as royalty possess a "body natural" and "body politic," one hidden within the private realm, the other on public display, Sôseki's fictional characters too possess a public (*tatema*) and a private (*honne*) body. Tsuda, for example, has a natural body which we observe on an examination table, and a social body, less frequently observed, as a white-collar worker, as *sarariiman*. Women have a "natural" body and a socially valued exchangeable body which is commodity of exchange between men and exploited to maintain smooth relations between men. The socially valued exchangeable female body can be seen in *Gubijinsô's* Sayoko, *Sorekara's* Michiyo, *Mon's* O-Yone, and *Kôjin's* O-Nao, *Kokoro's* Ojôsan, who are passed from one man to another—although smooth relations between men in Sôseki in competition for the same women are rare.

In my examination of bodies in Sôseki's fiction I hope to avoid repeating the all-too-common linkages made between Natsume Sôseki the author and his fictional creations. Past scholarship has been divided between *sakkaron* 作家論 bibliographical studies and *sakuhinron* 作品論 literary studies, but combining the two is a prevalent practice. Both types of "criticism" have been denounced for their being "impressionistic" (even Etô Jun's masterly four-volume study, *Sôseki to sono jidai* [Sôseki and His Age], uncompleted because of his suicide in 1999, has come under this criticism). Granted, these linkages between Sôseki and his work can be illuminating and entertaining, often deepening the reader's appreciation for Sôseki's literary capabilities, but I have tried to steer clear of this sort of exercise. I purposefully avoid giving lengthy biographical information and plot summaries. I refer readers interested in

learning more about Sôseki and his oeuvre to my detailed Bibliography. It should be clear that my focusing on Tsuda's disease in *Meian*, for example, is not an exploration of pathology or pathography but an emphasis on Sôseki's textuality, language, and rhetoric. Sôseki was a sick man during much of his adult life, and he eventually succumbed to the gastric ulcers that had long afflicted him, at the young age of forty-nine. Taking Sôseki's personal health problems as a key to understanding his fiction is something like attributing the elongated bodies in El Greco's paintings to the artist's astigmatism (which may be true, but does nothing to explain the artist's aesthetics, technique, or choice of subject matter). Typical of the pathographies on Sôseki is Fukushima Akira's *Tensai, oitachi no byôsekigaku* (A Pathography of the Personal History of Genius, 1996), which includes a psychoanalysis of schizophrenia, paranoia, and latent homosexuality in both Sôseki and his works.<sup>14</sup> One reason I find these kinds of studies pertinent, if at all, is for their emphasis on the body, or the mind/body.

For all its seeming irrelevancy, Fukushima's "analysis" does include the delightful anecdote of Sôseki's fondness for dressing up in his wife's New Year's kimono and running about the house (from his wife Kyôko's *Sôseki no omoide* [Remembrances of Sôseki]), and Etô Jun's statement that there existed a psychology of a love triangle thought to be predominantly homosexual among Sôseki and his disciples Komiya Toyotaka and Morita Sôhei [*hotondo homosekushuaru to omowareru sankaku kankei*] (Fukushima, 233). My point of course is that as stimulating as these insights might be, and as sensitive to Sôseki's writing as some are (Doi Takeo's *Psychological World of Natsume Sôseki* [1976], for example, shows a deep understanding and appreciation of Japan's most famous novelist), they often detract from our grasping the texts in a new way and sometimes prevent our going beyond the *idées reçues* of past scholarship. For all my deriding of pathographies, I am not entirely free from their influence and attraction: I too will explore asymmetrical triangles of desire and the homosocial in my own analysis, drawing on Doi's observations.

The diseased body is an important topos in Sôseki's oeuvre and one which, in spite of what I have just said, is difficult to resist linking the textual diseased body to Sôseki's personal ailments. Sôseki identified

closely with Dostoevsky's "sacred ailment," his epilepsy, which opened a window of clarity for the Russian author:

He remembered among other things that he always had one minute just before the epileptic fit (if it came on while he was awake), when suddenly in the midst of sadness, spiritual darkness and oppression, there seemed at moments a flash of light in his brain, and with extraordinary impetus all his vital forces suddenly began working at their highest tension. [Nikki oyobi danpen (Diary and Literary Fragments, 17 January 1915) SZ 26:178]

Sôseki quotes at length in his diary the passage excerpted above from *The Idiot* (1868-69), clearly associating his own near-death experience with Dostoevsky's heightened vision. He records his Shûzenji health crisis of 1910, returning from the death-like grip of a thirty-minute comatose state, as resulting in a blissful awareness and a sense of harmony with the world. These epiphanies of a sacred ailment never appear in his fiction, however. Whatever significance disease, illness, being unfit or degenerate may have for Sôseki's protagonists (and they are generally afflicted in some way), they are not privileged to have a blissful awareness or a sense of harmony with the world. On the contrary, the world is out of joint for many of them, and a "flash of light in the brain" is unattainable.

One more Foucauldian concept, in addition to the body as a site of rituals of power I would like to bring to our discussion is the example of surveillance and other forms of "disciplinary technology" inspired by Jeremy Bentham's plan for the Panopticon (1791), the circular prison with a central tower from where each and every move of the prisoner could be efficiently observed, recorded, and regulated. "The theme of the Panopticon," Foucault states in *Discipline and Punish*, "at once surveillance and observation, security and knowledge, individualization and totalization, isolation and transparency—found in the prison its privileged locus of realization" (Foucault, 249). The Panopticon serves as a macrocosm of society in which surveillance (of prisoners, of society) is maintained not through force and intimidation but through "discursive practices," the statements, speech acts, attitudes and ideologies that circulate throughout the body politic. The role of the gaze, the ubiquity of surveillance, the fear of detectives, all play an important part in Sôseki's fiction.

Perhaps the most salient feature of the body's place in literature is its power to represent society in macrocosm. Just as Foucault was able to observe and analyze the Panopticon and understand how the

disciplining and punishing of its members reflect social practices, we can observe and analyze the body in literature (literary representations of the body) and understand how discursive practices that circulate through the body politic converge on the site of the body. Sharon Chalmers has remarked on the historical process in Meiji Japan by which Western medicine and the concept of body-as-macrocosm combined forces to produce ways of disciplining and punishing the subject:

Western medicine during this period supported and further legitimated existing understandings of the body, which visualised the body as embedded in the macrocosm of society. This meant that illness was conceptualised as a symptom of a disequilibrium (encompassing past, present and future generations) between the moral and organic elements that constitute healthy social relationships. That is, the Meiji government promoted an ideology based on one's ability to perform in harmony with the land, climatic elements and a communal work ethic which would ultimately shape individuals into good citizens.<sup>15</sup>

The concept of the body as a macrocosm of society and the interrelationship between the micro and the macro is an ancient one, traceable to the Chinese classics known as the Four Books (The Great Learning, The Mean, Analects of Confucius, and Mencius). *Da Xue* (The Great Learning) contains one of the most famous examples of parallelism between the macrocosm and the microcosm, wherein the individual is a reflection of the state and the state is a reflection of the individual:

The ancients who wished clearly to exemplify illustrious virtue throughout the world would first set up good government in their states. Wishing to govern well their states, they would first regulate their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they would first cultivate their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they would first rectify their minds. Wishing to rectify their minds, they would first seek sincerity in their thoughts. Wishing for sincerity in their thoughts, they would first extend their knowledge. The extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. For only when things are investigated is knowledge extended; only when knowledge is extended are thoughts sincere; only when thoughts are sincere are minds rectified; only when minds are rectified are our persons cultivated; only when our persons are cultivated are our families regulated; only when families are regulated are states well governed; and only when states are well governed is there peace in the world.<sup>16</sup>

Meiji ideologues relied in part on the body-embedded-in-society to develop their own political language of a *kokutai* (body politic, the national polity) with the emperor as the national head of the family and the individual partaking of the quality of sacredness of the institution:

The Emperor was the family of the nation, it was argued, because the imperial family was the "national head family" (*kokumin kokka*) and the imperial family was the *kokumin kokka* because it derived from the topmost kami (spirits, deities) in the Shinto tradition . . . . The Confucian-type familistic ethic provided the real foundation for the society, and

increasingly, from the late-Meiji period on, Japanese ideologists spoke of the nation as an “extended family.” The nation was not like a family, it really was a family. This national family, supported from below by the socio-ethical patterns of individual households, was then “sanctified from above by Shinto beliefs which imbued it with a quality of sacredness.”<sup>17</sup>

With the body operating as a synecdoche of society, a blight on the body is a blight on society, and some afflicted bodies in Sôseki appear to stand in for a larger social malaise.

**Desire.** Gender is a frequent topic of feminist criticism; the body is a necessary component in Foucauldian notions of power relations; desire, however, is more difficult to theorize, and literature on it therefore is obscure, even impenetrable. An essay on desire is included in the second edition of *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, and the author of the essay is Judith Butler, whose *Gender Trouble* was considered by *Lingua Franca* to be one of the most influential scholarly works of the 1990s. Butler goes to classical Greek texts, as a number of feminist scholars have, to trace the philosophical origins of desire in the West. Desire has been structured as two corresponding moieties: masculinity, rationality, active desire, and mastery on the one hand, and femininity, matter, passive desire (or desirelessness), and masterability, on the other.<sup>18</sup> If we add some binary oppositions (BOs) from our gender/genre discussion above, they might look like this:

Masculinity	Femininity
Rationality Active desire Mastery Closure Sequential	Matter Passive desire Masterability Open-endedness Associational

Figure 2. Masculinity / Femininity

Throughout my analysis of gender, the body, and desire, I frequently construct BOs as a way of marking differences, but such an ordering of apparently random features must not be misconstrued as homologous. A seemingly infinite number of associated oppositions can be generated from a text, but a one-to-one correspondence cannot be made to fit the realities of lived life across cultures, across time and space. The above-mentioned binary oppositions are a convenient tool for setting up a framework of understanding that

then must be dismantled. As a point of departure, this binary ordering can be identified with corresponding patterns in Japanese literature in which the rational, active desire, and mastery are associated with men; but the converse is also true, wherein women possess active desire, mastery, and the rational. Sôseki's fiction as well contains copious examples of strong women with active desire and a sense of mastery. In fact, it is the inversion of these expectations with which Sôseki seems to be preoccupied in his writing: the passive male and the woman desiring mastery over the male.

Lacan's notion of desire is, in its simplest form, a desire for wholeness—a "hole in the self" that the subject attempts to close through an endless "metonymic chain of supplements": the perfect this, the perfect that, the perfect boyfriend, a tenure track job. Desire is a continuous force. As soon as one supplement is obtained, desire moves on to its next object. Desire is always "the desire for something else" (Lacan, *Écrits*, 167). Desire is a thirst that can never be quenched. Lacan's notion of desire will shed light on our understanding of Tsuda in Meian, who, as we shall see, has a "hole in the self"—and closure of that hole constitutes the plot of the novel. Also essential to Lacan's notion is the desire to be the object of another's desire, and desire for recognition. These two desires we will observe in O-Nobu, who desires the absolute love of her husband, Tsuda. Desire is mediated by the desire of another. Mediated desire is an important concept in our discussion of erotic triangles. In Sôseki's erotic triangles, desire for the beloved is always mediated by the desire of another. Even O-Nobu's desire is mediated by Mrs. Yoshikawa, whom she secretly emulates to gain power over Tsuda.

No discussion of desire in Sôseki would be complete without a Buddhist interpretation. Lacan's very definitions point out the problem of desire: desire is always "the desire for something else" since it is impossible to desire what one already has. "desire is continually deferred" (Lacan, 167, 175). Desire is unsatiable. In Buddhist soteriology, enlightenment and liberation from desire are the goal. Enlightenment comes through termination of desire, suffering and attachment. Nirvana, meaning "to extinguish," and "to blow out" (from the Sanskrit *nis-* out + *vis* it blows), is a state of "extinction," the termination of all craving and desire, not just the extinction of the object of desire (including, paradoxically, the desire for liberation), but desire itself.<sup>19</sup> Sôseki represents the world of desire in terms of the Lotus Sutra's Burning House. He

refers to *hitaku* 火宅, the Burning House, in his novels *Sanshirô* and *Sorekara*, as well as in his essay *Omoidasu koto nado* (Things Remembered, 1911).

Of *Sanshirô*'s three worlds (the past, the university, the world of women), only the second world, the all-male academy, offers peace and escape from the Burning House of desire. The novel ends before we know which world *Sanshirô* will choose, but considering that he is already attending the university and considering his view of the second world, his choice should be obvious:

He saw the human shadows flitting through his second world. Most of them had unkempt beards. Some walked along looking at the sky, others looking at the ground. All were shabbily dressed, all lived in poverty. And they were at peace. Closed in on every side by streetcars, they yet breathed deeply of the air of peace. The men in this world were fortunate, for they knew nothing of the real world. But they were fortunate as well, for they had fled the Burning House of worldly suffering. (Rubin, 63)

In *Sorekara*, Daisuke is unable to escape the Burning House of desire (the real world) and the novel ends with his being engulfed in hallucinatory flames: "Oh, it's moving, the world's moving," . . . His head began to spin at the same speed as the train. The more it spun, the more flushed it became from the heat. If he could ride like this for half a day, he thought he could be burnt to ashes" (Field, 256).

In *Gender Trouble*, Butler challenges the idea that there are true gender identities and natural sexes, exposes the myth of what we assume are stable and abiding terms, and reveals the fictions supporting gender hierarchy and "compulsory heterosexuality." Gender identities are not fixed, not rooted in nature or even bodies, but performative. Her "performative theory of gender" seems almost a cliché now that "performativity" is used to such a great extent in such disparate fields as literary criticism and notions of self, for example. Butler introduces her rhetoric (and answers her own questions) by interrogating the performance of drag queen Divine, star of many John Waters' films:

His/her performance destabilizes the very distinctions between the natural and the artificial, depth and surface, inner and outer through which discourse about genders almost always operates. Is drag the imitation of gender, or does it dramatize the signifying gestures through which gender itself is established? Does being female constitute a "natural fact" or a cultural performance, or is "naturalness" constituted through discursively constrained performative acts that produce the body through and with the categories of sex?<sup>20</sup>

The use of performance as a metaphor is not new of course. Erving Goffman employs the metaphor of theatrical performance in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) as a framework for understanding human behavior in social situations (but Butler acknowledges no debt to Goffman). Gender differences are curiously lacking, however, in his discussion; he is not concerned with how female and male “performances” might differ. If we substitute Goffman’s “self” with “gender,” the following passage almost reads like Judith Butler (without the pomo talk):

In this report the performed self was seen as some kind of image, usually creditable, which the individual on stage and in character effectively attempts to induce others to hold in regard to him. While this image is entertained *concerning* the individual, so that a self is imputed to him, this self itself does not derive from its possessor, but from the whole scene of his action, being generated by that attribute of local events which renders them interpretable by witnesses. A correctly staged and performed scene leads the audience to impute a self to a performed character, but this imputation—this self—is a *product* of a scene that comes off, and is not a *cause* of it.<sup>21</sup>

The idea of performance and constructedness goes back to Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* (1949) and her much-quoted first sentence, “One is not born a woman, rather, one *becomes* a woman.”<sup>22</sup> Womanliness as performance resonates both in Goffman and Butler (though, of course, “constructedness” was not a vogue word in the 1950s when Goffman was conducting his field work). If the correctly staged and performed scene leads to the imputation of self/gender, we cannot look for a cause, as Goffman says, but only observe/evaluate the performance for its competence, appropriateness, and effectiveness. O-Nobu’s “performance,” for example, will be seen as inappropriate, especially by O-Hide and Mrs. Yoshikawa (perhaps out of jealousy toward her free-mindedness), because she attended the theater when her husband had just checked in to a clinic (among other reasons, including being a spendthrift). O-Nobu’s poor performance as dutiful wife will result in her needing to be “educated” by Mrs. Yoshikawa.

I have purposefully avoided defining gender, since no acceptable definition exists for such a slippery term. In Iida Yūko’s *Karera no monogatari: Nihon kindai bungaku to jendaa* (Their Story: Japanese Modern Literature and Gender)—which I will turn to now and again in later discussions—the author uses the definition made famous by Joan W. Scott in her *Gender and Political History*, that gender is knowledge about sexual difference [性差にかんする知]. The obvious obstacle is in using gender as an analytical category when theorists such as Butler suggest it is not a category at all. A more effective tool, perhaps, is

analysis of the intersection of gender and desire, as analyzed by René Girard in his influential *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel*. Girard writes that the novel (and by novel he means Western novel: Cervantes, Dostoevsky, and Proust predominate) articulates the triangular structure of all desire, that all desire is negotiated through a mediator, and that desire for the Other is in actuality a hidden desire for the mediator. This is a desire not just to possess but to replace the mediator, to change places with the mediator. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick expands Girard's opening chapter "'Triangular' Desire" into her own equally influential book, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Sedgwick's work I have found particularly helpful in analyzing the erotic triangles in Sôseki's fiction.

Finally, I intend to read Sôseki's fiction as postmodern writing, ignoring the fact that his work is properly *modernist* and therefore *anterior* to postmodernism but not ignoring history or the historical moment in which all his novels are situated. Many critics, Japanese and non-Japanese alike, are fond of saying Japan has always been postmodern (though, topically speaking, not heard much nowadays). Masao Miyoshi, among others, has explained why:

As a matter of fact, the description of postmodernism began to fit the Japanese conditions remarkably well, as if the term were coined specifically for Japanese society. The dispersal and demise of modern subjectivity, as announced by Barthes, Foucault, and many others, have long been evident in Japan, where intellectuals have chronically complained about the absence of selfhood. The postmodern erasure of historicity—on which Jean-François Lyotard reflects—is the stuff of Japanese nativist religion (Shinto), in which ritual bathing is meant to cleanse away not only the evil residuals of the past but the past itself. Anti-traditionalism, and parody and pastiche have constituted one of the two main cultural streams—together with imported “realism”—for the last two centuries.<sup>23</sup>

Looking for the postmodern in a modernist work, I feel not only justified in doing so but also in good company. Japanese sociologist Takie Lebra too claims to have been practicing poststructuralism all along, “I could claim to be a deconstructionist in this sense if I were receptive to fashionable poststructuralism,” she says. “I am resistant to this brand of Western intellectual fashion, probably because I am like other Japanese who, too sensitized to the situational, multiple contingency of perception and action to be fully converted into structuralism, have been practicing poststructuralism prestructurally and therefore have nothing to deconstruct.”<sup>24</sup> In order to practice a postmodernist reading pre-postmodernistically, I will identify and engage only certain “pertinent” elements from a host of postmodern tendencies to bring to our

discussion of Sôseki's fiction. By "pertinent," I mean the more obvious and utilizable elements such as disjunction, play, pastiche, indeterminacy. Out of Ihab Hassan's famous ordering of the differences between modernism and postmodernism, I will invoke the following, some more pertinent than others:

Modernism	Postmodernism
form (conjunctive, closed)	antiform (disjunctive, open)
purpose	play
design	chance
hierarchy	anarchy
mastery/ logos	exhaustion/silence
art object/finished work	process/performance/happening
creation/totalization/synthesis	decreation/deconstruction/antithesis
presence	absence
centring	dispersal
genre/boundary	text/intertext
selection	combination
metaphor	metonymy
root/depth	rhizome/surface
interpretation/reading	against interpretation/misreading
signified	signifier
lisible (readerly)	scriptible (writerly)
master code	idiolect
symptom	desire
transcendence	immanence
determinacy	indeterminacy

Figure 3. Schematic Differences Between Modernism and Postmodernism<sup>25</sup>

Karatani Kôjin has called Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760) a thorough dismantling of the modern European novel at a time when the modern European novel was still in its formative stage, in the same way that Sôseki's *I Am a Cat* is a dismantling of the modern Japanese novel at a time when the modern Japan novel was still in its formative stage (and, to a great extent, being developed by Sôseki himself). If *Meian* is a bourgeois novel that participates in the very form it deconstructs, it also, as the novelistic form, deconstructs previously existing genres. In deconstructing *Meian*, I will attempt to point out what I see as postmodern tendencies and add layers to, or "thicken," my description of Sôseki's final work.

Chapter 2  
Reading the Diseased Body:  
Fissure, Blindness, and The Gaze in *Meian*

“Call me Ishmael.”

“It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen.”

“As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed into a giant insect.”

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.”

“He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish.”

“It was a dark and stormy night and the rain fell in torrents—except at occasional intervals, when it was checked by a violent gust of wind which swept up the streets (for it is in London that our scene lies), rattling along the housetops, and fiercely agitating the scanty flame of the lamps that struggled against the darkness.”

“riverrun past Eve and Adam’s from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs.”

*Longtemps, je me suis couché de bonne heure.* (For a long time I used to go to bed early.)

*Kokkyō no nagai tonneru wo nukeru to yukiguni de atta.*  
 (“The train came out of the long tunnel into snow country.”)

*Isha wa saguri o ireta ato de shujutsudai kara Tsuda o oroshita.*  
 (“After the doctor had probed the fistula, he helped Tsuda off the operating table.”)

Herman Melville begins *Moby Dick* by having the character Ishmael introduce himself. George Orwell begins *Nineteen Eighty-Four* with a jarring anomaly. Franz Kafka begins *Die Verwandlung* with a man waking to a living nightmare. Jane Austen begins *Pride and Prejudice* with an ironic proposition. Ernest Hemingway begins *The Old Man and the Sea* with, what else, an old man at sea. Edward Bulwer-Lytton begins *Paul Clifford* with a now famous cliché that has become synonymous with bad writing. James Joyce begins *Finnegans Wake* with a fragment that is a continuation of the final sentence of the novel. Marcel Proust begins *À la Recherche du Temps Perdu* with the narrator Marcel’s early retiring to bed. Kawabata Yasunari begins *Snow Country* with a train passing through a tunnel. Natsume Sôseki begins *Light and Darkness* with an anal probe.

We begin with the anus. We begin with the anus because that is where Sôseki begins his novel *Meian*, with what is surely one of the most unusual opening passages of modern fiction:

医者は探りを入れた後で、手術台の上から津田を下ろした。  
「矢張穴が腸まで続いているんです。この前探った時は、途中に癩痕の隆起があったので、ついに其所が行き留りだとはばかり思って、ああ云ったんですが、今日疎通を好くする為に、其奴をがりがり搔き落して見ると、まだ奥があるんです」(SZ 24:6)

After the doctor had probed the fistula, he helped Tsuda off the operating table.  
“The fistula did go as far as the intestines, after all. When I probed it before, I found a great deal of scar tissue midway, and I actually thought it didn’t go any farther. That’s why I said what I did. But today, in scraping at it to drain it properly, I saw it goes quite a bit beyond that point.” (Viglielmo, 1)

This passage is not to be taken lightly. Everything that develops in the course of a novel, as narratologists tell us, is anticipated in the beginning. All possible significant outcomes are already built into the opening of the story. The narrative is front-loaded to predict later developments—or, in this case, rear-ended. The *ana* 穴 (hole) or anal fistula or fissure<sup>1</sup> which is described in the first paragraphs of *Meian*, is emblematic of the protagonist’s condition and functions as a central trope for the novel as a whole: hole, gap, fissure, rupture, blindness all are to be experienced, I hope to demonstrate, on a multitude of levels—textually, thematically, epistemologically—later in the course of the work.

We should make it clear at this point that Sôseki never names the disease. Translator Viglielmo has provided the reader with the word “fistula,” which does not appear in the Japanese text. To restore the ambiguity in Sôseki’s opening sentences, I would translate them as follows:

After the doctor had finished the [anal] probe, he helped Tsuda off the operating table.  
“Just as I thought, the hole did extend all the way to the intestines.”

Many readers and critics (including Fredric Jameson) have mistakenly assumed the disease to be hemorrhoids, which clearly is not the case. The misunderstanding comes in part from Sôseki’s medical journal in which he describes his own hemorrhoid operation:

漱石日記（明治四十四年十二月四日）に、医者のところに行き、「痔の中を開けて疎通をよくしたら五分の深さと思ったものがまだ一寸ある。。。』というよう  
な記事が出ている。漱石は、痔の治療に長らく通いまた一週間ほど入院したこともあった。

In Sôseki's diary of 4 December 1911 he records going to the doctor and "when having the hemorrhoid opened and irrigated, what was thought to be 1.5 cm (5 *bu*) deep was actually 3 cm deeper." Sôseki went for hemorrhoid treatment for a long time and was also hospitalized for one week. [SZ 24:276, n1. Translation is mine.]

A hole cannot be a hemorrhoid. The hole, in the case of a fissure, refers to a tear; in the case of a fistula, it refers to a tract or channel (I admit ambiguity here, as in so much of the novel). In addition to anal fistula (which I believe is the correct prognosis), I also will use the word "fissure" for all the associations it opens up in the text. To return to the fundamental problem—fundament being buttocks or anus—the *fundamental* problem then is Tsuda's anus, or more specifically *in* his anus. Tsuda suffers from a medical problem the cure of which, together with his convalescence, constitute the major concern of the text (Jameson summarizes the plot succinctly as "a man who has just undergone a minor surgical intervention goes to recuperate in the countryside"<sup>2</sup>). Disease and illness, we can assume, will be worked and figured into his narrative as a primary metaphor. But there is much more than this:

Tsuda nodded but did not speak. Near him, on the table beneath the southern window, was a microscope. Since he was rather intimate with the doctor, upon entering the consultation room earlier, he had been allowed to take a look through it out of curiosity. He had clearly seen under the lens, which magnified objects eight hundred and fifty times, coloured botryoidal bacilli exactly as if they had been minutely sketched. (Viglielmo, 2)

Under the lens of the author/narrator, the details greatly magnified for the benefit of our readerly gaze, we are going to observe closely Tsuda's physical (and some would say spiritual) condition and his journey on the road to recovery, such as it is. The authorial lens will also be turned on other characters too of course, focused on interpersonal relations between and among them, and held over their social milieu so as to amplify the disease and illness present there as well, whatever that might be. One difficulty with Tsuda's illness is that he cannot see it. He cannot confirm his condition with his own eyes. It is a blind spot. He must rely on the doctor's prognosis and care.

Fistula/fissure can be linked to blindness in a number of ways: Tsuda's fistula is situated in a blind spot, and it is located somewhat in the vicinity of the cecum, or blind intestine, which is related to the word "cecidity," or "blindness" [see Appendix A]. Fissure or rupture in the text, fissure and rupture in relationships, blind spots in the text (areas, details, things that readers cannot see and cannot know), and

blind spots in characters' own self-knowledge and knowledge of others all come from, all descend from, converge on, or can be traced back to, this one site on Tsuda's body: the anus.

In the same way that Sôseki has begun his novel, we must probe in this chapter as well the *ana* あな 穴 (hole) in all its possible significations. Besides its primary definition of hole, *ana* is further defined by Shôgakkan's *Nihon Kokugo Daijiten* (Japanese Language Encyclopedic Dictionary) as 2) *kaketa tame ni dekita kûhakujôtai* (a blank condition produced by lack); and 3) *fukanzen na ten, ketten* (an imperfect point, a fault). The example for 3) is, appropriately enough, a citation from Sôseki's *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (I Am a Cat, 1905-6): *Shujin no ronri ni wa ooi naru ana ga aru* (There is a great defect [literally, "hole"] in my master's logic). All these definitions apply to Tsuda's condition and will be explored here: Tsuda the lacuna, the blank slate, Tsuda the flawed and defective.

One more symbolically charged item appears in the opening section, in addition to the *ana* and the microscope: Tsuda's leather wallet (*kawa no kamiire* 皮の紙入). Money, financial problems, the cash nexus, as we shall see, not only further the narrative development (how will the operation be paid for now that father has cut off Tsuda's allowance?) but invade and displace many of the *ningen kankei* (interpersonal relationships) of the novel. Taken together, these ideas which are front-loaded/rear-ended in the first section of *Meian*—fissure, rupture, blindness, the gaze, and the cash nexus—will in turn be probed, analyzed, and explored in this chapter. To understand and appreciate fully what Sôseki has accomplished in *Meian* (both what he has achieved and what he has not, in terms of producing a modern novel of complexity) I will attempt to point out some salient features that characterize and resonate in both Sôseki's *Meian* and in fiction of his Japanese contemporaries, as well as in some eighteenth- and nineteenth-century English novels, of which Sôseki was a critic and scholar.<sup>3</sup>

**“I wouldn't happen to be tubercular, would I?”** Tsuda's inability to observe his own medical condition, means, as we have said, he must trust the words of his doctor. Worse, Tsuda is worried that he may even be tubercular:

“If I were tubercular, and you performed the operation you’ve just mentioned, it wouldn’t heal even if you did make that narrow incision all the way to the intestine, would it?”

“If you’re tubercular, it’s hopeless, since it won’t do to treat the opening without probing deep into the fistula.”

Tsuda involuntarily knit his brow.

“I wouldn’t happen to be tubercular, would I?”

“No, you’re not.”

To determine how much truth there was in the doctor’s words, he fixed his eyes on him for a moment.

“How can you know? By the routine examination?”

“Yes, I know just by looking at you.” (Viglielmo, 2)

“I wouldn’t happen to be tubercular, would I?” (*Watashi no wa kekkakusei ja nai n desu ka* [Mine isn’t tubercular, is it?]) Does Tsuda perhaps know something we don’t? Or is his question entirely innocent—one of hopeful concern that tuberculosis has not invaded his body? Could a layman such as Tsuda be aware of tuberculosis’ destructive power in its many manifestations: that an anal fistula in fact can be caused by tuberculosis? Today we know that the disease can be found in “inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain (meningeal tuberculosis), destruction of kidney tissue (renal tuberculosis), the infirmity of the hunchback known as gibbus or Pott’s disease (tuberculosis of the spine), lupus (tuberculosis of the skin), fistula-in-ano and several other pathological conditions.”<sup>3</sup> Medically speaking, Tsuda’s lesion (a fistula-in-ano, I believe) could very well have been caused by tuberculosis. Whether he actually possesses a detailed knowledge of the disease is uncertain, but this much is clear: use of the word *kekkakusei* 結核性 for tubercular or tuberculous (from “kernel” or tubercle) indicates a modern understanding of tuberculosis; he does not use the archaic expression *rōsai*, meaning “consumptive.” Koch’s discovery of tuberculin was known in Japan from 1850 (though, misguidedly, he thought it a cure rather than a way of testing for the disease).

More important, we must remember that Sōseki has used this metaphor before. In *Mon* he begins Chapter 17 with this ominous opening paragraph:

The sin of Sosuke and Oyone cast its shadow over their entire lives and engulfed them, so that they felt very much like ghosts adrift in the world of men. They had a vague realization that deep in their hearts, too deep for eye to penetrate, was concealed a dreadful canker. Yet as they faced each other day after day, they pretended to be unaware of this. And the years passed by. (Mathy, 168)

The Japanese that Sôseki uses is more threatening than “canker”: it is *kekakusei no osoroshii mono* 結核性の恐ろしいもの, something horrible, tuberculous. The ominous feeling turns to reality when Sôsuke hears from his landlord that Yasui, the man he displaced to be at his wife’s side, has returned to Tokyo, and his sense of guilt for his past actions begins to throb like an “old wound.” The metaphorical wound is described as if it were a real flesh and blood lesion:

The wound, which in the last two or three years had finally begun to heal, now began to throb afresh, and the throbbing was accompanied by fear. The scar seemed about to break open anew and be exposed to a poison-bearing wind that would blow mercilessly into it. Sôsuke thought of revealing the new development to Oyone so that she could share the pain with him.” (Mathy, 171) [Mathy’s translation uses Oyone, but I prefer the orthography O-Yone since “O” is the prefix attached to a woman’s name, a common Meiji practice].

Tsuda’s wound, similarly, must be read metaphorically, or to be more precise, metonymically, since it is not an arbitrary relation, but contiguous, embodied. Whether Tsuda’s disease is read metaphorically or metonymically, his question is dead serious. Tuberculosis, a real and constant threat, was the leading cause of death in Japan before World War II and Sôseki himself knew first-hand of the disease because it took the lives of many of his literary friends and colleagues: Higuchi Ichiyô (1872-1896), Takayama Chogyû (1871-1902), Masaoka Shiki (1867-1902), Kunikida Doppo (1871-1908), Futabatei Shimei (1864-1909), Ishikawa Takuboku (1886-1912), and Mori Ôgai (1862-1922), to name a few. As early as 1895 “consumption” (*rôsai* or *rôgai*, “phthisis,” as it was known throughout the Edo period but rarely used after 1868) made an appearance in Japanese literature in Ichiyô’s story, “Nigorie” (Troubled Waters), in which the geisha O-Riki is haunted by her mother’s death by consumption and by her insanity, both thought to be hereditary diseases. In *Zangiku* (The Lingering Chrysanthemum, 1889), by Hirotsu Ryûrô (1861-1928), the first modern work to make a tubercular person its main character, O-Kô, like *La Dame aux Camélias*, was prepared to endure a lingering disease and suffer eventual death, but she continues to fight her illness and eventually overcomes it. *Hototogisu* (translated as *Namiko*, serialized 1898-1899), by Tokutomi Roka (1868-1927) captured the public’s imagination with its tragic tale of Namiko, who is divorced by her husband because of her consumption and who dies following her divorce. It goes without saying that in Sôseki’s lifetime (and during the timeframe of *Meian*), tuberculosis was still a stigmatized, dreaded disease. Traditionally, victims and family members often hid the fact from others. Even army physician and later

surgeon-general Mori Ôgai, advocate of Western science and medicine, kept knowledge of his condition from his family.<sup>4</sup> Against this familiar and abhorrent social backdrop, Sôseki has situated his main character, Tsuda, whose fear of being tubercular, it turns out, is well founded. “Then as now,” explains William Johnston in his *History of Tuberculosis in Japan*, “physicians assumed absolute authority over the interpretation of the signs and symptoms of illness, and thus in many respects over the bodies and lives of their patients” (Johnston, 129).

Unlike Tsuda’s invisible fistula, tuberculosis instills a fear all its own besides requiring that it must be probed even more deeply: that it can be seen, that it is detectable, that it is visibly written on the body. TB or not TB, that is the question. Tsuda, after all, is a typical Sôsekian protagonist in his sharing with other major male characters in his fiction the mark of being punctilious, proud, ruminative, secretive, cautious to a fault, and excessively concerned with appearances. He is the typical modern man who in Walter Benjamin’s view is like a character in a Franz Kafka novel: bewildered, lost, shell-shocked into passive conformity and emotional numbness—an abject picture of alienation.<sup>5</sup> Under the professional gaze of the doctor, Tsuda is told he is not tubercular. “I know just by looking at you,” the doctor says. Thus end the first two pages of the novel, constituting the first section. But in the remaining three hundred plus pages (a total of 187 sections or chapters, one each serialized daily in the *Asahi shinbun* from May 26 to December 14, 1916) are revealed scene after scene in which characters are subjected to a similar gaze, an objectifying gaze, a prognostic gaze, a hierarchizing gaze, just as the doctor has given Tsuda.

Tsuda has no choice but to trust the opinion of the doctor whose very presence suggests probity, rectitude and veracity. “A doctor can’t lie in his professional life, you know,” the doctor assures Tsuda: Whom can one trust, if not a doctor? Of course doctors in Japan (“then and now” as Johnston reminds us) did not always tell patients the truth about their disease. Anthropologist Ohnuki-Tierney observes that it is not uncommon for patients to entrust the doctor not only with their medical problems but with their entire welfare (*Sensei ni o-makase-shimasu*; I entrust everything to you).<sup>6</sup> Even doctors today in Japan, sometimes do not tell the patient of a cancer “verdict,” just as a tuberculosis “verdict” was concealed from patients in Sôseki’s day. A case in point is Doppo, who was told he had “pneumonial catarrh,”—laryngeal

or pneumonial catarrh being code words for tuberculosis. Like O-Kô in *Hototogisu*, whose disease is kept a secret from her, the truth must be learned inadvertently—from the maid in her case. Not until the 1940s, when it became curable, Johnston tells us, was tuberculosis seen as no more stigmatizing than the common cold. As long as Tsuda is ignorant of his condition (even though we have no reason to doubt the words of the doctor), his body is not his own possession; others, as we shall see, also lay claim to it. Who can be trusted? Indeed, this question is the unspoken interrogative that threatens to destabilize, undermine, or challenge in some way all the principal relationships in the novel: fidelity between husband and wife (Tsuda and O-Nobu); filiality between brother and sister (Tsuda and O-Hide); propriety between superior and subordinate (Yoshikawa and Tsuda); affection between friends or “friend and foe” (Tsuda and Kobayashi).

In addition to his fear of contracting a deadly disease, Tsuda is concerned about whether he might be tubercular for another reason. Exhibiting telltale symptoms is one thing: the cough, the sputum, respiratory problems, the wasting effect (being “consumed” by the disease, whence the word consumption, or phthisis, from the Greek for wasting away; *rôsai* or *lao chai*, the disease of labor, the wasting disease).

But bearing the marks (stigmata) of moral decay, pollution and weakness associated with the disease is quite another. Sôseki visited England in 1900-1902, long after the phrenology craze of the mid-nineteenth century had waned, but his knowledge of phrenology, degeneration theory, the Lombrosian revolution and atavism, however limited, is reflected in the fact that he possessed in his extensive personal library English translations of Nordau’s *Entartung* (Degeneration, 1892) and Cesare Lombroso’s *L’Uomo di genio* (The Man of Genius, 1891) which contained Sôseki’s handwritten notes throughout (SZ 32:165-66).<sup>7</sup> Lombroso’s idea that the sicker the body the more sublime the intellectual products, would have had a peculiar resonance with Sôseki (himself a man of genius and a sick man). Nordau defined degeneration as the morbid deviation from an original type. “When under any kind of noxious influences an organism becomes debilitated, its successors will not resemble the healthy, normal type . . . but will form a new subspecies.”<sup>8</sup> By 1890 there was a growing consensus that modern industrial society was creating a “barbarian within” and that “a tide of degeneration was sweeping across the landscape of industrial Europe, creating a

host of disorders in its wake that included a rise in poverty, crime, alcoholism, moral perversion, and political violence.”<sup>9</sup> Armed with copious data from examination of the skulls of criminals and of the facial/cranial physiognomy of living criminals, Lombroso in his book *L’Uomo Delinquente* (Criminal Man, 1876) posited that visible, distinguishing marks of the murderer, rapist, and deviant could be identified on the skull, head, and face. Certain physical signs on the body could reveal the savages and throwbacks in our midst, he believed. Atavistic theory, which existed before Darwin, seemed to find confirmation in his theory of evolution, and became the cornerstone of degeneration theory. Atavism, from *atavus*, or remote ancestor, taught that “every organism had certain ‘lost’ characteristics that were ready to reappear under certain conditions and would then be passed on to offspring.”<sup>10</sup> Emile Zola (1840-1902) explored some of these themes in his twenty-volume series of novels on the Rougon-Macquart family, a study of degeneration and the interaction between heredity and the environment. Even though a localized version of Zolaism appeared in Japan, Japanese writers of the naturalist school largely ignored degeneration theory. Forerunners of naturalism in Japan, Kosugi Tengai (1865-1952) and Nagai Kafû (1879-1959) soon lost interest in the movement and did not go on to developing works of naturalism. The literary oeuvre of Sôseki, who is generally regarded as being antinaturalist, has little to say directly about atavism or degeneration theory, although James Reichert has observed these very themes in his study of Sôseki’s early novel *Nowaki*.<sup>11</sup> In this regard I do not think it strange that Sôseki has returned to these themes, even if minutely or obliquely, in his final work (uncompleted at his death), which is usually seen as the culmination of his literary art. In my scheme of things, Tsuda fears that being read as “diseased,” will translate socially into meaning morally corrupt, degenerate, weak, unfit. The relevance of degeneration in our discussion of Sôseki is reinforced in a roundtable discussion, *Sôseki to taika-ron* (Sôseki and Degeneration Theory) in volume four of *Sôseki Kenkyû* (Sôseki Studies).

Tsuda, in other words, is two people: at times a doting husband to O-Nobu, and yet he seeks “closure” with his former fiancée Kiyoko (to name but one dichotomy). He possesses a dual nature, a divided self, having *tatemae* (public self) and *honne* (private self)—as is so often said to hold true for the majority of Japanese people. His body condition of fissure, rupture, schizoid (split, cleft)—in the antagonistic sense, not in the psychological—points toward this division. The theme of the dual nature of humanity and the divided self

are most clearly seen in the two new literary genres of the Victorian era, the horror story and the detective novel, which take up the motif of the “evolutionary duality of modern man.”<sup>12</sup> Well-known examples are Robert Louis Stevenson’s tale of civilized man/bestial duality in *The Strange Case of Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886); H. G. Wells’s macabre evolutionary fable that revolted contemporary reviewers, *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896); Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Case of the Creeping Man” (1923), whose deductive search for physical signs, visible clues, parallels Lombroso’s technique; even Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) modeled on the “decadent” and “degenerate” Oscar Wilde;<sup>13</sup> as well as Wilde’s own gothic study of aestheticism, the beautiful and the profane, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890). In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), Freud too recognized the dual nature of human beings, seeing them as seething pots of lust which require a sublimation of brute instinct and a veneer of civilization to keep them from boiling over.<sup>14</sup> Whether Freud’s analysis of Western civilization applies to Japan is moot, but the basic conflict between egoism and individual renunciation that he identifies certainly is germane to Japan and to Sôseki’s work in general. Broadly speaking, Sôseki’s treatment of Tsuda centers on this tension (and it is an enduring, significant theme in all his mature fiction): the conflict between individual freedom versus the demands of society, the instinctual life of egoistic self-satisfaction versus individual renunciation. The agon of egoism and self-renunciation is present in Sôseki’s concept of *sokuten kyôshi* 即天去私 (follow heaven, abandon self), which some critics have seen as the golden key to understanding Sôseki, the man and his work, but Etô Jun, most notably, has pooh-pooed this idea.<sup>15</sup> As I hope to show, this binarism is just one among many that facilitate a provocative, compelling *explication du texte*.

Among Sôseki’s contemporaries were Japanese authors who pursued the dual nature of humanity and of human desire in their works. Ozaki Kôyô’s *Konjiki yasha* (Demon Gold, serialized 1897-1903) basic premise was structured on the dual struggle of pure love (*ren'ai* 恋愛) and unconditional love versus the love of money and success. Arishima Takeo’s *Aru Onna* (A Certain Woman, 1919) explored female sexual passion versus male reason and intellect. The divided self in Sôseki’s *Meian* is not a picture of the duality of the civilized man versus the atavistic troglodyte, but rather of modern man paralyzed in a world of moral chiaroscuro, in a world in which deceit and dissembling are requisite survival tools (especially in marriage),

and in which humanity and free will are counterpoised against the ill will, rancor, and animosity of the Other.

As is well known, Sôseki's novels are full of detectives and characters who live in fear of detectives and in apprehension and disgust over their dubious role in society. *Meian* is no exception to this pattern: Kobayashi thinks he is followed by detectives, and in the bar scene in Section 35 a mysterious Sherlock Holmesian character appears on the scene, complete with Inverness cape, deerstalker cap, and note pad. Sôseki often thought he was being tailed by detectives, and his wife considered this another indication of his neurosis. They are repugnant to Sôseki protagonists not just because of an aversion to "the gaze," but because a detective's role is to ferret out secrets and look for physical signs and visible clues on a person's body: the suspect's face and body must be read. Most protagonists in Sôseki's fiction harbor secrets. Sensei in *Kokoro* takes his secret to the grave, divulging it in the end only to Watakushi (the "I" narrator), the student, in a "Last Testament." Tsuda too has many secrets he has kept from his wife, O-Nobu (the undisclosed financial status of his family in Kyoto, Kiyoko, the other woman, the true purpose of his hot spring trip, to see Kiyoko), just as O-Nobu has withheld certain information from Tsuda (her own financial circumstances). A detective would unmask Tsuda's disembling, expose his "dual nature," or reveal that beneath his social persona is nothing but a hollow man.

The connection between making distinctions based on visible clues and detectives (and buttocks) is made in Sôseki's early novel *Kusamakura*. The artist reflects on the difference between wandering in the country and in the city:

I had stopped walking. I decided to remain where I was until I grew bored with the place, and considered myself very lucky to be able to do so. If I had done such a thing in Tokyo I would either have been run down immediately by a tram, or moved on by a policeman. In the city they are unable to tell the difference between a law-abiding citizen and a vagrant. Moreover, they pay enormous salaries to detectives who are the biggest rogues of all.

I eased my law-abiding buttocks [ *taihei no shiri* ] down on to the cushioning grass.  
(Turney, 133)

Private investigators were and still are frequently employed in Japan to do a background search on prospective marriage partners, especially for arranged marriages, including a health check to search for the

“dreaded illnesses,” tuberculosis and insanity, which, as I mentioned, were thought to be hereditary (this theme forms an important subplot of Tanizaki Jun’ichirô’s *Sasameyuki* [The Makioka Sisters, 1943-48], for example). The search might also be for *burakumin*, “special village people” of outcaste status, considered to be another form of pollution.<sup>16</sup> The marriage of Tsuda and O-Nobu was a “love marriage,” not an arranged one, and no mention is made of a private investigator checking the backgrounds of the marriage partners. The character who assumes a private investigator-type role—the one who surveys, checks and investigates—is none other than the “all seeing” Mrs. Yoshikawa. Some things, however, cannot be observed by a private investigator, such as Tsuda’s condition which is at once hidden from view but an open subject of discussion.

Bertram: What is it, my good lord, the king languishes of?

Lafew: A fistula, my lord.

Bertram: I heard not of it before.

—*All’s Well That Ends Well* I.1.31-4.

**An anal fistula is no laughing matter**, unless you are the butt of jokes as is the King of France in Shakespeare’s *All’s Well That Ends Well*, a playful play full of bawdy body language, anal and scatological references. Sôseki’s character Tsuda is not the butt of jokes; he is not a true comic figure and not a hero. He is not a great man but a small man, a literary type whose genealogy is related to the superfluous hero Bunzô in *Ukigumo* (1887-9) by Futabatei Shimei (1864-1909), a “venerable” lineage traceable to “Dvevnik Lishnego Cheloveka” (A Diary of a Superfluous Man, 1850) by Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883).<sup>17</sup> What more lowly, humbling, deprecating way to present our proud hero, to hoist him on his own petard, than by having him suffer from an anal fistula? Bard C. Cosman, M.D., states in his article “*All’s Well That Ends Well: Shakespeare’s Treatment of Anal Fistula*,” that fistula was a commonplace term in Elizabethan England and that the audience would appreciate the bawdy humor typical of Shakespeare’s comedies.<sup>18</sup> A close examination of Dr. Cosman’s anal fistula article might help to shed some light on Tsuda’s condition (and possible symbolic significance). Shakespeare departs from Boccaccio’s original story in the *Decameron* (1353; III. 9) in which Gileta of Narbona cures a French king’s fistula (*nel petto*, in or on his breast) using an herbal remedy. Wound symbolism is rich and various in all cultures. A non-healing wound, especially that of a king, has a long tradition in European legend. The Fisher King suffered from infertility because of a non-healing wound. In Christian tradition, the crucified body of Jesus was pierced in the side by the spear

of Longinus. In medieval art and literature, Cosman points out, this wound appears like a breast nurturing saints or a vagina-like orifice from which the Church was born. By relocating the wound in the anus, Shakespeare has removed associations with Christian lore: “By locating the fistula in the anus,” claims Dr. Cosman, “he retained both the aspect of the non-healing wound and the infertility/impotence aspect of a private wound. Helena’s healing of the anal fistula [in Shakespeare] is brought anatomically closer to the older, fertility-ritual stories, emphasizing the sexual aspect of her interaction with the king” (Cosman, 921). Tsuda’s anal fistula, what for some time will remain a non-healing wound, functions symbolically as an indicator of his lack, his spiritual impotence, and the many fissures that occur in all relationships in the narrative. The newlyweds Tsuda and O-Nobu, like almost all couples in Sôseki’s fiction, are childless. O-Yone in *Mon*, for example, has three miscarriages. Infertility in the childless couples bespeaks a larger problem of noncommunication (or “discommunication”) which also plagues relations between husband and wife. In the final chapters of *Meian*, Sôseki brings together Tsuda and his former fiancée, Kiyoko, at the hot spring resort—unhealed Tsuda and post-miscarriage Kiyoko—whose symbolic conditions are so similar (breach, disruption, interrupted [irregular], disconnected), one wonders how any reading of possible closure or “healing” is operable. Traditional critics such as Komiya and Viglielmo have seen Tsuda’s physical and spiritual recovery as the crux of *Meian*, observing that the doctor Kobayashi tends to the former and the firebrand Kobayashi, who attempts to awaken a sense of humanity in Tsuda, tends to the latter. It should be obvious, however, that I do not share this view.

We cannot say that all is “well ended” in Sôseki’s *Meian* as the king says in Shakespeare’s play. Tsuda may be a superfluous hero but he is not a comic hero, as I have said, in spite of his having some near comical moments. Although Samuel Johnson criticized Shakespeare for never being able to resist a pun, Sôseki manages to steer clear of word play about Tsuda’s condition (something I, perhaps as an indication of *nostalgie de la boue*, find difficult to resist doing in my writing about him). *Kusamakura*, however, is a different story: the artist interrupts his “aimless wandering on that beautiful spring evening at Kankaiji temple,” to ponder fart-counting by detectives:

They will set a detective on your tail [shiriしり (buttocks, behind)] for five or ten years to reckon up how many times you break wind, and they think this is Life. Moreover, they

will, on occasion, leap out in front of you and impart such unsolicited information as, 'You farted x number of times.' (Turney, 146)

He goes on to use the word fart (*he 屁*) five more times. This example shows that Sôseki was not afraid to use bawdy humor (and attests, as well, to the legacy of Edo literature, known for its ribaldry, to which he was heir). More to the point, there is the fear and abhorrence that something private and personal is being observed and recorded. Both the artist in *Kusamakura* and Tsuda in *Meian*, it would seem, have something to hide. Helena examines the king off stage (a lesion in private parts must be examined in private) but Sôseki spares us no detail. Many *Meian* readers are surprised to find from the first sentence the protagonist undergoing an anal probe. This experience is similar to turning on the evening news on 27 June 1987 to see Ronald Reagan's polyps in a diagrammatical close up of the presidential colon. *Meian* is after all not a true comedy but a realistic social novel, a *fûzoku shôsetsu* 風俗小説, a novel of manners,<sup>19</sup> in which characters play out their various foibles, peccadilloes and moral dilemmas against a broad social background complicated by relations of family, class, and status. The author assuredly has social commentary on his mind, to wit, the microscopic analysis of a modern man named Tsuda, a liminal figure suspended between comedy and tragedy, concealing and revealing, pathetic and bathetic (will he be "reagglomerated"? made whole? "saved"?), and any number of binary oppositions to which we will now turn.

**Binarisms in *Meian***  
"Of light and darkness mutually bound"<sup>21</sup>

明 (mei) / 暗 (an)  
明らかに (akiraka ni) / 暗に (an ni)  
light / darkness  
transparent / opaque  
lucid / occluded  
to see, to gaze / to be seen, to be gazed at  
lisible (readerly) / scriptible (writerly)  
voyeurism (active scopophilia) / exhibitionism (passive scopophilia)  
insight, sight, sighted / blind, blinded, blindness  
clairvoyance / occultation  
clairaudience / deafness  
utterable / unutterable  
éclaircissement / obfuscation  
visible / invisible  
known / unknown  
mobile / sessile  
robust / feeble  
passion / reason  
overt / covert  
public / private  
country / city  
opened / closed  
full / empty  
chiaro-/oscuro  
(chiaroscuro)  
clear / obscure  
white / black  
yin / yang  
female / male  
...  
[vaginal / anal]

Figure 4. Binarisms in *Meian*

**Binarisms in *Meian*.** It is not insignificant that the title of the novel which we are examining is itself a binarism. The Chinese compound light+darkness, read *meian* in Japanese, is an overdetermined binarism under which the text is opened up to an endless play of signifiers. The term has prosaic and technical usages in addition to its literary ones, as in *meianhō* 明暗法, shading (clear-obscure, chiaroscuro, clair-obscur); *meiankō* 明暗光, an occulting light; *jinsi no meian no ryōmen* 人生の明暗の両面, the bright and dark sides of life. *Mathews' Chinese English Dictionary* lists only *ming an chih an ying* 明暗之庵映, or chiaroscuro. By the endless binary ordering that I am suggesting above, we can see that Sōseki has created a complex system of dichotomies. But before we consider them separately we should stop to consider how

binarisms have been generally used in the past and how I am using them specifically in this paper. Structuralists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss worked with binarisms in their research (the raw and the cooked, for example) to indicate structures and frameworks that facilitate understanding of cultural practice (in his study of mythology, most famously). Then the post-structuralists came along and used binarisms only as a point of departure, stating that binarisms, once established and examined, need to be deconstructed and shown to be not hard and fast categories after all. Where Lévi-Strauss saw binary signification as stable and systematic, deconstructionists saw instability and decentering. More recently, cultural studies and gender studies people tell us that not only are binarisms false and largely socially constructed but also often even interpenetrated. It is this latter, postmodern usage in which I am particularly interested. To my mind, Sôseki's binarisms in *Meian*, though textualized in a modernist work, are most easily understood in terms of not hard and fast categories, not clear-cut polarities occurring in nature, but in terms of their social construction and interpenetration, in terms of a yin-yang process.

Sôseki describes such a yin-yang harmony in Sections 75 and 76. O-Nobu's uncle, quoting Fujii, instructs her that "If men and women aren't eternally chasing after each other, they can't become complete human beings. In other words, there's something lacking in each of them and they can't possibly get it by themselves" (Viglielmo, 135). The truth of this statement she admitted to herself. Her happiness/love as a wife was not possible without the happiness/love of her husband. It was the opposite, yin-yang discord, that bothered her. "But we're not a case of yin-yang discord," she lies to her uncle, "We're really in complete harmony, I tell you" (Viglielmo, 137). Ultimately, though, she does accept the fact that yin-yang discord is better than nothing, when she and Tsuda arrive at a "compromise." Disequilibrium will prevail. It is the best they can hope for, under the circumstances. What O-Nobu seems not to realize is that ying-yang discord is the obverse of the coin called "yang-yin harmony."

In general terms, binarisms bring into stark relief the relationships between characters and their distinguishing attributes: Mrs. Yoshikawa's physical fullness compared to Tsuda's spiritual emptiness; her covert operations (and O-Nobu's as well), compared to Kobayashi's or O-Hide's overt, explicit, articulate mission to change Tsuda; O-Nobu's much admired clairvoyance (which unfortunately seems to short-

circuit when she needs it most), compared to Tsuda's blindness to the needs of others; the unutterable situation of Tsuda's parents in Kyoto (money matters), compared to the utterable, pronounced cure (*myōyaku* 妙薬) that O-Nobu's uncle offers (a cheque); the clearness and transparency of O-Nobu's motives, compared to the opacity, obscurity, and darkness of Tsuda's; on-the-go O-Nobu compared to flat-on-his-back Tsuda, and many others.

In what appears to be a postmodern rendering, binarisms are established in *Meian*, aspects of characters are realized, narrative expectations are set up, and then without warning, the author/narrator pulls the rug out from under the reader by revealing different aspects, even polar opposites to what was anticipated or already established (instability and decentering). O-Hide at first appears to be the voice of propriety and moral rectitude but the next day appears as a somewhat shrewish, judgmental woman who delights in casuistry (a termagant, in my opinion). Kobayashi also appears to have no personal motives for browbeating Tsuda nonetheless comes across in a position of smugness, while being an outcast of sorts at the same time. Both O-Hide and Kobayashi, in my opinion, graduated from the same Jesuit school of Take the High Moral Position, the former from a familial platform, the latter from a social one. Binarisms are set up and then collapsed; established, then inverted and toyed with.

Surgeons must be careful  
When they take the knife!  
Underneath their fine incisions  
Stirs the culprit—Life!

—Emily Dickinson, No. 108

**Tsuda's Anus and Kiyoko's Vagina.** There is one obvious false binarism in my list (if indeed, they are not *all* false binarism as postmodern critics would have it)—vaginal/anal. Normally, binary thinking about the sexes would be represented by phallic/yonic or penis/vagina, but Sōseki has established a polarity between Tsuda and Kiyoko along the lines of disease, not genitalia. The condition of *ana*, or fissure, has brought them together for the second time. Mrs. Yoshikawa has arranged for Tsuda to meet Kiyoko at a hot spring. They are both brought together and kept apart by their ruptured condition. None other than Mrs. Yoshikawa herself in fact previously brought the two together (before the story begins) as a possible love match. Now Kiyoko has married and has had a miscarriage. A few critics such as Ōoka Shōhei and Viglielmo have suggested that her husband, Seki, has transmitted a sexual disease to her (that one of the

men next to Tsuda at the dark first-floor “VD” clinic described in Section 17 is in fact Seki<sup>22</sup>. The details of Kiyoko’s miscarriage are not given. “When she [Mrs. Yoshikawa] told him that Kiyoko had gone there primarily to recover from a miscarriage, she looked at Tsuda and smiled knowingly” (Viglielmo, 267). Even accepting the critics’ view of miscarriage, it is still not absolutely clear, not to me anyway, whether it is a self-induced abortion (out of fear that the baby too will be infected) or a spontaneous abortion, a “natural” miscarriage. Whichever the case, Kiyoko is going to a nearby hot spring to recuperate after the miscarriage, where, if Mrs. Yoshikawa’s plans are successful, Tsuda will have the possibility of meeting her. We can assume that she has undergone a dilatation and curettage of some sort, what today is commonly referred to as a D&C (dusting and cleaning in the colloquial), which is medically explained as “a minor operation in which the cervix is expanded enough (dilatation) to permit the cervical canal and uterine lining to be scraped with a spoon-shaped instrument called a curette (curettage).” Tsuda’s anal fissure, we recall, has also been scraped clean to allow it to drain properly (*garigari kakioroshite* is the phrase used, and the verb *orosu* in Japanese commonly means “to abort”). Tsuda and Kiyoko, both having been scraped clean, will converge at the hot spring to seek its healing waters.

We do not know what kind of relationship Kiyoko has had with her husband Seki, whether it is happy or strained, fulfilling or debilitating. We are denied details about her marriage, her miscarriage, and her present condition. Kiyoko as a character is largely a blind spot. How can a character who seems to be so important to the protagonist’s “healing process” and the development of the novel as a whole be so sketchily depicted, so ambiguously and nebulously drawn? And why? The reader does not meet her until section 176 (out of 188) and can only judge her by her appearance in these final thirteen installments. Far from the beatific, blessed, Beatrice-like image that is often projected on her (an image Viglielmo himself has promoted), Kiyoko is to my mind defiled (at least in the autochthonous Shinto belief in pollution by blood or death) and empty, childless (as are Tsuda and O-Nobu), and alone (her husband does not have the *yoyū*, the luxury, to travel with her). The presence of the active Yokohama couple at the same hot spring brings into relief the separateness and passivity of Tsuda and Kiyoko. Her condition is indicative of lack, of blankness. Her smile, that much-discussed enigmatic smile which constitutes the closing line of the novel (the last words Sôseki was to write) might very well be a simple, conventional smile. Like Mrs.

Yoshikawa's "knowing smile," its meaning is not clear to us (or to Tsuda). The smile itself is not modified, although smiles and looks are modified in a myriad of ways throughout the novel—bitter (*kushō*), beautiful, nervous, painful, and sneering (*reishō*)—Kiyoko's smile is simply described as *bishō*, a smile without modifiers:

Kiyoko smiled as she said this. Tsuda returned to his own room, while trying to explain to himself the meaning of her smile (Viglielmo, 375).

UNFINISHED

We cannot make too much of the "wounded" nature of Tsuda and Kiyoko. Tsuda's vagina-like wound and Kiyoko's wound-like vagina are juxtaposed in a position of dis/order and dis/ease. Both of them have somatized the rift in their respective conjugal relations. That Kiyoko has been infected by her husband (if the conjecturing of some critics is the case) only reinforces the connection between illness and a deteriorating marriage. Tsuda's somatization of his fissure with O-Nobu is made clear in his long monologue in Section 93 (169-170) as he lies in bed on the second floor of the clinic, mentally and physically linking the peristalsis-like contractions in the "muscles near the incision" with O-Nobu's departure.

The gaps, ruptures, rifts, and fissures remain unhealed, uncured in this unfinished novel. Since in *Meian* it is not the protagonist who dies, like Aschenbach in *Death in Venice*, like Milly in *Wings*, like Dorian in *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, but rather the author, we have a perfect ending: an open text which defies closure; future generations can speculate endlessly on possible outcomes. By dying, Sōseki has created a postmodern masterpiece that revels in instability, decentering, and aporias.

The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil,  
and has reduced the family relation to a mere money relation.

—Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

*Ubi est morbus?* Where is the disease? *Ubi est morbus* is the founding precept of Giovanni Battista Morgagni, Paduan anatomist and founder of the science of autopsy. His motto appears on plaques in autopsy rooms around the world: *Hic est locus ubi mores gaudet succurso vitae*—"This is the place where death rejoices to come to the aid of life." What is clearly needed in *Meian* is not an autopsy, obviously, since no death occurs in the novel (except the death of Kiyoko's and Seki's child, which is mentioned but

not described), but rather a biopsy—the modern novel as biopsy. As already mentioned, Sôseki uses his own journal entries which he kept during his hemorrhoid operation to describe Tsuda's medical experience. There is another example of Sôseki's linking the anus with morbidity or death in an earlier novel, *Higan Sugi Made*. The narrator describes the body of his dead child, turning the dead infant over to inspect the anus. The anus is indeed dilated, a sure sign of death. Sôseki's two-year old daughter had died suddenly in 1911, and his medical journal once again provided the reference material. The scene, which resonates with the examination room scene of *Meian*, is morbid and bizarre for its clinical aspect, and the medical gaze with which the father regards his own offspring. There is no emotion or sentiment in the father (who resembles Tsuda in this regard), yet the scene is all the more emotional for its lack of affectivity.

The late nineteenth century accepted the sanatorium movement all over Europe, based on the concept that rest in the open air could cure tuberculosis. Removing the patient from the close, stuffy, poorly ventilated rooms of the city and placing him in the "pure air" of the country, away from the contamination of civilization, suggests at some level that Civilization was the disease and Nature was the cure. Sôseki himself exhibited some anti-progress sentiment, a distrust of science in particular, most famously in this passage from *Kôjin*:

Man's insecurity stems from the advance of science. Never once has science, which never ceases to move forward, allowed us to pause. From walking to ricksha, from ricksha to carriage, from carriage to train, from train to automobile, from there to dirigible, further on to the airplane, and further on and on—no matter how far we may go, it won't let us take a breath. How far it will sweep us along, nobody knows for sure. It is really frightening. (Yu, 285)

As an escape from civilization, Davos in the Swiss Alps had been home to health resorts since 1841, to whose doors Arthur Conan Doyle brought his tubercular wife, followed by Robert Louis Stevenson and other celebrities, a trend which culminated in its literary memorialization in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924). Japan as well followed the Western model of treatment and opened sanatoria in an attempt to isolate the infected from others, to avoid further contagion, as much as to "cure" the disease. Kunikida Doppo spent the last months of his life in a tuberculosis sanitarium in Kamakura, but medical attention was unavailable to the many factory workers in Japan who suffered most from the epidemic. After the first mention of tuberculosis in the opening chapter of *Meian*, the disease is never named again. Tsuda

is briefly hospitalized (he checks into a clinic as an “out patient”) and in Chapter 167 takes off on a trip to a hot spring resort—Japan’s traditional “sanatorium” since antiquity—for rest and relaxation. The last twenty chapters of the novel deal with this journey away from the confinement of the city to the open air of the country. Sôseki seems to suggest some hope for Tsuda in this journey away from the city and civilization, away from the constraints of his hen-pecked marriage, away from the intimidation of Kobayashi, and toward the promise of rejuvenation in the country (Hakone was still countryside then, not the Disneyland that it is today)—perhaps even into the arms of his former fiancée, Kiyoko. The hot spring resort is no garden of Eden, however, and what lies in store for Tsuda is not what he expects.

Seidensticker claims in his introduction to his translation of Kawabata’s *Yukiguni* (Snow Country, 1935-47) that “the hot springs, one of which is the locale of *Snow Country*, also have a peculiarly Japanese significance. The Japanese seldom goes to a hot spring for his health, and he never goes for ‘the season,’ as people once went to Bath or Saratoga. He may ski or view maple leaves or cherry blossoms, but his wife is usually not with him. The special delights of the hot spring are for the unaccompanied gentleman” (vi). By focusing on the lubricious instead of the salubrious, Seidensticker effectively closes off the traditional, historical aspects of hot springs which is the most obvious reason for going: for the benefit of one’s health. As far back as the *Izumo Fudoki* [ca. 733], it is reported that Tamatsukuri hot spring was continually thronged with visitors and that by “bathing once, the visitor was made fair of face and figure; bathing twice, all diseases were healed; its effectiveness has been obvious since of old” (Kôdansha’s *Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*). No matter how many times Tsuda takes the healing waters of the hot spring, no reader will believe that he will be made fair of face and figure or that all his diseases will be healed (not this reader, anyway). Whatever the outcome, Sôseki has created some degree of narrative expectation, leading the reader to believe that the narrative and its protagonist, Tsuda, are both headed for a showdown, a denouement, a “cure.” But if the disease is more than Tsuda’s bodily affliction, and more of a cluster of symptoms, of meanings about illness in society, as I believe it is, a brief stay at a hot spring resort will not assuage a systemic malaise.

Beginning a narrative with disease or deploying illness as metaphor as a means of achieving narrative cohesiveness is not an unusual practice in literature. At the beginning of *Oedipus Rex*, the city of Thebes is stricken by a plague. The killer of King Laius must be found and order restored for the curse of the plague to be lifted. Seven women and three men pass the time during the plague of Florence telling each other one hundred tales in Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Daniel Defoe (on whom Sôseki writes a chapter in his *Bungaku hyôron*) describes narrator H. F.'s anxiety over the London plague, and his vacillation between staying and fleeing the city, in his *A Journal of the Plague Year*. Camus says in his novel *The Plague*: "What's true of all the evils in the world is true of the plague as well, it helps men to rise above themselves" (all these examples are catalogued in Susan Sontag's *Illness as Metaphor*). Sôseki's Tsuda, unfortunately, cannot manage to rise above himself. At the "end" of the novel, for the most part he still cannot open his mouth without lying, cannot open his eyes without doubting, cannot think of anything but himself and his appearance in the eyes of others. Trying to make sense of illness, as we know in our own time of epidemics, can function as a kind of ordering device. The self creates its own order, as Susan Sontag writes in *AIDS and Its Metaphors*:

Thinking of syphilis as a punishment for an individual's transgression was for a long time, virtually until the disease became easily curable, not really distinct from regarding it as retribution for the licentiousness of a community—as with AIDS now, in the rich industrial countries. In contrast to cancer, understood in a modern way as a disease incurred by (and revealing of) individuals, AIDS is understood in a premodern way, as a disease incurred by people both as individuals and as members of a "risk group"—that neutral-sounding bureaucratic category which also revives the archaic idea of a tainted community that illness has judged.<sup>21</sup>

Tsuda's illness is curable, and we see no evidence of social stigma attached to his "embarrassing" condition (though never termed that), and it does not seem to cause him any actual embarrassment at all. In fact, he drinks his castor oil while his relatives are having dinner ("look at me!" he seems to be saying) and must be satisfied with only nibbling on bread—all this in preparation for his important operation. His condition is understood in a modern way: it is not God's punishment for sinning or wrongdoing; it is not retributive or judgmental. Yet Tsuda *is* being judged (and read) by his family and friends. Onto his physical ailment, about which, oddly enough, no one in the novel has anything to say directly, save for the doctor, is superimposed his spiritual condition (if we follow the traditional reading) whose cure seems to be *everybody's* business (and surely aspects of social illness/degeneration are just as important as a

metaphorical spiritual degeneration or spiritual malaise). As Karatani Kôjin points out in his discussion of sickness as meaning, “tuberculosis appeared not because of the tubercle bacillus, which existed from long before, but because of a disturbance within a complex net of interrelationships. The phenomenon of tuberculosis itself is a social and cultural symptom which must be diagnosed.”<sup>22</sup> Following Karatani’s line of thinking, it is not the pathology of Tsuda’s disease that should concern us (indeed, perhaps it is best left unnamed and undescribed as Sôseki has done) but the complex net of interrelationships in the novel and the social and cultural symptoms.

In Thomas Mann’s *Death in Venice* (1912), Aschenbach’s personal decline in health and eventual death are projected onto Venice, a city deteriorating, in fact, moribund. Venice is also an important setting in Henry James’s *Wings of the Dove* (1902) for this same reason; it is a direct allusion to Ruskin’s vision of Venice as “a mythic locus of the aspirations and decline of Western culture.” Tsuda’s health is, by comparison, not entirely a personal affair but rather a public one, in which family, friends and acquaintances enter and exit in various degrees of meddlesomeness, self-indulgent intrusion. His disease is not transferred to the state, indicating a national malaise (or is it?), or a state in decline. Neither is illness, death, or shame writ large in cosmic terms like Dimmesdale’s projection of his guilt into a giant letter A composed of stars in the night sky; it is not gothic like the demise of everyone in attendance at the ball in *The Masque of the Red Death*; it is not sentimental like the death of Little Nell. More than being a structuring device in the novel, Tsuda’s illness, his anal fissure, is emblematic of all the ruptures of modern life which simply must be tolerated and with which one must live.

The delicious irony of Kiyoko’s query in the final section: “*Sore de anata mo doko ka o-warui no?*” (“Does that mean you’ve been ill too?”) is that she has no knowledge of Tsuda’s illness, and he has no knowledge of the details of her miscarriage other than the fact that she is recuperating from one (unless Mrs. Yoshikawa has told him more—but this is not made clear to the reader). It is Sôsekian irony at its best: words that stand out in capital letters and force the reader to reconsider everything that has gone before. The textual question is the one posed by Susan Sontag in her book *AIDS and Its Metaphors*: is the plague as depicted by Defoe, by Manzoni, and even by Camus, a transforming experience? No, it is “an exemplary

event,” she says, “the irruption of death that gives life its seriousness.” And we then must ask, is Tsuda’s malady a transforming experience for him? Certainly he is made to think about life and finally in the end able to see the light of humanity in others, but there is no clear indication that he has changed dramatically or completely. There is no irruption of death in *Meian*. The movement toward recovery, such as it is, is not smooth or swift; it is painstakingly slow (although the narrative spans less than two weeks). To my mind, Tsuda’s recovery must be an on-going process, like, say, Alcoholics Anonymous: one day at a time, carried out continually, unflaggingly. Even if at some point in the future Tsuda’s anal fissure does heal or “close up” there is no indication in the novel that the ruptures and fissures in interpersonal relationships will ever find real closure.

Regardless of whether Tsuda’s illness is a transforming experience or not, one thing is clear: illness is the ordering device in the narrative of the novel. Tsuda’s illness brings everyone together, united against him, as it were. His condition during the one-week stay on the second floor of the clinic is indicative of Tsuda’s general malaise and, by extension, of the Sôsekian weakling, specifically Ichirô, the protagonist of *The Wayfarer* whom he resembles (minus the intellectual depth). For Ichirô there is no easy solution to the dilemma of modern life but “To die, to go mad, or to enter religion—these are the only three courses left open to me” (Yu, 196). Unfortunately for Tsuda, he lacks the intellectual powers of Ichirô to consider these options. He is flat on his back in a hospital bed, immobilized, dependent on others, passive, acted upon, the center of action but not an agent of action. Rather than the Sôsekian “crouch” which is said to characterize his male protagonists, the male body in bed much more eloquently and more ironically represents metaphorically the male condition in his novels: incapacitated, invalid (accent on first syllable), and invalidated.

Tsuda’s condition can be observed more clearly by juxtaposing it with the modern-day action hero of Jump Comic’s *City Hunter* [see Appendix B.]. Tsuda’s anal fistula and the action hero’s anal fissure may differ pathologically, but the manga illustrates the same predicament of both characters’ immobilization and feminization, while simultaneously explaining examination, treatment and possible causes. A nurse points out that a suppository-type medication is not adequate because it will not remain on or near the fissure

itself. A dressing must be applied directly to the wound, as was done in Tsuda's case. A cotton tampon is inserted into the anus to protect the fissure. The reader of *Meian* is spared a description of the actual operation, although Sôseki could have used details from his medical journal as he did in the examination room scene. In the manga, a nurse digitally probes the action hero, pushing him back with his feet over his head. What the reader does not see in *Meian* is Tsuda in gynecological stirrups with his legs spread in preparation for an anal probe. These are feminizing gestures which play up the gender differences (or "inversion") between headstrong, mobile O-Nobu and the dithering, immobile Tsuda. The action hero also lacks the two components of his vocation: he is out of action and shown in a less than heroic position. The nurse asks, *nanka futoi unko de mo shita no* (did you have a large BM or something?), indicating that a large stool can sometimes be responsible for the fissure. We recall that Tsuda's uncle Fujii joked that people in his day never had such diseases, suggesting it might be what is called today a "lifestyle illness," caused by, for example, a diet of too much red meat (curiously enough, Sôseki was fond of beefsteak and ate one at least once a week at his favorite Kagurazaka Western-style restaurant [note: I am aware of this bit of Sôseki lore thanks to William Curry, who treated his Sôseki Seminar students, of which I was one, to dinner at the very restaurant where Sôseki used to dine], or one lacking in sufficient fiber. Whether dietary or caused by a sharp object, anal fissures and anal fistulae affect their male victims in the same way: anal probing, cotton tampon insertion, and legs-over-the-head posture are all feminine/feminizing gestures.

Finally, there is the matter of money. Money matters, the cash necessity, *ano koto* ("that thing"), is the plague that imperils all relationships in *Meian* and indeed all male characters throughout Sôseki's works. As in the novels of Henry James, money is not referred to directly in polite society, yet it is always present. Money is the *myôyaku*, the cure-all for life's troubles—at least that is how Okamoto presents it as he waves a check in O-Nobu's face. Although the *myôyaku* scene is presented ironically, money is at once the disease and the cure. It is homeopathic medicine in the same sense that love is the disease and love is the cure. It could provide Tsuda and O-Nobu with the independence they desire, and it simultaneously binds them to a tighter social and family nexus. As a novelistic device, disease presents the opportunity to recover, to be cared for, or to show care and solicitude toward the patient. Three female characters converge at Tsuda's sickbed (individually and in ensemble appearances) ostensibly for *mimai*, to pay a courtesy visit, yet in

reality it is not an expression of love that is exhibited but largely their own self-interest. The word “solicitous” nicely sums up their behavior. No homeostasis is achieved, except perhaps between Tsuda and O-Nobu, who have worked out a compromise and have decided that stasis is better than constant ups and downs of doubting and badgering.

Sôseki aficionados will recall that in *Michikusa*, the nearest to an autobiographical novel in his oeuvre, family relations, as Marx prophesied, were displaced by money relations. The protagonist, Kenzô, hounded on all sides for money, not only supports his former foster father but is expected to assume financial responsibility for his brother’s and sister’s families as well. Not Confucian filiality, loyalty or obligation, but the cash nexus binds them together as a family. Kenzô speaks to his wife, criticizing his sister and her husband: “Money, illness—it doesn’t matter what’s involved, those two might as well be total strangers. They live in the same house, but that’s about all” (McClellan, 114). Money and illness have in fact estranged them in the same way that it has fissured relations in *Meian*. Money is at once a *myôyaku*, a panacea, and a destructive force capable of splintering the closest of human connections.

**Fissure, Rupture, Gap.** Some fissures, ruptures, and gaps are textual, some are physical, others metaphysical. To give concrete (corporeal) examples, Tsuda’s anal fistula and Kiyoko’s miscarriage are obviously physiological, but also emblematic of an immaterial disposition. Psychological ruptures develop between husband and wife (Tsuda/O-Nobu), brother and sister (Tsuda/O-Hide), superior-subordinate (Mrs. Yoshikawa/ Tsuda) and between “friends” (Tsuda and Kobayashi), resulting in mental anguish, alienation, and possible permanent division (the “nonhealing wound”). Socially fissures occur in family relationships, resulting in strained financial relations, and the need to cultivate acceptable social personae and social performances (leading to more duplicity). Textually, fissures irrupt on many levels as well, of which the most frustrating for the reader are the points of uncertainty and “unknowability.” As for gaps, the death of Milly Theale, for example, in Henry James’s *Wings of the Dove*, a novel that resonates peculiarly with *Meian*, creates a textual lacuna in the last third of the book; there is no account of the final weeks of her life.<sup>22</sup> This is not a new device. The same thing happens in *The Tale of Genji*. Genji is fifty-two in the “Maboroshi” (Wizard) chapter and in the next, “Niou Miya” (His Perfumed Highness), nine years have

passed since his death, which takes place outside the text. There is only a heading *Kumogakure* (Hidden Behind the Clouds) with no text.

It is a different story, however, when the author plays with these gaps in a methodical, systematic fashion. Hugh Stevens refers to the “representational voids” in *Wings*, saying “To read *The Wings of the Dove* several times is to stumble, repeatedly, against prominent gaps in the text....The incompleteness of narrative places the critic in a role analogous to that of each character, attempting to fill gaps in the stories they encounter.”<sup>23</sup> In *Meian*, Tsuda’s fissure (physical) is analogous to the interpersonal rupture (spiritual, emotional) which plagues the principal relationships between and among the protagonist and his surrounding cast of characters. The problematical metaphysical rupture, about which some critics, notably Jameson, will not speak, is Tsuda’s disengagement from a spontaneous, unmediated life experience. In spite of his many interior moments, his introspection and weighing out of every act in the scales of his mind, Tsuda still cannot see his own condition as being one of rupture. He cannot complete the First Step, of initially recognizing and admitting the problem, by saying, as it were, “I am Tsuda Yoshio and I am an alcoholic,” or more simply, “I am Tsuda Yoshio and I have a problem.”

As for more literal representations of fissures and gaps, I suggest we look at Kiyoko as something of an enigma, as herself being a gap in the text, somewhat like Milly’s death in *Wings*. Kiyoko is mentioned indirectly only as *ano onna* (that woman) at the very beginning of the novel and finally appears at the “conclusion.” She is physically absent everywhere in between, but nonetheless still lurks in the minds of Tsuda and O-Nobu—and even Mrs. Yoshikawa and Kobayashi. But Kiyoko remains a cipher, like Madonna in *Botchan* and other women in Sōseki whose epiphanies border on the ethereal and mysterious. O-Nobu relished the rupture between Tsuda and O-Hide (O-Nobu laughs behind O-Hide’s back “derisively”). “This rupture with O-Hide, which could only be termed an unforeseen event, was, in effect, the dawn of rebirth for her” (Viglielmo, 207). O-Nobu sees her chance to get directly at Tsuda and perhaps seeks to drive a wedge deeper between the brother and sister. Battle lines are clearly drawn up. Opponents are sized up in the ring.

Battle metaphors abound in *Meian* (of which 495 terms of conflict and negativity have been identified and analyzed by Nakayama Etsuko<sup>24</sup>) as they do in *Wings of the Dove*. Family relations are precarious. Tsuda thinks that “even if they did not have a reconciliation after the present incident, so long as they did not hope for a complete rupture, relations between the two families were certain to be resumed under some form or other” (Viglielmo, 211). Another gap in *Meian* is one between thought and action, which besets O-Nobu and Tsuda in particular: “O-Nobu sensed a very large gap between what she was feeling and what she could say. Furthermore, since she thought she had to close that gap as much as possible and show herself to others as a woman who had a husband without a single flaw, she could not reveal to her uncle anything of what she really felt” (Viglielmo, 109). Tsuda, typical of most Sôsekian males, will never be able to close that gap between thought and action because it is endlessly negotiated and rationalized. There is a similar gap in Kobayashi, who, in his knowledge of the world, his fondness for distinctions, his microscopic observation of life’s little tyrannies, is more like Tsuda than unlike him in his desire to go his own way, I feel, despite his role as a foil and a “fall guy.” He is a writer, like Kate and Merton in *Wings*, like Aschenbach in *Death in Venice*, whose own aesthetic experience creates the engaging intertextual and rhetorical flourishes of the novel (the conversation with Tsuda about Dostoevsky in the restaurant scene and the discussion with Hara about modern art, for example) and the “literary” or “readerly” environment which each one inhabits. Kobayashi is an editor and speaks a sort of Dostoevskian rhetoric—a gesture that further widens the gap between him and Tsuda.

According to Mary Cross, “James develops in *Wings of the Dove* . . . a context of lying, a space for fiction that interrogates its constructions and where indeterminacy becomes functional in the story. Opening up and exploiting its gaps, the text deliberately makes room for various ‘versions’ to flourish.”<sup>25</sup> This technique, I believe, is what Sôseki has achieved in *Meian*. Within this context of lying, characters are rendered ambivalent, their true motives hidden (why is Mrs. Yoshikawa bent on sending Tsuda to the hot spring rendezvous?); their pasts concealed (why is O-Nobu brought up by the Okamotos? What is Kobayashi’s past relationship with Tsuda?); their futures uncertain (what will become of Tsugiko? Does O-Nobu accept the “compromise” without reservation or will she remain like Ôgai’s Otama, *actively* resigned

to her fate? Or will Mrs. Yoshikawa “cure” or “educate” her?). The readerly experience of these gaps—“gapology,” as it has been termed—also contributes to the novel’s modernist sensibility.

**Blindness.** In my criticism of *Meian*, I may be guilty of saying something that the work does not say. Worse, I am probably guilty of saying things even I don’t mean to say. But as Paul de Man has pointed out, this is perhaps inevitable: “Our readings have revealed,” he writes, “even more than this: not only does the critic say something that the work does not say, but he even says something that he himself does not mean to say.”

And since interpretation is nothing but the possibility of error, by claiming that a certain degree of blindness is part of the specificity of literature we also affirm the absolute dependence of the interpretation on the text and of the text on the interpretation.<sup>26</sup>

Many critics are uncomfortable with this relationship of dependence between text and interpretation, but for me as a *Meian* reader, it is the blindness of the text that makes me engage with it, that exhilarates, irritates, fatigues, makes me think. We as readers are being written upon just like Milly in *Wings* and Tsuda in *Meian*. Both Kate and Densher in *Wings* are writers, who write on or textualize the blank slate of Milly—everyone in the novel seems to want to imprint or impress his or her own will upon her. Tsuda, as I conceive of him, is also a tabula rasa upon which all others seek to inscribe their morality and their way of seeing (their way of seeing often is a form of blindness: their way of not being able to see). Most conspicuously, Mrs. Yoshikawa, O-Nobu, O-Hide, the doctor and Kobayashi all “read” Tsuda (as in “diagnosis,” to distinguish, to know), reading his faults and “illness.” In the postmodern sense, they are also lisible (readerly) and Tsuda is scriptible, but they also seek to inscribe their collective will on him and in turn to read him like an open book. That the doctor and Kobayashi share the same name has been taken as proof to demonstrate Kobayashi’s role in “curing” Tsuda, as I have said, but I read this ironically, since even the doctor cannot cure Tsuda (only “Nature” can cure him). The irony of a character that is blinded to acquiring self-knowledge is we feel that we know them better than they know themselves because we “see” more than they do in the narrative of their lives.

We cannot know Kiyoko, for example, because the author has blocked out our having a complete, unobstructed view of her. Perhaps she does not understand herself, her marriage, her miscarriage and she

has decided to make the hot spring trip to sort things out (we can only guess). Neither Tsuda nor Kiyoko can see into their medical conditions, as one might examine, say, a cut finger. Kiyoko cannot see into her vagina just as Tsuda cannot see into his anus. There is a blind spot that prevents their acquiring complete or certain knowledge. Nor can they ever see themselves fully in the mirror of the other because that mirror itself does not reflect the truth (true image). The inability of a woman to see her genitals has been theorized by Freud and others, including Camille Paglia, who states: "It is mystery, *the hidden*....A girl's inability to see her genitals and a boy's ability to see his [is] the source of 'the greater subjectivity of women as compared with the greater objectivity of man.' To rephrase this with my different emphasis: men's delusional certitude that objectivity is possible is based on the visibility of their genitals."<sup>27</sup> In a typical Sôsekian inversion, it is Kiyoko who has the ability to see objectively, compared to Tsuda's *agnosia* ("not knowing"). Tsuda may have thought he knew Kiyoko but after sharing a few moments together at the hot spring he is forced to realize that he was laboring under a misapprehension: Kiyoko no longer cares for him, romantically, and is perhaps the only person to stand up to him and speak honestly. O-Nobu, on the other hand, is blinded by self-doubt and sucked into the hierarchical power of Mrs. Yoshikawa, whom she inwardly desires to emulate. Everyone seems to think they know Tsuda better than he knows himself (as we readers too perhaps do)—which is a big assumption to make. As one who thinks more about himself than others, Tsuda should be in possession of greater self-knowledge. Like Hamlet who is clever enough to feign madness, Tsuda is headstrong and duplicitous enough to achieve what he wants, to have things his way (but he does not get, however, a reconciliation with Kiyoko).

In Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Years*, there is no obtainable knowledge of the plague, nothing is certain; sure knowledge is ungraspable. Since certain knowledge cannot be grasped, superstition and the supernatural take its place. Tsugiko's situation in *Meian* encapsulates many of the problems of knowing. How can an uncertain future (her own in this case) be known? How can the character of a person (Miyoshi, Tsugiko's suitor, in this case) be judged? Knowledge is outside her grasp, and even O-Nobu's extrasensory powers cannot help her see the future, so she must turn to divine oracle, the fortune-teller's box, for an answer. "'Knowledge' during and at the very beginning of the plague (in Defoe's journal) either does not exist or is extrasensory—as in the many cases of predictions made by fortune-tellers and astrologers, and

the interpretations of signs and dreams.”<sup>28</sup> Tsuda’s situation is no different. Uncertainty plagues his condition. When and if his condition improves (when the plague is “lifted”) perhaps sure knowledge will be his, including a surer knowledge of himself. But *we* do not know this for sure. We cannot know, as accessories to the narrative, whether this is even possible because from the beginning to the end of the narrative we know Tsuda only as a man stricken by disease (albeit, ostensibly convalescing); we do not know him in any other state or condition. We do not know him in an “un-diseased” state (except perhaps through O-Nobu’s eyes before marriage). [I have trouble visualizing him as “whole,” “centered,” and “robust” even if by outward appearance, he seemed “normal” or even handsome, as we learn at the hot spring visit.] But deep inside he harbors secrets and mistrust, the mark that all Sôseki protagonists bear.

Howard Hibbett quotes from Dostoevsky’s *Notes from the Underground* to shed light on the secrets that are at the heart of every Sôseki novel. In the Dostoevskian scheme of things (in descending hierarchy from open to closed, clear to dark), there are secrets revealed 1) only to friends; 2) only to oneself; and 3) not even to oneself:

In every man’s memory there are things which he does not reveal to everyone, but only to his friends. There are also things which he does not reveal to his friends, but at best to himself and under a pledge of secrecy. And finally there are things which man hesitates to reveal even to himself, and every decent person accumulates a considerable quantity of such things. In fact, you might say the more decent a person is, the greater the number of such things that he carries around with him.<sup>29</sup>

Hibbett suggests that the protagonist Sensei in Sôseki’s *Kokoro*, basically a decent man, harbors many secrets. Tsuda too belongs to category No. 3. Just as Sensei took his secret with him to the grave, Sôseki died with Tsuda’s secrets unrevealed. Secrets, false leads (who is that foreigner anyway, mentioned only at the beginning of *Kokoro*?), ambiguous information, conflicting information all combine to create blind spots in Sôseki’s texts. The egoism of the characters in *Meian* is seen frequently as the source of their blindness. Love is blind, but so is egoism—it is a blind and blinding force. Janet Walker describes *Meian* as “depict[ing] a married couple who suffer from the fact that they are enmeshed in a legal and therefore unfree bond, and here the emphasis of his scrutiny is the blind egotism of the characters and the power that each, in his blindness, desires over the other.”<sup>30</sup> What exactly is the relationship between blind egotism and power over others that each seeks? We do not know for sure. In my view, egotism is merely one aspect, one symptom, of a larger more pervasive agnosia, or blindness.

One of the most serious, disturbing blind spots in *Meian* might belong to the author himself. I refer to Sôseki's blindness to the (his own) imperialism and racism of Japan in its "monopolistic capitalism" and "empire-building" stage as persuasively presented by James Fujii in his article "Writing Out Asia: Modernity, Canon, and Natsume Sôseki's *Kokoro*." Fujii juxtaposes Sôseki's travelogue, *Man-Kan tokorodokoro* with *Kokoro* to demonstrate Sôseki's blindness (or "silence," or "amnesia") regarding Japan's involvement in Asia: "What Sôseki's prose fiction (including *Kokoro*) demonstrates," he says, "is a blindness to the connection between Japan's experience of modernity, about which he felt tremendous ambivalence, and to Japan's extraterritorial activities."<sup>31</sup> Even the delightful but irritating presence of *bien pensant* trickster Kobayashi ("trickster" in the Bakhtinian sense of carnivalization, the symbolic disruption and subversion of authority, turning upside down the hierarchical scale) in *Meian* indicates Sôseki's blindness to the character's trip to Korea and its important implications. Kobayashi, an ideologue, whose sole purpose in life seems to be to *épater les bourgeois*, has nothing to say—good, bad, or otherwise—about the significance or propriety of his forthcoming trip to Korea. This important topic of the *tairiku rônin* 大陸浪人, the continental wanderer, of which Kobayashi is one of many in Sôseki's fiction.

"Faith" is a fine invention  
 When gentlemen can see—  
 But *Microscopes* are prudent  
 In an emergency.

—Emily Dickinson, No. 185

**The Microscopic Gaze.** "Whenever examinations with the naked eye leaves one with doubt as to the tuberculosis," wrote Lebert in 1843, "the microscope will easily settle the issue."<sup>32</sup> Upon entering the examination room, Tsuda was shown colorful, grape-like bacilli magnified 850 times under the lens of a microscope. Why he should have been shown plant pathogens instead of, say, the tubercle bacillus is puzzling. Had the doctor wanted to convince Tsuda with ocular proof, could he not have simply shown him innocuous bacilli from the site of the fissure and compared that to an illustration of tubercle bacilli? Instead of giving Tsuda proof that he might see with his own eyes, the doctor puts Tsuda in a position wherein the patient must simply believe and trust the opinion of the doctor. This situation of uncertainty, of not being

able to see clearly and completely, of not being able to possess a sure, complete knowledge characterizes many aspects of the novel.

Ultimately, it is not the doctor who cures Tsuda but nature, or rather Tsuda will let nature run its course. The doctor, by his own medical judgment, cleans and drains the fissure and leaves it to heal naturally, instead of suturing the wound; it was deemed unnecessary at that stage to close up surgically the fissure (later Tsuda does in fact submit to surgery, but, significantly, there is no suturing of the wound). It is, however, not a scientific gaze (a mechanistic view shown by a microscope or some other instrument) but an objective, prognostic gaze, the “medical gaze” which sets Tsuda’s “recovery process” in motion. The author/narrator will in turn perform the role of doctor as he aims the lens of his objectivity at the characters in the narrative to magnify their everyday concerns and relationships. Half a century before Michel Foucault began explicating his “microphysics of power” —the concept that power struggles are played out not top to bottom but from bottom to top, on a microscopic level in all relationships—Sôseki in the early decades of the twentieth century was focusing his powerful lens of observation not on the large struggles between nations, between ideologies, or between humankind and institutions (though the perceptive reader will find something of these too), but rather on the minuscule, often petty but nevertheless inescapable, tensions and conflicts that are carried out on the stage of everyday life and negotiated in everyday relationships. “At first reading this work may appear commonplace,” Viglielmo writes in his “Afterword,” “for it certainly cannot be denied that it treats lives and events which are ordinary in the extreme. Yet Sôseki has achieved an extraordinary work while thus utilizing the most ordinary material” (Viglielmo, 381). It is Sôseki’s extreme close-up on the tensions of ordinary lives which gives the novel its ring of modernity and universality.

The microscopic gaze is only one aspect of “scoping,” or seeing. Every character in *Meian*, as I hope to show, is set on “scoping out” the other. The doctor turns his gaze on Tsuda, Tsuda turns his gaze on O-Nobu, who in turn has Tsuda fixed in the crosshairs of her own scopic regime, while everyone seems to be under the panoptic gaze of Mrs. Yoshikawa, a sort of Madame Merle. We shall call this condition (or disease, since it reaches pathological proportions) “scopophilia” to cover both the active sense, voyeurism,

and the passive sense, exhibitionism. One of the many ironies in *Meian* is Tsuda's remark about O-Nobu to Kobayashi, "She's not on exhibition, you know." But, of course, she is on exhibition, being actively "scoped" by O-Hide, Mrs. Yoshikawa, Kobayashi and Tsuda himself.

**Ocular Proof.** The presence of the microscopic lens in the examination room where Tsuda is diagnosed also signals by means of metaphorical juxtaposition the function of another powerful trope related to the act of seeing (which must be applied retrospectively, after the reader has learned of the jealousies and fear of betrayal that "agonize" the relationship between Tsuda and his wife O-Nobu), that of ocular proof. In the front-loaded opening chapter, the stage is already set for the acute ocular-centrism that defines the novel. Tsuda wants ocular proof, visible knowledge of what he cannot see (his "condition") and O-Nobu seeks visible knowledge of her husband's constancy. The *locus classicus* of ocular proof is the famous demand made by Othello on learning from Iago that his wife is not as chaste as Othello might wish to think. He demands to see with his own eyes proof that Desdemona is unfaithful to him.

O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;  
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on; that cuckold lives in bliss  
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger;  
But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er  
Who dotes, yet doubts, suspects, yet strongly loves!  
—Iago to Othello, III. iii. Line 165

Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,  
Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof:  
Or by the worth of man's eternal soul,  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog  
Than answer my waked wrath!  
—Othello to Iago, III.iii. Line 359

The metaphor of ocular proof is not, most readers will agree, entirely applicable to *Meian* (even though Sôseki, as a well-read scholar of Shakespeare, makes mention of the plays, especially *Hamlet*, in his *Bungaku hyôron* and did write a haiku about ten of Shakespeare's plays (SZ 33: 168-170). There is after all no real demand to test Tsuda's constancy, unless we view Mrs. Yoshikawa as a kind of Iago who wants to spur Tsuda to take some kind of action. O-Nobu wants Tsuda to love her "absolutely," which of course would leave no room for inconstancy, and she desires proof of his absolute love. O-Nobu's tragedy is that she can never be sure of Tsuda's love for her alone. The significance of Shakespeare's "ocular proof" to

our discussion is also in the fallacy that “seeing is knowing,” that seeing something is proof of its existence or its veracity. Othello does indeed see with his own eyes what he believes to be proof that his wife is inconstant, but, tragically, he is merely being deceived by Iago’s Machiavellian machinations. Othello gets the ocular proof he demands. Iago’s orchestrated, staged, dramatization of Desdemona “having an affair” with Cassio is what Othello believes to be true. He believes, like the inhabitants of the cave in Plato’s *Republic*, that the shadows reflected on the wall of the cave are real.

Mrs. Yoshikawa successfully urges Tsuda to meet again with Kiyoko, his fiancée (someone now married to another) before marrying O-Nobu. Mrs. Yoshikawa is the financier (her husband is Tsuda’s employer), the one who provides the funds. Tsuda, who sees it as his “obligation” to comply with Mrs. Yoshikawa’s arrangements, does in point of fact get the ocular proof he needs—much more than he bargained for. He sees himself in a different light (in the lower depths of the hot spring where he gets lost) and finally sees what Kiyoko really thinks of him. Even accepting the invitation to see Kiyoko again, one might assume, would “open old wounds,” complicating his recovery process instead of promoting it. Ostensibly going to the hot spring for convalescence and recovery, where his fresh wound can heal, Tsuda’s well-being is in fact threatened by the possibility of having an old wound reopened. Mrs. Yoshikawa’s orchestration to have Tsuda and Kiyoko meet again at the hot spring is all that is needed to throw doubt on Tsuda’s current marital relationship (in the eyes of O-Nobu) and potentially to destroy it, just as Iago’s manipulations are enough to convince Othello of his wife’s inconstancy, to force him to destroy the thing he loves most. O-Nobu is perhaps the most tragic character in *Meian* for this very reason. She too confuses seeing with knowing. Of all the characters she is the most gifted with vision and intuition, but ironically she cannot see her own pathetic situation. Tsuda’s “friend” and thorn-in-the-flesh Kobayashi also acts as a kind of Iago, filling her with doubts and hatred.

Anyone who has typed the letters O I C (Oh, I see) while chatting on the Internet must realize that metaphors of understanding most commonly involve “seeing.” Linguists who produce lexicons and word frequency lists indicate that as much as eighty percent of the most common usage of the verb “to see” is uttered to indicate understanding/knowledge. Even though the Japanese language does not exploit the same

order of metaphors for seeing=knowing, the misconception, or, more precisely, the metaphorical coherence<sup>33</sup> that to see is to know still applies. To see something clearly, however, is not necessarily to understand it, as O-Nobu shows. Conversely, not to see something clearly does not necessarily mean failure to understand: Tsuda does not see or observe his medical condition “first hand,” but he understands what is involved and what is required in the healing process. “To see clearly” becomes an important metaphor in the development of the novel. O-Hide “sees through” O-Nobu. Mrs. Yoshikawa, with her prodigious girth and matching powers of perception, seems to see all—except her own prodigious manipulateness and condescension. Kobayashi also seems to possess the power of discernment which he wields as a weapon against O-Nobu’s sense of doubt and fear of betrayal and against Tsuda’s moral complacency. Tsuda weaves a tangled web of deceit to prevent all others from seeing his true motives, which today we would call “looking out for Number One” (a telling American metaphor if ever there was one). Tsuda is quite transparent, as it turns out, since both Mrs. Yoshikawa and Kobayashi—and even Kiyoko—“see through him.” Scopically challenged O-Nobu is the important exception.

**“The Terrorism of the Gaze.”** The terrorism of the gaze is Michael Moon’s phrase for describing how vision functions in Henry James’s novel *The Wings of the Dove*. He argues that gazing between Kate and Merton “turns out to be part of the system of sexual-domination-by-visual-terrorism which to a large degree governs relations between the sexes and classes as they are represented in this novel.”<sup>34</sup> For a work such as *Meian* too, in which glances play a significant role and are found on virtually every page of the text—making it a Book of Glances of sorts—the terrorism of the gaze is especially apt for defining relations between Tsuda and O-Nobu as well. As in *Wings*, it is the women not the men who possess powerful gazes (and women in both *Wings* and *Meian* are in ascendancy while the male protagonist is in eclipse).<sup>35</sup> In the West the gaze has been defined as a male domain, as in the phrase “the objectifying male gaze,” which is turned on women. In Laura Mulvey’s ground-breaking article “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,”<sup>36</sup> she cites woman as the image and man as the bearer of the look, in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, split between active/male and passive/female. In the fictional world of *Meian*, however, no single individual alone is in possession of the gaze; it belongs to both male and female alike. And Sôseki has turned the tables on the active/male and passive/female binarism by delineating O-Nobu as

active and mobile in contrast to Tsuda as passive and sessile (at least during his days in the clinic). O-Nobu boasts to her cousin Tsugiko that “A woman should be able to judge a man at a glance” (Viglielmo, 118). It is woman who is in possession of the hieratic gaze, the Freudian “eye-penis” that has the power to penetrate. Equipped with oracular/ocular powers, O-Nobu is in a position to take control (of Tsuda, of their marriage) but ultimately is defeated.

In *Meian* we first encounter the gaze (after the medical gaze of the examination room), appropriately enough, in the theatre scene, described in sections 47 and 48 in particular (and reminiscent of an Oscar Wilde play). O-Nobu discovers that she is the target of Mrs. Yoshikawa’s gaze and she does not like the feeling of being watched from a distance. But later she and Tsugiko playfully imitate Mrs. Yoshikawa’s use of opera glasses. “That was quite brazen of her, I suppose,” Tsugiko remarked, “But that’s the Western way, Father says.” Sôseki has imported the Western gaze into his novel: “You mean to say in Europe and America it doesn’t matter if you do that?” O-Nobu asks, “Then it’s all right for me to stare at her that way too, I suppose. I wonder whether I should try it.” To which Tsugiko replies, “Go right ahead. She’d probably like it, and say you’re very smart and stylish.” Mrs. Yoshikawa can terrorize O-Nobu with her gaze, but O-Nobu’s gaze, on the other hand, would merely be taken as a stylish gesture. O-Nobu is just learning to use her gaze, but, as we shall see, she is a quick learner. Soon she will be shooting lightning bolts at Kobayashi (“A streak of lightning flashed directly from her narrow eyes”) and hate beams at Tsuda. O-Nobu finds out later that she was in fact invited to the theatre and the dinner party for the hosts to obtain her opinion of Tsugiko’s suitor, but this important detail had slipped her attention (not a good sign). With Mrs. Yoshikawa as a model, O-Nobu can hope to harness the gaze for her own purposes, subjugating her husband to her will. Her aunt and uncle already believe her to possess psychic powers. “You do seem somehow to have some psychic power,” they praise her, “That’s why everybody wants to ask your opinion” (Viglielmo, 114). But they tease her that their “prophet” is losing her intuitive powers. “Since I’ve been married it’s gradually been worn away, “ she explains. “Recently I’ve not only not had second sight, I’ve not even had first sight” (Viglielmo, 115). O-Nobu, the one who should *noburu* and make pronouncements, our oracle of Delphi, cannot deliver the goods at will: “In front of Tsugiko she professed herself to be one of those few fortunate persons who have been able to receive happiness from God by

having had complete clarity of foresight.” (Viglielmo, 118) O-Nobu begins to feel victimized, as she is unable to live up to others’ expectations toward her ocular talents. Later when Tsugiko asks why O-Nobu did not use her special psychic powers, she confesses her inability to summon them: “It isn’t that I *didn’t* use them; it’s that I *couldn’t* use them” (emphasis in Viglielmo, 129).

**The Normalizing Gaze.** Mrs. Yoshikawa, society matron, woman of girth, meddler, and self-appointed director of all interpersonal relations within her possible grasp and domain, turns her formidable powers towards controlling Tsuda’s amatory relations, which is tantamount to controlling not only Tsuda’s sex life but his entire public and private life. He is already in the employ of Mr. Yoshikawa, on whom he depends for his economic livelihood, and therefore in a position from which Mrs. Yoshikawa can easily extricate him (by arranging for his leave of absence) and then dispatch him to the hot spring rendezvous she herself has orchestrated—all travel expenses paid. It is not enough that Mrs. Yoshikawa has the power to make people do her bidding; she seeks control over others which extends all the way to a person’s sexual identity. “Be a man” is her mantra to transform and transfix Tsuda to her vision of masculinity. She seeks to shape Tsuda’s masculinity to her own ideals. And from where exactly does her authority come, we must ask. By virtue of her class and social status, she stands in a position not only to manipulate others but, worse, to have them conform to her own standards; and her own vision of appropriateness and correctness become the standard, the norm. Today we recognize in Sôseki’s Mrs. Yoshikawa the “normalizing judgment” of the dominant/dominating class. Why does Mrs. Yoshikawa seek power over others? Because she *can*. Today we clearly see in Mrs. Yoshikawa the voice of, say, “save traditional marriage,” which seeks to impose the values and practices of the sexual majority onto all others. What the masculine Mrs. Yoshikawa means by her incessant repetition of “be a man” is actually “be like me”: decisive, in charge, in control—precisely the attributes which Tsuda lacks. The greatest irony of all is that Mrs. Yoshikawa’s intentions are good: “Since she was absolutely convinced that all of her activity in meddling in other people’s affairs was an expression of her kindness and goodwill and that there was not a particle of selfishness in it, she could not be expected to have any misgivings about it” (Viglielmo, 260). It is only “natural” and “self-evident” that her meddling (I prefer the words “manipulation” and “machination”) is to help others. In doing so, the status quo is

maintained, the Yoshikawas' own power and authority, by virtue of their class and social status are inculcated, reinforced, and renewed.

Who sets the norm? That is the question Sôseki poses by having O-Nobu, O-Hide, Kobayashi and Mrs. Yoshikawa one by one turn their normalizing gazes on Tsuda. O-Nobu wants to make Tsuda conform to her own image of a loyal husband; O-Hide wants Tsuda to conform to her own image of the respectful brother and filial son; Kobayashi, of all people, himself outside the norm, expects Tsuda to conform to his image of good friend and good husband to O-Nobu; Mrs. Yoshikawa aims to have Tsuda conform to her ideals of masculinity and dutiful husband (resulting, one would assume, in a blissful Confucian harmony). Each seeks power over Tsuda to have him conform to his or her image of "correctness." Each seeks to peg Tsuda in a narrowly conceived "role" instead of addressing him as an individual, and Tsuda successfully kicks against this oppression, refusing to conform (his one "heroic" gesture in my opinion which other critics are perhaps prone to see only as his fatal flaw). Each character seeks to impose his or her ego on Tsuda, demanding that he reduce his own hyperplastic ego to theirs, an egotistical mission in and of itself. Japanese critics in particular have been quick to point out the centrality of Tsuda's egoism, reducing the agon of the novel to a narrative of egoism and selfishness—an approach that resonates most within a country in which nonconformity is scorned and degraded. [Such a reductionist view, however, occludes the more basic, essential narrative of power over the other, and occults the power struggles evident in everyday interpersonal relationships. In the balance sheet of *Meian*, the tally sheet of who wins and who loses, it is Tsuda, in my opinion, who wins out above all others by refusing to bend to pressure from outside himself: his refusal to change is his victory (though a Pyrrhic victory perhaps, since he remains passive, miserable, directionless).] Through the lens of my own cultural experience—as an American for whom egoism (or more properly, aggressiveness and assertiveness) is *a priori* a survival skill, the sine qua non of getting ahead—Tsuda might appear a hero, unbending in the face of adversity, unyielding to the egos of others, like Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1882): "the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone!" To Japanese critics, Tsuda is egotistical and willful. Future generations of Japanese students, I predict (to use my own *senrigan*, or powers of clairvoyance) perhaps will look at the struggle of wills and egos as quaint and charming, very much in the same way we read Jane Austen today. But what of the emblematic

fissure? Where is the disease? In Tsuda's body? In society? In modern life in general? Is Tsuda the embodiment of Japan's national polity, the *kokutai*, the body politic, that purportedly can only respond to *gaiatsu*, to external pressure and outside forces, that is incapable of change from within? Could Sôseki be projecting the condition of the sick body, Tsuda's illness, onto the nation as a whole, onto the *kokutai*, the body politic? Stephen Dodd explores the relationship between the body politic and the physical body in his article "The Significance of Bodies in Sôseki's *Kokoro*." Is Sôseki describing not a personal illness, not an individual case study, but a social malady in general from which all of Meiji-Taishô Japan suffers? These questions are not beyond the bounds of Sôseki's far-reaching social commentary.

Ultimately, not one of the relationships described above ends satisfactorily, in the sense of reconciliation or "coming to a mutual understanding" (Confucian hierarchies are neglected and harmony is never achieved). Tsuda and O-Nobu reach a "compromise," actually more of a stalemate, in which neither party gains an advantage nor sacrifices ground to the other. Tsuda might appear to be a hero in that he does not buckle under to people who seek to control him, yet he is tragic in suffering the sin of hubris (that alone would be enough to bring about his downfall in Greek drama), and it is this pride which denies him any acts of heroism. Far from being a hero, he is modern man who must continually seek to maintain his own ground, always to redefine that ground and thereby forever plagued with the threat of being insubstantial and inauthentic.

**The Utopian Voice in *Meian*.** For all the scintillating dialogue in *Meian*, no one really communicates; language alone is not capable of getting through to another person, it would seem. People talk *at* each other, not *to* each other. For this reason, one must question Fredric Jameson's vision of the utopian in Sôseki. Although he does not define "utopian," Jameson's sense of the word seems to be that the major characters have been given equal voices, or equal say, as it were: each voice may try to dominate but in the end none is effectively silenced (and, I might add, each character has a distinct, complex psychological profile). Certainly Sôseki's writing contains a critique of the status quo that is utopian in the sense of "aiming to overcome social inequality, economic exploitation, sexual repression, and other possible forms of domination that make well-being and happiness in this life impossible" (as defined in the Oxford

*Dictionary of Philosophy*)—particularly in the voice of the adversarialist Kobayashi. That is to say, *Meian* is concerned with depicting forms of inequality and domination, though it does not actively seek to overcome them—except perhaps in the lone voice of Kobayashi (who nonetheless remains ineffectual or worse, a poseur). It is not concerned with identifying fantastic, unrealistic speculation (the pejorative meaning of utopian, a *no-place*). In fact, Sôseki presents no social alternative whatsoever. [I agree instead with philosopher Foucault's definition that there can be no utopia, in that modern society is a dystopia of all-pervasive power relations.] The world of *Meian* is, if not dystopic, dysfunctional. The family drama played out is one of dysfunction. All characters, but particularly Tsuda and O-Nobu, are *toujours déjà* caught up in their unequal relations of power, in social inequality, economic repression and other forms of domination that make well-being and happiness in their lives if not impossible then extremely difficult.

For all his faults, Kobayashi (whom I find morally repugnant because he participates in the same terrorism—terrorizing O-Nobu and Tsuda—which he seeks to eliminate in others), is undeniably the utopian voice of *Meian*, and his unique appearance in the novel sets it off as a true original; he is not found in the literary works of Sôseki's contemporaries such as Henry James or Marcel Proust. Kobayashi's very presence signals social inequality and class distinction, yet he is not beyond using Tsuda for his own personal gain. He is a necessary challenge to Mrs. Yoshikawa's class and power, the thorn in the flesh to O-Nobu and Tsuda, in short, Sôseki's balance in the yin-yang process at work in the world of *Meian*. Without him, the novel would lack a full spectrum of the hierarchical structure from the *embourgeoisement* of the Yoshikawas to the disenfranchisement of Kobayashi. In *Anna Karenina* (1875-77) Leo Tolstoy famously proclaims, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Showing us one unhappy family, Sôseki has presented the singularity of the unhappy couple Tsuda and O-Nobu, focusing not on the euphoric and the utopian but on the dysphoric and distopic.

Symptoms of disease are nothing but a disguised manifestation of the power of love; and all disease is only love transformed.

—Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*

**Some Conclusions.** What *is* wrong with Tsuda? Is his illness a disease of being "incapable of love" (as is suggested on the inside cover of the English translation)? Milly Theale's doctor in *Wings* advises a love

affair as a cure for her tuberculosis. Is Mrs. Yoshikawa unwittingly doing the same thing in sending Tsuda to the hot-spring rendezvous with Kiyoko—to cure him with a love affair? Is disease a metaphor for sexuality? In a novel as complex as *Meian*, any number of interpretations and linkages would seem possible. And is the illness of the mind or of the body? *Both* would seem the answer: for Milly and for Tsuda. In keeping with the image of the languishing heroine dying tragically of a secret illness à la *La Dame aux Camélias*, Tsuda too is feminized: immobilized, in a state of being rather than becoming. Though feminized, he has no “tubercular appeal” (*kekaku-gonomi*) typical of the pale, wispy beauties of prewar fiction. Tsuda, however, does seem to fit somewhat Susan Sontag’s description of the tubercular personality type, “melancholy, sensitive, creative, a being apart” (even though he is not in fact tubercular and certainly not creative, except in his deceptiveness). Deploying disease as a metaphor for sexuality gives an author a way of discussing sexuality indirectly. There is no sex in *Meian* but there is sexuality. Tsuda’s love and sexuality are on the “hiding and lying side,” as James describes his own dilemma in presenting Milly’s death after her having sex with Merton. Representing such vulgarity would be ugly but resorting to “hiding and lying” would be ugly too. James comes out ahead by making the ugly beautiful. Tsuda’s condition, on the other hand, is not pretty (neither the physical nor the spiritual aspects of his illness), and Sôseki does not attempt to beautify it. Neither is there the fatal attraction between Thanatos and Eros that we find in later Japanese works such as Kawabata and Mishima. As we have said, there is no death in *Meian*, only disease. Tsuda’s fate is equal to or worse than death: he is dead to the concerns of others and until his dying day he must continue the Sisyphean task of being his own physician. No one can cure him—not the doctor, not O-Nobu or O-Hide, not Kobayashi, in my opinion, or Mrs. Yoshikawa, not even Kiyoko. Neither can Nature cure Tsuda if the disease is civilization, the disease of modernity, the disease of modern man (we are still working on that cure). He must cure himself. Assuming, of course, he sincerely wants to get well.

Like other Meiji giants, Sôseki stood, with one foot firmly in the past and one foot tentatively in the future, astride two worlds, the Tokugawa tradition of the past and the brave new world of modernity. He looked hard at the world he lived in, a world not unlike the fictional universe of *Meian* he created and populated, and asked serious questions about self and society, money and interpersonal relationships, personal

freedom. He artfully posed important questions and skillfully refrained from drawing neat conclusions about modern life, about problems that are essentially irresolvable. As is frequently pointed out, Japan is still wrestling with many of these questions (as is the rest of the modern world). As in Henry James's *Wings of the Dove*, knowledge itself becomes uncertain. Just as astounding or more astounding than the instance of Sôseki beginning his novel with an anal probe is the rhetorical significance of opening *Meian* by way of an aporia, an aporetic expression, with the anal fissure representing both an impasse and a puzzle. The *Oxford Companion to the English Language* defines it this way: "APORIA [16c through Latin from Greek *aporia* difficulty in passing, impasse, puzzle]. (1) In rhetoric, the expression of a real or simulated doubt or perplexity: *I hardly know where to start, it's really all so confusing*. (2) In logic, difficulty in establishing the truth of a proposition, caused by the presence of both favorable and unfavorable evidence." Sôseki's ironic mention of Poincaré's theory to explain coincidences makes his aporetic opening all the more challenging. It is a caveat lector warning the reader that solid answers, clear explanations and pat conclusions, like Tsuda's fissure, will not be easily sewn up. It is a postmodern touch in a modernist work. English professor and writer David Lodge has his fictional English professor in *Nice Work* explain the importance of aporia in postmodern discourse:

Robyn wrote the word with a coloured felt-tip pen on the whiteboard screwed to the wall of her office. Aporia. In classical rhetoric it means real or pretended uncertainty about the subject under discussion. Deconstructionists today use it to refer to more radical kinds of contradiction or subversion of logic or defeat of the reader's expectation in a text. You could say that it's deconstruction's favourite trope. Hillis Miller compares it to following a mountain path and then finding that it gives out, leaving you stranded on a ledge unable to go back or forwards. It actually derives from a Greek word meaning "a pathless path."<sup>37</sup>

Sôseki, as I have said, inadvertently has written the perfect ending in leaving Tsuda on a "pathless path" (the author having died before finishing the novel—leaving it an "open text"), which fairly well describes the Sôsekian protagonist in general: he is unable to go back, unable to go forward. It is the thinking man's modern condition. *I hardly know where to end; it's really all so confusing*, we could just as well say now as when we began.

Chapter 3  
Women on Top :  
Epiphanies in *Botchan*, *Kusamakura*, *Sanshirô*, *Sorekara*, and *Meian*

A. M. D. G.

It was a tree; there was the river; it was afternoon; here we were; I in my serge suit; she in green.  
There was no past, no future; merely the moment in its ring of light.  
—Virginia Woolf, *The Waves*

There are in our existence spots of time  
That with distinct pre-eminence retain  
A renovating virtue . . .  
A virtue, by which pleasure is enhanced,  
That permeates, enables us to mount,  
When high, more high, and lifts us up when fallen.  
This efficacious spirit chiefly lurks  
Among those passages of life that give  
Profoundest knowledge to what point, and how,  
The mind is lord and master—outward sense  
The obedient servant of her will. Such moments  
Are scattered everywhere, taking their date  
From our first childhood.  
—William Wordsworth, *The Prelude* [12. 208-25]

Epiphanies come in numerous guises. They might be instantaneous perceptions, *moments privilégiés* (Proust), revelations from the “very pulses of the air” (James), or moments of vision (Conrad). We might know them as spots of time (Wordsworth), the infinite moment (Browning), the great moment (Yeats), or timeless moments (Eliot).<sup>1</sup> The literary connotation of epiphany in the West, and particularly as it applies to modern literature, is usually traced back to this passage in James Joyce’s novel *Stephen Hero* (1916—the end of Sôseki’s career but just the beginning of Joyce’s):

This triviality made him think of collecting many such moments together in a book of epiphanies. By an epiphany he meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phrase of the mind itself. He believed that it was for the man of letters to record these epiphanies with extreme care, seeing that they themselves are the most delicate and evanescent of moments.<sup>2</sup>

The primary denotation of epiphany is the festival which commemorates the Adoration of the Magi, the festival of “the Three Kings” observed by Christians on January 6th, or “Twelfth Night.” In this original sense too, the word signifies a manifestation or a showing. By way of definition, I will use in this paper the three criteria that qualify a poetic moment as an epiphany as cited by Nichols in his *Poetics of Epiphany*: “expansiveness,” “atemporality,” “mysteriousness.” But few seem to agree with Nichols’s criteria. Others

have added “heightened intensity,” for example. In *Epiphany in the Modern Novel*, Morris Beja includes the “criterion of incongruity.” In *Epiphanic Mode in Wordsworth and Modern Literature*, Robert Langbaum proposes four more: “psychological association,” “momentaneousness,” “suddenness,” and “fragmentation, or the epiphanic leap.” By analyzing five epiphanies in Sôseki, taking *Sanshirô* as our main example (and one each from *Botchan*, *Kusamakura*, *Sorekara*, and *Meian*), I will comment on their function and structure and also hope to be able to identify distinctive patterns that might mark them as recognizably Sôsekian.

In Joyce’s *Stephen Hero*, Nichols notes that Joyce was borrowing terminology from Thomas Aquinas, and that his *claritas* (radiance) and *quidditas* (whatness) help define the moment when “the soul of the commonest object seems to us radiant.” “For Stephen,” he explains, “epiphany is the moment when the mind discovers the *claritas* of a thing to be identifiable with its *quidditas*. The modern epiphany is a logical extension of this celebration of the ordinary. As Joyce’s mouthpiece, Stephen Hero can espouse the author’s aesthetics in the same way that the artist in *Kusamakura* can mouth Sôseki’s personal critique of art and literature.

But what does Epiphany have to do with the works of a Japanese author? To that rhetorical question I would respond that Sôseki was an exceptional student of English literature and an outstanding critic as well (Matsui Sakuko has translated some of his *Bungakuron*, A Study of Literature, in a publication titled *Natsume Sôseki as a Critic of English Literature* [1975]). Nowhere have I found the use of the English word “epiphany” or the katakana エピファニー<sup>3</sup> in his writing, but he was well read in nineteenth-century literature in particular, which is often characterized by poetic epiphanies. Whether he was consciously working epiphanies into his writing I cannot say, but in my examples it will become obvious that he has created exceptional moments—poetic moments—that are expansive, intense, and mysterious, not to mention sudden, incongruous, and fragmented.

In addition to epiphanies, Sôseki’s dense intertextuality and use of ekphrasis, I hope to show, combine to produce an exotic (and *Western* exoticization) of his fictional female characters. A native tradition also

exists—the “lyric moment” in Japanese poetry—which Sôseki draws upon both in his narrative technique and in his depiction of women. *Kusamakura* and O-Nami are a case in point. Sôseki’s haiku novel is told not in the chronological style of Western narrative but by “progression through image association” in the Japanese lyric style. Resolution of conflict is not the goal, but rather “elaboration of the moment.” In his article “Elaboration of the Moment: The Lyric Tradition in Modern Japanese Narrative,” Earl Jackson, Jr. establishes a comparative model by which Western literature is typified as transcendent and Japanese literature as immanent. He contrasts the epic of the West (the quest for truth, “the beginning of a teleological ‘journey’ toward the meaning, always elsewhere,” the closure of meaning) with the Japanese lyric (“necessitating no reaching *beyond* the initial experience, but rather within the experienced moment,” a celebration of the moment it concretizes).

Instead of narratizing the object (Achilles’ shield in Homer is probably the *locus classicus* of the practice of ekphrasis) and transforming the object into a story, the Japanese narrative tradition “weaves discontinuous observed moments.” Jackson’s comparative model, as I have summed up in Fig. 5, illustrates how *Kusamakura* and O-Nami can be understood in these terms.

Traditional Japanese Narrative	Traditional Western Narrative
Progression through image association	Chronological development
Description/evocation of environment	Character-driven plot
As plot motivation	
Non-teleological movement or absence of movement	Telos, closure
Elaboration of the moment	Resolution of conflict/mystery
Multivocality, intersubjectivity	Omniscient narrator

Figure 5. Immanence vs. Transcendence  
Source: Adapted from Earl Jackson, Jr., (1989, 8)

O-Nami is the embodiment of “progression through image association”—she reveals herself as a series of images (and in limited dialogue), that is, presentationally. There is no character-driven plot (in fact, no plot at all in the conventional sense) but rather “description and evocation of environment.” Elaboration of the moment (the *modus operandi* of haiku, for example) is how *Kusamakura* moves from one scene to the next in a “weaving of discontinuous observed moments.” O-Nami herself is not a narrativized object or an object transformed into a story but rather an observed moment, an elaborated moment. O-Nami is not

transcendent (though she appears at times otherworldly) but immanent. None of Sôseki's female characters is transcendent.

Clearly, Sôseki shows an understanding both of the lyric moment and the epiphanic moment as is lucidly articulated in this essay, an essay written aboard ship on the way to England where he was to begin his study of English literature (yet already written in consummate English!). His own words, "that delicate link which connects man and infinity . . . and permits [a] peep into the kingdom of absoluteness, the realm of transparency . . ." might very well serve as our definition of the epiphanic moment:

The sea is lazily calm and I am dull to the core, lying in my long chair on deck. The leaden sky overhead seems as devoid of life as the dark expanse of waters around, blending their dullness together beyond the distant horizon as if in sympathetic stolidity. While I gaze at them, I gradually lose myself in the lifeless tranquility which surrounds me and seem to grow out of myself on the wings of contemplation to be conveyed to a realm of *vision* which is neither aesthereal (sic) nor earthly, with no houses, trees, birds, and human beings. Neither heaven nor hell, nor that intermediate stage of human existence which is called by the name of *this* world, but of vacancy, of nothingness where infinity and eternity seem to swallow one in the oneness of existence, and defies in its vastness any attempts of description. Suddenly the shrill sound of a bell, calling us to lunch, awakened me to the stern reality, after a short short (sic) syncope of the senses, mercilessly cutting off that delicate link which connects man and infinity at some unexpected and unforeseen moments, and permits man in the very midst of passions and turbulence to peep into the kingdom of absoluteness, the realm of transparency, the world of real activity—an activity with no motion and no rest from whence we came, whither we tend and where we live even at present in this phenomenal existence which [we] call life. [Italics, sic, and bracketed words are as they appear in SZ 24:18-20]<sup>4</sup>

## The Pressure of Light: Sanshirô's Epiphany of the Woman in the Woods

### 三四郎

ふと目をあげると、左手の岡の上に女が二人立っている。女のすぐ下が池で、池の向こう側が高い崖の木立で、その後ろが派手な赤煉瓦のゴシック風の建築である。そして落ちかかった日が、全ての向こうから横に光を通してくる。女はこの夕日に向けて立っていた。三四郎のしゃがんである低い陰から見ると岡の上は大変明るい。女の一人はまばしいと見えて、団扇を額の所にかざしている。顔はよくわからない。けれども着物の色、帯の色は鮮やかにわかった。白い足袋の色も目についた。鼻緒の色はとにかく草履をはいている事もわかった。もう一人は真っ白である。これは団扇も何も持っていない。只額に少し皺をよせて、向こう岸から生い被さりそうに、高く池の面に枝を伸ばした古木の奥を眺めていた。団扇を持った女は少し前へ出ている。白い方は一歩土堤の縁からさがっている。三四郎が見ると、二人の姿が筋違に見える。

この時三四郎の受けた感じは只奇麗な色彩だという事であった。けれども田舎者だから、この色彩がどういう風に奇麗なのだから、口にも言えず、筆にも書けない。ただ白い方が看護婦だと思っただけである。

Sanshirô suddenly lifted his eyes. Two women are standing on a hill to his left. Directly below the women is the pond on whose opposite side is a grove of trees on a tall rise behind which stands the ornate red brick of a Gothic-style building. The lateral rays of the sun, now about to set, penetrate the entire scene from the opposite side. The women stood facing the setting sun. From the deep shadows where Sanshirô crouches, the top of the hill looks very bright. One of the women, caught in the glare, shields her eyes with a round fan to her forehead. He can't make out her face, but he vividly apprehended the colors of her kimono and obi. The white color of her tabi caught his eye. He could see that she wore zori but couldn't determine the color of the thong part. The other woman is all in white. She carries no fan or anything in her hands. Wrinkling her brow, she gazed into the old trees spreading their branches high above the pond forming the dense growth of the opposite bank. The woman with the fan stands just ahead of the woman in white who stands back a step from the edge of the bank. The silhouette of the two figures appears diagonally to Sanshirô's line of vision.

What Sanshirô felt at that time was how pretty the colors were. But as a country boy, he could not describe in speech or writing in what way the colors were pretty. All he thought was that the woman in white must be a nurse.<sup>5</sup>

At the still point of the turning world. Neither flesh nor fleshless;  
Neither from nor towards; at the still point, there the dance is,  
But neither arrest nor movement. And do not call it fixity,  
Where past and future are gathered. Neither movement from nor towards,  
Neither ascent or decline. Except for the point, the still point.  
There would be no dance, and there is only the dance.  
I can only say, *there* we have been: but I cannot say where.  
And I cannot say, how long, for that is to place it in time.  
—T. S. Eliot, *Burnt Norton* II

Sanshirô kneels at the edge of the heart-shaped pond (*shinji-ike*, shaped like the character for “heart”), a traditional configuration of Japanese gardens, peering into his own heart, as is were, not like Narcissus admiring his own reflection but rather reflecting on his own situation, his own existence, his new environment. Sanshirô has come to the pond to reflect. “He stared at the surface of the pond,” not at his own reflection. Escaping the hustle-bustle of the city, Sanshirô is the “still point of the turning world,” to

borrow T. S. Eliot's phrase. Sôseki has carefully set the scene for this epiphany, which is perhaps the most central, the most revealing of epiphanic moments in the works of Sôseki. Chapter Two, in which the epiphany occurs, opens with Sanshirô's sense of surprise and wonder (*odoroki* 驚き) at the goings-on of Tokyo. He is *awestruck* by the clanging of the streetcars, the bustling commercial center of Marunouchi, the expansiveness of the city, all of which give him a sense of *odoroki*—the words *odoroki* and *odoroita* are used eight times in the first two paragraphs (Rubin's "startled" lacks that important sense of wonder). Sanshirô's senses are assaulted by all the violent activity. "He stood in the center of activity now." His self-confidence is chipped away. He is feeling alone and hemmed in. He has just come from the dark world of Nonomiya Sôhachi in whose cellar-like laboratory experiments on light pressure are performed in the dark. All this, the background of Tokyo, with the foreground of Nonomiya's dark room, set the stage for Sanshirô's epiphany. Nonomiya's experiment has made him ask himself "what kind of pressure light could have and what function such pressure could possibly serve." He is about to find out some answers (and some more questions).

With bustling Tokyo as backdrop and Nonomiya's dark cave juxtaposed against the natural serenity of the pond, then, Sanshirô finally comes to his moment of quiet: "Sanshirô came to the edge of the University pond and knelt down."<sup>6</sup> The most obvious feature of Sanshirô's epiphany is of course the visual element and the fact that it occurs in nature. The opening phrase of the novel, we recall, is "He drifted off, and when he opened his eyes, the woman was still there." In his epiphany at the pond, he lifts his eyes and standing there before him are two women. Sanshirô has just previously recalled several "silent moments" back home in Kumamoto when he had climbed a nearby mountain and also at other times has remembered the wooded shrines (shrines traditionally are located in woods [one connotation of *mori* was the grove of trees surrounding a shrine]), which the University evokes. The word "suddenly" (*futo*) is important also, in that time is not unfolding in a normal sequence. In my translation I have tried to preserve the shifting aspect which marks the temporal instability of the event, whereas Rubin has rendered the entire passage in the past tense. The subject of tense or verb aspect, without going into it here, is a complex one in Japanese since an author is free to change tense even in mid-sentence without confusing the Japanese reader. And it is especially significant for Sôseki who experimented with tense and narrative perspective throughout his

writing career. In an article on Sôseki, Reiko Abe Auestad has commented on the linguistic constraints in the Japanese language that “make it unsuitable for the objective representation of reality.” The writing style of Sôseki’s later years has been characterized, she says, as “consciously motivated by a wish to experiment with narrowing the gap between English prose style and that of Japanese.” Sôseki was most effective at this in *Meian*, Auestad says, which was welcomed by commentators as a “rare achievement” in this regard.<sup>7</sup>

Of the many contrasts, light and shadow become the most meaningful. Sanshirô’s position in the dark shadows is contrasted with the bright light at the top of the hill. A hierarchy is established with man crouching in the shadows and woman on a high position in the light (this hierarchy is repeated in the example from *Meian*). The women seem to inhabit a timeless moment, standing in a ring of light, in Virginia Woolf’s phrase, with no past, no future. The crouching position is said to characterize the posture of Sôseki’s protagonists: they are poised to move but are paralyzed from doing so. In Sôseki’s final novel, *Meian*, the interplay of light and shadow becomes the very topic, theme, and problem of the entire work. In *Sanshirô* too, the bright world of women is contrasted against the dark world of the all-male academy. The pressure of light is real, Sanshirô knows, not just because he has observed it with his own eyes in Nonomiya’s experiment, but because he personally has experienced it already—twice. Once when he is struck in the face with the reality of woman’s physical presence in the world (“As soon as he released the box into the wind, the lid shot back against the train in a *flash of white*”) and once when he observes a foreign woman from the train with Hirota (“The woman was dressed *entirely in white*, and she was very beautiful”).

The “Gothic-style building” adds a, well, *gothic* quality and somewhat “other-worldliness” to the scene, which is certainly another world in contradistinction to Marunouchi and to Nonomiya’s laboratory which Sanshirô has just experienced. Another strange quality of the scene is the movement of the “eye” of the narrator from the large frame to the telescopic, zooming in on the feet in white *tabi* and the thong of the *zôri* from the wide-angle shot of the wooded hill-top. Through the narrative I/eye, we see Sanshirô intensely scrutinizing the women, down to the smallest detail, the color of the thong of a *zôri*. Despite its visual detail, the epiphany is oddly lacking in “revelation” as a Western reader might expect an epiphany to

have. In other words, it is not a moment of self-awareness for Sanshirô except in the broadest sense that he realizes the world of women is a mystery to him (no small revelation!). In fact, we might say that as a feature characteristic of epiphanies in Sôseki, these scenes are better at presenting questions than at providing answers, more inclined to mystification than to demystification. They are fraught with contradiction. How might he reconcile the three seemingly contradictory worlds he later imagines?—the Past (*furusato*, Mother, the girl back home), the Present (University, Ivory Tower, the isolated/isolating academy), and the Future (women, champagne, the good life).

Sanshiro was in a daze. Kneeling by the water, he began to see that there was something wrong, some terrible contradiction—but where? In the girl and the atmosphere of the University? In the colors and the way she looked at him? In his thinking of the woman on the train when he saw this one? Was it that his plans for the future had two conflicting courses? Or that he had experienced fear from the sight that had also given him great pleasure? This young man from the country could not be sure. He knew only that somewhere there was a contradiction.<sup>8</sup>

Sanshirô's epiphany ends with his reflecting on what he has just witnessed. It is an act of double reflexivity. His reflexivity, whether double or single, rarely yields answers. He is painfully aware of the contradictions in his situation. This contradictory aspect, this "incongruity" of the moment, is what most typifies the essential quality of epiphanies in Sôseki. The contradiction of the idealized Mineko in the all-male university environment is not lost on Sanshirô. In his first vision of Mineko, he turns her into a painting called "Woman in the Woods" (a romantic representation) and at the end of the story visits a gallery to see a painting called "Woman in the Woods" (a realistic representation, but still a representation). Neither representation "captures" her. She remains, we shall see, a free spirit.

Sôseki's rich intertextuality further complicates the characters of Mineko and Sanshirô. Sanshirô is naive but he is not shallow. Two English literary works in particular, *Oroonoko* and *Hydriotaphia*, contribute additional layers of meaning and add a restrained Western exoticism and academicism (a kind of reverse orientalism, if you will). *Hydriotaphia* is the name of a book which Hirota lends to Sanshirô, who opens it to read: "But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity." (Rubin, 167) Also known as *Urn Burial*, written by Sir Thomas Browne (1605-82), the book was published in 1658 and has been called the first archaeological treatise in

English and is considered to be written in the “high style” appropriate to its subject. The question is: what is it doing in *Sanshirô*? The answer: it makes him think of death, at least momentarily, and forces him to realize that he can only look at things, including Mineko, from the outside (normally, he has a difficult time seeing and understanding what is before his eyes). Just after reading a passage in *Hydriotaphia*, which has taken him the time to cover four blocks, Sanshirô watches a child’s funeral procession. Surely his own childishness and naiveté will not last long, but must soon perish. Sôseki’s artful name-dropping also creates a denser textuality and a wider web of allusion to other texts outside the text. Another example of this literary name-dropping is Aphra Behn’s *Oroonoko* (1688). Sôseki attempts to establish a connection between the white English-woman writer who visited Surinam where she is eyewitness to the story of the royal slave, with a forced narrative between Mineko and Sanshirô:

It was the story of Oroonoko, said the Professor, an African prince who was tricked by an English sea captain, sold as a slave and made to suffer great hardships. It was believed to be the author’s actual eyewitness account.

“That’s quite a story,” said Yojiro. “How about it, Mineko? Why don’t you write something like *Oroonoko*?”

“I wouldn’t mind, but I’ve never been an ‘actual eyewitness’ to anything.”

“If it’s an African hero you need, you’ve got Ogawa here, the Kyushu black man.”<sup>9</sup>

Sôseki’s intertextuality here again is astounding. *Oroonoko, or the History of the Royal Slave*, is thought to be the earliest English philosophical novel. “It deplores the slave trade and Christian hypocrisy,” the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* states, “holding up for admiration the nobility and honor of its African hero.” We know from *A Room of One’s Own* (1928) that Virginia Woolf acclaims Behn as the first English woman to earn her living by writing, a fact Sôseki knew without the benefit of having read Virginia Woolf. Besides deploring Christian hypocrisy (Mineko is a Christian but sees no harm in playing with Sanshirô’s feelings), the novel *Sanshirô* also shares with *Oroonoko* the concept of the noble savage, a term of obscure origin but frequently traced back to—*Oroonoko* (!). Sanshirô is not only the “Kyushu black man” waiting to be saved (preferably by a “white” [*iro shiroi*] woman in the Sôseki scheme of things), but he is also, in a sense, Sôseki’s noble savage. Sanshirô represents Nature, the green quiet countryside of Kyushu, in stark opposition to the artificiality, the industrialism, materialism and capitalism of Tokyo (Meiji Japan). The world of light inhabited by Mineko and the world of darkness inhabited by most men in *Sanshirô* is further problematized by overlaying this narrative of the noble savage.

The *Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms* has this entry under “Romanticism” which convinces me that Sôseki’s literary concerns are often romantic in nature: “Other aspects of romanticism in the 18th c. are a) an increasing interest in Nature, and in the natural, primitive and uncivilized way of life; b) a growing interest in scenery, especially its more untamed and disorderly manifestations; c) an association of human moods with the “moods” of Nature—and thus a subjective feeling for it and interpretation of it; d) a considerable emphasis on natural religion; e) emphasis on the need for spontaneity in thought and action and in the expression of thought; f) increasing importance attached to natural genius and the power of the imagination; g) a tendency to exalt the individual and his needs and emphasis on the need for a freer and more personal expression; h) the cult of the Noble Savage.” By this definition, Sôseki’s *Sanshirô* and *Kusamakura* are the most romantic of all his novels.

The role of nature in *Sanshirô* is multilayered. The eponymous hero represents nature and the noble savage and his epiphany of the woman in the woods also casts Mineko as Nature. If epiphanies are always gendered, it makes sense that Sanshirô, the boy from the country, envisions a beautiful woman as part of his memories of home and nature. The “sacred grove” is his refuge from bustling Tokyo, reminiscent of the landscape in his native Kyushu. The Japanese for “grove,” as I have said, *mori* (森、杜) can mean both a stand of trees and a place where a shrine is located (this latter definition is often listed first in dictionaries). Interestingly, the pond in the grove at Tokyo University now bears Sanshirô’s name (*Sanshirô no ike*), retaining nothing of the sacred but perhaps resonating with the Greek “the Groves of Academe.” The Groves of Academe, named after the stand of trees in honor of and sacred to the memory of the Greek hero Academos, was where Plato’s students gathered for instruction (“Academe” is a variant spelling of “Academos,” not a synonym of “academy”). What Sanshirô perhaps does not realize is that the Groves of Academe are a refuge not only from the real world but from the world of women since, as with the Greeks, only men received education. Women were just beginning to receive formal education in Meiji but were still barred from the university. Whatever its significance, Sanshirô’s sacred grove is the appropriate spot for an epiphany, “the manifestation of a deity.” Bathed in the light of the setting sun, Mineko, “Nature,” and her nurse-like companion, “Nurture,” mystify Sanshirô, as such a manifestation must. Later he learns, of course, that the “spirited” Mineko has something of a demonic aspect as well; she is a headstrong “Ibsen

woman.” Like Botchan’s epiphany of Madonna, the hot spring geisha (“Madonna/whore”), Sanshirô’s vision is both sacred and profane, or rather what at first appears in an otherworldly light (*claritas*) is later shown to be very much rooted in the real world, the mundane, the quotidian (*quidditas*).

Sanshirô’s ambiguous position—more unstable, perhaps, than ambiguous—is that of being a youth on the verge of manhood, a country boy in a new urban environment, a youth from the provinces at the nation’s foremost university in the capital. Mineko’s position is even more ambiguous and one that cannot be changed by simply choosing one of three possible options for the future. Mineko’s ambiguous position is not only “enshrined” in the sacred grove but more rigidly enshrined in society. Anthropologist Sherry Ortner has explored this “symbolic ambiguity” in her groundbreaking article “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” noting that in every society “the psychic mode associated with women seems to stand at both the bottom and the top of the scale of human modes of feeling.”<sup>10</sup> Women can appear to stand both under and over the sphere of culture’s hegemony, she says, because they stand for both the subversive feminine symbols (witches, evil eye, menstrual pollution, castrating mothers) and the feminine symbols of transcendence (mother, goddesses, merciful dispensers of salvation).

The ambiguously symbolic Mineko can stand at the top of her small salon of admirers, a Christian, poised to redeem the Kyushu “black man” Sanshirô as a merciful dispenser of salvation; she also stands at the bottom, quietly terrorizing the sexually naïve hero, castrating him with her haughty demeanor and shaming, sharp pointed words. Top and bottom are equally ambiguous, almost meaningless, terms when it comes to her real position in society: she is denied access to the all-male academy and must seek an alternative education (perhaps through Protestant missionaries), herself shows promise as an artist but settles instead to be an artist’s *object*, a model sitting for a portrait. Sôseki’s creation of Mineko has given Japanese literature an enduring portrait of a complex woman who, like human beings in the real world, is contradictory and multifaceted.

## Botchan's Epiphany: The Madonna of the Onsen

### ぼっちゃん

所へ入り口で若々しい女の笑い声が聞こえたから、何心なく振り返って見るとえらい奴が来た。色の白い、ハイカラ頭の、背の高い美人と四十五六の奥さんとが並んで切符を売る窓の前に立っている。おれは美人の形容などが出来る男でないから、何にも言えないが全く美人に違いない。何だか水晶の球を香水で暖めて、掌へ握って見たような心持がした。

The sound of young women laughing came from the entrance. Looking about nonchalantly, I saw that a special someone had come. She was a tall, beautiful woman with white skin and a foreign hairstyle. Next to her was a woman of forty-five or forty-six, standing in front of the ticket counter. I'm not the kind of fellow who can describe beautiful women, so I can't say, but no doubt she was a real looker. I felt somehow that I was clutching in my hand a piece of crystal warmed by perfume.<sup>11</sup>

In this passage from *Botchan* the eponymous hero's epiphany begins with ocular movement, as all epiphanies do. Instead of suddenly lifting up his eyes as Sanshirô does (*futo me o ageru to*), Botchan looks about nonchalantly (*nanigokoro naku furikaete miru to*), and there stands the woman that he assumes to be Madonna, the geisha about whom he has heard so much. Thus the epiphany is triggered by a simple eye movement and the sound of the human voice. Turney's translation reads, "When I glanced around, there stood a fantastic woman." The grammatical clue is the particle *to* in Japanese marking a sense of discovery, the *hakken no "to"* (発見の「と」), as it is termed, which here signals an epiphany. The most famous example in Japanese literature is Kawabata's opening line of *Yukiguni* (Snow Country, 1935-1947): *Kokkyô no nagai tonneru o nukeru to . . .* "The train came out of the long tunnel into the snow country." Translator Edward G. Seidensticker makes no attempt to account for this use of the Japanese particle *to* in his English version. But we might render it thus, restoring a sense of discovery: "There it was—just as the train came out of the long tunnel—*snow country*." Perhaps we should call this particle the "epiphanic *to*." In my other examples of epiphanies from *Kusamakura*, *Sorekara*, and *Meian*, however, Sôseki does not make use of the epiphanic particle, even though each passage indicates a visual phenomenon and contains a sense of discovery.

Turney describes the woman in Botchan's epiphany as a "fantastic woman," which is a far cry from the Japanese *erai yatsu*. To my ears, *erai yatsu* sounds more like "big shot" or "Very Important Person." We can see that Botchan's epiphany of the Madonna as "big shot" is not going to be a quasi-religious experience, as befits the exalted appellation. In fact, Tokyoite Botchan is highly critical, suspicious, and

judgmental of almost everyone in the country village where he teaches. Even Madonna falls under his judgmental eye. Physically, she is striking: a tall, fair (white-skinned) beauty wearing her hair in the “height of fashion.” Surely her fairness or whiteness (*shiroi iro*) is part of her beauty in the eyes of Botchan. And, like Sanshirô, he expresses his inadequacy in describing her beauty, or rather his lack of knowledge in the feminine pulchritude department. Then he contradicts himself by producing an extremely poetic and sensitive expression that is even more beautiful and stunning for its out-of-placeness, its incongruity: “When I saw her I felt as though I were holding in my hand a smooth piece of crystal, steeped in perfume” (Turney, 104). This delightful piece of synesthesia, a commingling of the senses, might seem more at home in Sôseki’s next work, his “haiku novel” *Kusamakura*—it presages the later development of the *Shinkankaku-ha* (neo-sensualists, new perception) writers such as Yokomitsu Riichi and Kawabata Yasunari for whom synesthetic expressions were tools of the trade. In Botchan’s epiphany, the *claritas* is the crystal steeped in perfume (Botchan’s vision or sensory perception of the woman) and the *quidditas* is the role of the *onsen* geisha which she, Madonna, performs. An everyday thing, even such a banal, diminished thing as an *onsen* geisha, is transformed into a moment of clarity and beauty.

Mention must be made of Botchan’s standard of beauty, which he confesses is inadequate and inexperienced. The woman is described in Western terms: tall, white and “foreign” hairstyle (I have rendered *haikara* [high-collar] as “foreign” since in Meiji the high collar, which Sôseki himself at times wore, is a metonym for all the material culture of the West which flooded Meiji Japan). The outrageous use of the Western name Madonna (マドンナ) for the *onsen* geisha is Sôseki’s own Botchan-like sense of iconoclasm and roguery (properly speaking, the high-sounding moniker was given by Redshirt, which Botchan sees as being typical of his colleague’s pseudo-intellectual effeteness). There is something wrong with this vision of beauty. It is profane. It is contradictory. Madonna is not adequately characterized in *Botchan* to allow a summary judgment. She remains a young man’s vision of the unknown, mysterious world of women (the reader knows her no better than Botchan). The quiddity of her trade, an *onsen* geisha in a small country village, is in sharp contrast to the clarity of her physical beauty, as I have said. Like Mineko to Sanshirô, she is unapproachable, unknowable, best viewed from a distance. She is unapproachable, yet she is experienced “tactilely” and “olfactorily”—“as if grasping a piece of crystal

steeped in perfume.” Since she is untouchable, Botchan can only grasp her through a synesthetic experience, an “elegant confusion” of the senses. He can grasp not the thing itself, but a metonym, as the Host to Roman Catholics embodies the Lord. Were Sanshirô an adult version of Botchan (clearly, he is not), we would see little progress made in the realm of women in the two years which elapse between the two works of fiction. Botchan can only worship Madonna from afar in the same way that Sanshirô can only idealize Mineko. Yet Botchan is not at the stage where he can even be a worshipful subject. Madonna is too insubstantial to be Transubstantiation. But she is tall and beautiful. And she is white.

The whiteness of woman in Sôseki could very well be a separate study. As Sanshirô moves farther away from his hometown in Kyushu, the women on the train become noticeably whiter as he approaches Tokyo. Madonna stands out, we can assume, from the naturally “dark” Shikoku natives just as Mineko stands out in Sanshirô’s mind from the dark women of his native Kyushu. Although white is normally associated with purity, in *Sanshirô* the white light which penetrates the darkness, the world now occupied by passive men, has about it an element of danger, as a bolt of lightning. This sense of danger in the light is not yet developed in the young Botchan (or in the youthful work *Botchan*), but it lurks just beneath the surface. It creates the slight tension and momentary sense of contradiction in Botchan’s “innocent” epiphany.

Sumie Jones, in her article “Natsume Sôseki’s *Botchan*: The Outer World through Edo Eyes,” claims Madonna represents the Edo-held view of the mysterious woman, citing a *rakugo* piece called “Time’s Up”:

If you treat her kindly, it goes to her head. Scolding makes her sulky, and blows make her cry. If you kill her, she turns into a ghost and haunts you. No way to handle a woman. She certainly looks good. Outside, she is a goddess, inside, a devil. Buddha said that, not me. Take your complaints to him.<sup>12</sup>

Sôseki’s Madonna/whore is not entirely consistent with our current understanding of the Freudian complex which describes men who can see women belonging to one of two categories only, either a virgin (untouchable) or a whore (serviceable).<sup>13</sup> The Madonna who appears before Botchan (who is, after all, too sexually naïve to appreciate such a difference anyway—this may be a distinction without a difference), is rather a mysterious, incomprehensible creature. Like Sanshirô, who grows to see Mineko as an

“unconscious hypocrite,” Botchan too, however naïve, is capable of seeing both goddess and devil in Madonna. “There’s nothing as unreliable as people,” he muses. “You’d never have thought, looking at Madonna’s face, that she’d have been capable of being so heartless, but, nevertheless, there she was, a beautiful woman, being cruel” (Turney, 108). Botchan might not be all that naïve, but he shows no sexual interest in women. The only woman in his life is Kiyō, his maid, with whom on his return to Tokyo he sets up house. Mothers are conspicuously absent in Sōseki’s novels, and Kiyō must serve as a surrogate mother for Botchan. She belongs to the Madonna category of pure and untouchable women as mothers must be, not beautiful or sexy—and she remains a virgin, for all we know: a maid, a care-giver, a nurturing helpmate but not a sexual partner.

Madonna, on the other hand, like the other women described in Sōseki’s epiphanies, is perhaps best remembered as a painting, or turned into a painting and put on exhibition in order to memorialize her beauty and to preserve her “purity” (the painting presumably would show only her best side, that is, her namesake’s virginal beauty, and not her worldly aspect). “Imagine Raphael’s Madonna standing on that rock,” suggests Yoshikawa while out boating with Botchan, Redshirt, and Clown. “It would make a superb picture. Don’t you agree?” he asks. “Madonna or belladonna, it’s all the same to me,” thinks Botchan [Turney’s translation, 64], showing at once a feigned lack of interest and a keen insight into the pure/poison aspect of woman, which later he will reconfirm with his beautiful-but-heartless judgment when he sees her at the train station.

This is the first mention of Madonna in *Botchan*, in the boating and fishing scene of Chapter Five (the epiphany occurs in Chapter Seven). But before the holy name is mentioned, the scene is first set by the admiring gaze of Botchan’s colleagues, who point out that the pines on Aojima look just like a painting by Turner. The name of English landscape painter J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851) is not dropped casually or randomly into the conversation but is rather a manifestation of Sōseki’s personal aesthetics, a probing of the relationship between painting and poetry. For the moment I wish to call attention to the “Western exoticism,” if you will (even though Turner was influenced by Japanese painting), that surrounds the name

of Madonna. Yoshikawa suggests to his colleagues that they call Aojima “Turner Island.” Then he says, “Imagine Raphael’s Madonna standing on that rock.” But before we can linger too long on the meaning of Raphael’s Madonna standing on Turner Island, Botchan quickly deflates the high-minded tone by mentally expressing his dislike for Redshirt’s nicknaming his favorite geisha Madonna (when Botchan himself, bundle of contradictions that he is, has already given nicknames to all his teaching colleagues). Nicknaming of characters is a carryover from Edo literature, as Sumie Jones points out, and Botchan’s observation that “since olden days a nicknamed woman is bound to be a questionable creature” is typical of Edo comic literature.<sup>14</sup> What impresses the contemporary Western reader, however, is not the juxtaposition of the old and the new (Edo comic literature and modern-day painting) but the disjuncture in presenting in a Japanese novel and within a Japanese setting a geisha named Madonna standing like a painting by Raphael on a rocky landscape done by Turner.

#### Kusamakura: Artistic Vision as a Series of Epiphanic Moments

<p>草枕</p> <p>すやすやと寝入る。夢に。</p> <p>長良の乙女が触袖を着て、青馬に乗って、峠を越すと、いきなり、ささだ男と、ささべ男が飛び出して両方から引っぱる。女が急にオフエリヤになって、柳の枝へ上がって、河の中を流れながら、うつくしい声で歌をうたう。救ってやろうと思って、長い竿をもって、向島を追っかけて行く。女は苦しい様子もなく、笑いながら、うたいながら、行末も知らず流れを下る。余は竿をかついでおおいおおいと呼ぶ。</p>	<p>I drift peacefully into sleep. And into dreams.</p> <p>The maiden of Nagara wears a longsleeved kimono and rides a pale horse. As she crosses a mountain pass, all at once out leap two men, Sasada and Sasabe, each of whom tries to make off with her. The woman suddenly turns into Ophelia, climbs among the branches of a willow, and then while being carried away by the stream, sings a song in a beautiful voice. Thinking to save her, I grab a long pole and pursue her to Mukôjima. She did not appear the least unhappy, but laughing and singing, drifted with the current to wherever it would take her. I shoulder the pole and call out, "Come back! Come back!"<sup>15</sup></p>
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The artist in *Kusamakura* begins his reverie not with the particle of discover the *hakken no to*, but by drifting into sleep. I intentionally attempted to retain the non-past tense of the original (which creates a somewhat awkward translation) in an attempt to capture the “eternal now” quality of the artist’s description. The entire novel is written in the present tense (“non-past”), though usually translated into the

past tense as is the case in much Japanese narration. The narrative does not unfold in normal time—everything is happening NOW. A timeless quality, we have noted, is typical of most epiphanies. *Kusamakura* unfolds in a succession of epiphanic moments as the artist reflects on art, nature, and aesthetics and on O-Nami's "appearances" or what seem like performance art pieces. Sōseki's epiphany is romantic to the extreme. That John E. Millais' (1829-96) Pre-Raphaelite masterpiece of the drowning Ophelia should surface in the dream (and resurface throughout the narrative) is a macabre touch beneath which runs the romantic ideal of the beautiful dead woman as established by Edgar Allan Poe (it is also a common aesthetic in *Genji*, in which Murasaki is seen to be even more beautiful in death). It should be no surprise to find romantic epiphanies in the early Sōseki since he is essentially romantic in feeling, at least in these instances, while remaining a modernist by period. Sōseki would agree with his French contemporary Marcel Proust's suggestion that the ultimate aim of the artist (at least the artist in *Kusamakura*) is not merely to record but to produce a sense of new and sudden vision. One of Elstir's paintings in Proust's *Within a Budding Grove* is described as a masterpiece because "he had succeeded in transcribing, in fixing for all time upon the painted sheet . . . The throb of one happy moment." It is the "throb of one happy moment," however, which the artist in *Kusamakura* is unable to capture.

The artist's woman-in-nature is a far cry from Sanshirō's woman-in-the-woods: it echoes deep in the forest, reverberating mysteriously whereas Mineko's manifestation at the pond is flat, her portrait in oils even flatter. O-Nami can be "re-presented" in haiku-like musings and word pictures. Mineko remains a flat representation, never becoming a real woman for Sanshirō. Sanshirō's crisis in not being able to see beyond a romanticized, idealized woman in the person of Mineko is simultaneously Sōseki's crisis of representation in not being able to create a New Woman or a real woman in the entire scope of his fiction (with the notable exception of O-Nobu in *Meian*). The *mori no naka no onna*, the Girl in the Forest, is an ideal, a dream, not a real woman. A painting, not flesh and blood. These two epiphanies of women (in *Sanshirō* and *Kusamakura*) crystallize a host of contradictions: Bashō's concept of *fueki ryūkō*, the eternal in the moment; the eternally unchanged painting; the "real" world of women within Nature, the male refuge; the conflation of O-Nami with local legend; the New Woman of Meiji vs. an idealized image of women. It is precisely these contradictions that make O-Nami and Mineko such fascinating studies.

O-Nami is in fact a conflation of at least three individuals: the legendary maiden of Nagara (pursued, like Ukifune, by two men), Millais' drowning Ophelia (and Shakespeare's mad Ophelia), as well as Winifred, the pretty girl who falls into a swoon while working as a model for artist Henry and who lives in a waking dream, as depicted in the novel *Aylwin* by Theodore Watts-Dunton (1832-1914). Sôseki was impressed enough by this novel to write an essay about it entitled "Shôsetsu Eiruwin no hihyô" (Criticism on the Novel *Aylwin*) for the haiku magazine *Hototogisu* (Cuckoo) in 1900.<sup>16</sup> Bearing a family resemblance to all three, O-Nami is at once mad (a real "nutcase" according to the town barber), bears the expression of "floating easily and calmly in eternal peace," and is the subject or model for the narrator's creativity, whether he is trying to capture her in a painting or in the word-paintings of haiku. But as is the case with Sanshirô, the woman (O-Nami, Mineko) remains a verbal or plastic representation, not a true woman. The artist in *Kusamakura* is unable to "capture" her essence until the final scene of the novel at the train station when she sees her former husband going off to Manchuria and the artist discovers the look of *aware* (compassion) on her face, the expression he had been waiting for.

Emotion (or lack of it) plays an important part in *Kusamakura*, for it is the world of emotion and intellect that the artist seeks to escape by taking refuge in a mountain village. He hopes to leave Tokyo behind for a new world of artistic detachment and uninvolvedness. A world without emotion is *hininjô* (Sôseki's neologism, "non-human feeling"), a personal utopian world in nature. It is worth pointing out that the artist has not singled out *only* O-Nami to turn into a painting. His artistic vision of detachment requires him to see the entire scene, the life moments of the entire mountain village of Nakoï as if it were "a part of the action in a noh play" and to see the people as "moving about in a picture" (in the artist's world). I imagine a sort of Breughel-like world full of activity but all taking place on a two-dimensional canvas. *Kusamakura* is perhaps the only utopia in Sôseki, or, in the Eastern tradition, a *tôgenkyô* 桃源郷, a Shangri-La. It is said that he came to dislike this novel in later years, and, indeed, such a world is never again described—instead, he returns to darker and harsher realities of everyday life. By the time of his final novel, *Meian*, the world he describes is if not a modern dystopia at least dysfunctional. The protagonist Tsuda seems to be utterly lacking in some essential qualities of *ninjô*, human feeling. Of course Sôseki (or

rather the artist in *Kusamakura*) would have to abandon his *hininjō* project at some point and come down from the mountain village and return to the real world. This liminal state is where we find Sanshirō in his wooded environment at the university, complete with its pond, like the Kagami Pond in *Kusamakura*, the scene of one of O-Nami's more flamboyant, exotic epiphanies. The woods with its pond is a retreat from the real world, a place where streetcars have no access. But a world, nonetheless, of which he is only a temporary resident. In other words, we know what is in store for him: the same things about which Sensei cautions his young friend in *Kokoro*, namely that after love comes betrayal, *après moi le déluge*. This knowledge of Sōseki protagonists only need be applied retroactively to realize what the future holds for Sanshirō.

O-Nami's untamed spirit also resembles that of Mineko in *Sanshirō*. Both women may be models for painters and objects of the artist's gaze, but it is the women who have the powerful gaze to mesmerize and transfix their male "victims," as it were. In *Aylwin*, the girl Winifred has her paroxysms miraculously cured by a giant magnet. Sōseki wisely resists using this device in *Kusamakura*. But we may recall that Mozart could not resist using it in his 1790 opera *Così fan Tutte*, which makes reference to the then-famous French doctor Mesmer (d. 1784) who introduced hypnotism and the power of magnetism to "mesmerize" and heal his patients. The femme fatale, in Paglia's words, is "the most mesmerizing of sexual personae." We may not use giant magnets as cures anymore (though Japanese are fond of using small ones like Pi!Erekiban) yet the mesmerizing gaze of strong women continues to penetrate Natsume Sōseki's literary works. In his final novel, the character O-Nobu in particular is obsessed with her own ocular powers and uses her gaze—sometimes effectively, mostly disappointingly—in an attempt to mesmerize and to control others.

Turney points out that "Sōseki's apparent desire to get away from the world and immerse himself in Nature may at first sight seem Wordsworthian." He ultimately rejects this notion, saying "There is, however, a vast difference between Wordsworth's and Sōseki's view of Nature. To Wordsworth, Nature was a reflection of God the creator. To Sōseki, it was not the reflection of anything, but was one facet of essential beauty." This is a bit disingenuous on Turney's part, because we can see from the Ophelia reference in *Kusamakura*, the English impressionist Turner in *Botchan* and *Kusamakura*, as well as *Oroonoko* and *Hydriotaphia* in

*Sanshirô* that Western art and literature (English art and literature in particular) are never far from the surface of his writing. To be fair, we are not talking about intertextuality here, and I must concede that Turney is right in the sense that Nature for Sôseki is not a reflection of God and may not even be transcendent, but it is a sanctuary from the real world, an earthly paradise, a bower of bliss. The real topic at hand is Sôseki's aesthetic view of literature and painting and their interrelationship. Turner was a devotee of the eighteenth-century attitude of *Ut Pictura Poesis* ("as in painting, so in poetry" from Horace's *Ars Poetica*, 1. 361), of which I believe Sôseki was also an advocate. Turner believed and propounded as professor of the Royal Academy that "genre painting could attain the imaginative power and complexity of poetry." Many of his pictures were accompanied by verse. Sôseki's blending of literature and painting, haiku and illustration (or painterly images) is an example of this doctrine in practice (it must be pointed out that writing and painting have always been linked in Japan, at least from the Heian period [794-1185]). Ruskin, another name that appears in Sôseki's fiction, defended Turner's position in his first volume of *Modern Painters* (1843). It was Ruskin, we should recall, who prefigured the postmodern reading of architecture as "text," when he states in *The Stones of Venice*:

*Read* the sculpture. Preparatory to reading it, you will have to discover whether it is legible (and, if legible, it is nearly certain to be worth reading). On a good building, the sculpture is *always* so set, and on such a scale, that at the ordinary distance from which the edifice is seen, the sculpture shall be thoroughly intelligible and interesting. [emphasis in the original]<sup>17</sup>

Putting aside Ruskin's misguided notion that architecture reflects morality (his thesis behind *Stones of Venice*), I will follow his advice and read not only sculpture and architecture but also the textuality of painting. What are we to do with Sôseki's fictional women rendered into paintings? Read them of course. And we can read them without any bothersome interaction, without their knowledge of our gaze, without their permission, without their input, rejoinders, or feedback. It may be a beautiful artistic treatment of women, rendering them into paintings in this way but it is not a humane treatment; it denies them an essential humanity. But for the protagonists examined here, who have so much trouble understanding women and dealing with them as equals, this may be the preferred treatment and best possible means of relating to them at all.

### Daisuke's Epiphany: The Burning House of Desire

#### それから

「焦げる焦げる」と歩きながら口の内でいった。

飯田橋へ来て電車に乗った。電車は真直に走り出した。代助は車の中で「ああ動く。世の中が動く」と傍の人に聞こえる様にいった。彼の頭は電車の速力をもって回転し出した。回転するに従って火の様にほてってきた。これで半日乗り続けたら焼き尽くす事が出来るだろうと思った。

忽ち赤い郵便筒が目についた。するとその赤い色が忽ち代助の頭の中に飛び込んで、くるくると回転し始めた。傘屋の看板に、赤いこうもり傘を四つ重ねて高く釣るしてあった。傘の色が、又代助の頭に飛び込んで、くるくると渦を巻いた。四つ角に、大きい真っ赤な風船玉を売っているものがあった。電車が急に角を曲がるとき、風船玉は追っかけて来て、代助の頭に飛び付いた。小包郵便を載せた赤い車がはっと電車と擦れ違ふとき、又代助の頭の中に吸い込まれた。煙草屋ののれんが赤かった。売りだしの旗も赤かった。電柱が赤かった。赤いペンキの看板がそれから、それへと続いた。しまいには世の中が真っ赤になった。そうして、代助の頭を中心としてくるくと炎の息を吹いて転回した。代助は自分の頭の焼け尽きるまで電車に乗って行こうと決心した。

"I'm burning, I'm burning," he muttered to himself, as he walked.

When he came to Iidabashi he got on a streetcar. The streetcar began moving straight ahead. Inside the car, Daisuke said "Oh, it's moving, the world is moving," loud enough to be heard by those around him. His head began to spin at the same speed as the train. The more his head spun, the hotter it was enflamed. If he continued riding like this for half a day, he thought, he could be completely burned up.

Suddenly, a red mailbox caught his eye. The red color immediately leaped into Daisuke's head and began to spin around and around. On an umbrella shop sign, four red umbrellas were hung high atop each other. The umbrellas' color also leaped into Daisuke's head and spun around in a vortex. At an intersection someone was selling bright red balloons. As the streetcar sharply turned the corner, the balloons followed in pursuit and leaped into Daisuke's head. A red car carrying parcel post, suddenly passing the streetcar, was also sucked into Daisuke's head. The tobacco shop curtain was red. A sales banner was red. The power line pole was red. Signs painted red went by one after another. Finally, the whole world turned bright red. It began to spin around and around, with Daisuke's head at its center, breathing tongues of fire. Daisuke decided to go on riding the streetcar until his head was completely burned away.<sup>18</sup>

Daisuke's epiphany (if we can so categorize his descent into madness—well, if not madness, then mental instability) is unique among my four examples in that it is not a male vision of Woman but a nightmarish manifestation of man's internal state. Strictly speaking, Daisuke's nightmare may not qualify as an epiphany (it is more of an anti-epiphany), but it does serve to remind us how epiphanies operate. It is an inward-turning gaze, an interior state which finds expression and reification in the external world. Daisuke's internal world and external world have come together in a bizarre synchronicity of desire. The burning house of desire, the Buddhist trope whose *locus classicus* is found in the Lotus Sutra, is also employed by Sôseki in *Sanshirô* in which men of the university, *Sanshirô*'s second of three possible worlds, are said to be able to escape the Burning House. In the emotional bildungsroman, or "education novel," of our noble savage *Sanshirô*, only certain males are privileged to escape the Burning House. In

*Sorekara*, Daisuke's awkward geometry in a love triangle yields only debilitation and crippling desire. There is no escape from the Burning House for him.

In this the final paragraph of *Sorekara*, we find Daisuke in the center of a moving world, like Sanshirô in the center of Tokyo. Daisuke is not a still point of a turning world but a spinning center. We don't know if it is the end or a new beginning for him. He has turned his back on his father and family and has set off to find a job, to build a life of his own, but "the end of the novel is unclear," as translator Norma Field has said. Typical of Sôseki's later work, *Sorekara* is an open text which defies closure and lacks a clear ending. The passage is written in simple, direct language, whose short, choppy sentences seem to pick up speed in an inexorable rush toward internal combustion. It is a firecracker, a stick of dynamite, ready to explode. But it won't explode because it is a *still shot* of a stick of dynamite about to explode. It is a moment frozen in time, like so many epiphanies. Like Sensei in *Kokoro* looking into the abyss, this closing passage of *Sorekara* shows the vortex of introspection which all protagonists in Sôseki are drawn toward and sucked into. I use the word "vortex" (*uzumaki*) for this reason, whereas Norma Field uses "whirled around," because I think it is a key word to understanding Sôsekian textuality, if there is such a thing. In the closing scenes of *Meian* as well, Tsuda also has a transforming experience looking into the vortex (vortices, actually) of water running from faucets in wash basins in the depths of the spa.

This final paragraph of *Sorekara* is written entirely in the past tense; there is no longer the use of first person, present tense or the shifting tenses as found in the earlier works of Sôseki. Neither is there a *hakken no to*, the particle that imparts a sense of discovery as we saw in *Botchan* and *Kusamakura*. There is not even a single use of the verb *miru*, "to see," even though Daisuke is seeing red, nothing but red. There is no "seem to be" (*mieru*) as in the *Meian* passage. There is no seemingness. Simile and metaphor are nowhere to be found. Amid all the visual imagery (and it is more than visual), the one verb related to vision is *me ga tsuita*, "caught his eye." The color red catches his eye like a fish hook. Red, signifying the dangerous "real world" of Sanshirô, is swallowing Daisuke. He is consumed by the flames of the real world. If he is an adult Sanshirô who now knows the world of women and the taste of desire, Daisuke still suffers paralysis, a common ailment of Sôseki protagonists. And he is still a stray sheep. He does not know where he is going.

We do not know where he is going. Again we can apply Sensei's warning to the narrator Watakushi: love will result in betrayal, alienation, and loneliness. Even if we see Daisuke's epiphany as positive (he has rushed out of the house to find a job after being disinherited by his family) in the sense that he is finally consumed with the desire to "get a life" and to make something of himself, it is difficult to accept the fiery imagery as beneficial or benevolent; it is not a baptism of fire bringing new life. No, the overall feeling is one of madness. It is an overdetermined climactic moment which defies easy categorization. It is a *mie* (since all *mie* are epiphanies: a showing, a manifestation), a Kabuki pose, a frozen moment on stage which makes the reader/spectator reflect on the fate of the char/actor.

Were we encouraged to find a glimmer of hope in this or any ending of a Sôseki novel, I think we would be hard pressed to offer any sweetness and light. As Pollack has written, "in the end, then, it is difficult to accept Jay Rubin's conclusion that in his later novels, 'Sôseki's increasingly dark view of man and the world never lacks for despair, but it stops short of condemning human nature as inherently evil.'"<sup>19</sup> Even if we embrace Pollack's view of man's inherently evil nature in Sôseki's *Kokoro*, I am inclined now to find some hope in Sôseki's characters' rebellion against the "tribalism and ceremonialism" of Japanese life. Tribalism and ceremonialism are Miyoshi Masao's negative terms for Japanese society in which people play roles instead of cultivating individuality.<sup>20</sup> If we can understand Daisuke's refusal to play a role (the filial son, the trusting friend and loyal lover) and his turning his back on family as a positive step toward self-fulfillment, then we might be able to see the light of hope instead of dark pessimism. It was Joyce's autobiographical character Stephen Dedalus in *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* (developed from *Stephen Hero*, one of our sources for the word "epiphany") who showed that turning one's back on family and even country (Dedalus left Dublin to pursue an artistic career in Paris) is sometimes necessary to develop one's individuality. This I suggest is the only choice, the only hope for Sôseki's otherwise paralyzed, immobilized protagonists. By turning his back on his family, Daisuke can forge a new destiny for himself. By turning his back on his family, *Kokoro*'s narrator, Watakushi (who leaves his dying father's bedside to be with Sensei) can cultivate an independent, individual self. By ignoring all the pleas to conform and to submit to the will of others, Tsuda can express his individuality. This is not a happy choice. But it empowers the protagonists in some way, making them appear less pathetic and only slightly more

admirable in my eyes (but not, of course, less self-centered, which is usually seen as the source of the problem to begin with).

Daisuke is no artist but his “narrative of desire” does resemble in some ways the portrait-of-an-artist novels of James Joyce (1882-1941), Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), and Henry James (1843-1916). Maurice Beebe’s study *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts* (1964) explores three interrelated themes: the Divided Self, the Ivory Tower, and the Sacred Fount.<sup>21</sup> The artist as hero journeys toward self-realization, experiences a Divided Self (struggling to define himself as an artist against base appetites); inhabits the Ivory Tower (feeling detached, above others); and yearns for the Sacred Fount (engagement and experience as the sole criteria of art). The self is divided between the Ivory Tower (detachment from life) and the Sacred Fount (engagement with life). This node of decision between detachment and engagement is where Sanshirō, poised but unable to move, finds himself at the end of novel. This necessary synthesis of Ivory Tower and Sacred Fount for the artist’s development, establishing equipoise between detachment and engagement, is what Daisuke, paralyzed by guilt for betraying a best friend (even as Sensei in *Kokoro* is paralyzed by guilt for betraying K) finds an impossible task. The novel *Sorekara* ends with a widening fissure opening before Daisuke (or inside him), leaving him in a divided state: “Finally, the whole world turned bright red. It began to spin around and around, with Daisuke’s head at its center, breathing tongues of fire. Daisuke decided to go on riding the streetcar until his head was completely burned away” (a description which resonates with Stephen Dedalus’ vision of hell in *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*. Unable to synthesize and integrate the two worlds, both Sanshirō and Daisuke (and Sensei to some extent), “stand bewildered at the broad crossroads.”<sup>22</sup>

Sōseki’s focalization on the male predicament eclipses the female characters’ development, drawing the reader’s attention away from *her* and toward *him*. The epiphanic moment (structurally occurring in the middle of the narrative so as to resonate with later evolvments [and for this reason, Daisuke’s nightmare, coming at the novel’s conclusion, does not truly qualify as an epiphany]) elevates women’s status only temporarily, camouflaging her real-life position in society. We ponder the predicaments and possibilities of Sanshirō, Daisuke, and Tsuda (along with other Sōseki male protagonists), forgetting—or noticing—that

their options are inextricably linked not to resolving metaphysical conundrums but to establishing, reestablishing, or salvaging relations with a woman. Women are used to show us what difficult, incorrigible, irredeemable creatures men are. The female predicament is just as precarious, but you would not know this from the male epiphanies.

Daisuke's epiphanic moment on the streetcar crystallizes (carbonizes?) the intensity and exigency of his personal crisis. It is no coincidence that his mad scene, or plunge into the real world, whichever the case may be, takes place on a streetcar. In the very year that streetcars were introduced in Tokyo, Sôseki wrote about them and gives us a typical ride on one, complete with all the stops on the line, in *Sanshirô*. Streetcars are Sôseki's metonym for modernity. Streetcars are the first thing that shocks Sanshirô about the city. Streetcars threaten to encroach on the university which is able to deny them access—no streetcar stop is allowed near the Red Gate, which marks the zone of Sanshirô's second world, a male refuge. Streetcars symbolize all the negative aspects of modernity (as does the train in *Kusamakura*)—the more and more disturbing intrusion of noisy, clanging machinery into larger areas of life; the loss of *urusato*, native space and traditional space; the increasing dependence on machines and unbridled race toward progress—and through this city of Tokyo Daisuke, a man still in love with another man's wife, is riding a streetcar named Desire.

**Meian's Anti-Climactic Epiphany: Kiyoko as Inverted Beatrice**

<p>明暗 不意にこう感付いた彼の前に、若やと思ったその本人が容赦なく現われたとき、今しがた受けたより何十倍か強烈な驚きにとらはれた津田の足は忽立ちすくんだ。目は動かなかった。 同じ作用が、それ以上強烈に清子とその場に抑え付けられたらしかった。階上の板の間まで来てそこでびたりと留まったときの彼女は津田にとって一種の絵であった。彼は忘れる事の出来ない印象の一つとして、それを後々まで自分の心に伝えた。</p> <p>彼女が何気なく上から目を落としたのと、そこに津田を認めたのとは、同時に似て実は同時でないように見えた。少なくとも津田にはそう思われた。無心が有心に変わるまでにはある時が掛かった。驚きするとき、不可思議のとき、疑いするとき、それらを経過した後で、彼女は始めて棒立ちになった。横から肩を突けば、指一本の力でも、土で作った人形を倒すより容易く倒せそうな姿勢で、硬くなった儘棒立ちになった。</p> <p>彼女は普通の湯治客のする通り、寝しなに一風呂入って温まる積もりと見えて、手に小型のタオルを掲げていた。それから津田と同じようにニッケル製の石鹸入を裸の儘持っていた。棒のように硬くなった彼女が、何故それを床の上へ落とさなかったかは、後からその刹那の光景迎るたびに、何時でも彼の記憶中に顔を出したがる疑問であった。</p>	<p>Suddenly realizing this, Tsuda brought his footsteps to a halt when before him someone inevitably appeared—Could it be?—It was she. He was seized with a shock many times more intense than he had just experienced. His eyes did not move.</p> <p>The same effect seemed to glue Kiyoko to the spot even more forcefully. When she had come firmly to a stop at the landing of the stairs, she seemed to Tsuda like a painting. This single, unforgettable image was communicated to his heart and remained there for a very long time after.</p> <p>Her nonchalantly looking down from above and her recognizing of Tsuda there below seemed simultaneous, but in reality they were not. At least so he thought. It took some time for her to change from incognizance to cognizance. After having experienced surprise, wonder, and doubt in turn, she first became stiff as a board. In a posture that could be easily knocked down, more easily than tipping over a clay doll with the pressure of one finger thrust from the side at the shoulder, she remained stiff, becoming completely rigid.</p> <p>Like the usual convalescent at the spa, she held a small towel and looked to be about to warm herself with a bath before bedtime. She carried the same uncovered nickel soap dish as Tsuda did. Whenever he retraced that moment's scene later, the question that always raised its head in his memory was why she, standing as stiff as a board, had not dropped it to the floor.<sup>23</sup></p>
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Since the character of Kiyoko is another overdetermined, much disputed, subject among Sōseki scholars, I wish to focus only on her long-awaited appearance, her epiphanic moment, which does not come until section 176 (out of 188), or page 347 in the English translation (out of 375 pages). It is significant, I think, that the moment begins with the word *fui*, suddenly, and with an intense sensation. Sounds like a classic epiphany to me. First there is a moment of doubt, and then the *honin*, the person in question, appears *yōsha naku*, indisputably, irrefutably (which I have rendered “inevitably” [Viglielmo uses “relentlessly”]). I mean, she *had* to appear *eventually*, at some point in the novel. Tsuda stands still, his eyes not moving, perhaps waiting for the apparition to move first. Kiyoko of course is the one who is surprised because she

has no knowledge that he is on a mission from Mrs. Yoshikawa. The following day, having deliberately stalked her, sniffing her out like a hound dog on a scent trail, Tsuda is accused by Kiyoko of having waited in ambush. The same *sayō* (action, agency, function, effect) gripped Kiyoko—but what effect was it? The same effect of surprise? Whatever the effect, it held her stock still like a painting. By some strange effect Kiyoko too has been rendered into a painting, like Raphael's *Madonna*, O-Nami in *Kusamakura*, and Mineko as the *Woman-in-the-Woods* oil painting. This is the image (Kiyoko as a painting, not Kiyoko as a former lover, the *ano onna* ["that woman" as she was referred to early in the novel]), that Tsuda will always remember. He will remember her as a painting.

The scene then shifts to Kiyoko's point of view. She looks down casually, nonchalantly, a recurring phrase in the epiphanies we have examined. Soseki has taken great pains to keep the narrator's thoughts and the thoughts of Tsuda and Kiyoko distinct and separate. The simple phrase, "Or so he thought," attributes the thinking to Tsuda, not to a third-person narrator. Then Kiyoko must go through a transformation. She must move from unconsciousness to consciousness to be able to recognize Tsuda's existence. It is difficult not to read this as a statement about Kiyoko's feelings toward Tsuda: she recognizes his existence but ultimately rejects him in the end. The next thing that happens is quite bizarre. Kiyoko becomes "stiff as a board," the phallic woman—*hajimete*, for the first time! The stiffness and rigidity are mentioned two more times. Kiyoko's sudden stiffness is like the ambiguous sexuality of the ghosts in *Turn of the Screw* who tend to pop up out of nowhere like ironing boards, to use Camille Paglia's expression (to appreciate this expression, one would have to remember the day when ironing boards once had their own closets). Then, as is commonly recurrent in epiphanies, the focus switches to the ordinary: a soap dish (I assume the *hadaka no mama* refers to the soap dish not to Kiyoko), and the lens of the narrative "eye" seems to zoom in for a close up.

I said I would resist taking up Kiyoko's place in the novel, but I must resist the temptation by yielding to it and comment on the word *tōjikyaku*. I would stress that the noun "convalescent"<sup>24</sup> (which Viglielmo leaves out) is used to emphasize Kiyoko's condition: she too is sick, like Tsuda, and has come to the spa to convalesce, like a supplicant at Lourdes, to be purified from her defilement (if the abortion rumor is

correct, we might see her condition as one of “blood defilement”). The epiphany ends when Kiyoko turns tail and runs. Significantly, the light at the top of the stairs goes out as Kiyoko flees the scene. Like Mineko standing on the hill in the light, Kiyoko stands at the top of the stairs with Tsuda in the dark at the bottom of the stairs. Encountering her in the depths of the maze-like spa facilities, Kiyoko is no longer the idealized version but rather a painting that will always be inscribed in memory. Again, the epiphany contributes more to the mystification (obscurification) of Kiyoko than to her clarification (the clear). The section ends with the Jamesian maze-like language which echoes the dark, labyrinthine environment of the spa (Viglielmo has several excellent Jamesian turns of phrase throughout his translation): “He shortly heard hurried footsteps from far back along the corridor. He stopped, midway on her errand to Kiyoko, the maid whose footsteps they were, and learned from her where his room was.”

### **Some Conclusions**

Epiphanies in Sôseki reveal much more than just a single moment in a particular work; taken as a whole they also reflect the author’s rhetoric in general, and more deeply, exhibit the author’s world and his world view. Epiphanies of women in Sôseki underscore the problem of representation which in a way was central to the development of the modern novel in Japan. The specific problem of how to represent women—and the new woman in particular—was the challenge faced by the writer of realistic fiction. I think we can safely say that Sôseki never quite successfully rose to the challenge. All his main protagonists are male and his female characters, if they figure at all, are mere satellites revolving around the male center, coming into view only rarely as they pass by on their elliptical orbits. There are no fully formed, fleshed out female characters—with the exception of O-Nami, Mineko, examined here, and especially O-Nobu. There is no Meiji novel titled *Mineko* (although this may say more about what was considered an appropriate title than about what was considered appropriate content). The fact is, women most often appear as ciphers in his fiction. Madonna is a cipher. She makes speechless appearances and then exits. Mineko is a cipher to Sanshirô. By ciphers I do not mean nonentities but rather puzzles, ciphers as in a code. They are encoded in poetic moments, or epiphanies, and as readers we can only try to break the code and fit the missing pieces together. O-Nami appears in a series of tableaux vivants and then exits after making a visual impression (making a visual point to be explained by the observer). Mineko appears “mysteriously” in the woods and

remains throughout the course of the novel an enigmatic figure to Sanshirô (and only less so to us as readers). Kiyoko in *Meian*, perhaps the most “celebrated” and discussed of women in Sôseki after O-Nami and O-Nobu, ultimately remains a cipher. Because she appears only briefly at the end of the novel, we do not have enough information on her fictional genetic code, as it were, in order to crack it or analyze it (but this has not stopped critics and students, myself included, from trying to do so).

In traditional criticism, Kiyoko has been seen as a possible savior for Tsuda, with her “beatific smile” (Viglielmo’s phrase) an indication of her exalted, almost saintly position. Viglielmo’s helpful “Afterword” to *Meian* outlines a brief history of critical assessment of the novel’s characters. In the traditional view, Kiyoko resembles Goethe’s vision of the “Eternal Feminine” (*das Ewig Weibliche*). Eichner’s English paraphrase to the conclusion of *Faust* reads: “All that is transitory is merely symbolical; here the inaccessible is portrayed and the inexpressible is made manifest. The eternal feminine draws us to higher spheres.” In Goethe’s vision, according to Eichner, the “ideal of contemplative purity” is always feminine whereas the “ideal of significant action is masculine.”<sup>25</sup> Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwoman in the Attic* have criticized this view “because women are defined as wholly passive, completely void of generative power (like “Cyphers”) [the British variant of cipher] that they become numinous to male artists. For in the metaphysical emptiness their “purity” signifies that they are, of course, *self-less*, with all the moral and psychological implications that the word suggests.”<sup>26</sup> Worse, the idea of the Eternal Feminine presents an unchanging archetype—the very image Beauvoir and other feminists have sought to dismantle in their rejection of a single definition of woman (*not* an archetype and *not* a changeless essence, according to Beauvoir). This is an easy trap to fall into: in searching for some commonality and fundamental sameness in Sôseki’s women, I, too, have jumped to conclusions that make women sound monolithic and unitary. Significant action may be masculine, but in Sôseki it is rarely the male who demonstrates it but rather the O-Nobus, O-Namis, and Minekos. More often than not it is the male protagonists who are the passive ones. The criticism that lack of generative power makes women numinous to male artists is spot on. All the aforementioned Sôseki women are childless and unable to produce anything of consequence (by circumstances, but not for lack of trying). Critics who favor Kiyoko as a redeemer probably hold the view that the pure, selfless, modest, passive woman is the ideal, the most desirable. I cannot agree with

Viglielmo's view of Kiyoko who "hold[s] the key to the entire novel and even more to the entire art and thought of Natsume Sôseki." This is too great a burden for any one character to bear. Why I reject Kiyoko as the golden key is that it undermines all the indeterminacies of the novel with a pat conclusion that is not in keeping with the openness and open-endedness of the author's texts.<sup>27</sup>

Maeda Ai has written about reading the city as a maze, and his *Toshi kûkan no naka no bungaku* (Literature of Urban Space) is helpful in appreciating Tokyo's urban space in *Sanshirô*. I suggest reading the woman in Sôseki's epiphanic moments as a maze: woman is a maze-like mystery. The four women (and one man) discussed here are rendered more ambiguous through the epiphanic moment; they are not more sharply defined or made more understandable. The contradictory forces at work in the epiphanies, as I have said, point to a basic mystification process ("mystification is the disorderly companion to love and art," as Camille Paglia has said). The modern crisis of representation is enclosed in Sôseki's epiphanies. Turning woman into a picture, placing her on the grass, so to speak, as Manet positions a nude in *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbes* (yet another woman in the woods), is a way of exercising control over women, not unlike the use of the objectifying male gaze which first attempts to freeze her in a moment of time. If a situation becomes laughable when the sexes are reversed, it is probably sexist, as feminists used to say. It is difficult to imagine a woman (Mineko, for example) having an epiphany of a man (Sanshirô, for example). Woman can only be represented; they cannot represent themselves. Sôseki's limited view of egalitarianism is mentioned by Donald Keene in relation to the work of the "poet of democracy," Walt Whitman, whom Sôseki himself had introduced to Japanese readers. "Above all, he admired Whitman's egalitarianism," Keene writes, "though 'as a Japanese with a background of a thousand years of Chinese thought,' he could not readily extend this egalitarianism to women."<sup>28</sup> This criticism aside, Sôseki has created a number of astonishing, transformative moments, psychological moments, translucent moments, flashes of insight, moments of intense clarity, which, all told, bear out his talent as a poet, demonstrate a nuanced knowledge of the inner workings of Western literature, and reveal how an artist creates. "The reason the artist lives and works and has his being," Thomas Wolfe writes in *Of Time and the River*, "is his intolerable desire to fix eternally in the patterns of an indestructible form a single moment of man's living, a single moment of life's beauty, passion, and unutterable eloquence, that passes, flames and goes...."

The question remains: Why does Sôseki turn his female characters into paintings? What does his aestheticization of women accomplish? Madonna in *Botchan* is rendered statue-like: virginal, beautiful and untouchable (in keeping with her name). Mineko, once the threatening “Ibsen woman” to Sanshirô, has her portrait painted which then can be viewed in the safe confines of a gallery, no longer the *roaku*, the femme fatale, just oil on canvas. O-Nami’s tableaux vivants, however visually stimulating to the artist they may be, never result in a painting (except for a word painting), which was the artist’s primary reason for the excursion in the first place. And Kiyoko will always be remembered as the imposing figure at the top of the stairs—and not for refusing to cooperate in Tsuda’s *folie à deux*.

Sôseki’s epiphanies do more than freeze the female object of desire in a moment of time; they problematize the relationship between textual and pictorial representation. The Greeks called this intense pictorial description of an object *ekphrasis*. In contemporary criticism, ekphrasis has been defined as the verbal representation of a visual representation. Romantic poets were particularly fond of exploring the relationship between writing and painting: think of Keats’ “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” Browning’s “My Last Duchess,” or Shelley’s “On the Medusa of Leonardo da Vinci.” Sôseki quotes his Romantic forebears such as Shelley in *Kusamakura* but reveals his true intention to explore the relationship between literature and painting by twice mentioning *Laocöon* (94, 136). The complete title of Gotthold Lessing’s 1766 treatise on aesthetics and philosophy was called *Laocöon: An Essay Upon the Limits of Painting and Poetry*. Lessing argues against the traditional view that painting is dumb poetry and poetry a speaking picture, theorizing the *differences*, not the *unity*, of the arts. Despite his interest in art and painting, the artist in *Kusamakura* produces no paintings (except for one of the unidentified men at the station [Turney, 182]). What does he do? He *writes*. “May I sketch you?” He asks O-Nami and proceeds to write a haiku. This example of ekphrasis demonstrates Sôseki’s mastery of *shaseibun* that he learned under his close friend the haiku poet Masaoka Shiki, the leading proponent of *shasei*: copying from life or “sketching,” a term borrowed from the vocabulary of Western painting. In my view, Sôseki is presenting a case for the *unity* of the arts (as Makoto Ueda has argued in his *Literary and Art Theories in Japan* [1967]), recognizing a nonduality of painting and literature, therein collapsing the distinction between verbal and visual representation in the

person of an artist who sketches with words on paper. “Many Japanese arts are composite arts,” Ueda says, “and in some cases they are uniquely Japanese. Literature and painting are united in the pictorial novel; painting and music are at one in calligraphy; poetry, drama, dance, and sculpture are fused in the Nô.” He then goes on to say that “Japanese aesthetics, while stressing the oneness of all arts, has little to say why and how one art differs from another.” (Ueda, 226)

Lessing decreed that the duty of pictures was to be silent and beautiful (like a woman), leaving expression to poetry. Only Madonna in *Botchan* remains silent and beautiful (she has no voice—or rather, she is given no voice). Mineko in *Sanshirô* not only talks back to the male viewer but challenges the authority of the male gaze and the power of the male word. Neither does O-Nami in *Kusamakura* remain silent. Instead of sitting still for a portrait she provides the artist with a series of tableaux vivants in which she controls the image presented. And the “beatific” Kiyoko in *Meian* berates Tsuda for frightening her at the hot spring, accusing him of lying in wait for her. Her clarity of vision penetrates his deceitfulness. These four epiphanies illustrate that the struggle for mastery between image and word is always gendered in Sôseki’s fiction. The narrative of desire and consummation belongs to the male: Botchan for Madonna, Sanshirô for Mineko, the artist for O-Nami, Tsuda for Kiyoko. The problem is that ekphrasis speaks not only about works of arts but also to and for them. Soseki’s female characters desire to speak for themselves. They manage not only to transfix or return the male gaze but also to mesmerize, intimidate, stimulate, frustrate and fill with awe the male viewer. They are beautiful but far from silent (except for the silent Madonna).

The obvious problem of turning a woman into a painting (and we must see this as a problem) is that they are rendered incommunicable; they are denied a material body, they are dehumanized. They have no corporeality: no orifices, no body odor, no female pollution. Sôseki’s painterly transformation of women (Mineko into a portrait called “Woman in the Woods,” O-Nami into Ophelia, the hot spring geisha into Raphael’s Madonna, Kiyoko into “The Woman at the Top of the Stairs”) is a *fin-de-siècle* fetishization of the image (like Walter Pater’s famous essay on the Mona Lisa), which is equivalent to today’s cyber- or virtual sex: a disengaged “interaction” of disembodied words and images.

Yet what happens to them in the end? Botchan will return to Tokyo to live with his loyal, caring maid Kiyō, leaving Madonna to whatever limited options are available to a small-town *onsen* geisha. Mineko marries well, leaving the “lost sheep” Sanshirō to ponder his future alone (a coming-of-age novel which ends before our hero has fully come of age). O-Nami goes to the train station where she sees off her former husband, now a soldier of fortune on his way to Manchuria. It is at the train station where the artist sees the look of *aware* in her face, the look of compassion he has been searching for to complete his portrait of her. We can assume she too will be left behind in this small *onsen* town to continue her performance of mad Ophelia. The final scene of the unfinished *Meian* leaves Tsuda pondering the meaning of Kiyoko’s smile, but it is the image of her as a painting of the woman at the top of the stairs that he will always remember. In the end, Sōseki’s epiphanies are not transforming experiences for the women they describe, but they create an intricately woven literary texture and present some of Japanese fiction’s most memorable female characters.

Chapter 4  
Asymmetrical Erotic Triangles and Homosocial Desire in  
*Gubijinsô, Nowaki, Sorekara, Mon, Kôjin, Kokoro, and Meian*

It's not what you eat or what you wear. It's the way you're constituted.  
—Aunt Asa to Tsuda in *Meian*

When he says he desires to possess all things, doesn't he mean to be ultimately possessed by all?  
And that to possess absolutely is to be absolutely possessed?  
—H writing about Ichirô in *Kôjin*

But I am not the kind of man who can give you the satisfaction you need. And there are other special  
circumstances which mean I cannot satisfy you. I am really sorry about that. Inevitably, you'll end up  
leaving me for someone else, and I'm actually looking forward to that. And yet . . .  
—Sensei to Watakushi in *Kokoro*

O you whom I often and silently come where you are that I may be with you,  
As I walk by your side or sit near, or remain in the same room with you,  
Little you know the subtle electric fire that for your sake is playing within me.  
—Walt Whitman, "Calamus," *Leaves of Grass*

Sedgwick's notions of "homosocial" and "triangular desire" are helpful analytical tools, which many scholars have relied on in their discussions of erotic triangles, especially in focusing on the male-male side of the triangle and literary representations of male-male desire. Neither term is her own: the first is borrowed from the social sciences and the second from René Girard's *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* (first published in French in 1961 and in English translation in 1966). Sedgwick reconsidered, reconfigured, and redeveloped Girard's ideas into her own study *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (1985). Building on this work, she published her celebrated analysis of "closeting," *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990). "In any erotic rivalry," she says, "the bond that links the two rivals is as intense and potent as the bond that links either of the rivals to the beloved: that the bonds of 'rivalry' and 'love,' differently as they are experienced, are equally powerful and in many senses equivalent."<sup>1</sup> The choice of the beloved is determined in the first place not by the qualities of the beloved, Sedgwick continues, but by the beloved's already being the choice of the person who has been chosen as the rival. Girard sees the bond between rivals as being even stronger than anything in the bond between either of the lovers and the beloved. The male-male bond solidifies and reinforces the interests between men. Relations between men according to Heidi Hartmann's definition is what specifies the very term "patriarchy": "relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men and enable them to dominate woman."<sup>2</sup> In her famous essay on "traffic in women"

feminist anthropologist Gayle Rubin also defines patriarchal heterosexuality in similar terms: women are used as a medium of exchange, as property, symbolically, to cement the bonds of men with men. She quotes Claude Lévi-Strauss's structuralist study of kinship: "The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects in the exchange."<sup>3</sup> The exchange (or traffic in women) analyzed by Lévi-Strauss is not metaphorical but an actual commodity exchange whereas Rubin seems at times to be more interested in the figurative or metaphorical application. French feminist Irigaray's notion of a "*homosexual economy*" can be aptly applied to Japan's neo-Confucian patriarchy of Meiji-Taishō: daughter obeys father (and elder brother), wife obeys husband (and eldest son), with women as a commodity of exchange among men. "Women exist only as an occasion," she says, "for mediation, transaction, transition, transference between man and his fellow man."<sup>4</sup> These concepts will become clearer as we apply them to specific erotic triangles in Sōseki's fiction.

Sedgwick's use of the term "homosocial" as appropriated from the social sciences is usually used to describe social bonds between persons of the same sex, and is applied, for example, to such activities as "male bonding." "Homosocial," she points out, is formed by analogy with "homosexual" but can also contain the paradoxical characteristics of "homophobia," which often accompanies manifestations of male-male desire. By the subject of homosociality Sedgwick is not indicating genital homosexual desire—and neither do I in my discussion of Sōseki—but rather "a strategy for making generalizations about historical differences in the structure of men's relations with other men." There is an obvious difference between the "homosocial continuum" of men and women, she points out. "Women loving women" (homosexual) and "women promoting the interests of women" (heterosexual) is not dichotomized in the same way as "men loving men" and "men promoting the interests of men" since patriarchy or "compulsory heterosexuality," in Adrienne Rich's famous phrase, is inherently homophobic. In other words, "women promoting the interests of women" are not antithetical to lesbians' interests whereas "men promoting the interests of men" are antithetical to gay men. As Gayle Rubin writes, "the suppression of the homosexual component of human sexuality, and by corollary, the oppression of homosexuals, is a product of the same system whose rules and relations oppress women." The patriarchal oppression of homosexuals results in the "gender

asymmetry.” Counterexamples to the idea that patriarchy requires homophobia can be found in Greek homosexuality and some aspects of *nanshoku* (in which there is no gap between “men loving men” and “men promoting the interests of men”).

Dodd’s recent *Monumenta Nipponica* article “The Significance of Bodies in Sôseki’s *Kokoro*” is especially pertinent to our discussion, as it depends heavily on Sedgwick’s analyses mentioned above. Dodd points out that one of Sôseki’s strengths as a writer (in our pursuit of a possible queer reading) was his ability to present alternative sexual desires in an age which was moving away from traditional tolerance vis-à-vis male-male desire (*nanshoku*) toward the *bunmei kaika* “enlightenment” attitudes about homosexuality as a perversion. The same cannot be said for his contemporaries, especially the Naturalists in Japan, for whom heterosexual expression was the norm. Sôseki’s contemporary Mori Ôgai (1862-1922) is a singular exception in that he mentions the homosexual activities common among university students of his day in his *Wita Sekusuarisu* (*Vita Sexualis*, 1909). The narrator, Professor Kanai Shizuka, Ôgai’s alter ego, proposes to write a chronicle of his own sexual awakening, attempting to give balance to his report by situating sexual desire as only one aspect of a young man’s education. Like Sôseki, Ôgai is generally considered anti-naturalist and states his position on the impact of the then fashionable Naturalism in Japan through the mouth of the young man Koizumi Jun’ichi in the novella *Seinen* (Youth, 1910-11)—in which, coincidentally, Sôseki appears in the guise of Hirata Fuseki, who lectures on literature and the intellectual life.

Naturalism has real and true materials, has minutely delineated each part with an equally rich and sensitive language, and these are really the merits of naturalism. Naturalism, however, should try to put more emphasis upon the spiritual values of human beings. Miracles should not be explained in terms of sensualism. Man has two parts, body and soul, which are delicately fused into one, are rather huddled together. If possible, the novel should treat Man from these two aspects.<sup>5</sup>

Whether Ôgai actually was successful in presenting the two aspects of human beings is debatable. Sôseki, on the other hand, was unwilling or uninterested in interrogating the dark or sordid side of human sexuality favored by his Naturalist compatriots such as Tayama Katai (1871-1904). However, he did express early in his career a willingness to introduce Walt Whitman and his “manly love of comrades” to readers in Japan through his 1892 article *Bundan in okeru byôdôshugi no daihyôsha Uoruto Hoittoman no shi ni tsuite* (On

the Poems of Walt Whitman: A Representative of Egalitarianism in the Literary World)<sup>6</sup>, written while still a university student. In his review, Sôseki quoted from the Calamus poems, “O You Whom I Often and Silently Come,” the most homoerotic of Whitman’s poetry—calamus being a very large, aromatic grass or rush, also called “sweet flag,” having sexual significance. Calamus was Whitman’s phallic symbol, even though he denied any homoerotic content to John Addington Symonds’s persistent query on the subject. Sôseki found Whitman’s “manly love of comrades” as “pure, completely free from rouge and powder, and truly manly.”<sup>7</sup> Sôseki seems almost Whitmanian in his celebration of the poet’s egalitarianism, while at the same time skirting any direct discussion of male-male love. Quoting “O You Whom I Often and Silently Come Where You Are,” Sôseki notes the centrality of this poem and its importance to understanding Whitman’s poetry: “People who don’t know this state [of heart] cannot understand Whitman’s poems.”<sup>8</sup> Sôseki also shows the limitations of his own egalitarianism in a comment on Whitman’s ideal of the great city in “Song of the Broad-Axe”: even though he praised the poem, he found the poet’s “women in public processions” ridiculous, as a “Japanese with a background of a thousand years of Confucian thought.”<sup>9</sup> For all Sôseki’s modern-sounding acceptance of the manly love of comrades, Dodd says it would be an exaggeration “to claim Sôseki’s comments as a ‘badge of homosexual recognition,’ but rather they indicate a concern to validate male/male bondings in the face of shifts in the Japanese libidinal economy that allowed increasingly less space for such relationships.”<sup>10</sup> In Sôseki’s fiction there may be no singing the body electric, but there is a subtle electric fire playing within some of his protagonists.

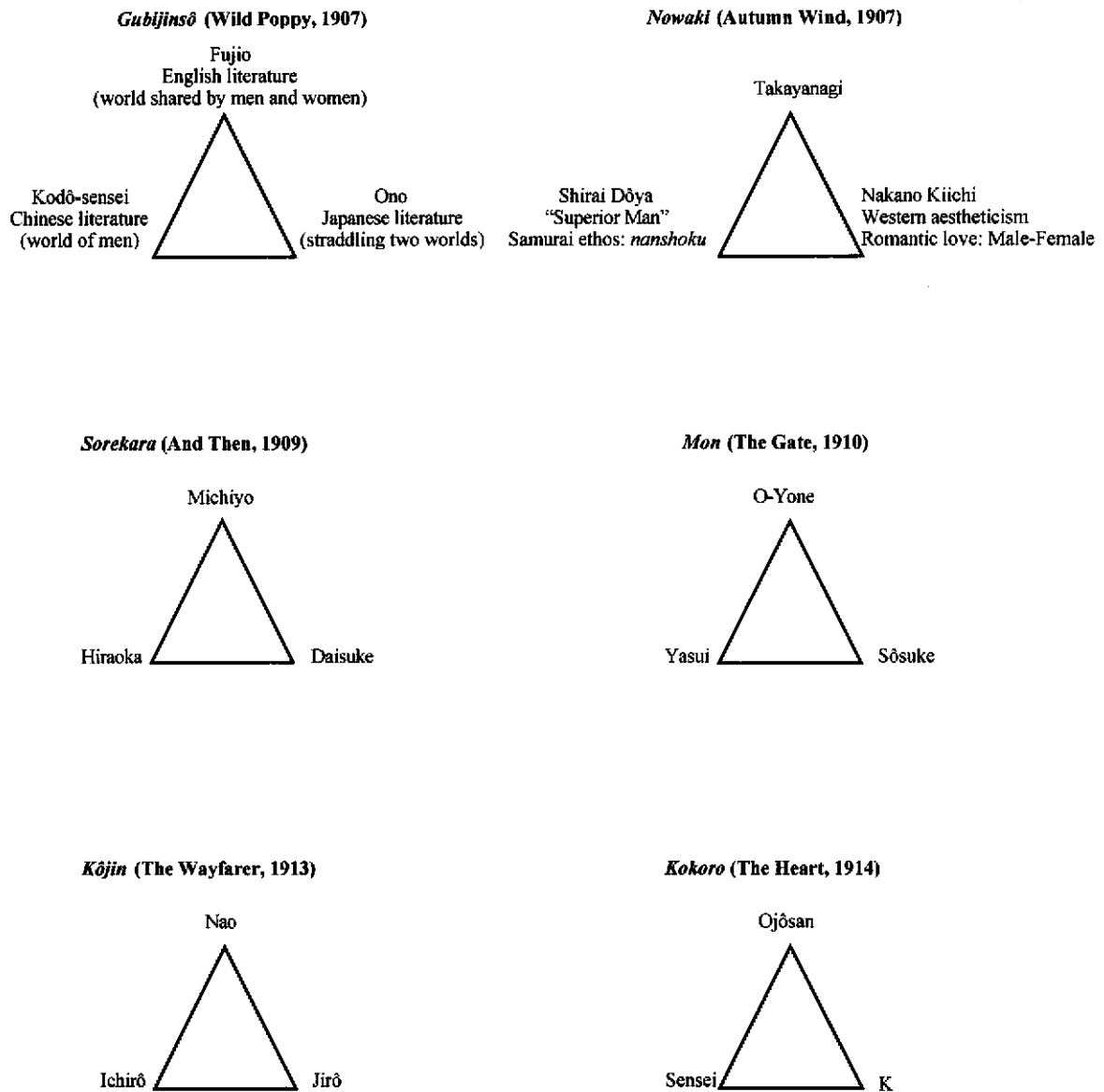
Japanese critics, especially Etô Jun and psychiatrist Doi Takeo, have not ignored the homoerotic content of Sôseki’s fiction. Doi conducted a careful psychoanalysis of characters in Natsume Sôseki’s novels in his 1969 work *Sôseki no shinteki sekai* (The Psychological World of Natsume Sôseki, translated 1976). For all its faults, *The Psychological World of Natsume Sôseki* does offer a close reading of the many triangular relationships that form the central problem of most Sôseki novels, even though these relationships, specifically the male-male side of the triangle, are usually seen as expressing, in his words, “latent homosexuality.” Doi sees latent homosexuality in the relationship between Hiraoka and Daisuke (*Sorekara*), between Yasui and Sôsuke (*Mon*) and Sensei and Watakushi (*Kokoro*) and even between brothers Ichirô and Jirô (*Kôjin*). One has to question what is accomplished and what is gained—not to

mention the inadequate explanatory power—in identifying latent homosexuality in these various relationships (if he means homosexual feelings are present but not homosexual acts, then one has to agree). Phrased differently, if “latent homosexuality” is the answer, what is the question? What does the diagnosis “latent homosexuality” *explain*? In our age of post-Freudian criticism, such a label seems singularly lacking in interpretative competency. Worse, for a diagnosis of “latent homosexuality” to have explanatory power, it would require certain identifiable, “universal” traits which of course would amount to an essentialization of homosexuality—the very notion that queer studies seek to dismantle.

The very same novels psychoanalyzed by Doi contain the triangular relationships at the heart of the Sôseki novels I wish to examine—Michiyo-Hiraoka-Daisuke (*Sorekara*); O-Yone-Yasui-Sôsuke (*Mon*); Nao-Ichirô-Jirô (*Kôjin*); Ojosan-Sensei-K (*Kokoro*). These relationships bear out, as Dodd says, “a new form of male-male relationship that do [sic] not quite fit the emerging mold of the Meiji male.”<sup>11</sup> Although Sôseki’s erotic triangles are most frequently formed between two males who are rivals for the attentions of the same woman, situated at the apex of the triangle, the corners of such triangles may also be “heroes, heroines, gods, books,” as Sedgwick mentions. Indeed, this is the case in *Sanshirô*, which has as its basic geometry three worlds, mutually exclusive it seems, to choose from: the familiar past (Mother, the girl back home), the all-male academy (of which *Sanshirô* is already a member), and the future world of women with bright lights, laughter, champagne. Embedded within the corner of the all-male academy, perhaps most representative and signifying of its potential, is the Hirota-Yojirô relationship, with Yojirô serving in the wife-like role, finding a new place for them to live together, ensuring that Hirota eats properly. This scenario is played out before *Sanshirô*’s eyes, but we do not know how exactly he feels about this option; but seeing how he cannot return home and that he finds the world of women intimidating, we can assume that it is a valid, even attractive, choice for him. Since *Sanshirô* lacks the basic triangle formed between two active members vying for the attention and affections of a “beloved” third, I have not included it in fig.

6.

**Figure 6. Gender Asymmetry and Erotic Triangles  
Male Homosocial Desire in the Novels of Natsume Sôseki**



The male-male bond between academics or intellectuals is also a common one in Sôseki, present in his earliest novels, *Wagahai wa neko de aru* and *Botchan*. Perhaps the most historically pervasive form of these academic/intellectual bonds between men is locatable in the Chinese antecedent of the gentleman scholar. Educated males seek the company of one another; women do not participate. Women are minor characters in *Wagahai wa neko de aru* and *Botchan*, hence the absence of erotic triangles. *Botchan* is implicated in the Redshirt-Koga-Madonna triangle but only as a pawn to justify Koga's transfer to another

school and not as a rival for Madonna's affection. In *Sanshirô*, too, none of Girard's triangles of desire can be constructed because *Sanshirô*, like *Botchan*, is naïve and innocent, and unacquainted with the world of women. Between *Wagahai wa neko de aru* and *Botchan* and his 1908 novel *Sanshirô*, appears Sôseki's more explicit investigation into kinds of romantic love, *Gubijinsô* and *Nowaki*. James Reichert gives a queer reading of the latter novel in his article *Sôseki Nowaki ni okeru otoko-dôshi no aijô no imi* (The Meaning of Male-Male Love in Sôseki's *Nowaki*). In his article, Reichert analyzes the three-way relationship among and between Shirai Dôya (who proposes the way of the "superior man" who sets his own standards, and whose ideas belong to the past tradition of male-male homoeroticism); Nakano Kiichi (who represents Western romantic love between male and female); and Takayanagi, who is caught in between, hoping to establish a friendship, a connection with the other two (something like Watakushi in *Kokoro*). In the end, Takayanagi fails to achieve any real intimacy with the others, and Dôya abandons his ideology ("homosexuality"), sublimating his sexual desire in his writing. The Takayanagi-Shirai Dôya-Nakano Kiichi triangle does not conform to Girard's typical geometry of two males in rivalry over one woman. I have included it precisely because Sôseki offers an alternative to Girard's model of triangular desire in Western literature. After these early novels of unfulfilled romantic love, Sôseki devotes the remainder of his literary career to elucidating the distrust, betrayal, and disintegration of intrapersonal relations manifested in more conventional love triangles (in either case, the sense of betrayal remains the same). Abandoning the dramatic sense of closure that concludes *Gubijinsô* and *Nowaki*, Sôseki focuses on the breakdown and destabilization of erotic triangles of desire. Frustrated and repressed desire is sublimated in various ways: in madness for Ichirô, and perhaps for Daisuke too; in compromise and resignation for O-Yone/Sôsuke and O-Nobu/Tsuda; or ends in the finality of death (Fujio and Sensei). At the risk of the spewing psychobabble, I read Sôseki's concluding his novel *Nowaki* with Dôya's act of sublimating his sexual desire in his writing as a possible key to understanding what Sôseki himself—the author who was rather indifferent to his own wife—may have been doing in his own fictional narratives that explore gender asymmetries and erotic triangles.

In Minae Mizumura's reading of triangular desire in *Gubijinsô* we find another example that does not conform to Girard's pattern, yet some imbricated elements occur. Fujio, the heroine, in love with Ono, who

rejects her in the end to marry Kodô-sensei's daughter.<sup>12</sup> One noticeable pattern is the sensei-student relationship or *senpai-kôhai* mentor-protégé relationship in which a younger man seeks guidance from an older man. Sensei and Watakushi in *Kokoro* is Sôseki's most famous and most analyzed of relationships of this kind, but not the first occurrence. Both *Gubijinsô* and *Nowaki* contain such couplings, Ono and Kodô-sensei in the former, Takayanagi and Dôya ("the way") in the latter. Many students today reading *Kokoro* for the first time frequently assume a gay relationship between Sensei and Watakushi and, while not ruling out such a possibility, I would point out that the *senpai-kôhai* relationship is a common one in Japan (probably evident in all Asian countries with a Confucian heritage and the *bunjin*, literatus, or gentleman scholar, tradition). One doesn't study alone as in the American myth of the lucubrating Abe Lincoln, but rather one seeks a sensei. The sensei traditionally will require an apprentice who serves variously as errand boy, assistant, ink grinder, and companion—perhaps even bedside companion. Mori Ôgai mentions this common practice in *Seinen*; the youth, usually a country boy, in return requires guidance, introductions, etc., as well as a means of living. This *sensei-deshi* mentor-protégé alliance among Japanese literary figures is also an enduring, common, and celebrated custom, and a subject of continuing research: Tsubouchi Shôyô-Futabatei Shimei, Masaoka Shiki-Natsume Sôseki, Mushakôji Saneatsu-Shiga Naoya, Kawabata Yasunari-Mishima Yukio, and others. In the contexts of homosocial desire, it is difficult not to see the male-male bond between literary companions working effectively in many cases not to "traffic in women" but to exclude women (women writers) in order to keep the *bundan* (literary establishment) a male preserve and under male control (that is, to further the interests of the *bundan*/patriarchy).

But to return to *Gubijinsô*, Kodô-sensei does "traffic in women" by pressing his daughter Sayoko's hand in marriage to Ono (crushing the spirit of Fujio, who suddenly falls ill and dies) and thereby preserving the *sensei-deshi* bond, assuring not only an heir through the marriage, but the perseverance of his research and the protection of Chinese literature (the world of men) from foreign (female) influences. Fujio's dramatic death seems out of place in Sôseki's otherwise open-ended oeuvre, and such a scene never appears again in his fiction. The (over)dramatic death would not be out of place, however, in *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, the novel by George Meredith (in some ways Sôseki's own sensei), in which Lucy, Richard's wife, dies of brain fever waiting outside the room of her sick husband, who is recuperating from having

been wounded in a duel. But as Angela Yiu remarks in her *Chaos and Order in the Words of Natsume Sôseki*, Sôseki's sense of morality and didacticism in *Gubijinsô* and *Nowaki* is closer to the *kanzen chôaku* (reward virtue, chastise vice) of Edo literature. "Sôseki refuses," she says, "to let go of his keen sense of responsibility to teach morality through literature. In the end, he is forced to conclude rather awkwardly on a moralistic and pedantic note."<sup>13</sup> Yiu makes no mention of homosocial desire or male-male bonding in her discussion of *Gubijinsô*, but she does note some eroticism in the "impenetrable closeness" that marks the relationships between Munechika and Fujio and between other sets of brothers and sisters in Sôseki's works. Her examples are Nonomiya and his sister Yoshiko in *Sanshirô* (who travel together to Venice), and O-Shige and her brothers Ichirô and Jirô in *Kôjin* ("the possessive sister who wants to keep her brothers to herself"). The sibling eroticism does little or nothing to illuminate homosocial desire, but it does function to complicate the existing triangular structures and demonstrates the author's willingness to explore the metaphors and literary representations of incest.

*Sorekara* has been compared to Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel: A History of a Father and Son*. The father in both cases seeks to influence and control the son's life by, among other things, choosing his marriage partner. Richard falls in love with a young country girl and runs off with her, bringing down his father's wrath. In *Sorekara*, Daisuke rejects the arranged marriage, an alliance with a landed family designed to bring two families together, to reward past loyalties, which he views as a feudal remnant. He even gives up Michiyo, the woman he loves, to his friend Hiraoka due to what we would call today "fear of commitment." The truth is, Daisuke is not able to commit to anything. The arranged marriage is nothing more than a business transaction with the bride being part of the transaction between men, an "alliance between capitalism and landlordism," to use Beongcheon Yu's insightful phrase. The sons are not only disillusioned with their fathers and their fathers' world but feel fear and apprehension at the same time. In *Richard Feverel*, Richard finally reconciles with Sir Austin, who is made happy by having an heir but at great cost: Lucy dies and Richard sinks to grief. Daisuke, having rejected his father's proposal and having rejected the woman he loved, is free to (forced to) ponder his situation and his true feelings. The thinking man's interiorized anguish in Sôseki has a death-like grip, producing inertia and paralysis.

We might ask how the first business transaction is different from the second. Does Daisuke manipulate Michiyo to bond with his rival Hiraoka? "It is something of a vogue nowadays," explains Norma Field, writing in 1978, "to posit a homoerotic relationship between Sôseki's characters, perhaps supported by such overtones in the relationships between Sôseki and his disciples."<sup>14</sup> The vogue initiated by the likes of Etô Jun and Doi Takeo shows no sign of abating, and I am still inclined to read a homoerotic relationship today, twenty-four years later (indeed, the vogue is still gathering momentum). Field discounts the homoerotic theory on the grounds that 1) Hiraoka, "too much of a philistine [and] a member of Daisuke's father's and brother's camp," would not appeal to Daisuke, and 2) Daisuke truly loved Michiyo. But to my mind, homosocial desire—or sexual desire in any case—can cut across class lines (often the object is *more* desirable across class lines as in Forster's *Maurice* and in Oscar Wilde's personal life) and Daisuke can still love Michiyo, profess that love, and negotiate that love through a mediator, Hiraoka, to bond with him. One name for that bond is empowerment. By giving up Michiyo, Daisuke is empowered over her (*noblesse oblige*), and Hiraoka is indebted to him as benefactor. The erotic triangle in Sedgwick's words is a "sensitive register for precisely delineating relationships of power and meaning, and for making graphically intelligible the play of desire and identification by which individuals negotiate with their societies for empowerment" (27). Ironically, Daisuke on the one hand rejects the patriarchy and authoritarianism of his father (representing feudal Japan) by refusing the arranged marriage, while on the other reinforcing the patriarchy and seeking self-empowerment by controlling Michiyo. Perhaps Daisuke's fear of commitment might be better described as the passive/aggressive male who seems at once to wallow in his own lack of control and yet willing to exert control when it is expedient.

*Mon* is another novel which does not neatly fit the Sedgwick/Gerard analysis of homosocial desire, proving the poverty of conventional, cookie-cutter criticism. Projectible conclusions cannot be applied universally. At first blush, *Mon* appears to be a classic Sôsekian erotic triangle: Sôsuke steals O-Yone from his best friend Yasui. True to the form, however, O-Yone remains the object, never to become the subject or mediator ("the subject is always already masculine," as Irigaray has said<sup>15</sup>), conforming to the Sedgwick/Gerard model in this sense, at any rate. Even while traveling in Manchuria, Yasui exercises control as mediator. Sôsuke, the typical Sôsekian tormented protagonist, remains the subject. Even though

both Sôsuke and O-Yone seem resigned to their fate (living a life of guilt and shame), even accepting of the karmic retribution for past sins, it is the subject who flees to a Zen temple in Kamakura for spiritual enlightenment, not O-Yone. Women, the passive objects in the triangles—especially O-Yone, Nao, and Ojôsan—are not allowed the same introspection as men. Sôsuke's inability to confront Yasui, narrowly avoiding him by seeking refuge in the Zen temple (perhaps that is his real motive, not "enlightenment," which proves impossible anyway) indicates an acceptance of Yasui's role as mediator of desire. Sôsuke can never come to terms with his past. It hangs like a dark cloud over the couple until the very end. Theirs is a life of resignation; they are resigned to their fate because they are not willing to confront the sin of their past. Communication is a rarity or impossibility; confession or soul-bearing disclosure—except for Sensei in *Kokoro*—is a not an option.

The main erotic triangle in *Kôjin* is between Ichirô, his wife, O-Nao, and his brother, Jirô. Ichirô's obsession with his wife's faithfulness (requesting his brother to test it) reminds us of O-Nobu's desire for her husband's absolute love: both are impossible projects from the start. Doi has observed "latent homosexuality" between brothers Ichirô and Jirô, whereas I read "homoeroticism" encoded in the relationship of Ichirô and the mysterious H, his traveling companion. They eat, sleep, and bathe together, a common enough practice at Japanese inns but also find their greatest solace in each other's company. The isolated, solitary Ichirô, sent away on a trip for his health, is more at ease, and indeed finds more comfort in the company of men than in the discomfiting communion with his wife (and I am tempted to say this is true not only of Sôseki's protagonists in general but of the author personally). Were the three-way configuration the novel's only triangle, or Ichirô and O-Nao the only married couple who question the meaning of their relationship, we might expect some clear answers, some sense of denouement. But, as in all the later novels, clear answers and a resounding conclusion are not to be.

As in *Kokoro*, Sôseki introduces a number of parallel situations for contrast, for analogy, as well as for balance and disjunction. His literary technique resembles Murasaki Shikibu's use of *narabi*, parallel situations, to advance the plot and further characterization; like Murasaki, Sôseki is not interested in action-driven plot but in the psychological state of characters. The lack of action in Sôseki's novels is incorporated

in his isolated, intellectually/morally paralyzed protagonists, who, like Hamlet, can only vacillate, hesitate, and waver in their tormented mental state. Ichirô is such a character. The state of his own marriage is paralleled in other couples, Okada/O-Kane and Sano/O-Sada, and mirrored/contrasted with the divorced Misawa and the blind woman whose sole desire was to know absolutely the heart of her lover. Things are getting complicated. We are reminded again of Othello's response to Iago's innuendo that Desdemona might be unfaithful: "Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore, be sure of it; give me the ocular proof." Ichirô doesn't demand ocular proof, but his desire to know absolutely the faithfulness of his wife, O-Nao sets him up for a tragic fall.

As in *Sanshirô*, Sôseki intensifies the relationships in *Kôjin* with additional layers of Western intertextuality: Paolo and Francesca as well as "El Curioso Impertinente," the impertinent husband's desire to test his wife's honor in *Don Quixote*. Other foreign names scattered throughout the novel include Mallarmé and Symons, Dante, Meredith, Nietzsche, and Shakespeare. That cleverly erudite Sôseki has H relate to the insomniac, neurotic Ichirô in Section 38 the anecdote of the usurpation of Mallarmé's rocking chair by the insomniac, neurotic Symons (the anecdote cries out for a Freudian reading). Symons was also known as "dandy, epicure, and decadent," code words which would register on the gaydar of most modern readers. Homma compares *Kôjin* to *Jane Eyre*, a novel Sôseki lectured on in his *Bungakuron* (Literary Theory, 1907), pointing out their overlapping concerns: solitude, fate, original sin.<sup>16</sup> Both novels are also concerned with marriage, independence, free will. We have returned thematically to Meredith's *Modern Love* and his scrutiny of marriage as a battleground, a contest of wills, intellect, hearts, and minds. Beongcheon Yu sums up the battle of the sexes in *Kôjin* this way: "Theirs is the battle of the sexes, as with Strindberg's characters. And what is worse is that in their society the battle cannot be fought in open; it is a constant duel of two minds that allows for no finality."<sup>17</sup> Once again, the limitations of Girard's and Sedgwick's inquiry into literary erotic triangles become obvious: their views are reductionist. Sôseki's novels defy being reduced to a single triangle or a single understanding of triangular desire because of, among a number of factors, his relentless, skillful use of *narabi* and intertextuality. One salient feature of Sôseki's use of intertextuality is the introduction of triangular relationships from other texts to shed light on, complicate, and differentiate his own triangles of desire. *Jane Eyre*, for example, a subject of frequent

comparison, though not alluded to in *Kôjin*, presents an indictment of the institution of marriage and a warning of its destructive potential. Jane Eyre's choice between St. John (marriage without love) and Rochester (love without marriage) does not exactly mirror Ichirô's dilemma, but his words toward the end of the novel make clear his view that marriage changes people:

Once married, a woman becomes perverse on account of her husband, no matter who he may be. As I say this I don't know how much I have already corrupted my own wife. Wouldn't it be really shameless to expect happiness from the very wife one has debased? Happiness is something you just can't demand from a woman whose innocence has been destroyed by marriage. (Yu, 318)

Ichirô and H can bond in a way that creates a space free of the tension from the destructive aspects of marriage. Sensei and Watakushi in *Kokoro* similarly are able to share moments that only friends—whose friendship is outside the gender roles and gender hierarchy of marriage—can share. *Kokoro* interrogates the male-male bond in a number of ways, almost to the exclusion of the passive object, Ojôsan, who has little or nothing to do or say (as is usually the case). Judith Butler's questions, echoing Sedgwick's, are especially pertinent in our analysis of *Kokoro*: "To what extent is the desire to move the rival out of the way a desire for the rival him/herself? And is identification merely an identification with the rival as object of desire, or can identification itself be a deflected sign of desire?" (Butler, "Desire," 383). These are the questions we need to ask in determining why Sensei invites K to lodge with him, the respectable widow and her beautiful daughter Ojôsan—unwitting or premeditated wish to mediate through K or to displace him? Once Sensei learns of K's love of Ojôsan, he (Sensei) preempts K's desire by proposing to her first—actually bypassing Ojôsan and proposing to her through the intercession of her mother. K commits suicide. Sensei loses a friend but gains a wife. Shamed by the outcome of his transaction, Sensei decides to live his life as one already dead. Not until he learns the news of General Nogi's *junshi* (the feudal practice of following one's lord in death) upon the demise of the Meiji emperor does Sensei realize what he must do to exonerate himself from his act of betrayal. *Junshi* may be viewed not only as an act of loyalty but as an act of love: one follows one's master to the grave out of love (Nogi also had to absolve himself for a botched military maneuver). Sensei's own suicide then follows the example of General Nogi's; he follows his "beloved" K to the grave by taking his own life. The former instance is hierarchical (ruler to subject), but the latter (friend to friend) offers a hierarchy-free zone for the expression of "pure" love. Pure or

otherwise, the term “love,” as imprecise or inappropriate as it may seem as regards *junshi* or Sensei’s suicide, must be opened up to its most polysemous, polyvalent manifestations to include brotherly love, maternal love, physical love, spiritual love, love of country, and encompass both the epitome of Christian love expressed in John 15:13, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends” as well as the ultimate sacrifice for male lovers in Saikaku’s *Nanshoku Ôkagami*, to die for the sake of their love.

Male-male bonds are explored so extensively in *Kokoro* that reading the novel forces one to confront the difference between homosocial desire and homosexual desire. Of the many male-male relationships in the novel, most of which end in death or betrayal (or both), the exact nature of the relationship is ambiguous in at least two cases: Sensei-student (homosexual?); Sensei-uncle (betrayal: uncle cheats Sensei out of inheritance); student-elder brother (betrayal: elder brother does not accept responsibility of ailing father); student-father (betrayal: student leaves father’s sickbed to be with Sensei); Sensei-K (betrayal: homosexual?); Meiji emperor-Nogi (*junshi*). As David Pollack has remarked in his *Reading Against Culture, Ideology and Narrative in the Japanese Novel*, Sôseki’s *Kokoro* discloses the breakdown and absence of the father figure in society and the precarious nature of male authority. But his discussion does not take into consideration the possibility of difference between “men loving men” and “men promoting the interests of men” (which I concede are difficult to discern). Emperors, fathers, and elder brothers may be concerned with promoting the interests of men, but between teacher and student, and between friends a different dynamic is at work (in Sôseki’s literary representation). The special relationship between friends lies outside the Confucian familial hierarchies, and perhaps for this reason was valorized by Saikaku (though both the “love of the samurai” and the Greek tradition of male love was always hierarchical). The male-male bond is privileged in Sôseki and held up as a model, yet paradoxically suffers the same foibles of male-female bonds (failed communication, distrust, betrayal).

*Meian* cannot be read as a conventional triangle of desire—even though Tsuda is married to O-Nobu and has another woman in his past. Instead of two men in rivalry over one woman, *Meian* presents two women, the wife O-Nobu and Mrs. Yoshikawa, in competition for the attention, interest, and “possession” of Tsuda.

The role of Tsuda as the feminized, passivized object is most easily observed in the sections taking place at the clinic in which Tsuda is immobilized in bed and the three women come and go (the sister O-Hide is also involved in the competition for Tsuda's attention). Sôseki somewhat improbably does give him the temporary strength to rush downstairs to send a note telling O-Nobu she need not come (the type of operation performed on Tsuda is usually done on an outpatient basis today so such a scenario is not necessarily inconceivable). O-Nobu, in the eyes of Mrs. Yoshikawa and Tsuda's sister O-Hide, is not only unwifely but "out of control." Tsuda does not control her as a strong husband should (the way Mrs. Yoshikawa's and O-Hide's respective spouses control them). Jealous of O-Nobu's free rein and shocked by her impudence in wanting to be loved absolutely by her husband, they band together to teach O-Nobu a lesson. Who actually exercises the most control of Tsuda becomes clear when Mrs. Yoshikawa succeeds in tempting him away from O-Nobu on an expenses-paid trip to the hot spring, where Kiyoko, unaware of Mrs. Yoshikawa's plans, will also be staying. O-Nobu even suggests joining her husband on the trip, but Tsuda is quick to put an end to the discussion. Mrs. Yoshikawa has enjoyed openly playing a game of cat-and-mouse with Tsuda in their private conversations, and his capitulation to her plan shows his willingness to play into her hands, effectively turning his back on O-Nobu. Mrs. Yoshikawa's power over Tsuda is reflected in the language describing their relationship: "he liked being treated like a child by her" and he had to "content himself with being cat to her mouse" and "reacted rather casually to being teased so unreservedly by her." The Japanese term used for "being teased" is *naburareru*, to be played with, dallied with, to be made sport of. Written with the Chinese character comprising two men on either side of a woman [鬪る] *naburu* encapsulates Tsuda's paradoxical situation of being not the man torn between two women (between O-Nobu and Kiyoko) in a conventional love triangle, but rather the feminine, passivized object controlled by or played with by two or more women. The subversion of gender hierarchies in the person of the emasculated Tsuda indicates that Sôseki has more on his mind, at least in *Meian*, than the narrativization of triangles of desire in which two men vie for the affection of one woman.

**In Conclusion.** With Queer Studies still in its infancy, the texts and narratives of Natsume Sôseki have yet to be explored in new, challenging queer readings. Ôhashi Yôichi's *Kuiaa faazaa no yume, kuiaa neishon no yume*: "'Kokoro' to homososharu ('Kokoro' and the Homosocial: Dream of a Queer Father, Dream of a

Queer Nation, 1996) and James Reichert's reading of *Nowaki* are just two recent articles which indicate possible future directions. Komori Yōichi's reading of *nanshoku* suggests possible linkages between Japan's traditional homoerotic past with current gender studies. Traditional Sōseki scholars such as Komiya have overemphasized the importance of individualism and egoism in Sōseki's novels, effectively closing off exploration of other ideas, themes, representations, and philosophical inquiries. It is time to open up a space for queer and other readings which take up subjects such as the literary representations of male-male sexuality (sexual identities), modern identities, gender role expectations, homosocial desire, alternative sexual expressions, sexual politics, relations of power and meaning across sex roles and class, as well as historical analyses such as Pflugfelder's *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse, 1600-1950*.

Terminology presents a problem if essentialization is to be avoided. Since homosexuality is not a transhistorical concept but always culturally specific, how can we speak of male-male desire across time and culture (as I have attempted to do as regards the novels of Natsume Sōseki)? Sedgwick's borrowing of the sociological term for male bonding, "homosocial," has become one useful term for discussion without using "homosexual" or "gay." Japan has a well-documented history of male-male sexuality (*Kōdansha Encyclopedia*, for example, has a two-column entry under "homosexuality"). A "homosexual" subculture flourished during the Edo period, its golden age, and produced a large body of writings known as *shudō bungaku* ("homosexual" literature), among which Ihara Saikaku's *Nanshoku Ōkagami* (The Great Mirror of Male Love, 1687) stands at the apex. It is now generally considered incorrect or misguided at best to strictly equate *nanshoku* with "homosexuality," just as scholars have pointed out the inaccuracy of equating Japanese terms *monogatari* or *shōsetsu* with the English word "novel." By the same token, we would not refer to Saikaku's *Nanshoku ōkagami* as gay literature, or question the Sensei-Watakushi bond in *Kokoro*, properly speaking, as a "gay relationship." "Homosexuality," according to new historicists, was a category invented in the nineteenth century and imposed on sexual practices that previously had enjoyed an absence of "scientific" scrutiny. In Japan, too, what was once celebrated and tolerated by some (but not by Tokugawa Neo-Confucianists) came to be viewed "scientifically": in Meiji Japan, male-male sexuality was given a new name, *dōsei-ai* (同性愛), to correspond to the Western term "homosexuality," and increasingly

defined in pathological terms.<sup>18</sup> Cast in medico-scientific language, homosexuality began to be seen as perversion or degeneration. Sôseki's fiction contains no indication that the author viewed homosexuality as a perversion or degeneration; unless the fit/unfit binary in operation in several of his novels is associated with degeneration, then the tuberculosis of *Nowaki's* Takayanagi and the scrawniness of *Kôjin's* Ichirô become visible signs of possible unfitness and degeneration, thus making their homosocial bonds suspect of being perverse in some way. *Meian's* Tsuda, on the other hand, is diseased and therefore unfit but indulges in no homosocial bonds wherein he may be judged perverse or degenerate. The triangle of desire between his wife O-Nobu and former lover Kiyoko, though never adulterous, is heterosexual and therefore normative.

Gayle Rubin discusses normative and nonnormative sexuality in her diagramming of sexual hierarchies, called "the charmed circle versus the outer limits" (fig. 7) which illustrates how the dominant culture sets the standards for what is the norm and marginalizes all other nonconforming activities. In the "charmed circle," the "good, the normal, and the natural" are considered heterosexual, married, monogamous, and so forth. How one set of sexual practices is privileged and how they are hierarchized depends on the dominant culture, the moral temper of the times, prevailing ideologies and social discourse on sexuality—a multiplicity of factors. During Saikaku's Genroku period, the neo-Confucianist might have insisted on heterosexual, married, monogamous, hierarchized relationships as the norm, but the floating world of the pleasure quarters and much popular fiction, as well as the merchant class's taste for commercial sex, resisted and challenged these conventions, turned the "outer limits" into the "charmed circle." Even in Sôseki's age, "Western values" of heterosexual, married and monogamous might have been normative, but the traditions of the pleasure quarter still remained. Daisuke in *Sorekara*, for example, is seen as profligate for his *geisha asobi*. He has a penchant for visiting geisha. He is a denizen of the demimonde.

The moral dilemmas in Sôseki's novels, as has been frequently mentioned by critics and scholars, result in part from this conflict of values traditional and modern, old and new. Rubin's binary oppositions do not of course represent the old and the new; they are not naturally appearing, hard-and-fast categories, but socially constructed classifications subject to constant change and revision. In Sôseki's fiction the bourgeois

Okamotos in *Meian*, Daisuke's family in *Sorekara*, and the Sakais in *Mon* appear to be the "good, normal, and natural," but the less financially stable Sôsuke/O-Yone in *Mon*, Sensei/Ojôsan in *Kokoro*, and Tsuda/O-Nobu in *Meian* appear to be outside the charmed circle in their not being procreative.

The Charmed Circle	Outer Limits
Good, normal, natural, blessed sexuality	Bad, abnormal, unnatural, damned sexuality
Heterosexual	Homosexual
Married	Unmarried
Monogamous	Promiscuous
Procreative	Non-procreative
Non-commercial	Commercial
In pairs	Alone or in groups
In relationship	Casual
Same generation	Cross-generational
In private	Public
No pornography	Pornography
Bodies only	With manufactured objects
Vanilla	Sadomasochism

Figure 7. The Sex Hierarchy: The Charmed Circle vs. the Outer Limits  
Adapted from Gayle Rubin, "Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality"

The nonporous boundary between charmed circle and outer limits has undergone change in recent history in the United States. Not until 1973 in the "enlightened" West (the United States, in this case) did the American Psychiatric Association drop homosexuality from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Psychiatric Disorders* and several years later announced that reparative therapies (aversion therapy, shock treatment [the method preferred by Mormons] and other "cures" for homosexuality) were deemed ineffectual. Many professionals in psychiatry are still afflicted with this pathologizing tendency (to some extent, their careers depend on it). The general tone of Doi Takeo's study is one of pathological treatment. Although Freud himself did not classify homosexuality as an illness, many Freudians including Doi "diagnose" homosexuality as they would a mental illness, with clinical attention to the "abnormal." In his introduction to the Japanese edition Doi states "It is my aim to show how unusual a 'psychologist' Sôseki is. In fact, I never cease to be amazed at his ability to understand the subtleties of different psychopathological states of mind and to write about them in simple, articulate prose."<sup>19</sup> Doi's words of praise to the contrary, the problem of sexuality in Sôseki's fiction is exacerbated by the many pathographies on Natsume Sôseki the author that attempt to link his illnesses with the fictionalized

accounts of characters in his own novels. Surely most criticism today would view such an undertaking as a vain and fruitless effort.

Whether Sôseki excludes any mention of sex, heterosexual or otherwise, in his fiction (not so much as a chaste kiss!) because of Victorian prudishness or Confucian respectability, as the case may be, or because of a self-imposed imperative to focus solely on psychological analysis of his characters at the expense of foreclosing on sex as a basic human activity, or because of a personal artistic stance that precludes the aestheticization of sex and sexuality, I cannot say. Perhaps Sôseki's view of sex mirrors that of the artist in *Kusamakura* who prefers the nude female form "dimly visible in the midst of a strange aura of enchantment which lent mystery to all within it." The artist's distaste for nude paintings seems to lie in the context of the unclothed amid the clothed: "The modern [Western] painters of nudes are not even content with reproducing as it is the body they have deprived of attire, but thrust it to a nauseating extent on to the clothed world round about" (Turney, 106). Yet the artist is not against describing in objective, though not erotic, detail the nude female form in the bath. Is a literary depiction of nudity acceptable whereas a painterly depiction is not? For Sôseki, sex could neither be contextualized in a literary nor a painterly representation. Sôseki was able to embrace Walt Whitman's "love of comrades" but unable or unwilling to contextualize it in his fiction, except for homoerotic narratives found in the male-male side of conventional erotic triangles involving two men and one woman.

Ignored by some critics and underscored by others, homosocial triangles of desire can be identified in four of the seven Sôseki novels I have examined. But whether these triangles conform to and illuminate the homosocial bond as described in Sedgwick and Girard in their studies of English and European novels, respectively, or challenge and resist these notions is of course an altogether different question.<sup>20</sup> Sôseki's literary representations of male-male desire suggest that he was well aware of the differences between the European and Japanese models and to a certain extent willing to explore both. *Nowaki* explores the tension between the samurai ethos (male-male desire) of pre-Meiji Japan and romantic love (male-female desire), a tension that ultimately is dissolved in writing or literary production (Takayanagi decides to use Nakano's gift of one hundred yen to publish the tract of his sensei, Shirai Dôya). In *Gubijinsô* as well, the homosocial

bond between Ono and Kodô-sensei is sublimated in the world of literature at the expense of the shunned Fujio who suddenly falls ill and dies. Sensei in *Kokoro* seems to share homosocial bonds with K (who, unable to achieve his ideals and undone by Sensei's hasty proposal to Ojôsan, kills himself) and later with his own spiritual *deshi*, the student, to whom he transmits his secret and then commits *junshi*, symbolically following his "beloved" K to the grave. Through a shared sense of aesthetics and a love of literature, Ichirô in *Kôjin* and his travelling companion H bond, but Ichirô's encroaching madness cannot be stopped, unable as he is to reconcile his self-estrangement and his alienated marriage. Daisuke in *Sorekara*, who finally declares his love to Michiyo, the woman he willingly "gave" to his friend Hiraoka, but, unable to act on his feelings, descends into a deteriorated mental state, if not actual madness. *Mon's* O-Yone and Sôsuke are the only Sôseki couple in the whole of his fiction permitted a modicum of marital and domestic bliss—yet their modest existence is forever haunted by their past involvement with Yasui, even after he has left Japan for the continent.

Ichirô's own pronouncement on his personal predicament seems to speak for other Sôseki protagonists: "To die, to go mad, or to enter religion—these are the only three courses left open to me" (Yu, 196). According to the logic of this formula in Sôseki's fiction, death claims Fujio, Takayanangi (sick and tubercular at the end of the novel, but not long for the world) and Sensei; madness claims Daisuke and Ichirô; religion offers the possibility of salvation for Sôsuke (and perhaps Ichirô, too) but is rejected in the end. Operating behind this nihilist formula in every erotic triangle is a homosocial bond.

Chapter 5  
The New Woman, the Femme Fatale, Osan/Koharu, Madonna/Whore

The sound of the door you slammed shut was for both of you . . . .  
One day you will understand that the husband and children whom you have abandoned are all yourself.  
—Hiratsuka Raichô, Letter to Nora-san<sup>1</sup>  
Hiratsuka Raichô, “Nora-san e” (To Nora-san), *Seitô* (January 1912)

She flouts Love’s caresses  
Reforms ladies’ dresses  
And scorns the Man-Monster’s tirades  
She seems scarcely human,  
This mannish “New Woman,”  
This “Queen of the Blushless Brigade.”  
—26 September 1894 issue of the London popular one-penny paper *Woman*  
whose assistant editor was Arnold Bennett and whose motto was “Forward but not too fast”

The Woman Question is the Marriage Question.  
—Sarah Grand, “The New Aspect of the Woman Question” (1894)

Sôseki’s fictional women are a diverse lot, who cannot be categorized easily under a single rubric, yet I will attempt to analyze them in terms of the new woman, the femme fatale, and compare and contrast their circumstances with the binaries Osan/Koharu and Madonna/whore. Not all fictional female characters in Sôseki qualify as either new women or dangerous women, but Fujio, O-Nami, Mineko and O-Nobu in particular stand out as being strong and independent women, sometimes even having a whiff of the dangerous woman about them. Mineko in *Sanshirô*, for example, is referred to as an “Ibsen woman,” which, we assume, identifies her as a sort of femme fatale (but in point of fact, the meaning of “Ibsen woman” is never made clear). Even before the first public performance of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House* in Japan in 1911, and before the feminist Hiratsuka Raichô, editor-in-chief of *Seitô* (Bluestocking) attacked in an open letter Ibsen’s heroine, Nora, for slamming the door on her husband and children, Sôseki introduced the “Ibsen woman” in his 1908 novel, *Sanshirô*, in a conversation about Mineko between Yojirô and Professor Hirota, while Sanshirô listens:

“It’s true, she is reckless. There’s something of the Ibsen woman in her.”  
“With Ibsen women, it’s all out in the open. Mineko is reckless deep inside. Of course, I don’t mean reckless in the ordinary sense. Take Nonomiya’s sister: she has this kind of reckless look at first sight, but in the end she’s very feminine. It’s an odd business.”  
(Rubin, 102-103)

Professor Hirota has created a fascinating binary of womanhood: she can be either feminine or reckless (*onnarashii* or *ranbô*) or perhaps even both feminine and reckless at the same time, as is Nonomiya's sister. The Japanese *ranbô* has many definitions (rash, rough, rude, etc.), but "wild" seems especially apt for describing Mineko and other Sôseki women. Their qualities of being "reckless," or unruly or untamed in men's eyes are in opposition to being ladylike, feminine or *onnarashii*. By adding the word "wild" to her English title of *Gubijinsô*, Mizumura focuses on the wild aspect of Fujio as the "Wild Poppy." The wild, untamed aspect of Fujio, O-Nami, Mineko, and O-Nobu is what makes them slightly dangerous, or femmes fatales.

The most incongruent, contradictory aspect of Sanshirô's epiphany, we will recall, was his vision of the "woman in the woods" and the harsh reality that the flesh-and-blood Mineko turns out to be more representative of the new woman and a femme fatale than an angelic redeemer. These two terms, "new woman" and "femme fatale," are never mentioned in *Sanshirô* but form an important subtext notwithstanding. Mineko is identified as being a Christian, and in Meiji Japan many young woman turned to Christianity, among other reasons, to gain an education (at Protestant missionary schools, for example), to improve their status, and to find an outlet for their individuality. But it is not just Mineko who stands out as an Ibsen Woman. Yojirô cautions his young classmate Sanshirô, "all modern women are like that, not just Mineko" (Rubin, 103)—suggesting that these types of woman were becoming more and more common in the later years of Meiji. The brash student Yojirô is unable to identify which Ibsen character he means (perhaps he is a little "reckless" himself), but he does have the peculiar insight to extend the scope of the Ibsen character to include men as well: "All women are like that nowadays. And not just women. Any man who's had a whiff of the new atmosphere has something of the Ibsen about him" (Rubin, 103). Yojirô eventually explains what he means by "Ibsen character." He goes on to say that "Ibsen's characters have been the clearest in their perception of the flaws in the modern social system. We'll be like that before long" (Rubin, 104). What begins as a conversation about Mineko develops into a general statement that "every creature living in a society is going to feel dissatisfied about something," even though Sanshirô's wish is to keep the discussion on Mineko. Yôjirô is only hinting at the "Ibsenism" that had swept through England and Europe in the 1890s—and through Japan in the second decade of the twentieth century.

George Bernard Shaw's 1891 essay, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, outlines the ideological framework of moral revolt which he observed in Ibsen's drama:

Ibsen's message to you is—If you are a member of society, defy it; if you have a duty, violate it; if you have a sacred tie, break it; if you have a religion, stand on it instead of crouching under it; if you have bound yourself by a promise or an oath, cast them to the winds; if the lust of self-sacrifice seize you, wrestle with it as with the devil; and if, in spite of all, you cannot resist the temptation to be virtuous, go drown yourself before you waste the lives of all about you with the infection of that disease. Here at last is a call to arms that has some hope in it.<sup>2</sup>

Shaw's socialist agenda and political interpretation of Ibsen may have little relevance to *Sanshirô* (and little in common with Ibsen, for that matter) except perhaps as it is manifested in the precocity, idealism, and contrarianism of the small university clique of which *Sanshirô* is a participant/observer. The shock that audiences around the world experienced from Ibsen's *Nora* was akin to the unease and suspicion harbored by men in *Sôseki* (and perhaps by *Sôseki* himself) toward the wild, unruly woman (though quite tame by today's standards). The university clique in *Sanshirô* is given to philosophical reflection and to spouting foreign words and phrases such as *romantische Ironie* and *de te fabula*; "Ibsen woman" is another bookish reference in their *conversazioni*. Other student discussions range from hypocrisy (*Mineko* is also seen as a hypocrite) to egoism versus altruism. In the novel, *Sôseki* has them attend a performance of *Hamlet*, not Ibsen, so we do not get to hear their criticism of an Ibsen play; however, a not uncommon criticism both in Victorian England and Meiji Japan of Ibsen's *Nora* was her willfulness and independence<sup>3</sup>—the two traits that most define *Mineko* and other aforementioned *Sôseki* women.

The Ibsen Woman, to whom *Mineko* is compared, and the new woman whom she represents have their roots in London at the end of Victoria's reign (the fact that a Norwegian dramatist's name is associated with a new concept indicates of course that the phenomenon was occurring in many places of the world at the same time). The year 1900 was a landmark time for *Sôseki* when he visited London on a *Monbushô* scholarship from the Japanese government. He witnessed the funeral of Victoria and the coronation of Edward VII. Before returning to Japan in 1903, he could not have missed all the talk and the brouhaha in the press on "the new woman." The new woman in England, as related by Karl Beckson, in his *London in the 1890s*, "insisted on alternatives to the traditional roles for women. Her smoking in public, riding bicycles without escorts, or wearing 'rational dress' (the divided skirt) were not the result of whim or self-

indulgence but of principle, for she was determined to oppose restrictions and injustices in the political, educational, economic and sexual realms in order to achieve equality with men.”<sup>4</sup> The 1890s in London were the time of productions of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *Ghosts*, which provoked a “storm of abuse in the press by their depictions of strong-willed, sensual women who violated Victorian standards of female decorum.” Ibsenism became a leveler of Victorian pieties and *Doll’s House* in Japan similarly overwhelmed audiences thanks in part to Japan’s pioneering Western-style stage actress, Matsui Sumako (1886-1919), who shocked conventional Meiji morality with her performance of Nora and other femme fatale roles in which she came to specialize.

Matsui not only specialized in femme fatale roles, but in the eyes of the press she seemed to embody them in her personal life. She is never mentioned by name in *Sanshirô*, yet her historical presence intersects with Sôseki’s intertextuality. The production of *Hamlet* attended by the university clique would have been, historically speaking, the performance of Tsubouchi Shôyô’s troupe Bungei Kyôkai, with Matsui playing the role of Ophelia (her debut role). Her lover, the famed literary critic Shimamura Hôgetsu (1871-1918) was the translator of *A Doll’s House*. Other notorious femme fatale characters were to follow: Carmen, Salome, and Katusha in Tolstoy’s *Resurrection*. *Salome* won laudatory reviews, and critics called Matsui’s Salome “at once egotistical, driven, and willful.” She also popularized the role of Magda, the heroine of Hermann Sudermann’s *Die Heimat* (Home, first performed 1893, known in translation as *Magda*)—also translated by Shimamura—who returns home, defiant and unrepentant, with her illegitimate child. Sôseki’s library contains a copy of *Magda* and five other novels and plays by Sudermann. Sôseki’s epithet “unconscious hypocrite” (*muishiki gizensha*) for Mineko was borrowed from Sudermann’s character of Felicitas in *Es war* (1894), which he read in the English translation, *The Undying Past*, before Matsui assumed the role of Magda. As a writer, Sôseki rode ahead of public opinion, exploring in his own subtle way the problem of the new woman. His images of O-Nami as Ophelia, Mineko as an Ibsen woman, and O-Nobu as new woman illustrate that his literary interests in the mad woman, the new woman, and the dangerous woman, as is the case with many writers, actually intersected with contemporary social concerns of his day.

No throat-slitting *dokufu* (“poison woman,” which I will touch on momentarily), real or imagined, nor castrating Salome-like character appears in the fiction of Natsume Sôseki. But both images loomed large in the public imagination in late Meiji and early Taishô. When Matsui’s lover Shimamura died from an outbreak of Spanish influenza, she was attacked by one critic for “kill[ing] him with her selfish behavior” (Birnbaum, 49), as if she were a possessed Salome. Oscar Wilde’s notorious *Salome*, first published in French in 1893 and later in English along with Beardsley’s erotic illustrations, was banned from the London stage because of an old law forbidding the depiction on stage of Biblical characters, but performed to packed houses in Japan, a production of Matsui’s and Shimamura’s troupe, the Geijutsu-za. Orientalism comes into play when Wilde’s *Salome* was under review: one critic called it an “oriental Hedda Gabler,” and Wilde himself criticized Beardsley’s erotic illustrations as being “too Japanese.” Salome was not “Oriental” in the sense of Asian but Semitic, and belongs more to the Japanese tradition of the dangerous woman than the Ibsen Woman. Salome, after all, did not slam the door on husband and family (that is to say, she was not a part of the Marriage Problem). Mori Ôgai had translated *Salome* in 1912 in his book *Hitomakumono*, but it was Tanizaki Jun’ichirô, drawn to the subject (he read Wilde in English and translated *Lady Windermere’s Fan*), who went on to develop a literary career to which the femme fatale was an essential, signature ingredient.

Sôseki was not only dealing with subjects that would have been topical to his readers, but also developing his own literary path while simultaneously pursuing his broad aesthetic interests in Western fiction. The novels of George Meredith, a major influence on Sôseki, and those of his disciple, Thomas Hardy, especially *Jude the Obscure*, published in 1895, were also associated with the marriage problem and New Woman fiction. The reading public did not welcome an excessively pessimistic view of marriage; so severe was the criticism in England of Hardy’s dark view of marriage in *Jude* that he decided to quit writing novels altogether. It is surprising to me that Sôseki, who presented an essentially pessimistic view of marriage in his fiction, was not criticized for maintaining such a one-sided perspective. He was not alone, of course, in depicting failed marriages—his Naturalist contemporaries far outdid him in this regard, especially Masamune Hakuchô (1879-1962) and Tokuda Shûsei (1871-1943), both known for their bleak, dismal portrayals of married life in their autobiographical novels *Doro Ningyô* (Clay Doll, 1911) and *Kabi*

(Mold, 1911), respectively—their titles tell it all. Little wonder that Naturalists, practitioners of the author-is-narrator “I” novel, the *shishōshetsu*, among them Hakuchō in particular, most admired Sōseki’s only autobiographical novel, *Michikusa*, which also probes the exigencies of married life and the affliction of familial relations in general. I use the word “affliction” because family relations in *Michikusa* are the root of distress and misfortune to Kenzō, Sōseki’s feckless protagonist, and are rarely a source of happiness and fulfillment. Relationships, all of which seem only to impinge on Kenzō’s personal freedom and individualism, must be tolerated, including those with his wife, O-Sumi:

And thus they spent their time running around in a circle. How wearying a business it all was they seemed not to know. Occasionally he would come to a halt, and so would she—he to cease for a brief while his agitated shouting, and she to break her tense silence. But even as they talked gently to each other, they remained standing on the circle, ready to start running again. (McClellan, *Grass on the Wayside*, 115)

Sōseki was not pulling the New Woman and the femme fatale out of a hat as a magician conjures up a rabbit; he was drawing on both Japanese and Western antecedents. One early example of the New Woman novel in Japan is Sudō Nansui’s *Shinsō no kajin* (*The Ladies of New Style*, 1887), a novel of the future, when “Tokio [sic] shall have become a great port, with all the appliances of an advanced civilization, such as wharves, docks, tramways, and smoking factory chimneys” (all seen at the time as positive images of progress). The heroine is a dairymaid, which, as described by W. G. Aston

. . . indicates that the lady is in the forefront of the progressive movement. Formerly, cow’s milk was not used as food in Japan, and when this novel appeared none but a truly enlightened person would dare to affront the old fashioned prejudices against it. This dairymaid’s favourite reading is Herbert Spencer’s treatise on education. She is a member of a ladies’ club where croquet and lawn tennis are played and women’s rights discussed.<sup>5</sup>

Here we find a possible Japanese precedent for Mineko, in the person of an “enlightened,” educated women (who probably eats beef, too, we can safely assume, if she follows the advice of Enlightenment leader and beef consumption advocate Fukuzawa Yukichi), who, also like Mineko, gets married in the end—in her case, to an advanced politician. The lady of new style in 1887 was a mere harbinger of things to come, more an object of gentle mockery than an actual threat to Meiji patriarchy. On closer analysis, the “Ibsen Woman” Mineko of circa 1908 had not gained much ground compared to the Spencer-reading dairymaid. It is interesting to note that Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), proponent of social Darwinism, was already known

in Japan in the late 1880s and was representative of new ways of thinking about moral education and individualism. The free-thinking Mineko is held in awe by Sanshirô, perhaps even feared, for her unladylike straightforwardness and outspokenness, but not for her political ideas.

*The New Woman.* The Japanese term for “new woman,” *atarashii onna*, was first mentioned by Ihara Seiseien in his review of the 1911 production of Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, starring Matsui Sumako as previously noted, and subsequently taken up by other writers. The year 1911 also witnessed the founding of the literary magazine *Seitô* (Bluestockings, published from 1911 to 1916) by Hiratsuka Raichô. In a 1913 issue Raichô challenged the conventional wisdom of *ryôsai kenbo*, the “good wife and wise mother,” and “attacked the Japanese marriage system for making women yield to power, not love, and legislating against the development of affection in marriage.”<sup>6</sup> *Seitôsha* (Bluestocking Society), Japan’s first feminist movement to attract national attention, and an association of self-defined “new women,” demanded to be taken seriously. Though also scorned by the media for their “scandalous” activities and unconventional lifestyles (some had children by different men, not their husband in marriage), *Seitôsha* published supplements devoted to defining the New Woman in addition to their monthly magazine *Seitô*, which took up women’s rights and feminist issues.

*Seitô* did not and could not present a unified voice of the New Woman, since opinion differed among its contributors. One of the dominant voices redefining women’s roles, in addition to Hiratsuka Raichô’s, belonged to Yosano Akiko (1878-1942), who disagreed with Raichô’s platform calling for state protection and special privileges for mothers. Akiko, who raised ten children, ran a household, and shouldered family responsibilities while continuing her career as a poet and essayist, argued for women’s economic independence, both from their husbands and from the state. Her argument for woman’s complete independence and her desire to manage a household and her writing career, places her on the level of today’s “supermoms” who are able to balance the responsibilities of child-bearing and child-rearing while pursuing satisfying careers of their own choosing.

More than one hundred novels appeared about the New Woman in England between 1883 and 1900, a genre which had no real equivalent in Japan. According to *The Oxford Companion to English Literature* the phrase “new woman” is said to have been coined by Sarah Grand (author of the short story “Should Irascible Old Gentlemen Be Taught to Knit?”) in her 1894 article published in *North American Review* to describe “a new generation of women, influenced by J. S. Mill and other campaigners for women’s rights, who believed in Women’s Suffrage, abolition of the double standard in sexual matters, Rational Dress, educational opportunities for women, etc.” No less vociferous, Victorian sisters in Japan in the 1880s also organized study groups, societies, and schools to improve their status in society, and began to publish journals to advance their rights. They suffered a setback with the promulgation of the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890 which effectively reaffirmed Confucian values, reinstated the importance of the patriarchal system, and reminded women of their subservient position. The suffrage movement in Japan did not obtain official organizational thrust until the founding of the New Woman’s Society in 1920, established by Hiratsuka Raichô, Ichikawa Fusae, and Oku Mineo. The “good wife, wise mother” role for women, however, continued to be fodder for government propaganda in the 1930s after the military takeover of the government as women were encouraged to support national priorities, again setting back the advancement of women’s rights.

Many of the New Women’s demands for reforms focused on the body, not just matters of dress or hairstyle and how women should appear in public, but important issues about venereal illness and reproductive health. After her career with *Seitô*, Raichô went on to lead a movement to make it illegal for men afflicted with V.D. to get married. Raichô’s eugenics-inspired anti-V.D. campaign upturned existing gender hierarchies by asserting the biological superiority of women: sexually dissolute men brought V.D. home, infecting innocent wives, threatening the health of the Japanese “race.” Women were fit; men were unfit. The dark Section 17 in *Meian*, in which Tsuda and a friend discuss “sex and love” also shows men as unfit and morally degenerate. At what is in fact primarily a V.D. clinic, Tsuda encounters his brother-in-law and an old friend whose pasts had been “too brilliantly colored” and who now “did not have the courage to look at that brightness, they closed themselves in, cowering in the darkness without making a move” (Viglielmo, 27). Yosano Akiko, perhaps most elegantly among New Women writers, also called attention to the female

body, but in a different way. Akiko's writing about the female body and female sexuality in her first volume of poetry, *Midaregami* (Tangled Hair, 1901) and in later works, was a celebration of passion and sensuality:

*Omowazu ya yume negawazu ya wakoudo yo moyuru kuchibiru kimi ni utsurazu ya*  
You young men! / Don't you think about love, / Want love? / Are you blind / To these red lips?<sup>7</sup>

Akiko never wrote the kind of Victorian New Woman fiction that shocked society with its frank acknowledgement of sexuality, but her poetry was "a poetry of protest, of love, of emancipation of women, of the glorification of the flesh." She was, according to a translator of her poetry, "the first to glorify the female body."<sup>8</sup> No Meiji writer of fiction could match this level of passionate intensity. The passion and sensuality in Akiko's poetry make Sôseki's woman pale in comparison. His narrative eye was focused not on the body, not on female sexuality, but on female psychology in intrapersonal relationships, particularly in marriage.

Marriage receives a negative treatment in the hands of many novelists, including Sôseki's and his Victorian contemporaries'. Thomas Hardy's final novel *Jude The Obscure* (1895) is generally regarded as the bleakest statement against marriage, the novel that most outraged Victorian readers for its "anti-marriage" doctrines. Instead of directly attacking the institution of marriage, Hardy portrays what "destructive and ruinous creatures" men *and* women are and what they do to each other in the name of love. This is Sôseki's modus operandi as well: let the characters' behavior speak out against marriage. It would be out of place for O-Nobu (or any Sôseki woman for that matter) to speak out like Meredith's Diana, "Banality, thy name is marriage!"; or to espouse the view of marriage held by Herminia in Grant Allen's *The Women Who Did* (1895) as a "malignant thing . . . a system of slavery."; or to make the remark of Sue in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*: "I shall do just as I choose!"; let alone utter Nora's famous last words: "I have another duty equally sacred . . . My duty to myself" O-Nobu is divided between attempting to save her marriage and struggling against it at the same time. Yet her strongheadedness is her ruin. Hardy reveals the flaws and faults of both sexes, as Sôseki does. If Jude is torn between the sluttish Arabella and angelic Sue, surely that is as much a statement about *him* and his desires as it is about women. Jude's choice is the classic madonna/whore dilemma; Sanshirô's choices are more subtle and just as demanding: he must choose

between the past (Mother and O-Mitsu, the girl back home), the Ivory Tower and the all-male academy, or the world of women (Mineko). Sanshirô sees them as mutually exclusive, whereas Jude is able to or compelled to move back and forth between his two worlds. The all-male academy might offer a safe haven from the world of dangerous women such as Mineko, but he himself does yet not know what he desires. Whichever choice he makes in the end, Mineko embodies for him many of the madonna/whore binaries: she is at once attractive/repulsive and redeemer/temptress as well as passive/aggressive.

**Madonna/Whore.** The madonna/whore complex can be categorized as a series of binary oppositions, which I have gleaned from multiple sources (see Fig. 8) and will use to discuss both Sôseki's treatment in his novels and its development, briefly considered, in Japanese literature in general. The limitations of the madonna/whore classification must be stated at the outset: it is a male concept and a male dilemma, a male ordering of a feminine universe that bifurcates female characteristics and attributes into two neat categories. The concept may have been designed to say something about women but ends up pronouncing judgment on the men who use it to categorize women and exert control in the act of naming,<sup>9</sup> nevertheless, I will now proceed to use it with impunity.

Madonna	Whore
Sacred	Profane
Purity	Pollution
Diana	Leda
Virgin	Fallen woman
Respect	Use
Attraction	Repulsion
Idealization	Denigration
Worshipful Devotion	Contempt
Redeemer	Temptress
Pedestal	Gutter
Passive	Aggressive

Figure 8. Madonna/Whore

Turning women into Madonna is an educational and ideological process that requires the worship of purity and chastity, and the institutionalization of these traits as ideal and most desirable in women. In the 1910s in Japan *teisô* (chastity/purity) became a popular topic of debate, in part to counter what was perceived as the immorality of the *atarashii onna*. The Japan Woman's Christian Temperance Union (Nihon Kirisutokyô Fujin Kyôkai), active since 1886, preached in earnest in the 1910s the absolute importance of

*teisô*. Women were put on a pedestal in Victorian England and boys were taught that “nice women” were to be worshiped for their purity. “He was to consider nice women (like his sister and his mother, like his future bride),” as Walter E. Houghton describes in *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, “as creatures more like angels than human beings—an image wonderfully calculated not only to dissociate love from sex, but to turn love into worship, and worship into purity.”<sup>10</sup> In Meiji Japan too, samurai ideas of shame and chastity from the Edo period were revived and inculcated by the state through the education system.<sup>11</sup> In the eyes of the state, women’s duty and only pleasure was the bearing and caring of children; reproduction and the domestic sphere were the essence of the idealized Japanese woman. The “good wives, wise mothers” ideology of Meiji was supplemented with the notion of *bosei honnô* (mothering instincts) to create a conceptualization of womanhood predicated on samurai and Confucian precepts of harmonious family relations. Wives and mothers could be elevated to the status of Madonna by residing in their proper spheres, the home, and maintaining their proper character, the angel in the house. “Even before the Edo period until well into the twentieth century, neither child-bearing nor child-rearing was necessarily considered a woman’s *ikigai* [one’s life’s worth] or main obligation.”<sup>12</sup> But during the Meiji period, the formation of the myth of motherhood began to transform woman’s role into the exact opposite of Nora’s claim: women *did* have a sacred duty to their husband and children, the very view espoused by Raichô.

Sôseki’s women both conform to and resist this model of the idealized Japanese woman. Conforming to the model of “angel in the house” are Michiyo in *Sorekara*, O-Yone in *Mon*, Ojôsan in *Kokoro*, and Kiyoko in *Meian*. But untrue to form, master of irony Natsume Sôseki does not allow any of these characters to be mothers: Michiyo has a stillbirth, O-Yone has three miscarriages, Ojôsan is childless, and Kiyoko is recovering from a miscarriage when Tsuda encounters her at the hot spring. Among major female characters, only O-Sumi in Sôseki’s autobiographical *Michikusa* is a mother. Resisting the model of the idealized woman are Fujio in *Gubijinsô*, O-Nami in *Kusamakura*, Mineko in *Sanshirô*, and O-Nobu in *Meian*. None of them is a mother. The author himself seemed to be heir to many Confucian attitudes toward women, including the concept that the domestic sphere is her proper place, yet in spite of these Confucian hierarchies, he was able to create in his fiction strong, independent women who see their place in the world as more than just the domestic scene (while paradoxically still being firmly entrenched in that

domain). Just as there were competing voices in Meiji fiction, in society, and in women's movements, over women's identity, from the importance of *teisô* propounded by the WCTU to the importance of *jikaku* (self-awakening, or self-liberation) advocated by the *atarashii onna* of *Seitôsha*, there were competing women's voices in Sôseki, and always a tension between the model of idealized woman and the promise of the New Woman.

The *Baien jiken* (Baien incident) of 1908 encapsulates many of these tensions of the *atarashii onna* and the clash of traditional and modern roles and values. The incident involved the tumultuous relationship between Morita Sôhei and Hiratsuka Haruko (later to be known as Raichô)—and a third party, though not a participant in the lovers' drama, Natsume Sôseki. In March 1908 Morita Sôhei, twenty-seven, a married man and a lecturer at a women's college, and one of his students, Hiratsuka Raichô, twenty-two, went to Shiobara hot spring with the intention of ending their love affair in a double suicide, but were found wandering in the mountains and apprehended by police, brought back to Tokyo and into the glaring eye of the media, which immediately turned the sensational story into a nationwide scandal. Morita's literary mentor, Sôseki, encouraged him to record the course of his love-affair in a novel, and the result was *Baien* (Soot and Smoke, 1909), which was first serialized in the *Tokyo Asahi Shinbun*. Morita was inspired both in art and in life by the fin-de-siècle decadence of D'Annunzio's *Il trionfo della morte* (The Triumph of Death, 1894), which ends with the lovers jumping from a precipice (although the woman doesn't go willingly). Morita cast his fictional lover, Tomoko, as an *atarashii onna* modeled on Raichô, but who "assumes the pose of a decadent and pretends to be sexually impotent, thereby avoiding being conquered by her lover."<sup>13</sup> Tomoko wishes to have the hero, Yôkichi, kill her to show him that her system has prevailed, and she remains unconquered. Her victory also requires his death. Yôkichi worships her as a sacred woman. The novel ends melodramatically with the couple walking in the snowy mountains of Shiobara as "the moonlight fades and day dawns, and suddenly a ray of light shines into their lives."<sup>14</sup>

Sôseki had read both *Baien* and D'Annunzio's *Triumph of Death* (as well as other of his novels), and soon began to write his own story of *Sorekara*, inspired in some ways by the two narratives, yet his own was noticeably lacking the melodrama and decadence of the other two.<sup>15</sup> In *Sorekara*, Sôseki creates an

uncanny scene in which Kadono, the houseboy, is reading the daily serialization of *Baien* in the newspaper (Sôseki, as editor, had in fact arranged for its serialization): “Doesn’t it seem like it really shows that modern anxiety?” the houseboy asks his master Daisuke, who replies, “And doesn’t it smell of the flesh?” [*sôshite niku no nioi mo shi ya shinai ka*] (Field, 60-61). At first blush, it appears Sôseki is about to embark on a literary recursion known as *mise en abyme*, such as André Gide’s *Les Faux-Monnayeurs* (The Counterfeiters, 1926) which contains a novel called The Counterfeiters. Sôseki’s newspaper readers may not have expected *Sorekara* (published a year after the *Baien* incident) to mirror precisely the travails of *Baien*, but a comparison between the two novels is certainly being solicited. In fact, the two novels are quite different. In his book *Atarashii onna no tôrai: Hiratsuka Raichô and Natsume Sôseki* (The Arrival of the New Woman: Hiratsuka Raichô and Natsume Sôseki), Sasaki Hideaki, who calls *Sorekara* the “antithesis” of *Baien*, claims that it was the “intellectual battle” about *Baien* that most interested Sôseki (not, we assume, the sexuality and the melodrama of *Baien*)<sup>16</sup>. Michiyo in *Sorekara* is worshiped as a sacred woman by Daisuke, himself resembling a fin-de-siècle decadent in his refined aesthetic tastes, for whom the smell of the flesh is to be avoided. Daisuke’s position furthermore represents the author’s own preoccupation with the intellectual battles involved in erotic triangles and the polite avoidance of carnality of any kind. The frail and sick Michiyo, by contrast, seems to embody more of the *kekaku-gonomi* (tubercular appeal) of sickly beauties from an earlier era—not the robust, defiant New Woman.

Sôseki’s Madonna character in *Botchan* lives on in popular Japanese culture. The legacy of Sôseki’s Madonna, according to Inoue Hisashi, has extended to the present day in the enduring “madonna” character in the *Otoko wa tsurai yo* (It’s Tough Being a Man) film series that ran to forty-eight installments, a Guinness Book record. In every installment Tora-san, unlucky in love and always a wanderer, falls in and out of love with a woman referred to as a “madonna” in the series, a representation of the eternal feminine. Another manifestation of the eternal feminine, the always popular Yoshinaga Sayuri, shares a similar position in the hearts of Japanese fans “despite the indifferent quality of many of her more than one hundred films.”<sup>17</sup> Sayuri is the embodiment of the male ideal of Japanese femininity: modest, sensitive, chaste. Many more examples of the eternal feminine exist in Japanese popular culture, but to return to the literary, Sôseki’s Madonna, although a minor, underdeveloped character, exhibits the desirable traits of

modesty and sensitivity. That she is a whore does not seem to conflict with the requisite chasteness of the eternal feminine, as long as she is pure in her sincerity and devotion (“the prostitute with a heart of gold” in Western terms). Sôseki did not need to turn to Western iconography to present Botchan’s epiphany; examples of the madonna/whore figure in Japanese literature are copious and ancient.

The madonna/whore motif runs through Japanese literature, both premodern and modern. An early reference appears in the fourteenth-century nô play *Eguchi*, in which the courtesan Eguchi in her final epiphany displays herself as “Fugen Bosatsu riding a white elephant, ‘borne by snow-white clouds, across the western sky,’ the Western Paradise of Amida.”<sup>18</sup> Michele Marra interprets the courtesan/bodhisatva symbolism as an “attempt to domesticate ‘alien’ shamanic practices for the purpose of making Buddhist philosophy the central episteme of medieval Japan.”<sup>19</sup> In his narrow-sighted attempt to recast Japanese literature into ideological contextualizations only, Marra overlooks the obvious problem (which needs to be stated) that gender representation and female sexuality are complex constellations of meaning not comprehensible even in an unambiguous double representation of prostitute as manifestation of the Buddha. Epiphanies of fallen women as avatars of Buddha (Izumi Shikubu and Ono no Komachi are other examples Marra explores) conceal a deeper problem than legitimating Buddhist philosophy as being central to medieval Japan: that texts authored/authorized by men still fail to come fully to terms with female sexuality. Marra’s analysis of the relationship between high/low, inclusion/exclusion, defilement/purification in his chapter “Aesthetics of Impurity” overlooks the obvious: that definitions of the boundaries of female “pollution” and “defilement” and the enforcement, regulation of those boundaries are a male domain and male prerogative.

In Victorian and Meiji society, the home became a symbolically charged space in which men could seek refuge (or be domesticated) and women could find fulfillment and be worshiped (or imprisoned, depending on one’s point of view). Robert Wright, reading human behavior in light of the Darwinian theory, suggests in his book *The Moral Animal: Evolutionary Psychology and Everyday Life*, that the Madonna/whore switch may be built into the human brain:

Victorian culture was finely calibrated to excite the “Madonna” part of a man’s mind and numb the “whore” part. The Victorians themselves called their attitude toward females “woman worship.” The woman was a redeemer—innocence and purity incarnate; she could tame the animal in a man and rescue his spirit from the deadening world of work. But she could only do this in a domestic context, under the blessing of marriage, and after a long, chaste courtship. The secret was to have, as the title of one Victorian poem put it, an “Angel in the House.”<sup>20</sup>

Without elaborating Wright’s argument here, it is clear that a certain amount of domesticity and parental investment is necessary for the rearing of the young. In reality, Victorian society and Meiji-Taishō society valued domesticity and saw woman’s sphere as the home, while at the same time turning a blind eye to prostitution. Women spoke out as early as 1886 (the Tokyo Women’s Reform Society was one such group) against the “corrupt social practices” of concubinage and prostitution. The New Civil Code of 1898 officially recognized the *ie sei* (family system or family authority) and the legal rights of men only. Little wonder that during that time concubinage became popular again. Jordan Sand explores inventing the home in his article “At Home in the Meiji Period: Inventing Japanese Domesticity.” Having no word for “home” (except the katakana *hōmu*), the Japanese neologism *katei* (家庭) came into use, and the discourse on domesticity was borrowed from Victorian and Protestant missionary vocabulary.<sup>21</sup> Coventry Patmore’s *Angel in the House* (1854) was part of such Victorian discourse on domesticity, representing as it did the Victorian ideal of domestic bliss, the ideal couple, the wife as “household nun.” It was not Patmore’s maudlin poetry that made Virginia Woolf shudder but the image of the domesticated, infantilized, desexualized, wife as angel, nun, and household slave that she rejected. Virginia Woolf was interested in exposing what today we would call the male fantasy of ultimate power, of ultimate control. Placing woman on a pedestal—a pedestal of virtue and honor—was a means of control, to keep her protected, pure, imprisoned. As women’s rights activist and editor Gloria Steinem was famous for saying, “A pedestal is as much a prison as any small space.”

**Dangerous Women.** Sōseki could have but did not draw on earlier Japanese precedents of dangerous women. Those in possession of an image of the ideal Japanese woman as docile and submissive would do well to recall the dangerous woman from history and the arts such as the spurned Kiyohime from the kabuki play *Musume Dōjōji* (The Dancing Girl at the Temple, first performed in 1793), who turns into a horrible serpent. Or ponder the difference in expression of the Noh masks of *magojirō*, the inscrutable

aspect of the young female roles compared to *hannya*, the female demon mask with horns, bulging eyes and gaping, toothed mouth. These two masks and the two kinds of women they represent can be seen in *Aoi no ue* (Lady Aoi), perhaps the most frequently performed of all plays in the Noh repertoire. Technically, it is the medium wearing a *deigan* mask (malevolent female spirit mask, resembling *magajirô*) that turns into the terrifying vengeful spirit of Lady Rokujô. It is this dual, two-in-one aspect that I wish to stress in reference to the Madonna/whore binary: one woman can wear both masks.

Japan is not without its own real-life dangerous women; in fact, a genre known as *dokufumono* (毒婦もの, poison woman stories) presents women who are murderers but who also represent an obvious challenge to male authority. The genre probably derived from the case of Harada O-Kinu, if not earlier, who poisoned her husband to have an affair with a kabuki actor. The most famous *dokufu* poison woman is undoubtedly Takahashi O-Den (1847-1879), who allegedly poisoned her husband and embarked on a life of crime. She was arrested for slitting the throat of a merchant, convicted, and executed, beheaded by sword. Her story was written up by Kanagaki Robun (1829-94), the *gesaku* (popular Edo fiction) author, as *Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari* (The Tale of Demon Takahashi O-Den, 1879) and later adapted for the stage by kabuki playwright Kawatake Mokuami (1816-93). In her confession, O-Den referred to herself as a *teifu retsujo* (strong and virtuous wife), but newspaper coverage, usually emphasizing the “deviance,” saw things differently.

Contrary to Oden’s intentions in narrating these accounts, her story ultimately ended up being taken up against her, and interpreted according to the pattern of the *dokufu*, or the *akujo* (evil woman), or *inpu* (promiscuous woman) appearing in the role oppositional to the virtuous women found in *gesaku* (light popular fiction) and *tsuzukimono* [serialized stories]. We might read these texts as the demands to submit to patriarchy which surrounded Oden and her mother in real life, taking the form of literary texts, demands that they be punished for not obeying men’s will.<sup>22</sup>

In an act reminiscent of Lombroso’s study of criminal crania to find physiological signs of degeneracy and deviance, doctors dissected the body of O-Den to discover the cause of her abnormal sexual deviancy and found that her sexual organs were larger than “normal.”<sup>23</sup> Under the scrutinizing gaze of medical science, O-Den’s “deviance” was seen to be inscribed on her body and readable to their professional eyes. Her crime was intensified by her “audacious” act of narrating and textualizing her own story, but in the end it

was male voices such as Robun and Mokuami that effectively “silenced” her personal narrative by becoming the “authoritative” retelling of the tale. Sôseki’s Fujio in *Gubinjinsô*, one is reminded, also encroached on the world of male letters and paid for it with her death.

Sôseki, of course, has no poison women in his novels, and only Kiyoko in *Meian* wields a knife (when she innocently peels an apple for Tsuda). Instead of dangerous women from Japanese history and literature, Sôseki chose to draw on Western literary motifs and patterns that must have appeared exotic if not erotic to his readers (*Botchan*’s Madonna, *Sanshirô*’s Mineko as Aphra Behn narrating a story of a noble savage, the dense intertextuality of *Hydrotophia* and *Alwyn*, frequent references to Meredith by name and by allusion, etc.). He did not draw on the plentitude of Japanese models for strong, willful, or dangerous women—unless one considers Raichô as one of the models for Mineko, as has been suggested. No matter the kind of woman to which he alludes, she will always be judged against the standards of her time, as all Sôseki fiction is anchored in a precise historical moment. The dangerous woman will always be judged by her male victims, detractors, jury, and executioner as aggressive and vengeful (what men are supposed to be)—which is not in keeping with her (male-defined and male-imposed) gender role.

The danger that is present in some female characters seems to be as much a part of the circumstances and environment as it is an aspect of their sexuality. As Camille Paglia commented on the Lorena Bobbitt trial (whence the word “bobbittize,” to sever the penis of one’s husband), “Now the problem of feminist rhetoric of the last twenty years is that it’s been totally unable to *deal* with the fact that *women* are as aggressive in sexual relationships and as vengeful as *men*! So what I think we have here is a *wonderful* demonstration of the darkness, irrationality, and turbulence of sex relations and the inadequacy of normal victimization rhetoric of feminism.” [Emphasis in original. Paglia often speaks in italics].<sup>24</sup> We need to be wary of narratives that misogynistically condemn a woman to death for wanting the same sexual freedom enjoyed by males (even though I am inclined to espouse this view and participate in the same culture of victimization as most Americans do). Another way of looking at the femme fatale is: women such as O-Nami, Mineko, and O-Nobu (or Takahashi O-Den, for that matter) are not victims of capitalist division of labor, victims of living in unenlightened times, victims of patriarchy, etc. Rather, they are victims of the

perilous game of love; they are combatants in the battle of the sexes, Carmen and José in *ai no koriida* (“the bullfight of love,” the Japanese title of Ôshima Nagisa’s 1976 film *Realm of the Senses*), players in the dangerous game of sex relations.

Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653-1725), the most popular dramatist of the Tokugawa period and a writer valorized by Meiji critics as Japan’s Shakespeare, presents a version of the madonna/whore aspect of woman in his play *Shinjû Ten no Amijima* (The Love Suicides at Amijima, 1721). Jihei, the hero, is torn between two women, his understanding, self-sacrificing wife, Osan, and the prostitute Koharu, who is also devoted to him. Much of the drama and poignancy arises from the empathetic and supportive relationship between the two women, which gives the lie to conventional readings of women in competition with each other over one man. So sympathetically drawn are the characters of self-sacrificing wife and devoted prostitute that it is difficult not to interpret Chikamatsu’s play as a male fantasy that man needs (and deserves) both a doting wife and a loyal prostitute—and, what is more, the two women in the triangle can actually cooperate and demonstrate compassion toward each other. I recall the scene of Mitterand’s funeral and the appearance of “the other woman” who by her presence seemed to be doing the appropriate, desirable thing—without ruffling feathers, without causing snickers and sidelong glances—a scene difficult to imagine in an American cultural setting. When Ibsen translator Shimamura died in 1918, his funeral was attended by his wife who confronted his lover Matsui with the words: “No, you’re not the one who is at fault. Once Shimamura left our house, I considered him a stranger.”<sup>25</sup> Perhaps theater people are accustomed to dramatic situations, but such a scene of confrontation between wife and lover (or between two men competing for the same woman, for that matter) is inconceivable in Sôseki. *Meian*’s O-Nobu and Kiyoko never meet; *Mon*’s O-Yone and Sôsuke hide from Yasui; *Kôjin*’s Ichirô, unable to confront his wife’s fidelity, requires the intercession of his brother and later, H; *Kokoro*’s Sensei and K cannot approach Ojôsan with their dilemma. There is no direct confrontation and no Osan/Koharu cooperation to save the man torn between two women. Sôseki prefers to leave his characters to dwell in their own anguish without hope of salvation.

O-Nobu does not cooperate with Kiyoko to save Tsuda; she performs the role of both Osan and Koharu to prove her love and to save their marriage. "By insisting on becoming both 'Osan' and 'Koharu,' according to Reiko Abe Auestad, "Onobu breaks one of the implicit traditional cultural codes."<sup>26</sup> Auestad refers to the polarization of female roles represented by devoted wife Osan and self-sacrificing sex worker Koharu as being carried over from Chikamatsu's play into Meiji/Taishō Japan. Sōseki is unique among his contemporaries in choosing the domestic marriage scene involving an ordinary husband and wife as the stage for his fiction, especially compared to, say, Nagai Kafū (1879-1959) who preferred the lives of geisha and prostitutes as his subject and the demimonde as his stage. Auestad notes the presence of the image of the Madonna and the whore as a similar polarization of female roles in the West, but makes the distinction that the same moral polarization did not apply to Osan and Koharu, who are "acting out the dictates of society within the format of the conflict between *giri* (social responsibility) and *ninjō* (human emotion)"<sup>27</sup> and not a conflict between morally superior and morally inferior. O-Nobu's struggle is to become both domestic, maternal "Osan" and lover/female companion "Koharu."

It is difficult not to acknowledge O-Nobu's desire to function both as Osan, the devoted, self-sacrificing wife, and as Koharu, the faithful companion and service provider. It may be difficult, however, to categorize O-Nobu as the self-sacrificing wife, since this is the very charge which O-Hide and Mrs. Yoshikawa see as O-Nobu's fatal flaw—not being adequately attentive to her wifely duties—which prompts Mrs. Yoshikawa (and O-Hide, the two of them working in concert against O-Nobu) to instigate her "educating" campaign to teach O-Nobu to be more like them. Reiko Auestadt's claim that "[O-Nobu's] attentive performance at home is motivated by her unconscious wish to create a happy home by being both 'Koharu' and 'Osan' for her husband" (Rereading, 90) denies O-Nobu her characteristic willfulness. O-Nobu is determined to save her marriage at whatever cost. Mrs. Yoshikawa and O-Hide are secretly motivated by envy of O-Nobu's mobility and their contempt for her arrogance in flaunting her husband's love (flashing her expensive ring at the right moment). At the beginning of the novel, O-Nobu is shown as the most mobile, symbolically I think. But her Osan/Koharu performance is not flawless. Women's proper sphere is in the home, but she can't even keep the hibachi embers burning. She desires her husband's absolute love but is unable to communicate this desire directly to her husband. She boasts of her "love

marriage” to Tsuda (no arranged marriage for this modern woman), and desires his absolute love (she is blissfully unaware that Mrs. Yoshikawa has probably arranged her marriage to Tsuda), whereas both Mrs. Yoshikawa and O-Hide are neglected by their husbands and are house-bound “house wives.” They want to see her humiliated for her audacity in attempting to perform both roles of Osan and Koharu to Tsuda’s Jihei.

**Tanizaki’s Women.** In modern times, the champion and adoring devotee of the femme fatale, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (1886-1965), built his literary career not on the backs of but under the dominating hands and feet of fatal, imperious women. His preferences were clear right from the start with the publication of his first story *Shisei* (Tattoo, 1910). Seikichi, the tattoo artist inks a vermilion spider on the back of a beautiful girl only to have her turn on the artist with the words, “Master, my heart is now free from all fear. And you . . . you shall be my first victim.” (Ivan Morris, *Modern Japanese Stories*, 100) Mitsuko in “Shōnen” (The Children, 1910) turns the tables on the group of young boys who first victimize her in games of dominance and submission, by eventually turning them into her slaves and forcing them to perform acts of coprophagy. Coprophilia also appears in “Shōshō Shigemoto no haha” (The Mother of Captain Shigemoto, 1949-50): Heijū, scorned by the beautiful Jijū, devours the contents of her chamber pot. In “Jōtarō” (Jōtarō, 1914), the writer, Jōtarō, in order to fulfill his masochistic urges procures the services of O-Nui who whips him and beats him in exchange for money. In *Chijin no ai* (A Fool’s Love, 1925, trans. as *Naomi*), Kawai takes a fifteen-year-old girl, Naomi, as a mistress, who demands expensive presents and tortures him with jealousy by openly flirting with other men. Samurai hero Terukatsu in “Bushūkō hiwa” (The Secret History of the Lord of Musashi, 1931-32), witnesses a woman washing the severed head of a dead enemy soldier and spends the rest of his life seeking out women to perform acts of mutilation to excite him. Tanizaki’s final work, *Fūten rōjin nikki* (Diary of a Mad Old Man, 1961-62) can be read as a culmination of the author’s “perverse aesthetic” or “aesthetic of perversion”: so besotted is the seventy-seven-year-old man with his daughter-in-law Satsuko—obsessed particularly by her slender, beautiful feet—that he dreams of erecting a “Buddha’s footprint” tombstone modeled on her dainty *pied*, so that he might enjoy eternal rest under the weight of her lovely extremity. “At the very thought of those Buddha Footprints,” the old man fantasizes, “modeled after her own feet she would hear my bones wailing under the stone. Between sobs I

would scream: “It hurts! It hurts! . . . Even though it hurts, I’m happy—I’ve never been more happy, I’m much, much happier than when I was alive! . . . Trample harder! Harder!”<sup>28</sup>

Tanizaki was criticized in his own day for being a “diabolist” and an “immoralist,” but to criticize him in the same way today is like the prim and proper Mrs. Oliphant taking issue with Hardy’s pessimistic view of marriage. Tanizaki’s is an interesting case in the long, rich history of the femme fatale in Japanese literature because he reaches back into the past for sources, to Heian and Tokugawa, while probing the modern psyche at the same time. In the end, his “perversion” becomes another aesthetic. His aestheticization of the so-called perverse takes it to a higher plane, beyond the merely titillating or the tasteless. Whether the author was exploring personal demons and fantasies in his writing is less important than his contribution to Japanese literature (or perhaps the continuing tradition) of a complex image of women and the possibility of redemption at the hand of the “bad woman.” Tanizaki inverts the madonna/whore binaries by placing on a pedestal, respecting, idealizing and showing worshipful devotion not to Madonna but to the “fallen women.” In *Diary of a Mad Old Man*, Tanizaki brings up Takahashi O-Den by having Utsugi wonder what it would be like to die at the hands of a “fascinating woman” and “real vampire” that is O-Den: “Since I have no particular reason to keep on living, sometimes I think I would be happier if a woman like Oden turned up to kill me. Rather than endure the pain of these half-dead arms and legs of mine, maybe I could get it over and at the same time see how it feels to be brutally murdered” (Howard Hibbett, 27).

Tanizaki is not all about bad beautiful women. His fiction strikes a balance or tacks back and forth between the femme fatale and the mother figure. *The Mother of Captain Shigemoto* contains scenes of degradation and debasement (the father attempts to forget his young beautiful wife by practicing the Buddhist practice of the Contemplation of Impurities in which he meditates on the body of his dead wife as a bag of pus, blood, and excrement in order to realize the illusion of desire and beauty), but the story also includes a beatific vision of Mother (Shigemoto’s angelic memory) and concludes with the father’s rejection of the image of his wife as a thing of impurity. Sachiko in *Sasameyuki* (The Makioka Sisters, 1943-48) is the consummate, domestic, loving wife, a model for the two younger, unmarried sisters. “Yoshinokuzu” (The Arrowroot of Yoshino, 1931) is also a study of maternal love. Mothers are pure; playthings are dangerously

seductive and diabolical. In Tanizaki's work the binary opposition of Madonna/redeemer and whore/temptress does not hold. In fact, the promise of redemption comes through sexuality: mother figure and femme fatale merge in *Fūten rôjin nikki* and *Yume no ukihashi* (The Bridge of Dreams, 1963).

This extended discussion of Tanizaki is meant to go a long way in revealing the differences between Sôseki's women and those of his contemporaries. The femme fatale not only dominates Tanizaki's fiction, she is the dominatrix of his literary universe. Woman is often the center of the narrative, whereas in Sôseki women seem to exist to mirror, inform, and define (though rarely transform) the male protagonist. Women are to be feared, respected, worshiped for their sexual prowess—if we can so generalize about Tanizaki's fiction—but Sôseki's mostly ordinary women in ordinary situations are denied any sexual expression by the author and betrayed or suspected of betrayal by their fictional husbands/paramours. Such is the case for Michiyo, who is betrayed by Daisuke who will not act on his true love for her; O-Nao is suspected of betraying Ichirô's trust by being untrue to him; and Ojôsan, betrayed by K and Sensei, both of whom keep the truth of the past from her. Just as Charles Dickens has been criticized for his inability to portray women other than as innocents and grotesques (a bit of the madonna/whore binary there), Sôseki has been criticized by Komori and others for his inability to portray women other than as their role as wives. Sôseki's contemporary Mori Ôgai did not create strong, memorable female characters in his fiction as Sôseki did, though he is not generally criticized for this shortcoming. His most memorable women in fact are the opposite of femmes fatales; they are all tragic victims: the kept woman, O-Tama, in *Gan* (The Wild Goose, 1911-1915); the abandoned German girl, Elise, in "Maihime" (Dancing Girl, 1890); and the victim of drowning, Marie, in "Utakata no ki" (Record of Evanescence, 1890).

### **Some Conclusions**

In her book *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism*, Ann Heilmann discusses some practices in Victorian society (and literature) which she identifies as enabling feminists to "challenge biological notions of sexual difference," namely cross-dressing and lesbianism:

A cultural phenomenon and vibrant metaphor long before the *fin de siècle*, woman's cross-dressing was reinvigorated by the Victorian women's movement because, by demonstrating the essential performativity of gender, it enabled feminists to challenge

biological notions of sexual difference deployed to rationalize women's political disempowerment as the product of "nature." Feminists were keen to celebrate activist forebears and military heroines whose cross-dressing exploits showed that it was costume, not the body, which inscribed gender and assigned social power to the wearer.<sup>29</sup>

Sarah Grand also created a sensation in her popular novels with her depictions of transvestism, venereal disease, and psychosis, with transvestism in particular challenging notions of gender difference. Gender performativity, though perhaps not quite in the sense Heilmann uses it, and cross-dressing appear in Japanese literature probably since its earliest origins. *Torikaebaya monogatari* (If I Could Only Change Them!) and *Ariake no wakare* (Partings at Dawn) are two gender-exchanging tales from the twelfth century. Gender-swapping between author and narrative voice is also a common feature in Japanese poetry. In kabuki it is a frequent device. But it is conspicuously absent in Meiji literature. What happened? In a word, Japan found "religion": Protestant missionary religion and Puritan "respectability." Yet religion alone cannot explain the absence in Meiji literature of "sexual scandal" implicit in Victorian fiction. Even the respectable Meredith has scenes in *Richard Feverel* of masturbation (rowing is the common encoded analogy), lesbianism (between Lucy and the cook, Mrs. Berry—whose famous words were "Kissin' don't last; cookery do!"), and cross-dressing (Bella Mount, as telling a name as Pussy Galore in James Bond). These influences Sôseki never seemed to have acquired in his own fiction. In Tanizaki's "Himitsu" (A Secret, 1911), the protagonist dresses up as a woman and accidentally encounters his former mistress at the theater only to discover that she is more elegant than he. But one is hard pressed to enumerate other examples.

What happened to Meiji fiction that sets it apart so distinctly from its Edo predecessor? What happened to the ribaldry of Jippensha Ikku and Shikitei Samba, the irreverence of *gesaku* in general, the licentiousness of Ihara Saikaku's *kôshoku-mono* (amorous tales) and his celebration of homosexual love in his seventeenth-century *Nanshoku Ôkagami* (Great Mirror of Male Love)? I am not suggesting that *gesaku* suddenly disappeared, which is not true: there were transitional figures such as Kanagaki Robun (1829-94) and others who carried on the tradition. But change was in the air. *Gesaku* became the whipping-post of Tsubouchi Shôyô (1859-1935) who decried its triviality and didacticism in his groundbreaking *Shôsetsu shinzui* (The Essence of the Novel, 1885-6), valorizing the serious, respectable fiction of the West. His

models were, among others, Bulwer-Lytton and Disraeli, who not only wrote serious, respectable fiction, but were respected and prominent public figures as well. Modern critics have laid an even severer blame on Shôyô, that of “heteronormativity,” of privileging heterosexual relations in literature as the desirable norm. Something else changed the nature of Meiji fiction, something that had been missing: romantic love. The introduction of romantic love, or *ren'ai* (恋愛), was a term popularized by Kitamura Tôkoku (1868-94). A number of influences are usually cited in conjunction with the brief career of Tôkoku who took his own life at the age of twenty-six: Byron, Carlyle, and Emerson, but undoubtedly Christianity was the greatest influence on his ideal of love.

“What we call ‘passionate love,’” Denis de Rougemont writes in *Love in the Western World*, “is unknown in India and China. They have no words to render this concept.”<sup>30</sup> (China also adopted the characters for *ren'ai*). He then proceeds to trace the origins of passionate, romantic love to Christianity and the secular elaboration of conjugal love in twelfth-century poetry. Tôkoku’s emphasis on the individual and individual freedom underlined the tension in the institution of marriage which fostered dependency, and love’s potential to imprison. Janet Walker notes a prototype for Tôkoku’s ideal of love in Chikamatsu’s *Shinjû Ten no Amijima*: “love of a prostitute stimulated Jihei to live for once in his life according to the demands of his feelings (*ninjô*) and to take the final step that would guarantee his freedom—the love suicide with Koharu.” Both the prostitute and the wife could rise to the heights of life, she says, Koharu in self-fulfillment in love and Osan in self-sacrifice. Walker goes on to point out the implications of such a love:

According to Chikamatsu, it was wrong to see such a love between man and woman as merely an instinctual attraction, as Confucian morality viewed it. Chikamatsu obviously saw the passion of his lovers as a kind of *jônetsu* (“Romantic ardor”) that, through its heroic sublimity, brought them and those involved with them into the “other world” of transcendent freedom. Thus, the forerunner of love in the Tokugawa era already was an illicit, antisocial love, and one is prepared to see Tôkoku’s ideal of love reveal itself, similarly to Western romantic love, as basically antimarriage in its implications.<sup>31</sup>

Individualism was an abiding concern for Sôseki, who gave a famous lecture on the subject, *Watakushi no kojishugi* (My Individualism) at Peers’ School in 1914, two years before his death. The tension between individualism, individual will and the demands of marriage and other social obligations is ever present in his fiction. There is always something of the illicit, antisocial love of Chikamatsu in Sôseki’s fiction.

Characters are caught between forces of love for someone promised to another and social obligations to conform to conventional morality, between the need to express individual will, to seek independence, and the comfortable pull toward *amae* (dependency) and social harmony. These tensions, as I have said before, are irresolvable (one reason Sôseki's fiction is never "finished"). Even the architecturally symmetrical *Kokoro*, with the finality of death in the persons of the Meiji emperor, General Nogi, the student's father, K., and finally Sensei himself, does not end in closure. The irresolvable tension built up in the novel resonates to the end (and beyond). Marriage is never a place for love and happiness in Sôseki but a site of tension and conflict. If the Woman Question is the Marriage Question as Victorian novelist Sarah Grand stated, then Sôseki exhibits a timely, topical, and contemporary aspect in his fiction by probing this two-in-one question, but his conclusions (if we can call them such) are closer to the early nineteenth-century novels of Jane Austen than to the New Woman fiction. For whatever else they may be, women are always wives, marriage the proper institution, and the home her proper sphere.

Women never have free rein in the fiction of Sôseki, but they are free to move about within the narrowly confined space of Meiji-Taishô society. They only appear to be freer than the paralyzed male protagonist because of this movement (O-Nami and O-Nobu never rest). Freedom of movement is not social freedom to choose their own fate and life course (that will be settled for them). Women are different: they are not men. They can never be full members of the private men's club of Meiji-Taishô, neither its politics nor its literature, which are male preserves. Victorian in spirit, Confucian in moral values and attitude toward women, Sôseki never gives female characters equal status. Sôseki's personal prejudiced view of women may not be self-evident in his fiction but his notes sometimes expose his true feelings—private, off-the-cuff remarks are often the most telling. On page 466 of his copy of Nietzsche's *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, he wrote in the margin (in English):

The innocent are liked, not because they are innocent but because they are free from artificialness which means a very dangerous thing sometimes. Fools are companionable in so far as they are innocent. Women are uncompanionable, as they are always conscious of what they are doing. And saying. They are never innocent, very often too artificial. Confucius said many centuries ago: "Don't give shelter to women and small men." Let Europeans read this and reflect. I wonder whether they will admit this truth. For all they are slaves of women; [sic] they do everything for the sake of silly women, wicked women and conceited women.<sup>32</sup>

Women are never innocent and are often too artificial because they have been forced to develop these survival tools to compete in a male world. O-Nobu's use of *gikō* 技巧 (artifice), her "performance," can both repel and attract. In fact we first encounter O-Nobu in a scene of artifice, as she welcomes home her husband while pretending to watch sparrows nest. It is a "necessary evil she readily admits to using," Auestadt says, and "Tsuda is afraid of the potential female dominance suggested by such displays of seductive power." The many binary oppositions I have engaged (madonna/whore, top/bottom, light/dark, etc.) manifest an unbridgeable gender gap: unequal affections, unequal status, unequal partners. When we say Sôseki was a man of Meiji, we must include these inequalities as being inherent both in the fabric of society and in the fiber of the mind of the author.

One achievement of Victorian New Woman fiction was the frank acknowledgement of female sexuality, the earth-shattering revelation that women have sexual desires. The New Woman of Japan also showed that she possessed sexual desires and could instigate and control a relationship at will. The character Tomoko's kiss scene in *Baien* was excised by censors not because of her manifest sexual desire, but because she was the instigator of the action. Mineko's coquetry and adeptness at intellectual sparring are an indication of her New Woman status, but her sexual desires do not surface except in the form of teasing Sanshirô. Sôseki seems to be fishing both sides of the stream by creating strong, independent women such as O-Nami, Mineko, and O-Nobu, but falling short in giving them opportunities for *jikaku*, the self-liberation and self-awakening that was also definitive of the New Woman.

In her famous manifesto published in the first issue of *Seitôsha*, Raichô asserted proudly that *Genshi josei wa taiyô de atta* (In the Beginning Woman Was the Sun), reminding society of the primary position of woman in the Age of the Gods in the person of Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess. A woman-centered universe is conceivable in the fiction of Tanizaki, as I have said, but not in Sôseki. Women in Sôseki's fiction can be divided into two categories: not central/marginal, madonna/whore, femme fatale/Pollyanna necessarily, but rather by their psychological depth and the breadth of their psychological depiction by the author. Ojôsan, Michiyo, and O-Nao may be central to the narrative but they have no psychological depth and are given no interiority by the author. They have no inner life (*naibu seimi*, in Tôkoku's terminology). Even the stronger,

more active O-Nami and Mineko, in spite of their passionate personalities, are not given psychological depth; we never know their innermost thoughts. They serve as mirrors to reflect the male egos around them. Only Fujio and O-Nobu have deep psychological profiles and interiority equal to their male counterparts. *Meian's* O-Hide, Mrs. Yoshikawa, and, to a lesser degree, Kiyoko are also finely delineated characters with psychological profiles. The characters Fujio and O-Nobu in some respects were possible only because of precedents in English literature (which Sôseki studied assiduously), namely Clara in *The Egoist* and Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. It is the strong women in the fiction of George Meredith in particular that served as literary models for Sôseki, to which we will now turn.

Chapter 6  
Modern Love in Meredith and Sôseki:  
The Dissolution of a Marriage

George Meredith (1828-1909) and Natsume Sôseki (1867-1916) were almost but not quite contemporaries and though there is certainly no indication that they ever met, the former's influence on the latter is well documented and the subject of much continuing research. Sôseki himself acknowledged his debt to Meredith in his *Danwa* 談話 (Conversations, an interview in the *Kokumin shinbun* [The People's Newspaper] 21 May 1909):

I confess that I was influenced by Meredith. I've read all of his books and there are very few which had no effect on me. To be influenced is one thing, to remember the contents is another. This is just like drinking and eating. Even if I cannot recollect what I have eaten and drunk, the essence of food and drink passes from my stomach onto various organs and stays for a long period of time as flesh and blood.<sup>1</sup>

Sôseki's interest in Meredith was no passing curiosity but a lifetime preoccupation, a part of his literary "flesh and blood." Donald Keene's comments in *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in the Modern Era* includes a mention of Meredith as being one among a myriad of influences: "Sôseki was undoubtedly influenced by Chinese and Japanese writings, and his readings in such Western authors as George Meredith, Hermann Sudermann, and Henry James affected various of his novels, but it is his individuality, his distinctiveness as a presence in modern Japanese literature, that has earned him his reputation (Keene, 306)." He later points out that "echoes of Victorian novelists, especially George Meredith" are most evident in Sôseki's first work for the newspaper *Asahi shinbun*, titled *Gubijinsô*, a novel marked by aphorism and ornate diction, a style which Sôseki quickly abandoned. Keene, however, fails to point out the commonly-held association between *The Egoist* and Sôseki's *Meian* which would have established a Meredith connection with the early and the last of Sôseki's *Asahi* novels. Homma Kenshirô, for example, in his comparative study, finds elements of *The Egoist* in not only *Gubijinsô* but also in *Sanshirô* and links *The Ordeal to Richard Feverel to Sorekara*. In our discussion of marriage I will focus mainly on the woman's side, on Meredith's and Sôseki's fictional women: Clara in *The Egoist* (1879); Diana in *Diana of the Crossways* (1885); Mineko in *Sanshirô*; and O-Nobu and Kiyoko in *Meian*.

Meredithian influences can be found in Sôseki's characters, his themes and his rhetoric. Meredith's sonnet sequence *Modern Love* (1862), I suggest, is a way of reading the "failed marriages" and the marriage problem in Sôseki and explicating these influences. The sonnets are to be read as a study in the dissolution of a marriage, and I have taken my title from a comment on the French translation of *Meian, Clair-obscur*, which is called an examination "de la décomposition d'un couple ordinaire."<sup>2</sup> The word "decomposition" seems particularly apt as it contains both senses of dissolution and analysis (analysis, from the Greek, to break up). Meredith's analysis, then, going by a dictionary definition, is a "separation of a whole into its component parts." By selecting nine sonnets from *Modern Love*, I have linked together (granted, somewhat randomly) a framework of component parts for reading about marriage, conflict in general, and gender conflict in particular, as well as love triangles in the novels of Meredith and Sôseki.

The stages of the decomposition are then: 1) Wishing for the sword that severs all [I]; 2) Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask [II]; 3) Not till the fire is dying in the grate [IV]; 4) In this unholy battle I grow base [VIII]; 5) I play for Seasons; not Eternities! [XIII]; 6) The actors are, it seems, the usual three: husband, wife and lover [XXV]; 7) The wrong is mixed. No villain need be! [XVIII]; 8) Their sense is with their senses all mixed in [XLVIII]; and 9) Then each applied to each that fatal knife [L]. This concatenation of associations will show Sôseki's debt to Meredith and demonstrate that Sôseki was just as much a Victorian in many ways as he was a man of Meiji-Taishô (1868-1926). What is found lacking in concinnity I hope to compensate for by establishing some affinities and parallels between these two authors, chiefly, their shared interest in the portrayal of strong women characters and their struggle against the vicissitudes and confines of marriage.

#### **Wishing for the Sword that Severs All**

By this he knew she wept with waking eyes:  
 That, at his hand's light quiver by her head,  
 The strange low sobs that shook their common bed  
 Were called into her with a sharp surprise,  
 And strangled mute, like little gaping snakes,  
 Dreadfully venomous to him. She lay  
 Stone-still, and the long darkness flowed away  
 With muffled pulses. Then, as midnight makes  
 Her giant heart of Memory and Tears  
 Drink the pale drug of silence, and so beat  
 Sleep's heavy measure, they from head to feet

Were moveless, looking through their dead black years,  
By vain regret scrawled over the blank wall.  
Like sculptured effigies they might be seen  
Upon their marriage-tomb, the sword between;  
Each wishing for the sword that severs all.

—Sonnet I.

Meredith begins and ends his *Modern Love* with the image of cutting: “the sword that severs all” in the first sonnet and the “fatal knife” in the last. *Modern Love* belongs to the Victorian sonnet revival which included E. B. Browning’s *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1847-50); Coventry Patmore’s *Angel in the House* (1854-63); Robert Bridges’s *The Growth of Love* (1876); and Rossetti’s *The House of Life* (1881). The form itself comments on the subject matter: modern love (as opposed to, say, courtly love or other kinds of love) is truncated, lopsided, cut off—50 sonnets instead of the conventional 100 sequence. Meredith’s 16-line departure from the 14-line standard allowed him to say more and to spurn conventions (—of marriage, too?). The sequence begins with a funereal, marmoreal image of death (a dead marriage): two cold, unfeeling marble images as one might see on a tomb in, say, Westminster Abbey (where, strangely enough, Meredith is *not* interred in the poet’s corner, presumably because of his religious beliefs. Hardy suggested that there should be a “pagan annexe”). In the Meredithian scheme of things, or at least in *Modern Love*, the sword that severs all never appears—except in the form of death itself. Neither man nor woman it would seem considers seeking a divorce, which would be our modern way of severing all. Perhaps they are waiting for something external to themselves that will sever the relationship without their own intervening. This absence of a divorce option no doubt reflects the difficulty of pursuing divorce in Victorian society and the unacceptable, even shameful, consequences of such an act. Instead of choosing divorce, the woman kills herself, not with a sword but by drowning: “he found her by the ocean’s moaning verge (XLIX).”

*Modern Love* does not exist as a template or key to understanding all the novels of George Meredith (which are too diverse to be unlocked by a single key), and I think it would be wrong to read the poems in such a way. Still, similarities exist, and Meredith’s sonnet sequence is one way of probing some of the problems of modern love and “the marriage problem.” We need to ask: what is the problem? What is our *problematique*? One obvious problem is the inequality of marriage in which women—both Victorian women and women of Meiji-Taishô Japan—were defined solely by their roles in marriage, as wives and mothers, whereas men were always more than “merely” husbands and fathers. The necessity of marriage

and the imperative of self-definition create the central conflict. At times, suicide is seen as the only way out. Clara Middleton, in *The Egoist*, manages to escape the clutches of Sir Willoughby and his unwanted marriage proposal without resorting to the sword of suicide that severs all. Diana Merion, the eponymous heroine of *Diana of the Crossways* similarly severs her relationship with Percy without becoming suicidal (though she agonizes over the consequences of having willfully revealed his secret which causes him quickly to abandon her). That is not to say that suicide does not figure in Meredith's novels. Sir Purcell Barrett, Cornelia's rejected lover, kills himself in *Sandra Belloni* (1886), and Clare kills herself in *Richard Feverel* (1859) upon Richard's criticism of her marriage to a man twice her age ("backed by his tailor and his hairdresser, he presented no such bad figure at the altar, and none would have thought that he was an ancient admirer of his bride's Mama"). Fujio, too, in the Meredith-inspired *Gubijinsô*, unable to win the man she loves, although she does not take her own life, is overcome by a sense of betrayal and suddenly falls ill and dies.

Into the mouth of Dr. Middleton (Clara's father) Meredith puts the words (directed at Willoughby regarding his challenger Colonel De Craye) "Assuming then, manslaughter to be your pastime, and hari-kari [sic] not to be your bent, the phrase, to escape criminality, must rise in you as you would have it fall on him, ex improviso" (*Egoist*, 248). The reference to "hari-kari" (*harakiri*), one assumes, is an allusion (along with the "Double-Blossom Wild Cherry-Tree" of chapter 9) to the "oriental tale" on the blue willow pattern plate of china, the tale upon which *The Egoist* is "patterned," as it were. This connection between Willoughby Patterne and the blue willow pattern of china did not come to light until the publication of Robert D. Mayo's 1942 article.<sup>3</sup> Clara and Vernon, we assume, will "escape" from Patterne Hall in the same way that the young lovers inscribed on the blue willow plate escape over the Willow Bridge to freedom (and who are eventually turned into birds in token of their fidelity)—without resorting to "hari-kari" [sic]. Clara, referred to as "the rogue in porcelain," is loath to become part of Willoughby Patterne's china collection, a mere possession to be put on display, just as the wedding china (one assumes, the willow pattern) is put on display at Patterne Hall. Homma Kenshirô, in his *Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study*, astutely makes the connection between Sôseki's Mineko as a *roakuka* (露悪家 [femme fatale]) and Clara's "rogue in porcelain," suggesting that the archetype of Mineko is to be found in Clara (*Egoist*, 93).

Chapter One of *The Egoist*, “A Minor Incident, Showing an Hereditary Aptitude in the Use of the Knife,” begins with a pruning metaphor: the necessity of cutting off “besieging relatives” from the main branch (Willoughby’s) to keep it strong and powerful. When a Lieutenant Crossjay Patterne shows up at Patterne Hall, he is quickly “cut off,” dismissed with the words “Not at home” and later paid off with a sum of money. Sôseki’s final novel *Meian* also begins and ends with a cutting metaphor. Although the protagonist does not actually go under the knife until later, the novel opens with Tsuda on the operating table, undergoing an examination. Japanese for “going under the knife,” *mesu o ireru* (though not a term used by Sôseki) can mean both “plunge a scalpel into” and “make a searching inquiry,” which is just what Sôseki does: make a searching inquiry by plunging the scalpel into disease, familial relations, the cash nexus. The money difficulties that are experienced by the newly-wed couple, a major theme of the novel (and even more important in the largely autobiographical *Michikusa*), begin when Tsuda’s father in Kyoto “cuts off” his allowance. The narrative of *Meian* is suddenly cut off by the death of the author. But long before the final 188th installment is complete, O-Nobu and Tsuda cut off his meddling sister, O-Hide, dismissing her by O-Nobu’s producing a check to cover the hospital expenses which O-Hide was offering to pay, had Tsuda played the role of filial son, respectful brother, and trusted husband to her liking. O-Nobu is emotionally cut off from Tsuda when a “compromise” is reached between them. In the end, Kiyoko figuratively cuts off Tsuda, disabusing him of the notion that she is the least bit interested in him, peeling and cutting an apple, and offering him a piece. We will return to this scene in our discussion of the final sonnet.

*Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask*

It ended, and the morrow brought the task.  
Her eyes were guilty gates, that let him in  
By shutting all too zealous for their sin:  
Each sucked a secret, and each wore a mask.  
But, oh, the bitter taste her beauty had!  
He sickened as at breath of poison-flowers:  
A languid humour stole among the hours,  
And if their smiles encountered, he went mad,  
And raged deep inward, till the light was brown  
Before his vision, and the world, forgot,  
Looked wicked as some old dull murder-spot.  
A star with lurid beams, she seemed to crown  
The pit of infamy: and then again

He fainted on his vengefulness, and strove  
To ape the magnanimity of love,  
And smote himself, a shuddering heap of pain.  
—Sonnet II.

The pressing question of *Diana of the Crossways* is: why does Diana immediately divulge to *The Times* the secret that Percy has entrusted to her? Or perhaps the more interesting question might be: Why does Percy choose to share with Diana what amounts to a state secret? Caroline Norton, the model for Diana, fought a ten-year custody battle over her children whom she had left behind when her husband turned violent. He had created a public sensation when he unsuccessfully brought suit against Lord Melbourne in 1836, charging him with seducing Caroline. Unable to obtain a divorce or to see her children, she became involved with a young statesman, George Herbert. When in 1846 “the secret decision of the Government to repeal the Corn Laws became known to the editor of *The Times*, there was gossip that Caroline Norton had betrayed the story that Herbert had confided in her.”<sup>4</sup> To disabuse readers of interpreting his novel as a *roman à clef*, Meredith (pressured by the Norton family) prefaces *Diana of the Crossways* with the words, “A lady of high distinction for wit and beauty, the daughter of an illustrious Irish House, came under calumny. It has latterly been examined and exposed as baseless. The story of *Diana of the Crossways* is to be read as fiction.”

Just as gossips must have speculated on why Caroline Norton would betray the story to *The Times*, readers Victorian and modern must ask why Diana rushes off to the newspaper office that very night after Percy has confided his secret to her. Careful readers will notice that Percy has more on his mind than simply politics. Diana has to repel his sexual advances, telling him to keep his hands to himself: “I wish to respect my hero. Have a little mercy. Our day will come: perhaps as wonderfully as this wonderful news. My friend, drop your hands. Have you forgotten who I am? I want to think, Percy!” (*Diana*, 306).

Have mercy, Percy, indeed! Diana and Percy were rumored to be lovers, but in Diana’s mind their relationship was based on intelligence and mutual respect. Imagine her shock to discover that his motives were base after all. Diana seems to embody this conflicting tension in the Victorian view of women: on the one hand, the idealized woman, woman on a pedestal versus, on the other hand, the fallen woman, the

seductress, the femme fatale. In yielding to Percy's desire for sexual intimacy, the already unhappily married Diana Warwick would only be acknowledging rumors about herself.

Diana is not a simple, single-faced woman, but a complex multifaceted creature. She wears many masks. "In so vulgar an age as this," wrote Oscar Wilde, less than a decade after *Diana of the Crossways*, "we all need masks." Diana's own self-image is changeable: "I am robust, eager for the fray, an Amazon, a brazen-faced hussy" (*Diana* 367) she tells her confidante, Emma. She is variously called a tigress with allusions to Hecate. She represents what the Romans called Diana Triformis, the Triple Goddess (Diana, Persephone, Hecate, or to the Greeks, Persephone, Demeter, Hecate). Also known as Diana Trivia, traditionally depicted as a figure with three faces each facing a different direction. In her form as Hecate, she is the Goddess of pathways and crossroads (hence the title *Diana of the Crossways*): where paths crossed, a triple figure of Hecate rose up from masks placed at the junctions. Each aspect had an animal face, one of them a dog. Dogs accompanied Diana (Hecate), the huntress, perhaps for their path-finding skills, for their howling at the moon (one of the three names of the Triple Goddess is Lunar Virgin). Not without reason, Meredith gives Diana a large dog named Leander (Meredith's allusions to Greek and Roman mythology are relentless) as her companion in his narrative. Hecate is also known as the Dark Mother, the Dark Goddess.<sup>6</sup> In *Diana of the Crossways*, the eponymous female protagonist is Meredith's dark beauty, as opposed to the fair Clara Middleton of *The Egoist*. Diana is dark because of the Spanish blood that flows in her veins (her middle name is Antonia, and she is affectionately called Tony by her friend Emma). Walter Pater's description of mythological Diana is even darker, crueller, and more threatening:

She is the complete and highly complex representative of a state, in which man was still much occupied with animals; not as his flock, or as his servants (after the pastoral relationship of our later orderly world), but more as his equal, on friendly terms or the reverse—a state full of primeval sympathies and antipathies, of rivalries and common wants . . . .It was as the Deity of Slaughter—the Taurian goddess, who requires the sacrifice of shipwrecked sailors, thrown on her coasts—the cruel, moon-struck huntress, who brings not only sudden death, but rabies, among the wild creatures, that Diana was to be presented.<sup>7</sup>

Meredith's Diana does not require the sacrifice of shipwrecked sailors or bring rabies, though she is shown as being full of sympathies, antipathies, of rivalries and common wants in her treatment of many suitors. We need to examine *Meian's* Kiyoko, arguably the most mysterious and enigmatic of Sôseki's women, in a

similar way: not as a single-faced, unambiguous representation of purity (the meaning of the Chinese characters which form her name), as some critics, including Viglielmo, have maintained but as a two-faced, ambiguous representation of woman. I see her as Lilith, Adam's reputed first mate (if I may stretch the mythological allusions), because she was Tsuda's first love, mentioned earlier in the novel only as "that woman" (*ano onna*). In nineteenth-century art and literature, Lilith is usually shown in "intimate communication with serpents." In *Modern Love*, serpents appear in the first sonnet, the very first image associated with the wife: "The strange low sobs that shook their common bed / Were called into her with a sharp surprise, / And strangely mute, like little gasping snakes, / Dreadfully venomous to him . . ." Kiyoko is not shown in intimate communication with serpents, but she is shown Eve-like, peeling an apple and offering it to Tsuda. It is this Edenic epiphany which triggers his initial memory of her: "This woman, in precisely the same posture, peeled exactly this kind of apple for me" (Viglielmo, 372). Now in a fallen state, as I see her, recuperating from a miscarriage at the same hot spring as Tsuda, Kiyoko once again offers an apple, but not as a seductress or temptress; there is no passion, no coquetry. The penultimate chapter ends: "She offered him the apple she had finally finished peeling and slicing. 'Why don't you take a piece?'" She does her expert peeling and slicing with a knife, bringing the cutting image back into the final scenes of the novel. Beware the knife-wielding woman in fiction! The "pure" Kiyoko may appear modest and docile—all those desirable traits that O-Nobu does not possess—but Kiyoko's honesty, in speaking truth to power, cuts Tsuda to the core, like a ripe apple.

*Not till the fire is dying in the grate*

All other joys of life he strove to warm,  
 And magnify, and catch them to his lip;  
 But they had suffered shipwreck with the ship,  
 And gazed upon him sallow from the storm.  
 Or if Delusion came, 'twas but to show  
 The coming minute mock the one that went.  
 Cold as a mountain in its star-pitched tent,  
 Stood high Philosophy, less friend than foe:  
 Whom self-caged Passion, from its prison-bars,  
 Is always watching with a wondering hate.  
 Not till the fire is dying in the grate,  
 Look we for any kinship with the stars.  
 Oh, wisdom never comes when it is gold,  
 And the great price we pay for it full worth:  
 We have it only when we are half earth.  
 Little avails that coinage to the old!

—Sonnet IV.

Not till the fire is dying in the grate, not until the flames of passion have died and we have returned to our senses can we look at a relationship dispassionately, with the clear eye of wisdom. Passion and wisdom, it would seem, are mutually exclusive. A self-imprisoning Passion, as Meredith explains, is enemy to Philosophy. This “truth” presents a paradox for our heroine Diana. Her marriage to Mr. Warwick was not out of passion but in order to protect and build her social standing—and to deflect advances of men such as Sir Lukin, already married to another woman. Her marriage lacked passion but she was passionate in conversation, in her writing. Around her swarmed at least three suitors: Redworth, Sullivan Smith, and Arthur Rhodes. Percy Dacier is another story. Diana could write passionately of their relationship—chaste though it was—in a thinly-veiled novel called *The Young Minister of State*, setting tongues wagging (like our reading of *Diana of the Crossways* as a *roman à clef* about Caroline Norton). Diana’s obvious passion for conversation, for life in general, must have been easily misunderstood by Percy, who thought he could take liberties with her, a married woman. Rejected, Percy quickly proposes to an heiress. Diana languishes in her room, refusing nourishment and the warmth of a fire: “Shutters and curtains and the fireless grate gave the room an appalling likeness to the vaults.” Meredith has turned her into the Dark Mother Hecate who haunts graveyards. Now in a room with a fireless grate, her flames of passion extinguished by a man she had once loved for his intellectual companionship, Diana is free to ponder her future. When she says she no longer believes in happiness, Emmy informs her that “The mistake of the world is to think happiness possible to the senses” (*Diana*, 361). Perhaps Diana is now free to know happiness with the mind and not through the senses. But what does Diana want? Her maid believes “she’ll hate men all her life after Mr. Dacier.” Diana herself says “Banality, thy name is marriage,” and questions her future as a married woman: “Is marriage to be the end of me?” Yet is she actually free to forego marriage?

In the end she marries Redworth who has bought the manor house Crossways for her. Marriage has its uses after all. If she wants to continue to move in certain social circles, to keep her salon, to entertain and to be the witty and beautiful center of attention that she was in the past, then she must marry. Because of this final action Diana is closer to Laetitia, in my mind, than to Clara Middleton. Laetitia marries not for love but as a compromise, a self-sacrifice to free Clara from a loveless marriage to Willoughby. Laetitia has the upper hand, it turns out, because she will no longer serve as a mirror for Willoughby’s self-admiring gaze;

instead she mirrors back his egoism and hollowness. Her marriage to him is expedient, and that is all. Her Passion is drained and Wisdom reigns. Theirs will be a loveless marriage. The narrative is cut off before the actual wedding ceremony occurs. *Diana* ends with the “Nuptial Chapter” which traditionally should presage happiness for the heroine, but I think this must be read ironically: “With that I sail into the dark,” she tells Emma (*Diana*, 413). She has made sacrifices, too, in marrying for expediencies.

Not until it is too late can wisdom reign in its proper place over passion. I’m not sure, however, Meredith would agree to this conclusion in his novels, even if it is suggested in the sonnet. The “sovereign brain” and the senses will always be at odds with each other. This tension between passion and reason is central to all of Meredith’s writings—both his sonnets and his novels, I would argue—and important to Sôseki’s as well. O-Nobu’s tragedy is that she can never overcome her passion, her desire, to be loved absolutely by Tsuda, her husband. Married only six months, O-Nobu has acted in a way that has led some people (O-Hide, Tsuda’s younger sister, and Mrs. Yoshikawa, wife of Tsuda’s employer) to believe that she is neglecting her husband and her wifely duties. Returning home to a fire dying in the hibachi in chapter 57, O-Nobu feels a twinge of guilt and an awakening of conscience. “She mechanically stirred up the ashes, and added new charcoal to the dying embers. She then boiled some water as if it were absolutely indispensable for her home. And yet as she strained her ears to the sound of the iron kettle whistling in the deepening night a feeling of loneliness pressing in on her from somewhere gathered even greater force than when she had returned earlier.”(Viglielm, 101) Guilty of not keeping the hearth fire burning, O-Nobu realizes she has neglected her wifely duties (there is always a maid to see to this sort of thing in the novels of Meredith and Sôseki, but, in this particular instance, she rightfully takes personal responsibility). I am literalizing Meredith’s metaphor of embers dying on the grate: not until the failure of familiar knowledge, of losing sight of what lies before our very eyes, do we seek a higher enlightenment (“look we for kinship with the stars”), and reifying it. There is a real fire in the room that has gone unattended. The sign of a happy home (a fire burning in the hearth or in a hibachi) and its referent (a dutiful, attentive wife at the fireplace or beside the hibachi) are familiar topoi in Japanese literature of the Meiji-Taishô periods. We might even be able to trace the loyalty and betrayal of the kept woman O-Tama in Mori Ôgai’s *Gan*, for example, by observing her attentiveness to the embers in the hibachi, as she moves from devoted mistress to scheming

woman on a mission to attempt to taste personal freedom. Both O-Tama and O-Nobu abandon (even temporarily) their appointed station at the hibachi and suffer for it in the end.

Diana too, it should be recalled, can build a fire if she chooses, instead of lying in the darkness. Early in the novel, Redworth had shown that he was impressed by how Diana could bend over the grate and start a fire like a housemaid. O-Nobu's momentary reflexive scene, her prick of conscience, does not prevent her, however, from her single-minded pursuit of her husband's absolute love, or, more specifically, for proof of that love. Her single-mindedness is best expressed—and most formidably—in her attitude toward anyone who would doubt her intentions or stand in her way to earn her husband's love: "I loathe him, I despise him, I spit on him." This hysterical, venomous thought is indicative of O-Nobu's mental condition and the futility of her all-consuming quest—never expressed openly—for absolute love. O-Nobu's moment of hysteria is not made into a defining characteristic of her personality; neither does it achieve the level of what it did in Victorian literature and Victorian life, in which a man could have his wife incarcerated for hysteria, as Edward Bulwer-Lytton did to his wife Rosina Wheeler.<sup>8</sup> Victorian scandals of incarcerating one's own wife, tales of madness, hysteria, the women in the attic, have no place in the narratives of Meredith and Sôseki, who are both concerned with psychological study of relations between man and woman, what they do to each other in the name of love—and the site for this analysis is marriage.

*In this unholy battle I grow base*

Yet it was plain she struggled, and that salt  
Of righteous feeling made her pitiful.  
Poor twisting worm, so queenly beautiful!  
Where came the cleft between us? whose the fault?  
My tears are on thee, that have rarely dropped  
As balm for any bitter wound of mine:  
My breast will open for thee at a sign!  
But, no: we are two reed-pipes, coarsely stopped:  
The God once filled them with his mellow breath;  
And they were music till he flung them down,  
Used! used! Hear now the discord-loving clown  
Puff his gross spirit in them, worse than death!  
I do not know myself without thee more:  
In this unholy battle I grow base:  
If the same soul be under the same face,  
Speak, and a taste of that old time restore!

—Sonnet VIII.

The term “battle of the sexes” is of ancient origin. The warlike language of love has been in use since at least the third-century novel of Heliodorus, *Theagenes and Chariclea*, which, as Denis de Rougemont mentions in *Love in the Western World*, already refers to “the ‘battles of love’ and to the ‘delightful defeat’ suffered by the man who ‘falls under the unerring shafts’ of Eros” (de Rougemont, 244). Whenever and wherever men and women fought for each other’s affection, a battle of the sexes was waged. If marriage is the field of battle, the war is fought over, well, ultimately domination, over who wins. As Robert Louis Stevenson wrote in *Virginibus Puerisque*: “Marriage is like life in this—that it is a field of battle, not a bed of roses.” Stevenson met Meredith in 1878, and they became lifelong friends. The younger man worshiped the senior writer and never felt he could live up to his standards, especially in writing about love:

The difficulty in a love yarn which dwells at all on love is the dwelling on one string; it is manifold, I grant, but the root fact is there unchanged, and the sentiment being very intense, and already very much handled in letters, positively calls for a little pawing and gracing. With a writer of my prosaic literalness and pertinacity of point of view, this all shoves toward grossness—positively even towards the far more damnable closeness. This has kept me off the sentiment hitherto, and now I am to try: Lord! Of course, Meredith can do it, and so could Shakespeare.<sup>9</sup>

When Meredith is read, if he is read at all nowadays, it is for his keen insight into human nature, particularly his analysis of the feminine mind, and not for the sake of a good love story. Sôseki also offers little in the way of captivating narratives about love, except perhaps in *Mon*. Even though love triangles are configured into all his later novels, it is not a “love conquers all” theme that interests either author (obviously not a part of their literary vocabulary), but the damage love can do, the peccadilloes, transgressions, and injustices exacted in the name of love. Neither Meredith nor Sôseki was interested in idealizing or romanticizing Woman—yet their fictional women do stand out, at least to me, a modern reader, as Ideals, and Meredith more than Sôseki has his romantic women. If Sôseki could appreciate, learn and imitate anything from Meredith as a novelist, the English writer’s understanding and presentation of women in society must rank high on the list. The “battle of the sexes” is just one way of expressing and summing up the “marriage problem,” “woman’s role in society,” and feminist concerns such as women’s rights. The “battle of the sexes” was common terminology in the nineteenth century:

Not-so-ideal women, of course, had been around ever since that first Fall, and they had been very much in evidence in the annals of culture long before the industrialization of Europe had begun to gather momentum. Nor is there any reason to suggest that examples of sharp distrust between men and women had been absent before the eighteenth century.

The world of industrialism by no means invented what the late nineteenth century was fond of calling the “Battle of the Sexes.”<sup>10</sup>

The battle of the sexes is not of course over physical stamina but a contest of the mind and will. Diana is unusual in the Victorian fiction of her day because she considers herself an intellectual equal among men; she can hold court in the company of men with her scintillating wit and command of language. The real battle is fought on psychological ground: to understand the psychology of your “opponent,” not to be second-guessed, not to be outsmarted. O-Nobu’s battle is also carried out over psychological terrain (and Sôseki combs this terrain as if on a reconnaissance mission). What interests Sôseki is not the grand gesture—he has few of the big, dramatic scenes with a large cast as executed masterfully by Meredith—but the quotidian, the minutiae of everyday life. His interest in the small gesture and the ordinary, in, for example, examining the marriage breakdown of an ordinary couple, is perhaps what causes many scholars of Japanese literature (Keene, McClellan, Seidensticker, and Miyoshi, most notably, *vis-à-vis Meian*) to consider him, to their detriment, to be tedious and boring. Meredith tries his readers’ patience with densely-packed rhetoric, a tapestry of allusions and figurative language (through which only the most educated reader will pull himself). Sôseki tries his readers’ patience with psychological minutiae that can be brain-numbing. His language is clear and unadorned yet highly abstract, operating on a metalevel, as Iida Yûko points out, in which characters’ conversations are often comments on the discourse (“My, you are clever at turning phrases around.” Kiyoko tells Tsuda).<sup>11</sup>

“Where came the cleft between us? whose the fault?” *Modern Love*’s male narrator asks. The answer surfaces later in sonnet XLIII: “the wrong is mixed . . . No villain need be! Passions spin the plot.” We will return to this subject later. The cleft may be part of the terrain; the fault is part of the topology of the field.

*I play for Seasons; not Eternities!*

‘I play for Seasons; not Eternities!’  
Says Nature, laughing on her way. ‘So must  
All those whose stake is nothing more than dust!’  
And lo, she wins, and of her harmonies  
She is full sure! Upon her dying rose  
She drops a look of fondness, and goes by,  
Scarce any retrospection in her eye;  
For she the laws of growth most deeply knows,  
Whose hands bear, here, a seed-bag--there, an urn.  
Pledged she herself to aught, ’twould mark her end!

This lesson of our only visible friend  
Can we not teach our foolish hearts to learn?  
Yes! yes!--but, oh, our human rose is fair  
Surpassingly! Lose calmly Love's great bliss,  
When the renewed for ever of a kiss  
Whirls life within the shower of loosened hair!  
—Sonnet XIII.

Human beings may marry with Eternity in mind, as symbolized by the wedding band, but human beings also belong to the world of nature, and nature plays by her own rules. A beautiful rose fades and dies; Nature does not blink an eye, for the cycle of life and death—a seed bag in one hand, a funeral urn in the other—is seasonal, an endless repetition without stopping, without retrospection. If Nature is the disease, a Nature, who in her cycles “kills” love (“it is natural that love doesn’t last” is what I hear Meredith saying), then Nature is also the cure, when a new cycle begins (most notably, Clara and Diana are cured by Nature). Meredith is famous for his descriptive passages of the English countryside<sup>12</sup> and much of the action in his novels takes place out of doors: this is particularly true of *The Egoist*, *Beauchamp's Career*, and *Richard Feverel*, but perhaps less so for *Diana of the Crossways*, in which private conversations take place indoors. Many of his novels contain a love scene in nature which is always rendered stylistically distinct from the surrounding narrative: more poetic, more charged with imagery and sensations, rich in mythology and allusion. Examples of this treatment are found in the “Double-Cherry/Wild-Cherry Tree” chapter in *The Egoist*; Beauchamp's visit to Renée's castle; Richard's and Lucy's first meeting in the paradisiacal island in the stream, which in Meredithian allusion to Shakespeare, is entitled “Ferdinand and Miranda”; and Diana and Percy's meeting at the secluded pools.

Sôseki too is not without his descriptive passages of nature—Sanshirô's and Mineko's walk away from the city, leaving their friends behind at the chrysanthemum show, a scene reminiscent of a similar outing in Futabatei Shimei's *Ukigumo* (Drifting Clouds, 1887-89) comes to mind. In this passage it is the small gesture, precisely as in Meredith (Percy takes Diana's elbow, bracing her steps down to the secluded pools), the taking of Mineko's hand to help her step across a puddle that is the climax of the scene. *Kôjin* also abounds in outdoor scenes, since much of the action takes place wandering, as the title implies. Far more typical of Sôseki, in my opinion, are the urban, domestic, interior scenes which more often than not mirror a deep interiorization of the protagonist's anguished, tormented mind. *Kokoro* is the epitome of this

treatment, which is retrospective and inward looking to the point of being claustrophobic. Sôseki's final, uncompleted novel *Meian* is largely an urban setting (Sôseki was an "Edokko," or Tokyoite as we should say today, who was born, lived his life and died, in Tokyo) whose final chapters take place in the countryside at a hot spring. Viglielmo, Jameson, and others have pointed out the importance of this move away from the city into nature as part of Tsuda's healing process.<sup>13</sup>

More than just floral passages and scenes to display the author's virtuosity, natural settings can also offer a cure to human ills. Clara thinks that even Willoughby's egoism might be cured or at least mitigated by nature: "She threw up her window, breathed, blessed mankind; and she thought: 'If Willoughby would open his heart to nature, he would be relieved of his wretched opinion of the world.' Nature was then sparkling, refreshed in the last drops of a sweeping rain-curtain, favourably disposed for a background to her joyful optimism" (*Egoist*, 150). Similarly, Diana's love of nature, we are told, "saved her from despair and cynicism" when she felt trapped by Warwick's unwanted solicitation of her hand in marriage.

Nature, personified in the West as female, as Mother, has the power to stimulate and cut down, to bind and release—simultaneously. She is two-faced, or multifaceted, like Meredith's women. She is both "red in tooth and claw," in Tennyson's phrase, as well as sparkling, refreshing, and life-giving. The image of the loosened hair, often associated with female sexuality, contains both of these contradictory elements. The father figure, Sensei, in *Kokoro* is warning the admiring young Watakushi about the dangers of nature and female sexuality when he asks him, "Do you know what it's like to be tied down by long black hair?"

***The actors are, it seems, the usual three: husband, wife and lover***

You like not that French novel? Tell me why.  
You think it quite unnatural. Let us see.  
The actors are, it seems, the usual three:  
Husband, and wife, and lover. She—but fie!  
In England we'll not hear of it. Edmond,  
The lover, her devout chagrin doth share;  
Blanc-mange and absinthe are his penitent fare,  
Till his pale aspect makes her over-fond:  
So, to preclude fresh sin, he tries rosbif.  
Meantime the husband is no more abused:  
Auguste forgives her ere the tear is used.  
Then hangeth all on one tremendous IF:-  
IF she will choose between them. She does choose;

And takes her husband, like a proper wife.  
Unnatural? My dear, these things are life:  
And life, some think, is worthy of the Muse.  
—Sonnet XXV.

Love triangles are the basic geometry of all the later novels of Sôseki, as I have said. Most famous among them is perhaps the Sensei/K./Ojôsan triangle in *Kokoro*, which ends in K's suicide, followed in turn by Sensei's self-immolation. Love triangles also structure the narratives of *Sorekara*, *Mon*, and *Kôjin*. *Meian* would seem to the exception, but Iida Yûko, for example, has suggested reading the triangles as Tsuda/O-Nobu/Kiyoko or even Tsuda/O-Nobu/Mrs. Yoshikawa. Just as Meredith and Sôseki made use of marriage and married life to examine human nature in its most pressurized, mutable and delicate state, both authors also write of love triangles as best expressing the skewed, asymmetrical, unequal relationships in love. Eve Sedgwick is frequently quoted for her conception of "gender asymmetry and erotic triangles" (two men who in vying for the affection of one woman at times use her to reinforce the male-male bond) yet she fails to mention a fundamental inequality and asymmetry in the basic love triangle itself. "If equal affections cannot be," wrote W. H. Auden, "let the one who loves the more be me." This is not an "if" hypothesis but rather a "since, then" statement. Since love triangles are structurally unequal, then someone must love more, and suffer more, than the other.

The prolific Simon Raven (b. 1927), author of the ten-volume *Alms for Oblivion* (Victorian in prolixity if not chronologically), wrote "In short, what is destroying the quality of the novel, just as it is destroying the quality of life itself, is egalitarian dogma; for the chief fascination of novels, as of life, lies in the perception and the celebration of human inequalities." Both Meredith and Sôseki, to my mind, are novelists whose chief fascination appears to be in the perception and celebration of human inequalities. And what better place to observe and celebrate these inequalities than the battlefield of courtship, marriage, and married life.

In the opening chapters of *Richard Feverel*, a triangle is established between and among Sir Austin, his wife and Denzil Somers, the young poet whose genius Sir Austin had admired at Cambridge (a recapitulation is presented in Edward Mendelson's introduction to the Penguin edition [xx]). This triangle is quickly forgotten as the wife and the poet disappear from the picture, and Sir Austin, perhaps somehow

betrayed by wife and poet (merely hinted at, not clearly stated), focuses his energies on his “system” to educate young Richard. This triangle is reproduced in *Kokoro*: Sensei invites the student K to live with him, and both of them love Ojōsan. After K has killed himself, Sensei devotes his time to diffidently educating the young narrator known only as Watakushi, “I,” on the exigencies of his “system.” It is worth recalling the full title of Meredith’s novel, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel: A History of Father and Son*. (Every Sōseki novel has an ordeal [試練 *shiren*] —Sōsuke’s religious ordeal in *Mon*; Ichirō’s psychological ordeal in *Kōjin*; Sanshirō’s coming of age in *Sanshirō*—and many are concerned with a history of father and son, particularly *Kokoro* and *Sorekara*.<sup>14</sup>)

The love triangle as a literary device seems less obvious in Meredith. Beauchamp is true to Jenny and only interested in Renée with himself playing the chivalrous knight who wants to save her from an unhappy marriage to an elderly French marquis. Diana is only rumored to have a lover; she wants to be surrounded by the company of admiring men but doesn’t want to commit herself until the very end. Richard Feverel alone is involved in a true love triangle (he sleeps with Bella Mount, momentarily forgetting his young wife), but here again the desire is, like Beauchamp’s, to “save” Mrs. Mount from her iniquitous style of life. The egoist Willoughby, like Tsuda, has no room in his life for dividing himself between two lovers (there are Laetitia and Clara, but they are marriage candidates, not lovers; there is Kiyoko in *Meian*, but she is a ghost from the past who appears only in the final chapters), since all Tsuda’s energies must be focused strictly and solely and devotedly to his self. It is not the narrative of adultery, then, which interests Meredith and Sōseki but the subject of betrayal, egoism, compromise, the impossibility of true love, the pangs of lost love. In Meredith there is always the denied love, the love that could have been: the fair and decorous Cecilia; the darkly passionate Renée in *Beauchamp’s Career*; the self-sacrificing, compromising Laetitia in *The Egoist*; the tragic Clara in *Richard Feverel*, Richard’s childhood sweetheart who kills herself when asked how she could possibly live in such an unlikely marriage as that arranged by her mother; even Percy Dacier, whom Diana ultimately rejects by divulging his secret, is at one time held up as an ideal marriage candidate. An ideal marriage is of course inconceivable in Sōseki: Michiyo and Daisuke will never be happily united; Sensei and Ojōsan’s marriage will never be the same after the suicide of K; Ichirō’s questioning of his own wife’s fidelity drives him mad; Mineko orchestrates Sanshirō’s sexual

awakening and then drops him for another man. Only Sôsukey and O-Yone demonstrate the possibility of happiness in marriage, but their lonely, childless union is far from ideal. Both authors share a dark, pessimistic view of human happiness through marriage; Meredith's is submerged below brilliant dialogue and alembicated prose, Sôseki's is spread out like a patient etherized upon a table (Tsuda on the examination table).

*The wrong is mixed. No villain need be!*

Mark where the pressing wind shoots javelin-like  
Its skeleton shadow on the broad-backed wave!  
Here is a fitting spot to dig Love's grave;  
Here where the ponderous breakers plunge and strike,  
And dart their hissing tongues high up the sand:  
In hearing of the ocean, and in sight  
Of those ribbed wind-streaks running into white.  
If I the death of Love had deeply planned,  
I never could have made it half so sure,  
As by the unblest kisses which upbraid  
The full-waked sense; or failing that, degrade!  
'Tis morning: but no morning can restore  
What we have forfeited. I see no sin:  
The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot,  
No villain need be! Passions spin the plot:  
We are betrayed by what is false within.

—Sonnet XLIII.

If true love is impossible, at least it is clear who is to blame: the wrong is mixed. Both parties are guilty. There is no need to point fingers. There is no need for a villain. Passion has disastrous, even tragic consequences. We are betrayed by our own egoism. In love we are all egoists. Clara is just as much an egoist as Willoughby, but we sympathize (Meredith excels at presenting sympathetic, put-upon women) and we want her to be free. O-Nobu is just as much an egoist as her *tsumaranbô* (apathetic, abulic) husband [Iida's terminology], Tsuda, yet we want her to see more clearly, to be able to mouth those unspeakable questions, "Do you love me? Is there another woman?" Richard is just as egoistical as his father. It is a case of "the sins of the father shall be visited upon the heads of their children." Richard's own campaign to redeem fallen women is as misguided as his father's "system" to educate his son properly. Diana is just as egoistic and self-serving as Percy (she needs to be the center of her salon), but we want her to succeed, to get her due because she is a woman in a man's world not of her own making. Yes, the deck is stacked against the Dianas and the O-Nobus of the world. We cheer them on, hoping they can take control of their

lives. Even “control-freak” O-Nobu cannot see beyond her own blind passion to exhibit the “ideal marriage” for all the world to see.

No villain need be, and no true villains are to be found in Meredith or Sôseki. Willoughby is a semi comic figure, not a villain; Kobayashi is a gadfly, not a villain; Mineko, the femme fatale, the unconscious hypocrite, the Ibsen woman, who toys with Sanshirô is not villainized (she seeks no permanent damage, unlike Nora in *A Doll's House*). Neither are there any heroes. Anyone who attempts to speak or act heroically becomes a self-parody. Dr. Middleton in *The Egoist* sounds bombastic and didactic in his Carlyle-like sermons. Even at the time of Meredith's writings, the style and content of Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) seem far removed, even dated. Sôseki was familiar with Carlyle's *On Heroes and Hero Worship* (1841) and wrote about Carlyle in his article “Karairu hakubutsukan” (The Carlyle Museum) yet he wasn't moved to write about heroes in a similar way. They (Meredith and Sôseki) no longer lived in an age of heroes. Beauchamp and Richard Feverel appear “quixotic” in their tilting at windmills in the form of campaigns to save distressed or fallen women. Beauchamp's “heroic” gesture in the final chapter to save a drowning boy (which ends in his own death by drowning) is especially ironic when his career is cut short: his distant father and Carlyle-like mentor Dr. Shrapnel can only look at each other in sorrow, disbelief, and humility.

*Their sense is with their senses all mixed in*

Their sense is with their senses all mixed in,  
Destroyed by subtleties these women are!  
More brain, O Lord, more brain! or we shall mar  
Utterly this fair garden we might win.  
Behold! I looked for peace, and thought it near.  
Our inmost hearts had opened, each to each.  
We drank the pure daylight of honest speech.  
Alas! that was the fatal draught, I fear.  
For when of my lost Lady came the word,  
This woman, O this agony of flesh!  
Jealous devotion bade her break the mesh,  
That I might seek that other like a bird.  
I do adore the nobleness! despise  
The act! She has gone forth, I know not where.  
Will the hard world my sentience of her share  
I feel the truth; so let the world surmise.

—Sonnet XLVIII.

It is wrong, I think, to read the man's plea for women to have "more brain" as a condescending remark on the stupidity of women. Meredith, after all, is that rare Victorian novelist who gave us intelligent, willful (in the good sense) women characters—intelligent women characters who were beautiful, witty, and charming—such as Clara Middleton and Diana Warwick. In *George Meredith in Anecdote and Criticism* (1909), biographer J. A. Hammerton begins a chapter titled "His Heroines and Women Folk" with the quotation "'Your knowledge of women is almost indecent,' a celebrated lady novelist—of whose novels the same is partly true—once remarked to George Meredith" (Hammerton, 231). The woman novelist is, I believe, George Eliot, who praised his work and is known for her own "brainy" women characters. The mixing of sense and senses applies, I think, to either sex. Sense and sensibility, passion and reason, egoism and altruism. No single character is clearly in possession of one trait at the expense of the other. A true egoist would by definition be uncompromising, but Willoughby does in fact compromise in his marriage to Laetitia. Even egotistical Tsuda can share an intimate moment with his wife over the coup they have pulled off in silencing his sister's casuistry. The tendency to see characters on one or the other extreme of the spectrum, locatable in either light or in darkness, seems erroneous to me. Yet as recently as 1988, Nobel prize laureate Ôe Kenzaburô was following this counterproductive tendency, by placing Kiyoko and Mrs. Yoshikawa in the dark.<sup>15</sup> Self-absorbed Tsuda is sometimes reasonable. Calculating O-Nobu is sometimes feeling. Tyrannical Sir Austin comes to his senses in the end, embracing Richard's wife and child. Kiyoko seems neither beatific nor flawless. Diana can be intelligent, passionate, emotional, reasonable, high-strung, and excitable all at once. Meredith and Sôseki people their novels with complex, ambiguous characters. Their true-to-life, contradictory, multifaceted personalities translate into persons who cannot be pinned down to one defining character trait.

*Then each applied to each that fatal knife*

Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:  
 The union of this ever-diverse pair!  
 These two were rapid falcons in a snare,  
 Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.  
 Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,  
 They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers:  
 But they fed not on the advancing hours:  
 Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.  
 Then each applied to each that fatal knife,  
 Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.  
 Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul

When hot for certainties in this our life! -  
In tragic hints here see what evermore  
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,  
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,  
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!  
—Sonnet L.

The fatal knife of deep questioning is what drives Ichirô mad. O-Nobu's quest for certainties (absolute love) is *her* undoing. Tsuda, not a particularly deep thinker, remains unscathed by O-Nobu's knife, protected by his hard shell of egoism. Diana applies the fatal knife to herself, questioning the necessity of marriage ("The thought of a husband," she says, "cuts one from any dreaming. It's all dead flat earth at once!"), but is saved by Redworth's understanding, appreciativeness, and admiration.

A severing gesture opens and closes the sequence and "Love closed what he begat." With love begins the tale and with the end of love (love diminished or dead, since Nature in her cycles plays for seasons not eternities, or an old love forsaken for a new one) the narrative concludes. When *Modern Love* appeared in 1862, a memory was still fresh in Meredith's mind. His marriage to Mary Ellen Nicholls, the widowed daughter of T. L. Peacock, ended after nine years (some say due to sexual inadequacy on Meredith's part and Mary's unwillingness to conform to his ideas) when she eloped to Capri with Meredith's pre-Raphaelite painter-friend Henry Wallis, leaving behind George's and Mary's five-year-old son. *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859) was the first work to spring from this memory, and *Modern Love* came three years later, a year after Mary Ellen's death. There can be no denying the pessimism of these two works, but they are counterbalanced with the happy (or happier) endings of *The Egoist* and *Diana of the Crossways*. The same cannot be said for Sôseki, who, even though he suffered no debilitating loss from an unhappy marriage, certainly offered no hope or redemption in marriage.

### **Some Conclusions**

For all their strength, directness, and intelligence, what choices do Diana and O-Nobu have in their marriages of modern love? Rejection of the institution of marriage is not a viable choice for Diana or O-Nobu. In view of her monomaniacal tendencies, O-Nobu might end up taking her own life, as some critics have suggested, unable, as she is, to reconcile her image of marriage with that of her husband's. Diana is

another story: one of those rare creatures who, according to Vivian Gornick's argument in her *The End of the Novel of Love*, can stand up against marriage and even against love if it impinges on her individuality:

*Diana of the Crossways* gives us a protagonist for whom love is the enemy the way Lawrence understood it to be the enemy, only this time we have the information from a woman in whom the need to own her soul is more imperative than the need to love. Meredith knew that a woman might be better driven than a man to the extremity of foregoing love. . . . Love, Meredith wants us to know, is a deadly business: it throws us up against ourselves and leaves us hanging there. No one who engages seriously in it emerges without a sense of having been violated and, most often, of having committed the violation oneself.<sup>16</sup>

Love is deadly business: that much is clear from reading Meredith and Sôseki. With love comes betrayal, miscommunication (or discommunication, as Iida Yûko calls it); it is frequently an arena for egotistical display and a contest of wills—sometimes ending in untimely death. Both Diana and O-Nobu were products of their age, both struggling against social conformity. Their fictional creators were also men of their times, with Meredith regarded today in glowing feminist terms:

When *Diana of the Crossways* appeared in 1885 George Meredith was well known as a strong advocate of the rights of women. He encouraged legal emancipation of women and female suffrage. Meredith also urged the need for legal divorce, insisting that there was nothing more psychologically destructive than the continuation of a bad marriage and that training women to be ignorant was detrimental to society as well as individuals. His writings reveal a deep sense of the injustice suffered by women because of constraints on their natural abilities. He deplores the ways in which Victorian women conformed to social stereotypes; they appeared frail, less intelligent, passive, timid, gentle, tender, unpredictable, absorbed in trivia, dependent on men but controlling or diverting male lust by serving as guardians of hearth and home.<sup>17</sup>

Such an assessment would make little sense to Sôseki who was profoundly influenced by Confucianism, and his sense of egalitarianism did not necessarily extend to women. In many ways, women of Meiji Japan led even more circumscribed lives than their Victorian counterparts. Some brief historical background is in order. The Meiji intellectual Nakamura Masanao coined the phrase *ryôsai kenbo* 良妻賢母 “good wife, wise mother” in 1875 and considered that “women should be well educated so they will form the moral and religious backbone of the family and the nation. This education will elevate the status of women in the family so they can be effective mothers and interesting companions to their husbands.”<sup>18</sup>

While he saw the need to educate women, attacked the concubine system, and supported monogamy, Nakamura's view of mutual respect between husband and wife did not extend to equal rights for men and

women *outside* the home. The Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, a document that Sôseki was said to admire, enshrined Confucian values and the patriarchy. The New Civil Code of 1889 legally recognized only men: men controlled wives' property, only women could be punished for adultery, concubines again become popular. The "good wife, wise mother" slogan became part and parcel of Meiji ideology and held sway through the 1930s when the slogan was promoted as government propaganda to make women part of national priorities. This brief overview is enough to show that women's lives were severely restricted. Assuming that Sôseki's later novels are accurate reflections of Meiji and Taishô life and society, there is little wonder, then, that his fictional female characters such as Mineko in *Sanshirô* and O-Nobu in *Meian* are extremely limited in their options.

Although the conventional meaning of the term "Victorian morality" has come to be synonymous with prudishness, many critics have challenged the view that Victorians were sexually repressed and sexually intolerant. Meredith's own unhappy marriage pales in comparison to the more scandalous relationships of the Carlyles (childless, due to Thomas's impotence); the Ruskins (Effie left John, who could not consummate their marriage, for the painter John Millais [an interesting theme for both Meredith and Sôseki]; in later years Ruskin was attracted to very young girls); or Charles Dickens, who was legally separated from his wife, the mother of their ten children, having taken an eighteen-year-old actress as a mistress.

Sôseki is rumored to have had at least one affair, and if Etô Jun's claim is to be believed, it was with his sister-in-law Tose when he was twenty-four, an age that Jay Rubin and others have noted as the age of disillusionment (pre-disillusionment characters at the innocent age of twenty-three include Sanshirô, Keitarô in *Higan Sugi Made*, and Botchan).<sup>19</sup> Some critics have also called Sôseki misogynistic whereas more sympathetic admirers point out that as an artist his work always came first, before family and home life. His was not the happiest of marriages (though not childless: he fathered seven children), as we know from his wife, Kyôko, who thought his neurosis bordered on madness. Kyôko herself was suicidal after a miscarriage of her first pregnancy, and the couple slept with their bodies tied together at Sôseki's insistence after she had tried to drown herself. Whatever their misfortunes, both Meredith and Sôseki suffered that

terrible condition of always having their writing interpreted as biography—a vexing ailment, in my opinion, that is still far too virulent even in current scholarship. Having said that, I cannot deny that biographical data do inform and enrich our understanding of the texts, as well as offer a possible explanation for the disillusionment with marriage. There are no wedding bells in the fiction of Sôseki, and, in my opinion, no happy couples. There are wedding bells in Meredith but wedded bliss ends in tragedy in both *Beauchamp's Career* and *Richard Feverel*. Marriage is still essential for the women characters, because, as Gilbert and Gubar point out in Jane Austen's novels, "it is the only accessible form of self-definition for girls in society."

Some of the profound differences in Western and Japanese views of marriage are presented in "Marriage and Family: Past and Present," by Kyôko Yoshizumi. She contends that "Japan has a much smaller divorce rate than Western countries because of a traditional family system in which marriage was viewed as a means of perpetuating the family line, not as an emotional relationship." Western society traditionally supports monogamy, whereas Japanese society, she says, has a long tradition of polygamy through concubinage. Western society typically favors heterosexual social interaction, whereas Japan, in Yoshizumi's view, has typically favored same-sex social interaction. Marriage, in a word, was for parenting; love and emotional relationships, especially for men, were sought outside of marriage.<sup>20</sup>

The fictional Clara, Diana, Mineko, and O-Nobu had a real life, flesh-and-blood sister, Victoria Woodhull, who across the ocean in America, was able to stand up to male authority and say, "I have an inalienable, constitutional and natural right to love whom I may, to love as long or as short a period as I can; to change that love every day if I please, and with that right neither you nor any law you can frame have any right to interfere." This stunning remark was part of her public address on "Free Love" which she delivered to a capacity audience at Steinway Hall in 1871:

Are you a Free Lover? is the almost incredulous query.

I repeat a frequent reply: I am; and I can honestly, in the fullness of my soul, raise my voice to my Maker, and thank Him that I am, and that I have had the strength and devotion to truth to stand before this traducing and vilifying community in a manner representative of that which shall come with healing on its wings for the bruised hearts and crushed affections of humanity.

And to those who denounce me for this I reply: Yes, I am a Free Lover. I have an inalienable, constitutional and natural right to love whom I may, to love as long or as short a period as I can; to change that love every day if I please, and with that right neither you nor any law you can frame have any right to interfere. And I have the further right to demand a free and unrestricted exercise of that right, and it is your duty not only to accord it, but, as a community, to see that I am protected in it. I trust that I am fully understood, for I mean just that, and nothing less!<sup>21</sup>

Victoria Woodhull's powerful words still resonate radically today because she is making a plea not for equality in marriage, but for equality of the sexes *outside* the institution of marriage. None of the female characters in Meredith or Sôseki can even consider an alternative to married life, no matter how trapped or discomfited they may be: Mineko marries an artist after having toyed with the affections of Sanshirô (Mineko's marriage to the artist who painted her portrait, it must be mentioned, is curiously reminiscent of Meredith's wife's leaving him for the painter Henry Wallis, for whom Meredith was at the time sitting as model for the portrait, *The Death of Chatterton*); O-Nobu is resigned to her fate, unable to achieve that which she desires most in her marriage, the absolute love of her husband; Clara extricates herself from Willoughby's house of mirrors in which he plays the Sun King, and all women around him exist only to mirror his own reflection, his own Ego; only Diana agonizes over the necessity of marriage ("Banality, thy name is marriage" and "Is marriage to be the end of me?"), but who, in the end, marries Redworth, an act which reestablishes her at the manor house at Crossways (which she had put up for sale) and restores her position at the now safe and respectful center of her salon. Mineko too was the center of a "salon," though small, the witty and beautiful flower admired by Professor Hirota, Sanshirô, and a small group of other students—a salon, we can assume, that will be discontinued upon her marriage. For all their wit and intelligence, however, these women are not given a voice by the male author to speak out in a Victoria Woodhull-like plea to be able to love whom they may, to love as long or as short a period as they please, and to change that love every day if they please.

These women are not given a narrative voice to speak out against marriage (with the possible exception of Diana) but must somehow struggle alone against a male-dominated discourse on marriage. They have a voice, certainly—loud and strong voices—but not a voice capable of challenging patriarchy. Worse than this lack of narrative voice is the subtext of what Meredith and Sôseki have to say about the condition of marriage: the real struggle is not against marriage itself but against the impinging of one individual's will

upon another. This is especially true of Clara in *The Egoist*, but also applies to Diana and to O-Nobu. One substantive theme of all later Sôseki novels is this impinging of one individual's will upon another, and the most common site for observing this struggle in his novels is the institution of marriage. By the same token, *Modern Love* must also be read not as a diatribe against marriage but as a narrative of individual will.

One significant nugget of wisdom Sôseki gleaned from Meredith was not from "Modern Love" but from his essay "Comedy and the Comic Spirit" (1877). In large, masculine script, Sôseki summed up the essay in the margin: 男女同権ナラザラバ嬉劇ナシ (without equality of the sexes there can be no comedy), and underlined the pertinent phrases in Meredith:

But where women are on the road to an equal footing with men, in attainments and in liberty—in what they have won for themselves, and what have been granted them by a fair civilization—there, only waiting to be transplanted from life to stage, or the novel, or the poem, pure Comedy flourishes . . . .<sup>22</sup>

Surely Sôseki recognized the importance of having women and men on equal footing not only to allow comedy to flourish but also to allow fiction to flourish when transplanting their lives to the novel. Giving women and men equal footing is not the same as giving them equal treatment novelistically, however. Fujio and O-Nobu are men's intellectual equal but they are made to suffer (Sôseki has to kill Fujio and Mrs. Yoshikawa and O-Hide must "educate" O-Nobu), as if to say neither the author nor Meiji/Taishô society was prepared to accept fully these dynamic representations of woman.

Chapter 7  
Success, *Flânerie*, and *Tairiku Rônin* (Continental Wanderers)

The philosophy of Horatio  
What means it in the end?  
All truth is but one word—Unfathomable.  
Anguished, I think of this.  
In the end, I decide on death.  
Quiet. Quiet.  
Heaven and earth, past and present,  
Far, far distant.  
How to measure their greatness  
With my humble self.

—English translation of Fujimura Misao's suicide note,  
carved on the trunk of a tree before he jumped off Kegon Falls<sup>1</sup>

You did wish that I would make her turn.  
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,  
And turn again.

—*Othello* (IV.i. 243-5)

*Etre un homme utile m'a paru toujours quelque chose de bien hideux.*—Baudelaire

The condition of perfection is idleness.  
—Oscar Wilde, "Phrases and Philosophies for the Use of the Young"

In an all-too-familiar scene, one that almost everyone has experienced at some point in his or her life, the protagonist Sôsuke in *Mon* glances through some magazines on a table at the dentist's office. The appointment could have taken place yesterday. There are no details to make the scene look antiquated or for that matter dated in any way—except for one small detail: one of the magazines that Sôsuke picks up, mentioned by name as *Seikô* (Success), was an actual publication and a popular and influential one at that in late Meiji:

Then he took up a magazine called *Success*. On its opening page was presented in outline the formula for success. One point of the summary stated that energetic drive [*môshin*] was indispensable in everything. But, stated another, drive alone was not enough. To be effective, this drive must be directed towards a tenaciously held ideal.<sup>2</sup>

*Seikô* was one of the most popular magazines of Meiji, along with *Jitsugyô no Nihon* (Business Japan) and *Chûgaku sekai* (Middle-School World). Their common theme was advancement—either advancement through study for entrance examinations and a government position (*Chûgaku sekai*); advancement through accumulation of wealth (*Jitsugyô no Nihon*); or advancement through a combination of education and wealth (*Seikô*). The cover of the inaugural issue of *Seikô* (October 1902) featured a bust of Abraham

Lincoln and a picture inside of the log cabin in which he was born. Its message was clear: study hard, apply yourself, make something of yourself, rise in the world. Sôsukey, however, inhabited none of these worlds and exhibited none of these characteristics: "He read no further, but replaced the magazine. Success and Sôsukey were poles apart" (Mathy, 58) Success and most Sôseki protagonists are poles apart; they are curiously lacking ambition, entrepreneurism, desire for advancement. That essential ingredient of the successful man of Meiji, *môshin* 猛進 (drive), is not the desideratum of Sôseki's anti-heroes. Takayanagi, Daisuke, Sôsukey, Ichirô, and even Sensei do not fit the model of the Meiji ideals of self-help and success.

After putting down the magazine *Success*, and being forced to admit his own lack of success in life ("Success and Sôsukey were worlds apart," the narrator states matter of factly [*seikô to Sôsukey wa hijô ni en no tooi mono de atta*]), Sôsukey then gets a root canal in the dentist's office (Sôseki can be cruel at times). Sôseki does not open the novel with the scene at the dentist (which occurs in Section Five) in the way he begins *Meian* with the outrageous scene of Tsuda on the operating table undergoing an anal probe, but the effects are strikingly similar. The protagonists' fitness/robustness is called into question. "Necrosis has set in," the dentist explains to Sôsukey. "It is as if the core of the tooth is rotten," he explains. More than a subtle reminder of man's mortality, this scene should be read as a prognosis of Sôsukey's fitness and robustness in general: is he unfit for the business world? Unfit for married life? Unfit for social intercourse? Morally, spiritually unfit? As always Sôseki's pared-down language—minimalist and abstract—seems to suggest more than what is being communicated. "The core seems to be dead," the dentist says. "To Sôsukey these words evoked an image of the melancholy light of autumn. He wanted to ask if he had already reached such an age, but he was too embarrassed to do so...." The words "core seems to be dead" and "rotten to the core" resonate in Sôsukey's mind, pointing the reader to Sôsukey's future obsession in the novel with the sins of his past and the author's obsession with original sin (Mathy, 57-58).

The formula for success written on the first page of the magazine was *nan de mo môshin shinakute wa ikenai*, "one must strive," or "have drive" (to do one's best, to do one's utmost) in all things. *Môshin* is translated by Kenkyûsha as "make a bold dash forward, push forward vigorously." What prevents Sôseki's fictional male protagonists from making a bold dash and pushing forward vigorously? Are they consciously

resisting or just “deadbeats”? Perhaps a look at Meiji ideology as expressed in *Seikô* and other popular publications of the day will shed some light on their predicament. In discussing the Meiji ideology of *risshin shusse* 立身出世 (advancement, rising in the world) and self-help, we need to avoid universalizing “the man of Meiji” and refrain from treating these ideals as unitary, monolithic concepts to which all males subscribed. The fact that so many of Sôseki’s protagonists do not accept the prevailing ideology of *risshin* shows that some kind of resistance was possible, or, put another way, not everyone got on the bandwagon of advancement (which meant advancement in the world of business/government). The category of achievement and accomplishment, as David Gilmore describes in his cross-cultural study, *Manhood in the Making*, is a central component of masculinity in many cultures, he claims, a “constantly recurring notion that real manhood . . . is not a natural condition that comes about spontaneously through biological maturation but rather is a precarious or artificial state that boys must win against powerful odds” (Gilmore, 11). Even allowing for cultural differences and unique circumstances in Meiji/Taishô Japan that would have produced singular demands on manhood, the importance of achievement to the “ideal man” cannot be denied.

During his years of study in London, Sôseki perhaps for the first time came to see dramatically and in a personal way the abstract notions of survival of the fittest, class struggle, competition, and even race. He overheard someone speak of him as a well-dressed *Chinese* and once heard himself being referred to as a *handsome Jap* (Sôseki later wrote about his bewilderment at whether to be flattered by being termed handsome or offended at being called a Jap). These abstract ideas of race, class, and fitness became concrete by merely living in London, walking its streets (he always walked, finding the underground too complicated), and observing all around him. In the second paragraph of his *Rondon tô* (Tower of London, 1905) he observes:

I felt like a hare from the country, born and brought up at the foot of Mount Fuji, let loose in the middle of Nihonbashi, the Japanese counterpart of London Bridge. On the street I was afraid of being carried away by the surging crowd. In my lodgings I was afraid a railway train might crash into the wall. Night and day I could have no peace of mind. A two years’ stay among so many people might well, I feared, turn my nerves into a state like that of heated glue. How true, I thought, was the comment of Max Nordau on such a situation in his *Degeneration!* [Peter Milward and Kii Nakano, 23.]

Sôseki does not mention verbatim Nordau's comment, but we can assume it is not a positive one. Acutely aware of being Japanese and a foreigner, Sôseki seems to have developed an inferiority complex during his stay in London. Some critics assert that the real reason for his not enrolling in classes was not lack of funds as he claims (other Monbushô scholars managed on the same amount) but his anxiety toward social interaction. He became increasingly neurotic. In breaking my own rule not to intersect freely the lines of biography and fiction, I hope to make clear that fit/unfit is not an arbitrary dyad but actually representative of a life and death struggle for Sôseki, one which he incorporated into the warp and woof of his fiction.

The body as a marker of status and mental disposition speaks louder than the words of its master. Sôsuke in *Mon* is unfit for success because he is haunted by his inescapable past which takes a physical toll on his body. Koroku, who stands in judgment of Sôsuke's "languid" behavior, "secretly attributed his brother's behavior to inborn weakness" (Mathy, 19). There is a strong sense of Fate and a corresponding sense of fatality and determinism manifested in the body. Ichirô in *Kôjin* is physically unfit because of his scrawniness, of which he is extremely self-conscious:

"My brother [Ichirô] was naturally scrawny. Although everyone in the family agreed that it was due to his nerves, and suggested that he try to put on a little more weight, it was my mother, of course, who worried the most. As for my brother, *he loathed his own leanness as if it had been some sort of punishment*, and yet could not gain an ounce." (my emphasis [痩せているのを何かの刑罰のやうに忌み恐れた]; Yu, 96-97; SZ 11:81).

In both cases, there is *imi*, something ominous, unlucky, taboo, something abominable as in "abominations of Leviticus." In Mary Douglas's analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo in *Purity and Danger*, she notes that bodies are locations of deep feelings and categories of purity and danger. The meaning of "perversion" in Leviticus (a mistranslation, she says, of the Hebrew *tebhel*) is "mixing" or "confusion."<sup>3</sup> The hyrax (rock badger) and the camel are considered "abominations" in Leviticus because they do not conform to the category of cloven-hoofed, ruminant, ungulates. Their "hybridity" and "confusion" (cloven-hoofed but not ruminants, or appear to be ruminants like the hyrax but are not) are abominated; they do not conform fully to their class. Mary Douglas's notion of "category crisis" is introduced here only to express that cultural definitions of purity and danger depend on strict classification (systems of signs and symbols). Ichirô fears the taboo of being skinny because he will appear unfit in a world that favors and benefits men who are robust and active. Takayanagi in *Nowaki* remains a social misfit—belonging neither to Nakano's

high-collar class nor to Shirai Dôya's humble scholar class—in part because of his health (he is tubercular). Tsuda too, as already mentioned, fears being tubercular because he will appear unfit, perhaps even *unmanly* (not to mention the obvious fear of death). On a deeper metaphorical level, Sôsuke's rotten tooth instills the fear that decay and deterioration (degeneration in general) might be visible, that the sins of his past, though hidden from view, might suddenly materialize into a real cloud over his head. This fear of the reification of an internal pain or symptom is brilliantly described by Michael Cunningham, who turns Virginia Woolf's famous migraines into a pulsating, material object:

First come the headaches, which are not in any way ordinary pain (“headache” has always seemed an inadequate term for them, but to call them by any other would be too melodramatic). They infiltrate her. They inhabit rather than merely afflict her, the way viruses inhabit their hosts. Strands of pain announce themselves, throw shivers of brightness into her eyes so insistently she must remind herself that others can't see them. Pain colonizes her, quickly replaces what was Virginia with more and more of itself, and its advance is so forceful, its jagged contours so distinct, that she can't help imagining it as an entity with a life of its own. She might see it while walking with Leonard in the square, a scintillating silver-white mass floating over the cobblestones, randomly spiked, fluid by whole, like a jellyfish. “What's that?” Leonard would ask. “It's my headache,” she'd answer. “Please ignore it.”<sup>4</sup>

Sôsuke's fear is so palpable one expects it to materialize in the form of a great floating mass, like Woolf's headache. *Kokoro's* Sensei's shame and guilt over his past actions seem to materialize into a looming, confining dark space from which he cannot extricate himself, a darkness which gives the novel its claustrophobic interiority. The world of Daisuke, feverish with desire, bursts into flames in the novel's final scene. As mentioned before, this type of character who, if he does not outright resist the attractions of a successful business career, then retires quietly from active participation in the business world, goes back to the prototypical superfluous hero in the person of Bunzô in Futabatei Shimei's *Ukigumo* (The Drifting Cloud, 1887-9). Bunzô becomes a type in Japanese literature, a figure of the isolated, modern intellectual which Sôseki develops to an even greater extent, both in number, in treatment, and in psychological depth of character. Bunzô, sitting alone in his small upstairs room, staring at the ceiling, becomes an identifiable symbol of man disengaged from life. His problems arise in part, not from “being unable to sit still in a room”—the famous quip by Pascal (1623-1662) on the source of human evil—but from being unable to escape from his room and from his own interiority into the fresh air of out-of-doors activity. Pascal's assessment of the human condition—*Condition de l'homme: inconstance, ennui, inquiétude*—suggests that Bunzô's problem is not entirely a “modern” one but modern only in the sense that he chooses not to

compete in the rat-race of modern life the finish line of which is advancement and success in business. The highly-prized position of government bureaucrat, the plum of Meiji elite, would always be beyond his grasp and beyond the reach of Sôseki's protagonists. Bunzô and Sôseki's paralyzed protagonists such as Daisuke resonate with Henry Melville's clerk Bartleby the maker of copies of legal documents in *Bartleby the Scrivener* (1853) who increasingly rejects requests with the words "I prefer not to" until he has completely withdrawn from social interaction.

What Bunzô and many Sôseki protagonists have in common, perhaps more so than lack of achievement and accomplishment, is their "Oblomovism," that sense of inertia that characterized the superfluous man in Goncharov's *Oblomov* (1859), the inspiration for Futabatei's Bunzô. The sense of male powerlessness, like Virginia Woolf's headache, is palpable:

"And he was as intelligent as other people, his soul was pure and clear as crystal, he was noble and affectionate—and yet he did nothing!"

"But why? What was the reason?"

"The reason . . . what reason was there? Oblomovism!" (*Oblomov*, Part IV, Chapter 12)

Worse than being a superfluous hero, an exercise in inaction and futility (a marvelous contradiction), Bunzô and his epigone in Sôseki's fiction could be criticized and stigmatized further for not contributing to the myth of national progress. As Carol Gluck remarks in *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period*, the ideal of individual progress is linked to national progress (strong individuals make a strong nation), and in more complex ways, Japan (nation building), being Japanese (the creation of a national subject), as well as Japanese language and literature (*kokugo* and *kokubungaku*) are all interconnected by an intricate web of national priorities:

The striving for success in the world (*risshin shusse*), which was the Meiji doctrine of progress expressed on the level of the individual, had earlier origins in Tokugawa social thought. In 1872 it received its first official formulation in the Education Act that linked learning to success and, in the following years, its popular reinforcement in the inspirational tales of Smiles's *Self-Help*.<sup>5</sup>

A Japanese translation of *Self-Help* (1885) by English author Samuel Smiles (1812-1904) was published in 1871 under the title *Saikoku Risshi Hen* ("Lofty Ambitions in Western Countries" and immediately became a best-seller.<sup>6</sup> "The spirit of self-help," wrote Smiles, "is the root of all genuine growth in the individual; and, exhibited in the lives of many, it constitutes the true source of national vigor and strength" [my

emphasis]. The Japanese translator, Confucian scholar and prominent Meiji intellectual Nakamura Masanao (1832-91), also known by his pen-name Keiu, who advocated the moral development, self-cultivation, and self-education that were at the heart of Smiles's philosophy, was himself the embodiment of many of the principles put forward in the book. "The matching of values and virtues between the Confucian and Victorian traditions," Kinmonth says, "was especially close in the last chapter of *Self-Help*, 'Character—the True Gentleman' which Nakamura titled 'Character—the True Chün-Tzu,' indicating parallels with the ideal samurai gentleman (Kinmonth, 42). The two traditions differ most notably in their emphasis on merit and social mobility, two elements lacking in Tokugawa society, but agreed on the important relationship between ethics and national prosperity.

*Flânerie*. Sôseki's fictional protagonists stand in stark contrast to the ideal man of Meiji. *Sorekara's* Daisuke in particular—dandy, unemployed, and self-admitted loafer—is happy to live off his father's hard work and business success. The childless couple Sôsuke and O-Yone in *Mon* resign themselves to living modestly in a small house in the shadows of a cliff (in contrast to the big, well-lighted house on the hill, full of children's voices). Even though Sôsuke receives a nominal promotion and a small raise, the irony of the situation only highlights their humble life of withdrawal from the world. In *Higan sugi made*, Sunaga also is content to live off an inheritance from his father and singularly indisposed to "making an honest living" or even to being actively engaged with life in general. Translators Kingo Ochiai and Sanford Goldstein describe the diletante-ish characters this way:

While Keitaro is struggling to find a position in the world, Sunaga, like his uncle Matsumoto, refuses to look for work. Sunaga has also graduated recently, but able to live comfortably enough in the economic security inherited from his father, makes no effort in the direction of the utilitarian life in spite of the offers that have come his way. Unlike his other uncle, Taguchi, Sunaga refuses to take part in any kind of mundane world, even that of the practical joker.<sup>7</sup>

The "high-class idlers" (*kôtô yûmin* 高等遊民) Sunaga and Matsumoto join ranks with Daisuke, Sensei and Watakushi in *Kokoro*, the supernumeraries and idlers in *Neko* who are the object of derision, and even the unambitious Botchan, to form a recognizable, recurring type in Sôseki's fiction—and even the author, Sôseki himself, it must be said, seems to have aspired to this condition, in spite of his image as hard-working and driven. The life of a high-class idler is also a very real choice for Sanshirô, who, if he chooses

the academic life, may turn into another Hirota or Nonomiya. Too intellectual for their own good, both Sunaga in *Higan Sugi Made* and Ichirô in *Kôjin* (in many ways a continuation of *Higan Sugi Made*, with Ichirô and O-Nao picking up where Sunaga and Chiyoko left off), end up in isolation and mental anguish. The life of a dilettante, in other words, comes at a dear price. Sensei in *Kokoro* does not have to work for a living (one of the many ambiguous details of the novel), but his life is empty of meaning not from the ennui of the dilettante but from the weight of an inescapable past. More than any other, he is the Sôsekian emblematic figure of isolation and anguish. Too old to be an anguished youth, he is the mature, adult version of the educated problem youth of Meiji who, like Bunzô, disengages himself from society (besides having to hide his sin of betrayal, unlike Bunzô) and, like Fujimura Misao, found no outlet for intellectual and poetic expression.

The famous suicide case of Fujimura Misao (the English translation of whose suicide poem is quoted as an epigraph to this chapter) represents the “anguished youth” who stood in contrast to the “successful youth” (*seikô seinen*) of early Meiji who purchased wholesale the Meiji ideals of *risshin shusse* and *Self-Help*. Anguished youth such as Fujimura who rejected the prevailing wisdom of success and self-advancement had few alternative means for self-expression. At eighteen, a student of the First Higher School with a guaranteed future through the Imperial University, Fujimura was looked at sympathetically by Sôseki (Fujimura, in fact, had been one of his students). In *Kusamakura*, Sôseki mentions him by name. The artist, pondering O-Nami’s theatrical appearances, which he compares to scenes in kabuki (“I left the hotel feeling I had been watching a very early morning of kabuki”), falls to thinking about men’s behavior, how “a man whose behavior is considered theatrical is laughed at.” Then the artist (the first-person narrator identified only as *yo* [余]) temporarily abandons his artistic detachment and deeply sympathizes with (or actually mourns) Fujimura’s rather theatrical behavior:

There was once a young boy named Fujimura who committed suicide by plunging over a five hundred foot waterfall into the swirling rapids below. Before he died he wrote a poem called ‘The Cliff-Top.’ As I see it, that youth gave his life—the life which should not be surrendered—for all that is implicit in the one word ‘poetry.’ Death itself is truly heroic. It is the motive which prompts it that is difficult to comprehend. What right, however, have those who are not even able to see the heroism of death to ridicule Fujimura’s behaviour? It is my contention that they have no right at all, for being confined by their inability to sympathize with the concept of bringing life to a heroic

conclusion, however much such a step may be justified by circumstances, they are inferior to him in character. (Turney, 162)

Although *Kusamakura* appeared three years after Fujimura's 1903 suicide, the reading public would have recalled the front-page news story that captured popular attention. The narrator here speaking through the voice of Sôseki mentions it only in passing and returns again to his poetic musings on art and the ineffable O-Nami (in fact, it seems to me that the subject of the entire novel is "ineffability": what can and cannot be expressed in art and literature). In his musings, the artist/Sôseki makes clear his allegiance and sympathies toward people such as Fujimura while pondering a quince tree: "There are people who are absolutely unconcerned with their inability to make any headway in the world, and make no efforts to improve themselves. I am sure that they, in some future life, will be reborn as quince trees. I would like to be quince myself." (Turney, 166) The young man's suicide inspired a song and a pamphlet imprinted with Fujimura's picture and his poem (which became a best seller) and also inspired a number of "copy-cat" suicides, as Goethe's Young Werther did. Fujimura's suicide was not over a woman, as was Werther's, but over his sense of failure in a world where one's stature was measured by worldly success. Kinmonth attributes several factors behind the anguish of youths such as Fujimura: rigorous entrance examinations, the necessity to continue studying as a *rônin* ("masterless samurai") for another examination opportunity, a decrease in the "marketability" of educated youth, reduced likelihood of a "rags to riches" scenario playing out in the interwar years (after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5 and before the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5) compared to early Meiji, a decrease in starting pay as well as a decrease in power and prestige upon graduation.<sup>8</sup> Both Werther and Fujimura experienced what they felt was an unbridgeable fissure between their ideals and the mundane world. The fact that *The Sorrows of Young Werther* was written in 1774 suggests that the "anguished youth" is not a new phenomenon, although particularities of time and place will have their sway. Goethe's tragic love story gave expression to what Thomas Carlyle called "the nameless unrest and longing discontent which was then agitating every bosom"—which turned out to be an enduring affliction, still agitating bosoms in Japan one hundred years later.

Even the young runaway in *Kôfu* falls prey to the popular romanticism of wanting to make his suicide a leap from Kegon Falls. "I would use a pistol or dagger and die magnificently, in a manner that would elicit

praise. I often thought of taking the famous suicide leap at Kegon Falls. But quietly hanging myself in a toilet or storage shed?" (Rubin, *The Miner*, 134). At the point when he comes close to dying in the mines, he considers releasing his grip on the ladder and plunging into the abyss, but a command echoes in his head: "Wait! Wait! Get out of here and go to Kegon Falls!" The young runaway is both misfit and unfit, but he wears his anguish less formally than Fujimura and the anguished youths.

In addition to the views expressed in popular magazines, many Japanese novelists and writers also probed the "anguished youth" problem. Kunikida Doppo (1870-1908), a self-described "anguished youth," who was divided between his romantic ideals (to be a pioneer in Hokkaido, to travel in America) and conventional advancement scenarios, described his conflict in his diaries. Literary critic Takayama Chogyû (1871-1902), the translator of *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, authored an essay, *Biteki seikatsu o ronzu* (On the Aesthetic Life, 1901), which became a manifesto for anguished youth. Naturalist writer Masamune Hakuchô (1879-1962), in his pessimistic novel *Izuko e* (Whither?, 1908), follows the decline of Kenji from educated, promising youth to bored, indifferent social misfit. The protagonists of Sôseki's novels, however, belong to a later generation of anguished youth, a post-Russo-Japanese War generation, and they differ in significant ways. Daisuke perhaps more than others typifies this difference. He is educated but uninterested in rising in the world (when all he has to do is follow in his father's footsteps); he is a dandy and an idler. Whether these last-mentioned characteristics are the effect or the cause of Daisuke's dis/ease in the world, the source of his problems or the result, is not clear. What seems clear is that Daisuke's characteristics are a reflection of his moral quandary. He is called a "privileged loafer" by Homma, and he refers to himself as a *namakemono* (lazy man). The reader is confronted with Daisuke's dandyism at the beginning of the novel: "Stroking his full cheeks two or three times with both hands, Daisuke peered into the mirror. His motions were precisely those of a woman powdering her face. And in fact, he took such pride in his body that had there been the need, he would not have hesitated to powder his face" (Field, 2-3). Even *Meian's* Tsuda takes self-satisfaction in his handsomeness.

Daisuke's dandyism and its effects owe much to his European counterpart, especially to the English epicene and the French dandy and *flâneur*. This is not to deny a Japanese tradition, such as the *date otoko*.

In *Sorekara* Daisuke is called a “Genroku dandy.” As a Baudelaire-inspired form of dandyism that became known to late Victorians, it shared certain characteristics with *fin-de-siècle* Decadence, which were, according to Karl Beckson: “worship of the town and the artificial; grace, elegance, the art of the pose; sophistication and the use of mask. The wit of the epigram and paradox was called upon to confound the bourgeois.” None of these characteristics seems particularly appropriate descriptions of Daisuke the dandy but Beckson goes on to describe attributes more appropriate to our discussion:

For the industrious, pious middle class that increasingly valued social equality, solemn responsibility, and moral energy, the pose of dandyism was patently offensive, for it implied elitist superiority, calculated irresponsibility, and cultivated languor.<sup>9</sup>

True to the Western dandy form, Westernized Daisuke is an elitist, irresponsible, and a cultivator of languor. Michiyo’s brother, with whom he feels a special closeness, describes him as an “arbiter elegantiarum” [Sôseki writes the Latin phrase glossed with Japanese pronunciation alongside in *furigana*] (Field, 206). Criticizing Daisuke for his leisurely attitude toward marriage, his own brother compares him to a “Genroku dandy” [元禄時代の色男] (Field, 158). Daisuke is also given to taking walks without a purpose in mind. Getting on a streetcar and ending up in Ginza, strolling and stopping to shop for a “few necessities,” he buys an expensive bottle of perfume (later scenting his pillow with it and placing drops in the four corners of his room to indulge himself in perfume-scented sleep), and shuns domestic products at Shiseidô in favor of imports. He is also a *flâneur* (from *flâner*, to lounge, saunter idly), an idler.

The city of Paris taught Walter Benjamin *flânerie*, says Arendt, “like the dandy and the snob, the *flâneur* had his home in the nineteenth century, an age of security in which children of upper-middle-class families were assured of an income without having to work, so that they had no reason to hurry.”<sup>10</sup> The city of Tokyo taught Daisuke the same lesson. Walter Benjamin wrote about the *flâneur*, a pose if not a vocation he himself cultivated, in an essay on Baudelaire: “It is to him, aimlessly strolling through the crowds in the big cities in studied contrast to their hurried, purposeful activity, that things reveal themselves in their secret meaning: ‘The true picture of the past flits by,’ and only the *flâneur* who idly strolls by receives the message” (Arendt, 12). Benjamin, like Daisuke, thought working for a living was unspeakable, and depended on an allowance from his parents throughout his adult life until his parents’ death. Arendt

believes that *flânerie* influenced Benjamin's thinking and writing. *Flânerie*, in other words, is not a mere diversion but a way of being in the world. It is not an activity one engages in for lack of anything better to do but a purposefully purposeless activity. More, Daisuke's *flânerie* and idleness (they go together, hand in glove) are a subtle form of rebellion: he refuses to participate in the success scenario of his father's generation. He is content to wander aimlessly.

Tsuda is a different breed of *kôtô yûmin* altogether. Auestad uses the prosaic term "unemployed intellectual" to refer to those university graduates in early Taishô for whom not only was the fast-track to success an impossible dream but finding employment was increasingly difficult. Tsuda was employed but he was no up-and-coming Noboru as in *Ukigumo*. Tsuda's adult life, according to Auestad, "coincides with the emergence of the average *sarariiman* (salaried worker) whose way of life is motivated more by an instinct for survival and appetite for personal happiness, than by the ideals and principles held by the generation that reached adulthood during the Meiji period" (Austad, *Rereading Sôseki*, 91). Tsuda's obsequiousness as a prototypical *sarariiman* (we see him kowtowing to his boss, Mr. Yoshikawa, in *Meian*, lighting his cigars, groveling before him) according to Kinmonth's definition, would make him a modern-day samurai who sought to maintain his position and to advance (if there was advancement) by the relations he cultivated with his superiors:

The *sarariiman* ethos was explicitly one of obsequiousness. As long as it was generally believed that the nation was a reflection of the individuals composing it, it was intellectually difficult, indeed almost treasonous, to advocate the personality ethic. Intellectuals and journalists held to the Smilesean equation more strongly than did businessmen. (Kinmonth, 328)

Like the dandy Daisuke, Tsuda too was concerned with appearances. "Tsuda was a man who disliked revealing anything unpleasant to women," we are told. Understandably, he feels there is no need to have O-Nobu near his side during his operation. "He particularly disliked showing them any unpleasant aspects of himself. And even more than that, he felt unusual discomfort in being forced to look at his own unpleasant aspects" (Viglielmo, 70). Unlike Daisuke, Tsuda seems too unintellectual to consider *flânerie* as a form of rebellion. He does not rebel against the status quo but rather seems reasonably happy just maintaining his position. He may resemble other male characters for his lack of drive, but he is not resigned to his fate in

the same way, even though he is comfortable having Mrs. Yoshikawa control his actions. He is not resigned to his fate like Sensei or Sôsuke, who are pursued by a dark cloud of past transgressions. His journey to the hot spring, the only real movement we see Tsuda capable of performing, must be seen as a kind of wandering, the same kind of wandering that Ichirô does with H. Wandering, I aim to show, is a form of deviance or transgression, wandering is “to turn.” In Tsuda’s case, he goes to meet his former fiancée Kiyoko, leaving O-Nobu behind and in a sense “turning” away from her.

In his book *Sexual Dissidence*, Jonathan Dollimore demonstrates how wandering (errantry, as in “knight errant”), deviation, perversity, and erring are all semantically related, meaning “to turn away” (from a prescribed path). In his enlightening reading of *Othello*, he cites Shakespeare’s description of the Moor as the “erring barbarian” and the “extravagant and wheeling stranger of here and everywhere,” noting that the *OED* gives its first entry for extravagance as “a going out of the usual path; an excursion, digression; that which wanders out of bounds; straying, roaming vagrant.”<sup>12</sup> Dollimore finds turning at every turn: besides Othello’s constant turning, Iago’s vow to “serve my turn upon Othello,” and there is Brabantio’s “desperate turn.” But most famously there is Othello’s condemnation of Desdemona’s supposed betrayal in what Dollimore terms “an endless capacity for perverse movement”:

You did wish that I would make her turn.  
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,  
And turn again.  
—*Othello* (IV.i. 243-5)

Instead of the “deviant female” (*de+via*, away from, to turn from the way) of Shakespeare’s Desdemona, Sôseki presents a reversal of roles with a constant female, O-Nobu, and the “deviant male” Tsuda, who in turning toward, or returning to, Kiyoko opens the possibility of betrayal. In *Sorekara* as well, Michiyo is portrayed as the constant female and Daisuke is the deviant male. I cannot claim that the same semantics for wandering/erring exists precisely in Japanese, but the verb *mayou* 迷う, to wander, to go astray, to deviate from the rightful course, seems to have a corresponding polysemous richness in the Japanese language. Mineko, we recall, refers to Sanshirô as a “stray sheep,” which Sôseki writes as *mayoi hitsuji* 迷羊 finessed with the furigana, ストレイ・シープ. The novel ends with Sanshirô pondering Mineko’s words, “stray sheep, stray sheep.” As Rubin has pointed out in his “Sanshiro and Soseki: A Critical Essay,”

*maigo* (lost child) is a favorite word of Sôseki's: "Sôseki occasionally used the characters for *maigo* (a favorite word of his in any case) to write *mago-mago suru* and *mago-tsuku*, a synonym, indicating how closely these terms for bewilderment, confusion, and aimlessness were bound up in his mind."<sup>13</sup> Sôseki uses this vocabulary in *Kôfu*, *Higan Sugi Made*, and *Meian*, as Rubin mentions, but Rubin does not push the wandering/erring connection I wish to make. There are premodern instances as well: Shirane has remarked on the metaphorical coherence in the theme of wandering, exile and transgression in. for example, *Genji* and *Ise monogatari*.<sup>14</sup> As is frequently observed about Sôseki, there is a betrayal (a turning) at the heart of most of his later novels. The plot of *Kokoro* "turns" on a number of betrayals. The English title for *Kôjin*, *The Wayfarer*, nicely captures the sense of wandering (the English edition provides maps of Ichirô's wanderings on the back cover) and with it the possibility for erring/transgression that form the crux of the novel. The literary tropes ("tropes" is Greek for "turn," as in "turn of phrase") *flânerie*, wandering, digression, and transgression intersect in interesting and complex ways, reflecting a relationship between form and content, revealing a connection between author's style and the author's message. Wanderers appear in Sôseki's earlier novels as well (in *Botchan*, *Kusamakura*, *Kôfu*), in which, admittedly, the sense of transgression is not as pronounced, if present at all. Even in these earlier novels, wandering should be read as a turning away—from the capital, from city life, the past, etc.—and thereby opening up the possibility for *bôken*, for adventure, romance, discovery, and perhaps even treachery.

On an innocent, rambling level, "walking" and "sauntering" connote the peripatetic school of the Greek philosophers or the wandering philosophizing Confucian gentleman-scholar. This connotation is seen in the names of Meiji authors Tsubouchi "rambling" Shôyô (逍遙) and Kunikida "I walk alone" Doppo (独歩). Doppo's *Musashino* (1898), for example, is a leisurely walk in the country. Larded with quotations from his diary and lengthy passages from Turgenev's *Rendezvous*, the short story reads like Henry David Thoreau (the "walking eyeball in nature" that only observes but does not intrude into the scene)—even though Kunikida "I Walk Alone" Doppo's literary influences are generally stated as being Thomas Carlyle and William "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" Wordsworth. The good sense of saunterer (as opposed to the erring, rebellious nature of Daisuke's *flânerie*) as the cosmopolite author (cosmopolitan in his literary tastes at least), is found in Thoreau's essay "Walking":

I have met with but one or two persons in the course of my life who understood the art of Walking, that is, of taking walks—who had a genius, so to speak, for sauntering: which word is beautifully derived from idle people who roved about the country, in the Middle Ages, and asked charity, under pretense of going *à la Sainte Terre*, to the Holy Land, till the children exclaimed, “There goes a *Sainte-Terrer*,” a Saunterer, a Holy Lander. They who never go to the Holy Land in their walks, as they pretend, are indeed mere idlers and vagabonds; but they who do go there are saunterers in the good sense, such as I mean. Some, however, would derive the word from *sans terre*, without land or a home, which, therefore, in the good sense, will mean, having no particular home, but equally at home everywhere.<sup>15</sup> [emphasis in original]

I would prefer to say that Sôseki was cosmopolitan, a Confucian gentleman-scholar, and a man equally at home everywhere, but we know for a fact that his slightly more than two years in England were not happy ones (where he experienced a nervous breakdown), and neither were his years spent in Matsuyama and Kumamoto, for that matter. Nor was his married life particularly happy. What I can state unequivocally is that the author of the rambling essay *Watakushi no kojinsugi* (My Individualism) understood the importance of digression (what was the point of the *saba* anecdote, for example?). Both Kenshirô Homma and Beongcheon Yu translated the title of *Michikusa*—and not without reason—as “Loitering.” As McClellan explains in his introduction to the novel, idiomatically the phrase *michikusa o kuu*, “to eat grass on the road,” means to waste one’s time or to be distracted. The title seems to suggest, he says, “that the novel is about distraction.” Then he offers an alternative meaning: “that [Sôseki’s] private life had been that of an outsider, like a weed growing beside the main road” (McClellan, xi). I think McClellan was correct the first time. The novel is about distractions, and in the broadest sense (on a meta-level), Sôseki’s writing itself is about distractions (this is a lesson Sôseki learned well from Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*, and Sôseki’s *Neko* is a case study in Shandean digression). The journey and the process—both in life and in writing—are more important than the final destination (as the artist in *Kusamakura* walks intentionally without purpose toward the Zen temple). And of course by definition, meandering, loitering, strolling, and sauntering have no *telos*; they are ends in themselves. This lack of *telos*, of a final purpose or destination, is made clear in the novel: “What a drawn-out and difficult thing it is to complete anything in one’s life,” Kenzô muses on the birth of his third daughter—although it is not clear to *what* exactly he is referring (McClellan, 134). There is an expression of gender difference here that men more than women, especially men such as Kenzô, have a more difficult time bringing something to fruition or completion. The same sentiment is echoed in the last lines of the novel:

“Hardly anything in this life is settled. Things that happen once will go on happening. But they come back in different guises, and that’s what fools us.” He spoke bitterly, almost with venom.

His wife gave no answer. She picked up the baby and kissed its red cheeks many times. “Nice baby, nice baby, we don’t know what daddy is talking about, do we?” (McClellan, 169)

On one level Kenzô is speaking about the annulment of his adoption and the possibility that he may finally be free of the bonds of that uncomfortable relationship and be done with the money-grubbing Shimada, his opportunistic foster father. But on another level he is expounding his personal philosophy of life and serving as the author’s surrogate to espouse Sôseki’s *Weltanschauung* at the same time.

To avoid essentializing the wandering/erring binary, I suggest we again recall the role of the dandy and flânerie in Sôseki, and consider the importance of wandering and the associated theme of exile in Sôseki’s earlier works such as *Botchan*, *Kusamakura*, and *Kôfu*, all which involve movement away from the capital, away from the city, and even away from “civilization.” The renegade character of *Botchan*, the artist fleeing civilization in *Kusamakura*, the runaway boy in *Kôfu*, all have strayed, are deracinated, unsettled, and therefore suspect. They have to prove in some way that they are fit, successful, and not dubious characters. Mark C. Taylor in his *Erring: A Postmodern A/theology* summarizes the wandering/erring binary in a way that transcends his original religious context and applies in more general ways to our present discussion as well:

To saunter is to wander or travel about aimlessly and unprofitably. The wanderer moves to and from, hither and thither, with neither fixed course nor certain end. Such wandering is erring—erring in which one not only roams, rove, and rambles but also strays, deviates, and errs. Free from every secure dwelling, the unsettled, undomesticated wanderer is always unsettling and uncanny.<sup>16</sup>

*Kôfu*, according to translator Jay Rubin, is an experimental novel “that in many respects anticipates the work of Joyce and Beckett.” It is a novel of self-discovery in which the young man’s sense of identity is built in part on the realization of the foreign Other. While briefly employed working in a mine, he cannot sleep because of bedbugs (Nanking bugs [*cimex*]), and the “mud-rice” served to the miners is too slippery for him to eat with chopsticks (*nankin-mai*, imported or foreign rice). There is also a probability that the young man will encounter “guest workers” (slave labor?) in the mines. “You’re a Japanese, aren’t you?”

asks Yasu, a boss in the mines (Rubin, 143), who insists the young man look for a decent job and make his country proud of him. The “otherness” of the mine environment would make him consider his “Japaneseness” (though, of course, this is never mentioned or discussed outright)—and perhaps for the first time he must consider a “national identity,” a Japanese identity. I suggest that a similar process is at work in Sôseki’s later novels that contain the continental wanderer and historical descriptions of the colonies. Sôseki never directly poses the question *What does it mean to be a Japanese?*—but this is a pressing inquiry that requires scrutinizing once the reality of an Asian Other is encountered by his fictional characters. Keitarô in *Higan Sugi Made* merely dreams of someday becoming a superintendent of a rubber plantation in Singapore (in section 1) whereas characters in other novels actively pursue a future in the colonies.

The narrator of *Kôfu*, though not a continental wanderer, departs from Tokyo, walking North, with no destination in mind. The stage is already set for “deviation” and “perversity.” The narrator without a name is committed to taking his own life or, failing that, turning into a “degenerate” (*daraku* 墮落). He contemplates his future working in the mines: “. . . tomorrow I would have to begin clanging with hammer and chisel, that there would be those other things to deal with—the mud-rice, the bedbugs, the jangle, the ‘goddesses,’ and, last of all, the fact of my own degeneracy.” (Rubin, 131). In the end, however, a doctor judges him unfit to work in the mines. The young man considers the doctor’s diagnosis: “Bronchitis. The first step toward consumption. And once you had that you were finished,” and continues to ruminate, “I could wait for death as long as I stayed here training in degeneracy. Other kinds of training might be difficult for a consumptive, but degeneracy . . .” (Rubin, 158).

***Sôseki Here and There.*** Sôseki understood that literature is a form of meandering. In the autumn of 1909 he took a six-week trip (a press junket, as we would call it today) through Manchuria and Korea at the invitation of an old school friend, Nakamura Zekô, the president of the South Manchurian Railway (SMR), which was turned into a meandering travel narrative called *Man-Kan tokoro-dokoro* (Here and There in Manchuria and Korea). His travelogue was nicknamed by contemporary critics and readers as “Sôseki Here and There (*Sôseki tokoro-dokoro*) for its idiosyncratic style. James Fujii has criticized Sôseki for his

amnesia and blindness to Japan's "imperialist horizon."<sup>17</sup> But nowhere have I read the same criticism leveled at Yosano Akiko, for example, for her *Man-Mô yûki* (Travels in Manchuria and Mongolia, 1928), whose travelogue, like Sôseki's, is a personal, intimate portrait and not a political or ethical inquiry.<sup>18</sup> One could argue that the political has never been the sine qua non of belles lettres in Japan. Sôseki's contemporary Mori Ôgai served in both the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars, traveled in Manchuria and Taiwan but did not speak out against Japanese colonization of Asia.<sup>19</sup> It seems to me that James Fujii's charges of amnesia and blindness must be leveled against much of Japanese literature and its creators as being accomplices of silence. We do not need to reject Fujii's charges against Sôseki, however (he is indeed guilty as charged), in order to accept that the author's stylistic concerns as a novelist were always paramount. Sôseki's travelogue should be read alongside *Kusamakura*, his haiku novel, which it most resembles (not against *Kokoro*, as Fujii does); by doing so the influences of *shaseibun* (a kind of poetic photorealism studied with Masaoka Shiki) become more apparent. Inger Brodey's helpful introduction to her translation of *Man-Kan* should be read as a well-thought-out defense of Sôseki's travelogue, *contra* Fujii's indictment.<sup>20</sup>

Sôseki himself became a *tairiku rônin* 大陸浪人 (continental wanderer) of sorts by accepting an invitation to travel in Manchuria and Korea, and he also introduced the continental wanderer as a character in many of his novels. The novel without a reference to Manchuria, Mongolia or Korea is the rare exception in his works. Continental wanderers appear in the person of O-Nami's husband in *Kusamakura* (and Kyûichi is conscripted), Morimoto in *Higan Sugi Made*, Yasui in *Mon*, and Kobayashi in *Meian*. Besides these characters that populate the novels, there are also descriptive passages about the colonies in *Shumi no Iden*, *Sanshirô*, and in *Sorekara*. In *Meian*, Makoto's older sister and brother-in-law are living in Formosa. For a novelist who has been falsely accused of having nothing to say about Japan's imperial ethos, his frequent mention of continental wanderers is puzzling.

Character (Novel)	Colonial Destination
O-Nami's husband ( <i>Kusamakura</i> )	Manchuria
Morimoto ( <i>Higan Sugi Made</i> )	Dairen (Ta-lien), Manchuria
Yasui ( <i>Mon</i> )	Manchuria, Mongolia
Kobayashi ( <i>Meian</i> )	Korea

Figure 9. Continental Wanderers in the Works of Natsume Sôseki

Continental wanderers function in a variety of ways. O-Nami's ex-husband's appearance at the train station, in the final scene of *Kusamakura*, firmly brings the artist's reverie back to the historical present, and as a novelistic device, allows the artist to see for the first time compassion in O-Nami's face when she is confronted with his departure. Morimoto, who "skips town," leaving behind six-months' rent in arrears (and a walking stick which Keitarô claims and affects), writes a letter to Keitarô revealing his new employment at the Electric Park in Dairen, an amusement park operated by SMR which Sôseki observed on his travels there (Brodey and Tsunematsu, *Rediscovering Natsume Sôseki*, 47). Morimoto as a vagabond and adventurer is held in awe by the young Keitarô who is also having trouble finding employment. Yasui's "self-exile" to the continent fortuitously eases the mind of Sôsuke who suffers guilt for having stolen his wife/fiancée (their relationship is deliberately—and maddeningly—not made clear). Kobayashi, armed with Tsuda's old overcoat, perhaps the only symbol of bourgeois respectability in his possession, and a new suit, prepares to pursue a career as a poorly-paid journalist in Korea. The similarities are striking: the colonies offer employment, escape, and adventure. Becoming a continental wanderer is part of a young man's education, just as military life is a male rite of passage in most cultures. Sôseki's main male characters, however, effectively avoid either option. Departure for the continent is not shown as heroic except perhaps for Kyûichi, who will have to fight in the Russo-Japanese War. Perhaps Sôseki's unexpressed feelings about the SMR as well as his profound ambivalence toward progress and modernity can be found in his description of a train as an "iron monster" in *Kusamakura* (written prior to his visit to the continent):

Whenever I see the violent way in which a train runs along, indiscriminately regarding all human beings as so much freight, I look at the individuals cooped up in the carriages, and at the iron monster itself which cares nothing at all for individuality, and I think, 'Look out, look out, or you'll find yourselves in trouble.' The railway train which blunders ahead blindly into the pitch darkness is one example of the very obvious dangers which abound in modern civilization. (Turney, 181-182)

The desire to make something of oneself, when opportunities are fewer or nonexistent in Japan, drives the latter-day Morimotos, Yasuis, and Kobayashis to seek their fortune in the colonies, and the petit bourgeois success scenario, even if scorned by the likes of antiestablishment Kobayashi, is merely continued on a different stage, in a foreign but “Japanized” venue. Uchida Michio, in his article “Natsume Sôseki in Manchuria and Korea,” describes continental wanderers as “Japanese civilians active on the Asian mainland in various capacities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, [who] constitute a particular thread running through the corpus of Natsume Sôseki’s novels.”<sup>21</sup> I invite the reader to join me in “connecting the dots” between wandering, turning, and transgression (transgression: “to go beyond” limits, boundaries) with the effects and significance of continental wanderers’ actions in Sôseki’s works. Although I have just said that continental wanderers represent a continuation of the success scenario, the reason for going to the colonies in the first place was failure at home. In *Mon*, even Sôsuke’s younger brother Koroku says “I’m thinking of leaving school and going off immediately to Manchuria perhaps, or Korea” (Mathy, 24). Uchida suggests that “contemporary readers would have been stirred to entertain grave misgivings about the vast continent pictured in Sôsuke’s mind and the future course of the Meiji state, which was being caught up by some unknown force as it ravished this same continent” (Uchida, 16). Not only the continental wanderers but the Meiji state itself was on a course to go beyond established limits and boundaries. Because actions have consequences, many Sôseki protagonists refuse to act at all. Daisuke, as I have said, embodies a fear of action and cultivates his perfect idleness as a form of rebellion. Sensei, once the damage has been done (K’s suicide) decides to live his life as one already dead, a person who shuns action altogether. Sôsuke and O-Yone retire to their small private world after having driven Yasui into exile. The odd man out is Kobayashi, who, headed for Korea to write for a newspaper (in the same way that the SMR had hoped Sôseki would write for their organ, the *Manchurian Daily News*), stands to make pronouncements against Japanese society (what he does best) from the perspective of an outcast in exile. The narrative is cut off, however, upon Sôseki’s death, before Kobayashi has a chance to speak out, and we have no way of knowing whether he actually would have or even would have been able to do so. Uchida sees Kobayashi as Sôseki’s hope for continental wanderers to serve as a basis for his criticism of *bunmei kaika*, civilization and enlightenment:

It may be nonsensical to pin one's hopes on what might have come after *Light and Darkness*, but Kobayashi is a figure with the potential to fundamentally criticize from the perspective of 'exilement' and 'an exile' the ruling establishment of modern Japan, which had rushed into an unfortunate colonial period, and he represents the *ne plus ultra* of Sôseki's literary vision. (Uchida, 17)

### Some Conclusions

By the end of the Meiji period a new "ideological lingua franca," as Gluck called it, had emerged which made available a national discourse and a new vocabulary. Whereas in the Tokugawa period a sense of identity was either class-based (samurai, peasant, artisan, or merchant) or domain-based (*han*), by the end of Meiji a new sense of nationhood provided a fresh identity: you were a *kokumin* (a [Japanese] citizen or countryman), who spoke a *kokugo* ([Japanese] national language), and participated in a *kokutai* (body politic, or national polity); the emperor was both a constitutional monarch and a deified patriarch, incorporating the myth of the unbroken imperial line. The "ideological lingua franca" of Meiji formulated a sense of nationhood, a sense of history, and a sense of self, all of which were never far below the surface in Sôseki's writing. No single image of self, however, coalesces into a prevailing view, but rather several depictions of the subject, at times conflicting ones, can be seen in his writing. Perhaps most frequently associated with his portrayal of the alienated modern self, Sôseki also presents a traditionalist Meiji national subject who is inspired to follow General Nogi's *junshi* (Sensei in *Kokoro*), an atomized self (Daisuke), problems of the authentic self (*jiko hon'i* in his essay on individualism), and even a nationalistic self (Sôseki's own travels in Manchuria and Korea). Japan's modernity, as James Fujii has pointed out, is "radically contradictory," and Sôseki's writing reflects many of the contradictions inherent in the changing times.

Most remarkable, perhaps, is his emphasis not on the family romances of Victorian England (Jane Austen, the Brontës, George Eliot, which he read and studied) and of early Meiji but on creating anti-family-romances (as Komori Yôichi has noted in his *Yuragi no Nihon bungaku* [Japanese Literature of Deviation]). In Sôseki's anti-family-romances, communication is impossible, trust is in question, gender roles are skewed or threatened, marriages for the most part are childless, and interpersonal relations are strained at all levels, and ending in near-madness (*Sorekara, Kôjin*), suicide/s (*Kokoro*), or death (*Gubijinsô*), or quiet resignation (*Mon*). The dominant/dominating domestic scenario for women (the

passive woman, the angel in the house, the dutiful wife, good wives and wise mothers, *ryōsai kenbo*), has little place in the later fiction of Natsume Sōseki—except perhaps in the underdeveloped Ojōsan of *Kokoro*, hardly a *kenbo* but surely a *ryōsai*. Instead, women are active and intent on forging their own identities (especially O-Nami, Mineko, O-Nobu). Similarly, the success scenario for men of Meiji and Taishō Japan (advancement, rising in the world) has scant meaning for Sōseki's protagonists—in fact, many of them openly rebel against it, choosing instead a life of quiet desperation.

Sōseki's protagonists for the most part (Tsuda is an exception) refuse to worship what William James called “the bitch-goddess of success.” Surely Sōseki would have agreed with the prognosis of his contemporary, the pragmatic American philosopher—some of whose works such as *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), Sōseki had read—that the worship of success was a national disease. In a letter to H. G. Wells dated 11 September 1906 James wrote: “The moral flabbiness born of the exclusive worship of the bitch-goddess SUCCESS. That—with the squalid cash interpretation put on the word success—is our national disease” [James's emphasis]. Bunzō's nemesis in *Ukigumo*, Noboru, the “social climber” as his name implies, is oddly absent in Sōseki's fiction, except in the person of *Nowaki*'s Nakano Kiichi (and in Tsuda if we accept him as a milder incarnation of Noboru in his sycophantic stance toward the Yoshikawas). Sōseki does not set up a whipping post “social climber” to then expose and deride, but he does create the naysayer Kobayashi who delights in laying bare the bourgeois hypocrisy all around him. In *Mon* the Sakais exist to remind Sōsuke and O-Yone that their lives will never be full and abundant, just as the Okamotos in *Meian* remind Tsuda and O-Nobu of their comparatively circumscribed existence. Daisuke's rejection of his father's business success and his refusal to compete is tantamount to repudiating the national project of growth and prosperity.

*Mon* belongs to that category of Sōseki novels which currently seems to inspire theoretical readings, alongside *Gubijinsō*, *Nowaki*, and *Kokoro*. Mizumura, as we have discussed, has suggested reading *Gubijinsō* as an allegory or metaphorical struggle between English literature (Fujio), Chinese literature (Kodō-sensei), and Japanese literature (Ono). Reichert has proposed a queer reading of *Nowaki*, wherein Shirai Dōya represents the samurai ethos of *nanshoku* (male-male love), Nakano Kiichi romantic male-

female love, and Takayanagi caught in between, as it were. Uchida and others claim that *Mon* should be read as a colonial study of Japan and its relationship with Korea. Uchida is of the opinion that *Mon* “parallels the irrational course of the relationship between Japan and Korea and that it can be read as a metaphor of this historical background (including the circumstances of the three-cornered relationship between Sôsuke, Oyone, and Yasui)” (Uchida, 16)<sup>21</sup> Sôseki sets the stage for “colonialist criticism” in the beginning of *Mon* (Section III) with the assassination of Prince Itô (actual newspaper headlines of the day read “Prince Itô Killed by Korean!”). Skirting the issue, Sôsuke and O-Yone have little to discuss about the newspaper reports of Itô’s murder in Harbin. Their silence on the subject conceals, reconfirms, and echoes their own silence on the fate of Yasui (and the author’s silence as well?). Sôseki is not silent, however, about the event. Into the mouth of Sôsuke’s brother, Koroku, Sôseki puts the ominous and prescient words: “Still, Harbin . . . in fact, all of Manchuria is a very unsettled place. I can’t help feeling that there will eventually be an explosion.” (Mathy, 22) The tocsin is also sounded at the end of *Kusamakura* as the artist observes two men (perhaps soldiers about to depart for the colonies) at the train station: “They knew nothing of the stench which the wind was carrying across the plains of Manchuria, neither did they realize the shortcomings of modern civilization.” (Turney, 182). When Japan’s national identity was increasingly becoming connected to and defined in terms of its “imperial horizon,” Sôseki’s characters too (his male protagonists) were refashioning themselves in relation to Japan’s colonies.

Chapter 8  
In Conclusion:  
*Matome / Recapitulation*

A comparative approach will have its own drawbacks and limitations, as will all approaches to literature. In discussing love, for example, in its various manifestations (modern love, romantic love, homosocial desire, erotic triangles, etc.), I may speak of love in Japan and love in the West as if the former but not the latter is unstable and mutable—perhaps giving the impression that Western notions and concepts are the fixed and essential foundation against which all others are to be judged and measured. This is absurd, of course, and from the outset I have tried to critique and historicize all concepts (gender, sexuality, love, the body, disease), both Japanese and Western. Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, in his recent comparative study of Don Juan in the East and the West, concludes by deconstructing the very notion of comparative literature itself and the unfeasibility of his own comparative project.<sup>1</sup> Hijjiya-Kirschnerreit has criticized in turn the built-in problematics of Yokota-Murakami's project:

This work has a tendency to presuppose a fixed, monolithic understanding of a "Western" notion, be it "love" (evident among other things in the undiscussed equation of "love" with "romantic love" or the expression "to fall in love"), the Don Juanesque, or sexuality, in order to then show that it is inapplicable to the Japanese case. Rather than seeing this as a case of blindness on the author's part, I regard it as a consequence of his argumentative strategy, for which it is a pure necessity. To "compare in order to uncompare" requires that at least one of the items juxtaposed for this purpose be a fixed entity. Contextualizing and historicizing both would make things too complex to handle, and this results in a peculiar perceptible split as a precondition for the book's argument.<sup>2</sup>

I do not attempt to contextualize and historicize both sides of the equation—not because it is too complex to handle but because my focus (and expertise, such as it is) is necessarily limited to Japanese literature: contextualizing the *atarashii onna* and not the new woman of Victorian fiction, for example, or contextualizing and historicizing the *roaku* and Osan/Koharu of Japanese fiction, and not the femme fatale of the West, contextualizing the *flâneur* of Sôseki's fiction and not the European tradition. "Tradition" is another freighted concept that I use casually at times, perhaps implying that there are cohesive, single, uncontested cultural and literary customs and practices, which is rarely the case. In the postmodern "tradition," if that is the word, there is usually fragmentation, incongruity, disjuncture, and multiplicity to be found behind all claims to monolithicity—at least that is what I have sought to describe. The "tradition" of romantic love in the West (not of course fixed and monolithic, as Hijjiya-Kirschnerreit reminds us),

introduced to Japanese literature in early Meiji, required a new vocabulary and grammar of “love” and new literary characters to express it.

The Western concept of “love,” or rather *one* of its meanings that was new to Meiji literature and society—romantic love, but also including the meaning of the love for a person of the *opposite sex* as a friend and equal—best illustrates the problems in making a point to point correspondence between Japanese and Western terms and concepts. Yokota-Murakami offers a brief history of the English word “love” and its phonetic rendering into Japanese, *rabu* (also *raabu*, *rabbu*). Some of the earliest usages appear in Tsubouchi Shōyō’s *Tōsei shosei katagi* (The Character of the Modern Student, 1885) and in Suehiro Tetchō’s *Setchūbai* (Plum Blossoms in the Snow, 1886). In the former example, Shōyō glossed the Chinese character *koi* 恋 (love) with the *furigana* reading *raabu*. The “love” of *Edo* (*iki*, *kōshoku*, *tsū*, *sui*), the passion one feels for a professional woman, not for one’s own wife, was gradually transformed into the alien concept of “love” (*ren’ai*), signifying romantic love, even sexual love, that a man or woman could feel toward his or her spouse (heterosexual relationships).<sup>3</sup> The transformation of “love” was a dissociation of *iki*, which involved commercialized sexual relations.

This difference is still under discussion in Sōseki’s final novel of 1916. In an especially dark chapter, Section 17 of *Meian*, Tsuda encounters in the gloomy anteroom of the clinic (where he has gone to make an appointment for his anal operation), several men who share a similar past: “a portion of their past had been brilliantly colored.” The men now must seek medical treatment for their colorful pasts. Fredric Jameson seems to think that Tsuda himself is included among “this gloomy group of men, who without exception, had a similar past” (Viglielmo, 27). Tsuda recognizes two of them, his brother-in-law and an old friend (thought by many to be Seki, the man who married his fiancée, Kiyoko), with whom he leaves the clinic and “while they had eaten dinner they had had a serious discussion about the problems of sex and love” (Viglielmo, 27). Sōseki glosses the Chinese characters for love and sex, 性と愛 *sei to ai*, with the *furigana* phonetic rendering *sekkusu* and *rabu*. We do not know what kind of discussion the two men had concerning the “problems of sex and love,” but one can imagine a continuation of the debate that aroused Meiji literati—something along the lines of Tōkoku’s comparison of the Edo concept of *iki* and modern love,

*ren'ai*, perhaps? They might have discussed the following questions: How did Seki contract venereal disease, if not from commercial sex? Was he “in love” with a geisha? Did Hori “love” his wife, Tsuda’s sister? Did he marry for “love”? We don’t know the content of the conversation; neither do we know the content of Tsuda’s amorous experiences (does he, like Daisuke in *Sorekara*, visit geisha? Does he “love” his wife, O-Nobu? Is he still in love with Kiyoko? And how do these kinds of love differ?) Sôseki has ironically thrown Tsuda’s fate together with the men of the brilliantly colored past, coloring him with the same brush, making him (look) guilty by association. Daisuke, Sôsuke, and Sensei, each is haunted by his “sins” of his past. Often, they cannot or will not give a name to their sin (its name, I think, is love). Meredith also observed betrayal in his *Modern Love*, but pointed no accusing finger: “I see no sin: The wrong is mixed. In tragic life, God wot, no villain need be! Passions spin the plot: We are betrayed by what is false within.” Sôseki, however, is not as charitable as Meredith in allowing for no villains; the guilty must suffer. How much easier it would be to go to the clinic and be treated for one’s colorful past loves. But for Tsuda and for Sôseki there is no cure for love, only sustained alienation and anguish. The new language of love (Sôseki had almost nothing to say about sex as, for example, Ôgai did in *Vita Sexualis*) appealed to him most in terms of its effects and consequences (usually devastating), in the disillusionment in love, not in expressions of romantic love. Daisuke’s love for Michiyo, for example, is expressed in this florid passages: “You are necessary to my existence. Absolutely necessary. It was because I wanted to tell you this that I had you come all the way over” (Field, 208), and Sanshirô confesses his love for Mineko with the heartfelt proclamation, “I have just come to see you.”

The changes in the discourse of love from Edo to Meiji-Taishô account for the possibility of new literary representations of love and romance, of new narratives of desire, and accounts for the disappearance of other narratives. The answer to my rhetorical question, What happened to expressions of homosexual love in Meiji?, is suggested in Yokota-Murakami’s statement that “the traditional sexual ideal of *iki* [in Edo] was replaced by *ren'ai* (love), which differed from *iki* in that it could not be applied to homosexual passion, at least in the Meiji period” (Yokota-Murakami, 49-50). The newly utterable phrase “I love you,” a man could now exclaim in novels to his wife as friend and equal displaced the once articulated (male-male love) toward the unutterable. I do not think that Sôseki introduced the problem of articulating male-male love in

*Nowaki* in 1907 never to return to this theme again. Rather, it is subliminally present in *Sorekara, Mon, Kôjin*, and *Kokoro* in various manifestations and with varying degrees of intensity.

*Act Like a Man.* Mrs. Yoshikawa, having secretly arranged for Tsuda to meet Kiyoko, slowly unveils her plan in Section 140: “The first words she spoke were ambiguous: ‘If that’s the case, why don’t you behave more like a man?’ [‘*sonnara, motto otokorashiku shicha dô desu’ to iu bakuzen-taru kotoba ga, saisho ni fujin no kuchi o deta*] (Viglielmo, 266). Tsuda then ponders the meaning of ‘acting like a man.’ The dialogue in this section typifies the way Sôseki is able to create an exchange of words that signify much more than what is being communicated between two people. Just as he introduced the words *sekkusu to rabu* only to move on quickly to the next *mise-en-scène*, Sôseki interrogates ‘acting like a man,’ which in turn resonates with Tsuda’s behavior in the entire novel. In fact, the “-*rashisa*,” the being like, seeming like, and acting like, is important to understanding most of the principal characters in the novel: Mrs. Yoshikawa wants O-Nobu to be more *okusanrashii* (wife-like) and Tsuda to be more *otokorashii* (man-like); O-Hide wants Tsuda to be more like a brother to her and perhaps *less* like a husband to O-Nobu for showing his uxoriousness in buying her an expensive ring (O-Hide’s husband, after all, is a profligate, one of the men with a colorful past). I read all this emphasis on *-rashisa* as a statement on roles and gender performance. O-Nobu’s performance of a “modern woman” wanting to be both Osan and Koharu to Tsuda (or even wanting to be loved in marriage!) is repugnant to O-Hide and Mrs. Yoshikawa who cannot receive the dotting attention of their husbands, especially O-Hide.

In urging Tsuda to confront Kiyoko (his past), Mrs. Yoshikawa indirectly suggests what a man should be: a man is decisive; a man does not leave things undone; a man *acts*; a man *sees* what needs to be done. These are all qualities and attributes that Mrs. Yoshikawa not only proposes but that she herself possesses, embodies, and represents. Much more so than weak-willed, passive Tsuda, Mrs. Yoshikawa is the ideal man of Meiji/Taishô. At least in the novel, she is in many ways the most *otokorashii*. That is to say, her performance seems to conform to her own notions of “acting like a man” (since gender roles are defined by acting, by performance, Tsuda is not a man; he doesn’t act, he only follows Mrs. Yoshikawa’s lead).

As for women in Sôseki, they appear both in the form of the “angel in the house” (Michiyo, O-Yone, Ojôsan)—passive objects who have little power over their own lives or futures—and as the seductress, the madonna/whore (O-Nami, Mineko, O-Nobu)—who rebel against the status quo, and, even if temporarily, seek to subvert the established order of woman’s place in the home. O-Nami may appear uncontainable in her “performances” but is in fact perfectly contained by a society that permits intrusion and disruption in order to preserve acceptable boundaries. My treatment of Sôseki’s women as ciphers and mysteries would be repugnant to many feminists who would point out the false dualism of mysterious woman (Freud’s “the riddle of feminine sexuality”) versus intelligible, comprehensible man. But to be fair, Sôseki’s men are also riddles in many ways. Sensei would rather die than tell his wife the truth?—that does not sound like modern love to me. Daisuke would rather go mad than act on his true feelings for Michiyo. Sôseki also is able to observe similar situations and contexts of “love” from different gender perspectives: Othello’s doubting of Desdemona’s constancy is paralleled in *Kôjin*, but the roles are reversed in *Meian*, with O-Nobu doubting and demanding the constancy of her husband, Tsuda. Establishing any kind of pattern becomes difficult if not impossible (as in Yokota-Murakami’s problematics of comparative literature on Don Juan) because Sôseki, much to his credit as a novelist, examines human interaction and interpersonal relationships from a multiplicity of views and angles.

In making East-West comparisons in Sôseki’s novels, I sometimes fall prey to the dangers of parallel studies, attempting to make connections between disparate “traditions” which may have few commonalities. Tsutomu Takahashi has asserted the dangers of parallel studies in his own writing, and also made clear his validation of the method—both of which I have tried to keep in mind in my own readings:

The dangers of the parallel method . . . focus on the potential for a reductive view of literary activities: the complexities of human life may be reduced to universal human nature; literature may be reduced to its content and the general human context; and the reader’s experience may be reduced to the principles of appreciation and literary tastes. As a result, this approach often tends to underrate the individual problems that distinguish between East-Asian literature and Anglo-European literature. It is not only the linguistic and cultural differences that make East-West comparisons so unique and difficult, but also the operation of different systems of literary conventions and assumptions in the East-Asian and Anglo-European traditions. The strength of the parallel method, however, is validated when the critical perspective takes into account the ideological and literary differences between the two traditions.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the best we can do, as Takahashi says in his parallel studies, in applying the parallel approach to literature, is to minimize its dangers (arbitrary and subjective aesthetic judgments, the search for “universals”) and maximize its advantages (interpretative freedom, multiple readings). In attempting to find “universals” in the femme fatale East and West, I risk homologizing two distinct concepts. The *atarashii onna* in Japan, for example, was not a parallel construction of the Victorian New Woman; indeed, if the two had had occasion to meet, chances are they would not even recognize one another. Hiratsuka Raichô’s famous letter to “Nora-san” criticizes Ibsen’s creation for slamming the door on her husband and for walking away from her children (because of her “sacred duty to herself”). Japanese proto-feminists such as Raichô did not think that marriage and family had to be sacrificed in order for women to be free and equal, indeed both marriage and family were seen as necessary and important in defining a woman’s (even a “new woman’s”) identity. There is also the problem of how representative of Japanese women were the voices of the Bluestockings in Japan. Many of these problems are simply not within the scope of this dissertation. To maximize the advantages of parallel studies, I have favored multiple readings, often at the risk of ignoring “traditional” readings, while at the same time recalling the ideological and literary differences between the two traditions, drawing on Japanese literature and the Western novels (at times randomly, infelicitously, playfully) for comparison’s sake.

There are also problems and limitations in reading Sôseki’s novels as mirror reflections of Meiji/Taishô social and cultural morals and values, especially when the author himself is viewed as somehow both entrenched and embedded in his own times (and how could he be otherwise?) and simultaneously standing above or outside society in order to make pronouncements against it (as indeed many authors are able to do). My observations of gender differences in his novels may be shocking or worse, meaningless, to the people I am describing (gender being a recent category of literary analysis, as I have said). Instances of male alienation and male identity crisis that I have cited in Sôseki’s work are not unique to Sôseki or even to Japanese literature (again, tacking back and forth between universals and particulars). Sôseki’s literary predecessors and contemporaries also remarked on the problems of being a man: Futabatei Shimei’s Bunzô (unable to participate in the race for material success), Ozaki Kôyô’s Kan’ichi in *Konjiki yasha* (jilted for not being rich and successful), Arishima Takeo’s Kimura and Kurachi in *Aru Onna* (A Certain Woman,

1919) who suffer at the hands of a strong-willed “modern” woman who flouts conventional morality. Society had moved away from the stratified world of Tokugawa in which everyone knew his class, status, and place in the great chain of being, toward a new realm, in which one could rise to new heights through education, ambition, and perseverance, in which upward mobility was not only possible but one in which the new cultural myth of success was a preeminent. Sôseki’s protagonists represent those men who could not or would not make the transition—resolutely, fully—to the modern.

Michael Kane suggests in his book *Modern Men: Mapping Masculinity in English and German Literature, 1880-1930*, that a crisis of masculinity found resolve and positive expression in a national identity. Japan may appear to have few parallels with turn-of-the-century England and Germany, but the movement toward nation-building and empire was a common project of many modern states, including Japan. Empire and the colonized Other offered yet another means of forging individual (and group) identity.

With the decline of patriarchy and the crisis of masculinity around the last turn of the century, many men looked to the nation as the saviour of their threatened masculinity and idealized the nation above all as a homosocial community of men whose fears and conclusions about their own identity, and in particular about their own masculine identity, might be projected onto all territories outside the borders of that idealized masculine nation.<sup>5</sup>

The Orient was characterized by nineteenth-century Orientalists, according to Said, in terms of “eccentricity, backwardness, silent indifference, feminine penetrability . . . a locale requiring Western attention, reconstruction, even redemption.” (*Orientalism*, 206) Japan’s quest for empire found eccentricity, backwardness and feminine penetrability (some of which is chronicled in Sôseki’s own travels in Manchuria) in Taiwan, Manchuria, and Korea which required reconstruction and redemption by the Land of the Rising Sun. The absolute and systematic difference between the West (rational, developed, humane, superior) and the Orient (aberrant, undeveloped, cruel, inferior) was recast into Japan’s attitude toward Asia. Cast in these terms, “robust” Japan was in the developed, superior position to redeem the inferior, undeveloped nations of Asia.

I began with my own presentation of binary oppositions and would like to close by listing those from Michael Kane’s *Mapping Masculinities*, who says “This new dualist opposition between ‘fit’ and the

‘degenerate’ could be easily added on to the ancient dualistic scheme of things, thus reinforcing all those binary oppositions. The attitude of the time (and still, to some extent, of ours) could perhaps be summed up with the following set of oppositions:” (Kane, 10-11):

Good	Bad
Light	Darkness
Unity	Plurality
Male	Female
Limit	Unlimited
Mind	Body
Spirit	Matter
Culture	Nature
High	Low
Fit	Degenerate

Figure. 10. Fit vs. Degenerate

Kane is interested in pursuing Lombrosianism and Darwinism to its extreme manifestation, as a rationalization and justification for the tyranny of one group of people over another. It is all too easy, he points out, to add to this schema the BOs us/them, native/foreign, and colonialist/colonized. If “robust” Japan could colonize its “inferior” Asian neighbors, Sôseki’s continental wanderers similarly could prove their fitness in the colonies—even if they were unfit for the domestic business success and male rivalry at home. The continental wanderers in Sôseki are not the chief protagonists but rather his minor characters, still the fit/degenerate binary obtains in many narrative contexts, as I have tried to show. Yokota-Murakami also addresses the role of degeneracy in the writings of nineteenth-century sexologists (some of which were read by Ôgai and Sôseki) who posited a connection between passion and disease:

Sexuality emerges as potential lewdness, where too much passion and desire is a problem. Therefore, Forel speaks of a “monstrous superabundance of feeble, sickly, mentally perverted, criminally disposed, idle, treacherous, vain, crafty, covetous, passionate, capricious, and untrustworthy individual,” who have degenerated because of the failure to moralize their sexuality. Passion is now a moral problem on par with idleness, vanity, caprice, and treachery. It is a crime and a disease. (Yokota-Murakami, 139)

To Kane’s list of binaries we could add Yokota-Murakami’s passion/disease and the additional understanding that “passion spins the plot” and that passions, even secret, hidden passions of the past, are still readable on the body, manifested as disease and degeneracy. “The body” as described by Turner, “is at

once the most solid, the most elusive, illusory, concrete, metaphorical, ever-present and ever-distant thing—as site, an instrument, an environment, a singularity and a multiplicity.”<sup>6</sup> Corporeality in Sôseki has proved difficult to trace. What is marked on the body (or hidden, encoded) is a symptom, a sign of moral uncertainty, unfitness, degeneracy and disease: Tsuda’s anal fistula, Ichirô’s scrawniness, Daisuke’s dandyism and *flânerie*. In *Meian*, even the young Makoto’s French lesson seems to make a pronouncement against Tsuda’s physical body: “*Je suis poli. Tu es malade.*” In *Nowaki*, Takayanagi notices that the dandyish Nakano clutches his gloves in his hand when out walking, instead of wearing them. Destitute, tubercular Takayanagi understands the significance of bodily signs and display, on the one hand, and yet knows that being *deshabillé* does not equal moral shabbiness, however society might view him. There is no anagnorisis in Sôseki’s characters, as I have said, that moment of recognition in Aristotelian tragedy realized by marks on the body. Classical examples are the mark on Oedipus’s feet (lanced and bound together as an infant to prevent him from crawling away when abandoned by the roadside) by which he realizes he is the son of Laius; and Odysseus’s scar on his thigh by which his nurse recognizes him. Classical Japanese examples are Genji’s supernatural markings, or signs of the Buddha, a bundle of light, when born, and possessing a heavenly fragrance (which mark his identity, even when in the dark or in disguise). Corporeality, largely negative in its associations, mirrors the social body and, as Stephen Dodd has said, “is part and parcel of the wider body politic.” The body as microcosm reveals disease, unfitness, and passion writ large on the body politic. “The body,” as Judith Butler has said, “is synecdochal for the social system,” and Sôseki shows contemporary society of his day to be afflicted with the same malady of modernity/modernization that his protagonists suffer: alienation, intense self-consciousness, discontinuity, caustic irony (the stamp of modernist culture)—and more important, the rare ability at times to resist and oppose.

## Appendix A.

ana—>あな—>穴(ketsu)—>anus—>cecum—>cecily

医者は探りを入れた後で、手術台の上から津田を下ろした。

「矢張穴が腸まで続いているんです。この前探った時は、途中に癒痕の隆起があったので、ついに其所が行き留りだとはばかり思っ  
て、ああ云ったんですが、今日疎通を好くする為に、其奴をがり  
がり掻き落して見ると、まだ奥があるんです」(Meian, 5)

**Fundament** [14C) - L *fundamentum* foundation (*fundare* 'to found':

—>ment) - (c1290) *fondement* - (O)F] n. 1. (理論 原理) 基礎、基盤;

基本原理 2a 臀部、しり (buttocks). b 肛門 (anus).

3 「地理」原景観 (地形・気候・地質など) のような地域の本来の然的特  
徴)。

**Cecum** [(1721) -L *caecum* blind thing (neut.) - *caecus* blind: —>cecily] n.

(pl ce-ca) 「階割」盲腸。

**Cecily** [F *cecily* /L *caecitatem* - *caecus* - blind - ?IE\*kai-ko one-eyed] n.

(詩・比喩) 盲目 (blindness).



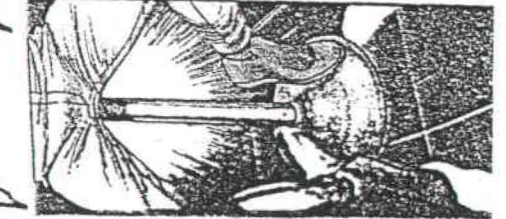
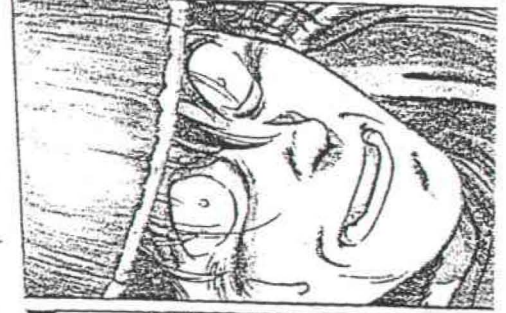
やった...



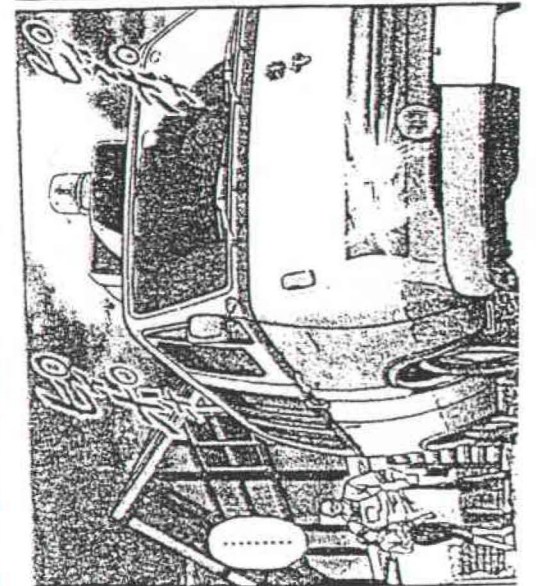
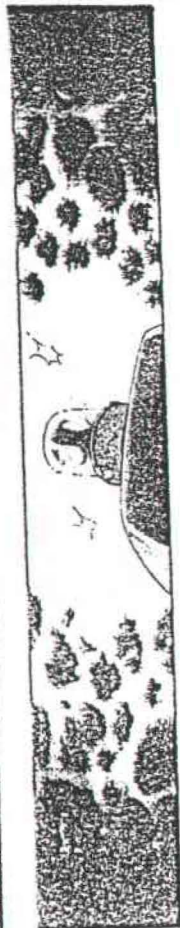
アッ



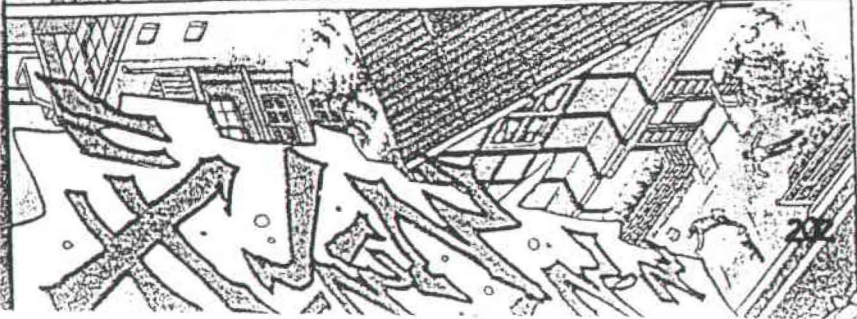
仕事すつほかして  
こんなにこで何  
やつてんだあ!!

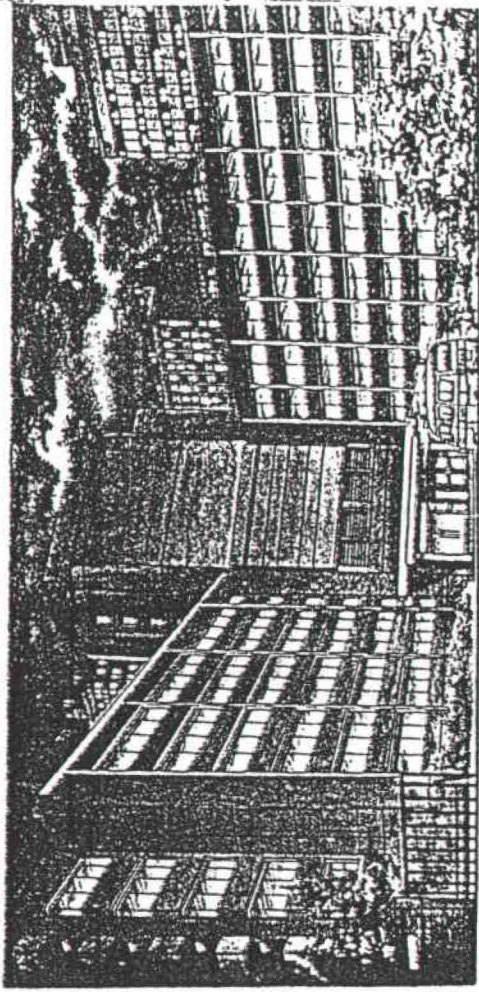


あ...?



ケツの穴にイスが  
ささって救急車を  
呼んだってのは  
前代未聞だろうな





愛宕ヶ丘大学病院



いやはや  
帰るう!!

こんな取すかしい  
怪我病院で診て  
もらいたくないあ!!

何言ってるのよ  
血が出るのよ!!

やだあああ

早くない!!  
いい大人が  
だつ子なら



女美人の  
医……



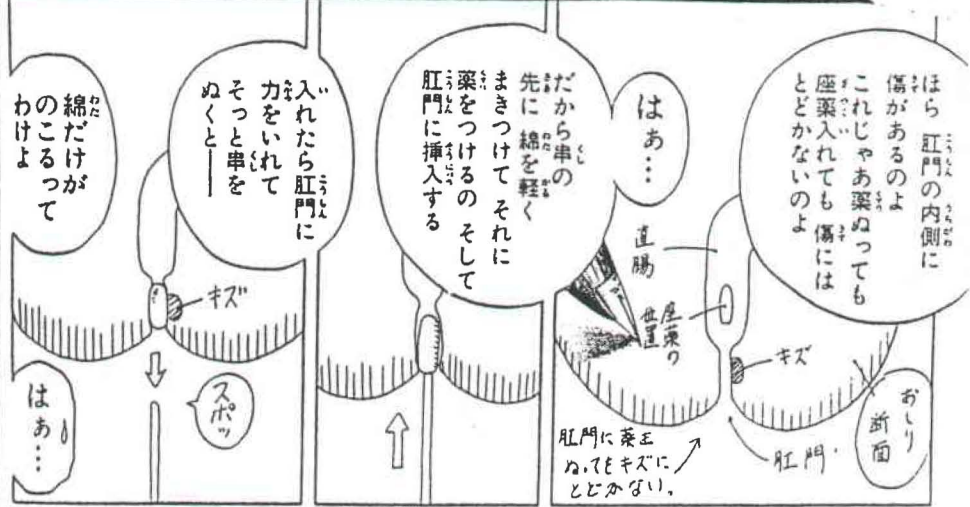
い……  
いやだ……



いやだあ〜  
こんな美人に  
こんな治療して  
はしくないあ!!

今また来ますから  
その時お茶でも  
しましょう  
だから今日は  
これにて失礼!!





## NOTES

### Preface

1. The exact quotations are as follows: "Obviously it is difficult to arrive at a definitive evaluation of *Light and Darkness*, but I confess that it bores me from beginning to end." Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature of the Modern Era* 2 vols. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984), 346. "It is the most tedious of Sôseki's later novels." Edwin McClellan, *Two Japanese Novelists: Sôseki and Tôson* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1971), 59. "*Meian* is one of the most tedious exercises in the Japanese language." Jay Rubin, "The Evil and the Ordinary in Sôseki's Fiction" in *Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel*, ed. Tsuruta Kin'ya and Thomas E. Swann (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1976), 352. "I think it's boring—I prefer *Sanshirô* to *Meian*." Edward Seidensticker (personal communication). Clearly more a reflection of their literary tastes than of their literary judgment, these comments conceal, I think, a preference for the erotic/exotic brand of Japanese literature which Keene, Seidensticker, and McClellan had a hand in promoting. Keene's comment that *Meian* is a "prolix, explanatory novel that relies little on the traditional practice of suggestion" confirms this preference (my italics) [Keene, 346].
2. Norma Field, "Afterword" in her translation of *Sorekara* [And Then] (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1978), 278.
3. Hannah Arendt, "Introduction" in Walter Benjamin: Illuminations (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 47.
4. Inoue Hisashi, *Wagahai wa Sôseki de aru* [I Am Sôseki] (Tokyo: Shûeisha, 1982), 162.

### Chapter 1 Introduction: Theorizing Gender, the Body and Desire

1. Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), ix-x.
2. Luce Irigaray, "When Our Lips Speak Together" *Signs* 6:1 (1980), 69-79.
3. Grosz, x.
4. Karatani Kôjin, *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, translation edited by Brett de Bary (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 190.
5. Myra Jehlen, "Gender," in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 263-273, 265.
6. Elizabeth Abel, ed. *Writing and Sexual Difference* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 173.
7. Wilfred L. Guerin, Earle Labor, Lee Morgan, and John R. Willingham, eds. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 193.
8. See Elaine Showalter, ed. *Essays on Women, Literature and Theory* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985). For a perspective on Japanese women writers, see also Paul Gordon Schalow and Janet A. Walker, eds. *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women's Writing* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996).
9. SZ 28:208 *Shokan shû* [Letters], quoted in Mizumura Minae, "Resisting Woman—Reading Sôseki's *Gubijinsô*" in *Studies in Modern Japanese Literature: Essays and Translations in Honor of Edwin McClellan*, ed. Dennis Washburn and Alan Tansman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 23-37. See also her longer article in Japanese on which "Resisting Women" is based, "'Otoko to Otoko' to 'Otoko to Onna'—Fujio no Shi—Natsume Sôseki, *Gubijinsô* o megutte" ['Men and Men' and 'Men and Women'—Fujio's Death in Natsume Sôseki's *Gubijinsô*] in *Hihyô Kûkan* 6 (Tokyo: Fukutake Shoten, 1992), 158-77.
10. This is not to say that there is no literature on the body. For an extended bibliography on the body (just over one hundred pages), see Barbara Duden, "A Repertory of Body History" in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, Part Three, ed. Michel Feher, Ramona Nadaff and Nadia Tazi. (New York: Urzone, 1989), 471-575.

11. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*. Second edition with an afterword by and an interview with Michel Foucault (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 111.
12. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Random House, 1979), 25.
13. Ernst Kantorowicz, Ernst, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 9.
14. Fukushima Akira, *Tensai, oitachi no byôsekigaku* [A Pathography of the Personal History of Genius] (Kôdansha, 1996), 233.
15. Sharon Chalmers, "Tolerance, Form and Female Dis-ease: The Pathologisation of Lesbian Sexuality in Japanese Society" in *Intersections: Gender History and Culture in the Asian Context* 6 (August 2001). [[http://www.she.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue6\\_contents.html](http://www.she.murdoch.edu.au/intersections/issue6_contents.html)] accessed September 2001.
16. *The Great Learning*, in *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, vol. 1, compiled by William Theodore de Bary, et al. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 115.
17. Jon Halliday, *A Political History of Japanese Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1978), 322.
18. Butler, Judith, "Desire" in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 369-386, 377.
19. Hans Wolfgang Schumann, *Buddhism: An Outline of its Teachings and Schools*, trans. Georg Feuerstein (Wheaton: Quest, 1974), 79-83.
20. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), viii.
21. Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959), 252.
22. Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. H. M. Parshley (New York: Knopf, 1953).
23. Masao Miyoshi, *Off Center: Power and Culture Relations Between Japan and the United States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991), 15.
24. Takie Sugiyama Lebra, "Migawari: The Cultural Idiom of Self-Other Exchange in Japan." in *Self as Person in Asian Theory and Practice*, ed. Roger T. Ames, Wimal Dissanayake and Thomas P. Kasulis (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1994), 107-123, 120.
25. Ihab Hassan, "The Culture of Postmodernism" in *Theory, Culture and Society* 2:3 (1985), 119-32, 124.

## Chapter 2      Reading the Diseased Body: Fissure, Blindness, and The Gaze in *Meian*

Epigraphs: the famous opening lines are from, in order of appearance, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851); George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949); Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* (The Metamorphosis, 1915); Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813); Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952); Edward Bulwer-Lytton's *Paul Clifford* (1830); James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939); Marcel Proust's *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* (Remembrance of Things Past, 1912); Kawabata Yasunari's *Yukiguni* (Snow Country, 1935-47); Natsume Sôseki's *Meian* (Light and Darkness, 1916).

1. I use the terms "anal fistula" and "fissure" interchangeably, although they indicate distinct medical conditions. A fissure is a tear in the lining of the anus, a condition frequently associated with sentinel piles (hemorrhoids, hence the mistaking the condition for hemorrhoids); a fistula (Latin for pipe) is a small tunnel connecting the anal gland to the skin of the buttocks outside the anus (fistulae must be drained, which is what the doctor does in *Meian*). Viglielmo correctly identifies, I believe, Tsuda's problem as an anal fistula (fistula-in-ano), although this information is not provided in the Japanese text. As for the difference between fissure and fistula, causes, and treatment (with illustrations), see for example [[http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact\\_sheets/mosby\\_factsheets/Anal\\_fissure\\_and\\_fistula.html](http://hcd2.bupa.co.uk/fact_sheets/mosby_factsheets/Anal_fissure_and_fistula.html)] accessed 10 June 2000. We should also consider the Japanese word *ana*, or hole, also read *ketsu* the etymologies of which are fervently debated. In *Kotoba no yurai* (Word Origins), Taka Hôryû makes the fantastic claim that *ketsu* evolved from *ki* "life energy" and *tsunageru*, "to connect," the farfetched idea being that "*ketsu* originally meant the whole hip area and was thus the place that two people 'connected' in marriage to create 'life.'" Quoted in Peter Constantine, *Japanese Street Slang*

- (Tokyo: Tengu Books, 1992), 94. The irony in *Meian* is that Tsuda and O-Nobu do not “connect” to create “life.” Tsuda’s condition, in fact, represents and embodies this rupture between them.
2. Fredric R. Jameson, “Sôseki and Western Modernism” *boundary 2* 18:3 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 123-141.
  3. “It was Sôseki who started in Japan the scholarly study of English literature.” Quoted in Matsui Sakuko, *Natsume Sôseki as a Critic of English Literature* (Tokyo: Tokyo Press, 1975), 5.
  4. Rene Dubos and Jean Dubos, *The White Plague: Tuberculosis, Man and Society* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1952), 4.
  5. William Johnston, *The Modern Epidemic: A History of Tuberculosis in Japan* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995). See especially Chapter 5 “Tuberculosis in Modern Japanese Literature, 124-159.
  6. Walter Benjamin, “Franz Kafka” in *Illuminations*, ed. and with an introduction by Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 111-40.
  7. Emily Ohnuki-Tierney, *Illness and Culture in Contemporary Japan: An Anthropological View* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). See especially her discussion of doctor-patient relationships, 207-208.
  8. See also Fujio Kengô, “Sôseki to M. Nordau ‘Taikaron’” (Sôseki and M. Nordau’s ‘Degeneration’), *Kagawa Daigaku kokubun kenkyû* [Kagawa University Japanese literature studies] 15 (October 1990). See also Ishihara Chiaki et al., “Zadankai: Sôseki to taikaron” [Roundtable Discussion: Sôseki and Degeneration Theory] in *Sôseki kenkyû* [Sôseki Studies] ed. Kômori Yôichi and Ishihara Chiaki 4 (May 1995).
  9. Max Nordau, *Degeneration*. Introduction by G. L. Mosse (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1958), 16. Nordau’s *Degeneration*, it should be recalled, steeped in homophobia, misogyny and old-fashioned notions of phrenology, was used also by the Nazi’s in their assault on “decadence.” Nordau, himself a Jew, changed his name to hide his identity. Sôseki’s copy of Lombroso’s *Man of Genius* also contains marginal notes. The idea of a link between genius and madness, though commonplace, must have held some interest for Sôseki, too. Lombroso more specifically sought to link genius and criminal psychopathology. He visited Tolstoy at Yasnaya Polyana expecting the famous Russian author to be “cretinous and degenerate-looking.”
  10. Arthur Herman, *The Idea of Decline in Western History* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 111.
  11. *Ibid.*, 114.
  12. James Reichert, “Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Period Literature” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1998). See also his “Sôseki *Nowaki* ni okeru otoko-dôshi no aijô no imi.” [The Meaning of Male-Male Love in Sôseki’s *Nowaki*] *Bungaku* 6:1 (1995), 84-96.
  13. See for example Masao Miyoshi, *The Divided Self: A Perspective on the Literature of the Victorians* (New York: New York University Press, 1969), especially Chapter 6 “Masks in the Mirror: The Eighteen-Nineties.”
  14. See Talia Schaffer, “‘A Wilde Desire to Me’: The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*” in *Dracula*, ed. Nina Auerbach and David J. Skal (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997), 470-482.
  15. Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, trans. James Strachey (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), 44.
  16. There is a large body of literature in English and Japanese on this perennial topic in Sôseki studies. Here is Etô Jun’s partial entry on *Meian* in *Shincho Nihon bungaku jiten* (Shinchô Dictionary of Japanese Literature). Etô Jun, “Natsume Sôseki,” in *Shinchô Nihon bungaku jiten* [enlarged and revised], Shinchôsha, 1988. See also his detailed discussion in Etô Jun., *Sôseki to sono jidai* [Sôseki and His Times] 4 vols. Shinchôsha, 1995.

*Meian*: chôhen shôsetsu (novel), serialized 26 May - 14 December 1916 (unfinished) in Tokyo; *Asahi Shinbun*. Published 1917 Iwanami shoten. One of a few Japanese modern novels that deserves the name of a true modern novel. Focusing on the unstable married life of a young couple, Tsuda and O-Nobu, it pursues the problem of egoism. Although unfinished, the novel has a vibrant supporting cast of Mrs. Yoshikawa and Tsuda’s sister, the wife of an entrepreneur, O-Hide; coupled with the lively, dazzling dialogue, it succeeds with a rarely seen dramatic structure. The appearance of Tsuda’s old friend, Kobayashi, a proletarian intellectual in contrast to the upper-class status of other characters, also expresses the author’s wide concerns. Scholarly opinion is divided on whether Kiyoko, Tsuda’s former lover, who appears in Chapter 176, is the embodiment of the idea of

*sokuten kyoshi* (follow heaven, abandon self): Komiya Toyotaka and Okazaki Yoshie are in the affirmative, whereas Kachimoto Seiichirō and others contest it.” [translation is mine]

17. See Ohnuki-Tierney, *Illness and Culture*, 60-61 and Johnston, *The Modern Epidemic*, 151-153.
18. Marleigh Ryan defines the superfluous this way in her book *Japan's First Modern Novel: Ukigumo of Futabatei Shimei* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), 182-3.
 

The superfluous hero has become a symbol of the sensitive, intellectual, or artistic man who lives outside the mainstream of modern life. He cannot find faith or philosophy or love in his world because the old beliefs have proved mortal and the new ones are not yet acceptable. The faith he seeks may be religious, intellectual, or emotional. The love he needs will take him from his confined universe, that is, from himself, and bring him closer to other people or even to one other person. He must learn to give—a cause, to an ideal, or to a person. He must learn to sympathize, to see why the positive man wants what he wants. The superfluous man pictures all life as a reflection of himself, as if he were somehow looking at a distorted mirror in which his image filled every inch. As a consequence he cannot fully appreciate anyone else; in some cases he is led to reject everyone completely. Some superfluous heroes are merely quiet and ineffectual; others are completely mad, exhibiting the whole range of classic paranoiac symptoms favored by the literary world. Most are situated somewhere in between.” Even Sōseki’s depiction of Tsuda is somewhere in between the quiet and ineffectual (Futabatei’s Bunzō) and the completely mad (Sōseki’s Ichirō), which brings into relief Tsuda’s utterly common and mediocre personality.
19. Bard C. Cosman, M.D., “*All’s Well That Ends Well*: Shakespeare’s Treatment of Anal Fistula,” in *Diseases of the Colon & Rectum* 41:7 (July 1998), 914-924.
20. Nakamura Mitsuo famously attacks the Japanese novel for its “distortions” and lack of social criticism and blames in part the *shishōsetsu* (author-is-narrator I novel) tradition for impeding or derailing the development of the Japanese novel along the lines of its Western counterpart (particularly the social novel, the novel of manners). Nakamura Mitsuo, *Fūzoku shōsetsuron* [Essay on the Novel of Manners] (Tokyo: Shinchō, 1950). Although he does not say so, Sōseki’s *Meian* would stand as a clear exception to this indictment.
21. From one of Sōseki’s *kanshi* (Chinese poems), quoted in Viglielmo’s “Afterword” in *Light and Darkness* (Tuttle, 1971), 380. Viglielmo’s translation in its entirety is as follows:
 

Though seeking solitude, not yet towards the turquoise hills have I gone.  
 I live among men but my feeling for the Way suffices.  
 Of light and darkness mutually bound, three times ten thousand characters,  
 While I fondled and rubbed my stone seal, have freely emerged.  
 Not for Christ, nor Buddha, and not for Confucius:  
 In the narrow lanes I sell my writings just for my own delight.  
 I have plucked and gathered how many fragrances in crossing the garden of art?  
 I have wandered leisurely around how many turquoise hills and pools in the poetry thicket?  
 Within the ashes of burning books, books first know life.  
 Within a world without law, law first understands rebirth.  
 Strike and slay the godly men, for at the place where every trace of them is lost  
 The empty void will clearly show the wise and foolish.
22. Ōoka Shōhei, “*Meian no ketsumatsu ni tsuite*” [On the Conclusion of *Meian*] in *Shōsetsuka Natsume Sōseki* [The Novelist Natsume Sōseki] (Tokyo: Chikuma, 1988).
23. See Chapter 5 of Susan Sontag’s *AIDS and Its Metaphors* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988).
24. Karatani Kōjin, “Sickness as Meaning” in *Origins of Japanese Literature*, translation edited by Brett de Bary (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), 97-113. I have liberally quoted Susan Sontag—perhaps too liberally and too unquestioningly—for which Karatani, is an antidote, who questions many of her assumptions such as the distinction between illness itself and illness as metaphor. Illness is not distinct from the system within which it is understood (the topological schema or semiological system), he claims.
25. There is no indication that Sōseki had read *Wings of the Dove*, but we know that he read James’s *The Golden Bowl* because his marginalia in his personal copy of the book can be found in *Zōsho no yohaku ni kinyū-saretaru tanhyō narabi ni zakkān* (Impressions and Short Criticism Recorded in Margins of Books from Sōseki’s Personal Library) SZ 32:66. Three other works by Henry James found in Sōseki’s library are *Partial Portraits*; *French Poets and Novelists*; and *Notes on Novelists*,

- listed in *Sôseki sanbô zôsho mokuroku* [Catalogue of Sôseki's Personal Library] SZ 33:19 This ground of comparing Henry James and Natsume Sôseki already has been touched upon, I was surprised to find, and rather eloquently, by Fredric R. Jameson in his article "Sôseki and Western Modernism."
26. Hugh Stevens, *Henry James and Sexuality* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), 123-141.
  27. Etsuko Nakayama, "A Study of Conflict in the Life and the Later Novels of Natsume Sôseki" (Ph.D. diss., University of Hawai'i, 1988).
  28. Mary Cross, *The Contingencies of Style* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 127.
  29. Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Blindness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1983), 109.
  30. Camille Paglia, *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 22.
  31. Michelle Brandwein, "Formation, Process, and Transition" in *A Journal of the Plague Year*, ed. Paul R. Backscheider (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 352.
  32. Quoted in Howard Hibbett, "Natsume Sôseki and the Psychological Novel," in *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald H. Shively (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), 328.
  33. Janet Walker, *The Japanese Novel of the Meiji Period and the Ideal of Individualism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 225.
  34. James Fujii, "Writing Out Asia: Modernity, Canon, and Natsume Sôseki's *Kokoro*" *positions* 1:1 (1993), 218.
  35. Dubos, *The White Plague*, 91-92.
  36. See George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1980) especially pp. 103 and 104 of Chapter 17 "Complex Coherences Across Metaphors," which cites the examples, "We have just *observed* that Aquinas used certain Platonic notions" and "*Having come this far*, we can *see* how Hegel went wrong." Metaphorical coherences will not cut across culture, but in this case similar expressions can be found in Japanese: *hyakubun wa ikken ni shikazu*, often mistranslated as "A picture is worth a thousand words", usually rendered "seeing is believing," and *hanashi ga mieru*, "I can see what you're saying."
  37. Michael Moon, "Sexuality and Visual Terrorism in *The Wings of the Dove*" *Criticism* 28 (Fall 1986), 427-43.
  38. In my article "Sôseki and Male Identity Crisis" *Japan Quarterly* 45: 2 (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun, 1998), 82-90 I failed to take into consideration the role of the new woman and the appearance of strong women in *Meian* and other novels as a major source of psychological conflict in male identity experienced by many of Sôseki protagonists.
  39. Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" *Screen* 16:3 (Autumn), 1975. On the subject of the gaze, it is difficult not to agree with Camille Paglia's "Enough with the 'Male Gaze'!" in her "Ask Camille" column on <http://www.salon.com> of 7 October 1998 (which takes up Laura Mulvey's article—they met at an Alfred Hitchcock conference and got along swimmingly). Truly, the gaze has been overworked and overtaxed in much academic writing (including my own), but there can be no denying that it is important, even indispensable, for analyzing the specularity and ocular-centrism of *Meian*. Jameson also holds this view in his critique of the novel.
  40. David Lodge, *Nice Work* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), 243.

### Chapter 3 Women on Top: Epiphanies in *Botchan*, *Kusamakura*, *Sanshirô*, *Sorekara*, and *Meian*

1. See Ashton Nichols' discussion in Chapter One, "The Background of the Modern Epiphany," in *The Poetics of Epiphany: Nineteenth-Century Origins of the Modern Literary Moment* (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1987), 1-13.
2. James Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, ed. Theodore Spencer (Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions, 1963), 211.
3. *Kenkyûsha's New English Japanese-Dictionary* (Fifth edition) gives this definition: Epiphany [(ca. 1325) Gk *epiphainein* to show forth <-EPI + *phainein* to disclose] n. 1 [the~ ] 「キリスト教」 a (東方の三博士 (Magi) の訪れによって象徴される救世主の顕現、公現)。b 御公現の祝日、顕現日 (1月6日) 三博士来訪の祝日: CF. Twelfth Day)。2 (神の) 出現、顕現、3 [Gk. *epiphaineia* appearance of a divinity <- *epiphanes* manifest]

(文学) a エピファニー (単純平凡な事件や経験を通して直感的に真実の全貌をつかむこと)。b エピファニー的な作品「場面」。

4. *Nikki oyobi dampen* (Diary and Literary Fragments) *jô* (Part I) SZ 24:18-20.
5. Translation is mine. Cf. Jay Rubin's translation *Sanshiro* (University of Washington Press, 1977), 22, 23 which reads:

"Sanshiro looked up. There were two women standing on a low hill to his left, the pond just beneath them. The bank opposite theirs lay beneath a high cliff surmounted by a grove of trees. Behind the trees stood a Gothic-style building of bright red brick. By now the sun had dropped low enough to cast its light from behind all this, directly at the women. From the low, shadowy place where Sanshiro knelt, the top of the hill looked very bright. One of the women, uncomfortable in the glare, held up a stiff, round fan to shade her eyes. He could not see her face, but the youthful colors of her kimono and obi shone brilliantly. She wore sandals, their thongs too narrow to show color at this distance, but revealing white-encased feet at the hem of the kimono. The older woman was dressed entirely in white. She did not try to shade her eyes, but instead knit her brow as she looked into the grove atop the cliff. There the old trees hunched over the pond, stretching their branches far down to the water. The girl with the fan stood just ahead of the woman in white, who is held back a step from the edge. Together their figures made a line oblique to Sanshiro's line of vision.

The sight gave him an impression of pretty colors, nothing more. A country boy, he could not have explained what was pretty about them. His only thought at the moment was that the woman dressed in white must be a nurse."
6. The kneeling gesture is one of supplication. Joseph Smith knelt in what is now known among Mormon believers (I no longer include myself among their number) as "the Sacred Grove" in upstate New York where he had a vision of God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ. Of course, many people of almost all religions kneel in supplication. Groves would seem to be an ideal place for a vision. Sanshirô's kneeling at the edge of the pond must be seen as a ritual act and the grove then becomes ritual space. I would like to call his vision of two women beatific, but there is no direct knowledge of God and no blessing from heaven. It is a secular vision. Dante's *Inferno* also begins within a dark wood: *Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita/Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura./Che la diritta via era smarrita*. "In the middle of the journey of our life I came to myself within a dark wood where the straight way was lost." Tony Kushner plays with the idea of Mormonism, Judaism, homosexuality, and visions in his famous play *Angels in America*:

Hannah: You had a vision.  
Prior: A vision. Thank you, Maria Ouspenskaya. I'm not so far gone I can be assuaged by pity and lies.  
Hannah: I don't have pity. It's just not something I have. One hundred and seventy years ago, which is recent, an angel of God appeared to Joseph Smith in upstate New York, not far from here. People have visions.  
Prior: But that's preposterous, that's . . .  
Hannah: It's not polite to call other people's beliefs preposterous. He had great need of understanding. Our Prophet. His desire made prayer. His prayer made an angel. The angel was real. I believe that.  
Prior: I don't. And I'm sorry, but it's repellent to me. So much of what you believe.

Tony Kushner, *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes. Part Two: Perestroika* (Theatre Communications Group, 1992), 103. I mention here Joseph Smith's vision in the Sacred Grove and Prior's visions of angels (and later wrestling matches with angels) only to show that visions, like epiphanies, can be sacred or profane (or secular), or an unsettling combination.
7. See Reiko Abe Auestad, "The Critical Reception of Sôseki's *Kôjin* and *Meian* in Japan and the West" in *Journal of the Association of Teachers of Japanese* 27: 2 (November 1993), 237.
8. *Sanshirô*, trans. Jay Rubin (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1977), 23-24.
9. *Ibid.*, 75.
10. Sherry Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), 8.
11. Translation is mine. Cf. Alan Turney's translation, *Botchan* (Kôdansha, 1978), 104 which reads:

“At that moment the sound of a young woman’s laughter came from the direction of the entrance. When I glanced round, there stood a fantastic woman. She was tall and lovely, with beautiful white skin and her hair dressed in the height of fashion. She was standing in front of the ticket-window with a woman of about forty-five or -six. It’s beyond my power to describe beautiful women, but there’s no doubt that she was lovely. When I saw her I felt as though I were holding in my hand a smooth piece of crystal, steeped in warm perfume.”

12. Sumie Jones, “Natsume Sôseki’s *Botchan*: The Outer World through Edo Eyes” in *Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel*, ed. Kin’ya Tsuruta and Thomas E. Swann (Tokyo: Sophia University, 1976), 157.
13. On the madonna/whore complex, see Estela V. Welldon, *Mother, Madonna, Whore: The Idealization and Denigration of Motherhood* (London: Free Association Books, 1988), 110-111. See also “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality” in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1953-73), 182-83.
14. Jones, *Botchan*, 157.
15. Translation is mine. Cf. Alan Turney’s translation *Three-Cornered World* (Tuttle, 1968), 43 which reads:
 

“I began to drift gently into sleep and into dreams.

There was a maid of Nagara with her long billowing sleeves, riding a white horse through a mountain pass, when out leapt the two men Sasada and Sasabe, and each tried to drag her off. Suddenly the girl turned into Ophelia; first climbing out along the branch of a willow, and then being carried away by the stream, singing in a beautiful voice. Thinking to save her, I grabbed a long pole and ran after her along the shore of Mukojima. She did not seem in the least unhappy, but smiling and singing drifted with the current down to wherever it would take her. I put the pole on my shoulder, and yelled, “Hey, come back! Come back!”
16. See Kenshiro Homma’s discussion in “*Kusamakura* and Theodore Watts-Dunton’s *Aylwin*,” in *Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study* (Osaka: Kansai University of Foreign Studies Publication, 1990), 52-68.
17. John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice: The Nature of Gothic in Prose of the Victorian Period*, ed. William E. Buckler (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958), 392.
18. Translation is mine. Cf. Norma Field’s translation *And Then* (Tuttle, 1978), 256, 257 which reads:
 

“When he came to Iidabashi he got on a streetcar. The streetcar began to move straight ahead. Inside the car, Daisuke said, “Oh, it’s moving, the world’s moving,” loudly enough to be heard by those around him. His head began to spin at the same speed as the train. The more it spun, the more flushed it became from the heat. If he could ride like this for half a day, he thought he could be burnt to ashes.

Suddenly, a red mailbox caught his eye. The red color immediately leaped into Daisuke’s head and began to spin around and around. An umbrella shop sign had four red umbrellas hanging one on top of the other. The color of these umbrellas also leaped into Daisuke’s head. A red car carrying parcel post passed close by the streetcar in the opposite direction, and its color was also sucked into Daisuke’s head., The tobacco shop curtain was red. A banner announcing a sale was also red. The telephone pole was red. One after another, there were signs painted in red. Finally, the whole world turned red. And with Daisuke’s head at the center, it began to spin around and around, breathing tongues of fire. Daisuke decided to go on riding until his head was completely burned away.”
19. David Pollack, *Reading Against Culture: Ideology and Narrative in the Japanese Novel* (Cornell University Press, 1992), 62.
20. Miyoshi Masao, *Accomplices of Silence: The Modern Japanese Novel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 80. The pertinent quote reads: “The novel, on the other hand, in order to explore the inverted universe that an individual consciousness is, always pulls toward freeing people from their role characteristics, and it is against such energy that Japanese society works so relentlessly with its tribalism and ceremonialism.”

21. Originally written for Professor Lower's 611 class, then presented at the 2000 LLL conference and published in the conference proceedings, my Epiphany paper shares some common ground with UH philosophy professor Steve Odin's book *Artistic Detachment in Japan and the West* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2001), which was released in the summer of the following year and I was surprised and delighted to find that he had pursued similar themes and used similar sources as my paper (obviously, if one is going to discuss epiphanies in literature, one must turn to James Joyce, hence the similarities). For an eloquent discussion of Beebe's *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts*, see his Chapter Four, "Psychic Distance in Modern Western Literature," 199-213.
22. The image of "standing bewildered at the broad crossroads," the plight of Sôseki's protagonists who, unable to take action, stand pondering their fate, I have taken from one of Sôseki's *kanshi* (poetry in literary Chinese}. Maria Flutsch translates it thus:
- When I lose heaven I lose my simplicity.  
When I think I have found the way, it distances itself from me.  
Human wisdom brings with it death;  
In the world of goblins the righteous are emaciated.  
When hurled into the sky it radiates brilliantly: the golden orb of night,  
But I trudge along the road alone, swallowing my tears,  
My parents both gone, I stand bewildered at the broad crossroads.
- Maria Flutsch, "An Introduction to Sôseki's Chinese Poetry" in *The World of Natsume Sôseki*, ed. Takehisa Iijima and James M. Vardaman, Jr. (Tokyo: Kinseidô, 1987), 12.
23. Translation is mine. Cf. V. H. Viglielmo's translation *Light and Darkness* (Tuttle, 1972), 347, which reads:
- Suddenly realizing this, his own footsteps instantly stopped, as the very person of whom he had been thinking relentlessly appeared in front of him and he was overcome by a surprise many times more intense than the one he had just experienced. His eyes did not move.
- It seemed as if the same paralysis bound Kiyoko to the spot even more firmly. When she had come as far as the landing at the head of the stairs and had stopped stock still, she seemed to him like a figure in a painting. This image of her remained in his mind for a very long time thereafter as an unforgettable impression.
- Her act of looking down from above unsuspectingly, and that of recognizing him there, seemed simultaneous, but actually were not. At least so he thought. She needed some time to assimilate the fact of his presence. After a period of surprise, one of wonder, and one of doubt had all elapsed, she finally became completely rigid. Indeed she stood so still and stiff it seemed that if someone had pushed her lightly with one finger she would have toppled more easily than a clay doll.
24. In using the term "convalescent," I don't think I am overstating my case. The Japanese *tôjikyaku* 湯治客 indicates that Kiyoko, like other guests at the spa, has come for the "hydrotherapy." It is important to note that she is not an overnight guest but probably a short-term or possibly long-staying guest, much like the couple from Yokohama who appear to have taken up temporary residency there. Although we must resist the notion of closure in Sôseki's later novels, as Angela Yiu has asserted in her book *Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sôseki*, I can't help pointing out that the novel opens with Tsuda as a patient in the doctor's examination room, and ends with a "treatment" at a spa. The subject of the length of Kiyoko's stay, in fact, constitutes the final sentences of the novel and the last words that Sôseki wrote (p. 375 of Viglielmo's translation):
- 'Kiyoko, how long will you be staying?'  
'I have no fixed schedule at all. If a telegram should come from home, I may even have to leave today.'  
'Do you think something like that will come?'  
'That I can't say.'
- Kiyoko smiled as she said this. Tsuda returned to his own room, while trying to explain to himself the meaning of her smile.
- U n f i n i s h e d
25. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: Nineteenth-Century Literature* (Yale University Press, 1980), 21.
26. *Ibid.*, 21.

27. Kiyoko is seen as a Beatrice to Tsuda by some critics, a reading that has no particular pertinence to my explication—except perhaps as an image, a painted image that might resonate with the (mental image) painting of Kiyoko as The Woman on the Stairs. One possible candidate for such a painting is Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s “Beatrice, Meeting Dante at a Wedding Feast, Denies Him Her Salutation,” which shows Beatrice on the stairs and Dante at the foot of the stairs. Kiyoko, we will recall, is startled by Tsuda’s appearance and flees without acknowledging his presence. This painting can be viewed at [<http://www.artmagick.com/paintings/painting2037.asp>]. Sôseki’s knowledge of the Pre-Raphaelite painters such as Millais, suggests to me that this image may not be too far-fetched. Millais’ Ophelia can be viewed at, among other places, [<http://web.ukonline.co.uk/wildbunch/ophelia.html>] accessed 15 January 2001.
28. Donald Keene, *Dawn to the West: Japanese Literature in the Modern Era* 2 vols. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1984), 307.

**Chapter 4      Asymmetrical Erotic Triangles and Homosocial Desire in *Gubijinsô*, *Nowaki*, *Sorekara*, *Mon*, *Kôjin*, *Kokoro*, and *Meian***

1. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 21.
2. Heidi Hartmann, “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union” in *Woman and Revolution: A Discussion of the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism*, ed. Lydia Sargent (Boston: South End Press, 1981), 14.
3. Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality” in *The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader*, ed. Henry Abelove et al. (London: Routledge, 1993), 543.
4. Luce Irigaray, *The Sex That is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985), 193.
5. Cited in *Vita Sexualis*, trans. Kazuji Ninomiya and Sanford Goldstein (Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972), 15.
6. Stephen Dodd, “The Significance of Bodies in Sôseki’s *Kokoro*” *Monumenta Nipponica* 53:4 (1999), 473-498, 479. See also “On the Poems of Walt Whitman, a Representative Egalitarian Writer” in Sakuko Matsui, *Natsume Sôseki as a Critic of English Literature* (Tokyo: The Centre for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1975), 9-20. For a history of Whitman’s early reception in Japan (which mentions Sôseki’s contribution), see Iwao Matsuhara, “Walt Whitman in Japan” in *Leaves of Grass: authoritative texts, prefaces, Whitman on his art, criticism*, ed. Sculley Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), 912-918. Sweet flag (calamus) also has phallic significance in Japan. Traditionally in Japan sweet flag or *shôbu* is associated with Boys’ Day, not only because *shôbu* is a homonym for “victory,” but because of its sword-like shape and propensity to dispel evil.
7. Cited in Matsui, 12.
8. Matsui, 18.
9. *Ibid.*, 12.
10. Dodd, 481.
11. *Ibid.*, 485.
12. Minae Mizumura, “Resisting Woman—Rereading Sôseki’s *Gubijinsô*,” in *Studies in Modern Japanese Literature: Essays and Translations in Honor of Edwin McClellan*, eds. Dennis Washburn and Alan Tansman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 23-37.
13. Angela Yiu, *Chaos and Order in the Words of Natsume Sôseki* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1998), 41.
14. Norma Field, “Afterword” in *And Then*, trans. Norma Field (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1978), 271.
15. Cited in Judith Butler, “Desire” in *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin, 2nd ed. (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), 369-386, 384.

16. See Chapter X “*Kôjin* and Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*” in Kenshirô Homma, *Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study* (Osaka: The Intercultural Research Institute, Kansai University of Foreign Studies), 161-179.
17. Beongcheon Yu, *Natsume Sôseki* (New York: Twayne, 1969), 119.
18. For a detailed analysis of this subject, see Chapter 3 “The Forbidden Chrysanthemum: Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji Legal Discourse” in Gregory Pflugfelder, *Cartographies of Desire: Male-Male Sexuality in Japanese Discourse 1600-1950* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 146-182.
19. Doi Takeo, *The Psychological World of Natsume Sôseki*, trans. William J. Tyler (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 2.
20. Sharlyn Orbaugh alerted her readers to the potential differences between European and Japanese models of homosocial bonding: “A fundamental part of Sedgwick’s argument states that the homosocial bonds between men in Anglo-European cultures have been predicated not only on misogyny but also on homophobia toward gay men (not necessarily toward lesbians to the same degree). Since the attitudes surrounding male homosexuality in Japan are historically quite different from those in most Anglo-European cultures, it is likely that the precise configurations of male homosocial desire in modern Japan likewise differ in some degree from Sedgwick’s models.” Sharalyn Orbaugh, “General Nogi’s Wife” in *The Woman’s Hand: Gender and Theory in Japanese Women’s Writing*, ed. Paul Gordon Schalow and Janet A. Walker (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 7-31; n19.

#### **Chapter 5      The New Woman, The Femme Fatale, Osan/Koharu, Madonna/Whore**

1. Hiratsuka Raichô, “Nora-san e” (To Nora-san) *Seitô* (January 1912); quoted in Phyllis Birnbaum, *Modern Girls, Shining Stars, The Skies of Tokyo: Five Japanese Women* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 29.
2. Karl Beckson, *London in the 1890s: a Cultural History* (W. W. Norton, 1992), 166.
3. On Ibsen’s Nora, London’s *Theatre* critic Clement Scott wrote: “It is all self, self self!” (Beckson, 160) and Hiratsuka Raichô criticized Nora for being too independent and self-serving (Birnbaum, 29).
4. Beckson, 129.
5. W. G. Aston, *A History of Japanese Literature* (Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1972), 388.
6. Laurel Rasplica Rodd, “Yosano Akiko and the Taishô Debate over the ‘New Woman’” in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 178. For the life story of Matsui Sumako, who debuted as Ophelia in *Hamlet*, created the role of Nora in Japan, and who became Japan’s first celebrated Western-style stage actress, see “Slamming the Door, Scaring the Neighbors,” in *Modern Girls, Shining Stars, The Skies of Tokyo: Five Japanese Women*, ed. Phyllis Birnbaum (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 1-52.
7. Akiko Yosano, *Midaregami* translated by Sanford Goldstein and Seishi Shinoda in *Tangled Hair: Selected Tanka from Midaregami* (Tokyo: Tuttle, 1987), tanka no. 89.
8. *Ibid.*, 19.
9. Comedian Dennis Miller puts this narrow view into perspective in his *The Rants*, by showing the true many-sided complicated nature of the madonna/whore complex:
 

I will say that one constant theme in man’s interaction with women is the Madonna/whore complex, and believe me that’s just the tip of the Oedipal iceberg. Quite frankly, I think when you get a guy alone he’ll readily confess not only that he has a Madonna/whore complex, he’s got a Mother, Au Pair, Catholic Nun, Hullabaloo Dancer, Julie Newmar-Cat Woman, Asian Cigarette Girl, Pamela Anderson in a Plexiglass House, Miss Hathaway with a riding crop-complex. And you should understand this about men. Men aren’t designed to be introspective. We don’t even know how we’re feeling. Your vagina goes inward, you introspect. Our penises point outward- we want to knock things over with it, alright [sic]? Dennis Miller, *The Rants* (New York: Doubleday, 1996).
10. Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 354-55.

11. See Hayakawa Noriyo, "Sexuality and the State: The Early Meiji Debate on Concubinage and Prostitution" in *Feminism and the State in Modern Japan*, ed. Vera Mackie (Monash University, Melbourne: Japan Studies Centre, 1995).
12. Gail Lee Bernstein, "Introduction" in *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991), 3.
13. V. H. Viglielmo, *Japanese Literature in the Meiji Era*, compiled and edited by Okazaki Yoshie, translated and adapted by V. H. Viglielmo (Tokyo: Ôbunsha, 1955), 284.
14. *Ibid.*, 284.
15. Kenmochi Takehiko, "Natsume Sôseki *Sorekara* to D'Annunzio *Shi no Shôri* (Natsume Sôseki's *And Then* and D'Annunzio's *The Triumph of Death*) in *Hikaku bungaku kenkyû: Natsume Sôseki* (Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study) ed. Tsukamoto Toshiaki (Tokyo: Asahi Shuppan-sha, 1978), 474.
16. Sasaki Hideaki, *Atarashii onna no tôrai: Hiratsuka Raichô and Natsume Sôseki* [The Arrival of the New Woman: Hiratsuka Raichô and Natsume Sôseki] (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1994), 293.
17. Mark Schilling, *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture* (New York: Weatherhill, 1997), 304.
18. Michele Marra, *Representations of Power: The Literary Politics of Medieval Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 95.
19. *Ibid.*, 94.
20. Robert Wright, *The Moral Animal: Evolutionary Psychology and Everyday Life* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 123-124.
21. Jordan Sand, "At Home in the Meiji Period: Inventing Japanese Domesticity" in *Mirror of Modernity: Invented Traditions of Modern Japan*, ed. Stephen Vlastos (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 191-207.
22. Hirata Yumi, "The Story of the Woman, the Woman of the Story: Takahashi Oden and the Discourse of the 'Poison Woman'" trans. by Anne McKnight in *Gender and Japanese History*, ed. Wakita Haruko, Anne Bouchy, and Ueno Chizuko, vol 2 *The Self and Expression/Work and Life* (Osaka: Osaka University Press, 1999), 243.
23. Christine Marran, "'Poison Woman' Takahashi Oden and the Spectacle of Female Deviancy in Early Meiji" in *US-Japan Women's Journal* (English supplement) 9 (1995), 93-110, 20.
24. Camille Paglia, "Bobbitt versus Bobbitt" in *Vamps and Tramps: New Essays* (New York: Vintage, 1994), 420.
25. Birnbaum, 49.
26. Reiko Abe Auestad, "Discourse in the Japanese Novel: 'Dialogic' Social Exchange in Natsume Sôseki's *Meian*" in *Bakhtinian Theory in Japanese Studies*, ed. Jeffrey Johnson (Lewiston: Edwin Mellon Press, 2001), 83-199, 87. So far as I can determine, Auestad's article is excerpted from her *Rereading Sôseki*, and its inclusion in *Bakhtinian Theory in Japanese Studies* shows her important position in Sôseki studies in general.
27. *Ibid.*, 87.
28. Tanizaki Jun'ichirô, *Fûten rôjin no nikki* (Diary of a Mad Old Man) trans. Howard Hibbett (New York: Berkely Medallion, 1971), 126-27.
29. Ann Heilmann, *New Woman Fiction: Women Writing First-Wave Feminism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 118.
30. Denis de Rougemont, *Love in the Western World*, trans. Montgomery Belgion, revised and augmented edition including postscript (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 5.
31. Janet Walker, *The Japanese Novel of the Meiji Period and the Ideal of Individualism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 82.
32. SZ 32:139-140.

## Chapter 6      Modern Love in Meredith and Sôseki: The Dissolution of a Marriage

1. Translated by Homma Kenshirô, *Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study* (Osaka: Kansai University of Foreign Studies, 1990), 110. There is a large body of literature on the relationship between the

works of Meredith and Sôseki, but surprisingly little in English. Homma's 1990 study includes an eight-page bibliography with sources in English on Meredith and Japanese sources on Sôseki but no English sources on Meredith and Sôseki. This subject really deserves a book-length treatment, but ideally would require a Japanese specialist who is also a Victorianist (a Miyoshi Masao, for example). Any untrained reader, however, will recognize Meredith in Sôseki because the name is mentioned outright in several novels. Meredith is mentioned by name in *Wagahai wa neko de aru*, *Nowaki*, and in *Kôjin*. Chapter Eight of *Beauchamp's Career* is worked into chapter Nine of *Kusamakura*. Kuno Shinkichi points out in his article "Sôseki Natsume and George Meredith: How Sôseki Has Read Meredith," [in English] *Hikaku bungaku* [Journal of Comparative Literature] 4 (1961): 20-32, that Chapter Twenty-Six of *Diana of the Crossways* is adapted for Chapter Eighteen of *Gubijinsô* and frequent mention is made of Meredith in Sôseki's *Bungakuron* [Theory of Literature] which takes note of *The Egoist*, *Lord Ormont and His Aminta*, *The Shaving of Shagpat*, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, and *One of Our Conquerors*. Kuno states that Sôseki had read Meredith during his years abroad in London and probably continued reading him while he was lecturing on literature at Tokyo University. Kuno went to the trouble of recording all of Sôseki's marginalia that appear in Meredith's works (photographing each page) as catalogued in the Sôseki Library at Tôhoku University, classifying them into "marginalia (including those both in the inside of the cover and on the flyleaf), Underlines, Sidelines, Circles (o), and Crosses (x)." His data and notes are faithfully reproduced here, just as they appear on page 25 of his article:

**The Table of the Classification**  
(The number denotes frequency)

Works	Mar.	Und.	Sid.	Cir.	Cross
<i>Shaving of Shagpat</i>	5	0	1	0	2
<i>Tales of Chloe</i>	7	8	7	0	2
<i>Richard Feverel</i>	22	6	35	0	0
<i>Sandra Belloni</i>	10	3	14	0	0
<i>Rhoda Fleming</i>	48	29	35	0	0
<i>Vittoria</i>	8	5	20	0	0
<i>Beauchamp's Career</i>	4	8	15	5	0
<i>The Egoist</i>	4	2	12	0	0
<i>Tragic Comedians</i>	4	3	15	0	0
<i>Diana of the Crossways</i>	5	5	3	3	0
<i>One of Our Conquerors</i>	1	9	2	0	0
<i>Lord Ormont</i>	17	27	12	0	0
<i>Amazing Marriage</i>	11	4	8	0	0

Notes

1. This table does not refer to "An Essay on Comedy."
2. No entry into "Harry Richmond," or "Evan Harrington" and "Poems."
3. Entries in the inside of the cover and on the flyleaf are included in Marginalia.
4. 「J」 is included in Sidelines, for the case is very rare.
5. Underlines and Sidelines are sometimes found at the same place. I counted them severally.
6. Marginalia and Sidelines or Underlines are sometimes found at the same place. I counted them severally.
7. Sometimes, Sidelines extended over several pages. I counted them page by page as one for page.
8. The Sidelines of "Richard Feverel" are sometimes done by pen and pencil at the same place. I counted them severally.

- I won't attempt to analyze Kuno's data (his study is largely quantitative and makes no attempt to explain why Sôseki evaluated Meredith's work so highly), but I would like to point out that the absence of entries in *Poems* (Note 2) is no indication that Sôseki—a poet himself, in fact, a poet before becoming a novelist, as was Meredith—had not read them.
2. The complete quotation reads: "Pour nous, c'est *Les Liaisons dangereuses* que *Clair-Obscur* évoque; ce roman a soufflé au cinéma son art du montage et Sôseki prolonge sa cruauté en appliquant sa vitesse d'exécution à l'examen de la décomposition d'un couple ordinaire." (Christian Perrot, *Libération*) in *Clair-obscur*, trans. René de Ceccatty and Ryôji Nakamura (Paris: Editions Rivages, 1990).
  3. See Robert DeMayo's essay, "The Egoist and the Willow Pattern" in *The Egoist* ed. Robert M. Adams (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 453-460.
  4. See Lois Josephs Fowler's Introduction to *Diana of the Crossways* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1973), vii.
  5. Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 4.
  6. Barbara G. Walker, *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), 233-234. See also Patricia Monaghan, *The Book of Goddesses and Heroines* (New York: Dutton, 1983), 84. As for an older source that would possibly be known to Meredith and his Victorian readership, see John Bell, *Bell's New Pantheon, or Historical Dictionary* (London: British Library Strand, 1790), 233-238.
  7. Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*, 239.
  8. Marilyn J. Kurata, "Wrongful Confinement: The Betrayal of Women by Men, Medicine, and Law" in *Victorian Scandals: Representations of Gender and Class*, ed. Kristine Ottesen Garrigan (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992), 43-68.
  9. Quoted in J. A. Hammerton, *George Meredith in Anecdote and Criticism* (London: Grant Richards, 1909), 111-112.
  10. Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*, 5.
  11. See especially Chapter 10 on *Meian*, Iida Yûko, *Karera no monogatari: Nihon kindai bungaku to jendaa* [Their Story: Modern Japanese Literature and Gender] (Nagoya: Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998), 277-310.
  12. See for example "The Country of George Meredith" in *The Selected Writings of William Sharp Vol 4. Literary Geography* at [[http://www.sundown.pair.com/Sharp/WSVol\\_4/meredith.htm](http://www.sundown.pair.com/Sharp/WSVol_4/meredith.htm)], accessed 3 May 2001.
  13. See for example V. H. Viglielmo, "The Concept of Nature in the Work of Natsume Sôseki" *The Eastern Buddhist* 8 (1975):143-153; and Fredric R. Jameson, "Sôseki and Western Modernism" *boundary 2* 18:3 (1991), 123-141.
  14. See Homma's discussion of *Sorekara* and *Richard Feverel* in *Natsume Sôseki: A Comparative Study*, 106-121.
  15. Ôe Kenzaburô, "Meian no kôzô" (The Structure of Meian) in *Saigo no shôsetsu* (The Last Novel) (Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1988).
  16. Vivian Gornick, *The End of the Novel of Love* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1997), 7,15.
  17. Lois Josephs Fowler's Introduction to *Diana of the Crossways*, v.
  18. See "Japanese Women in Meiji, Taishô, and Shôwa Japan: Historical Timeline" at [<http://www.smith.edu/fceas/curriculum/wollam/htm>], accessed 24 May 2001.
  19. Etô Jun, *Sôseki to sono jidai* [Sôseki and His Age] 4 vols. (Tokyo: Shinchôsha, 1970-1995), vol. 1, 194-196. See also Jay Rubin, "Sanshirô and Sôseki: A Critical Essay" in *Sanshirô* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977).
  20. Kumiko Fujimura-Fanselow and Atsuko Kameda, ed. *Japanese Women: New Feminist Perspectives on the Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Feminist Press, 1995).
  21. Madeleine B. Stern, ed. *Victoria Woodhull Reader* (Weston, Mass.: M & S Press, 1974), 23-24.
  22. Sasaki Hideaki went to the trouble of photographing the Sôseki's *kakiire* (marginalia) in Meredith. See Sasaki Hideaki, 278-79. For the complete paragraph in question, see "An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit" in *The Egoist*, ed. Robert Adams (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), 431-450, 441.

1. English translation by Earl H. Kinmonth, *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought: From Samurai to Salary Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 207. See also his n3 with Itô Sei's remark that the poem, titled *Gantô no kan* (Thoughts upon the Precipice), was plagiarized from Hamlet, which, Itô suggests, Fujimura had been reading shortly before his death.
2. *Mon* (The Gate, 1910) trans. Francis Mathy (Tuttle, 1972), 58.
3. Mary Douglas, *Danger and Purity* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 53.
4. Michael Cunningham, *The Hours* (New York: Picador, 1998), 70.
5. Carol Gluck, *Japan's Modern Myths: Ideology in the Late Meiji Period* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1985), 257.
6. Kinmonth, *The Self-Made Man in Meiji Japanese Thought*, 33.
7. Kingo Ochiai and Sanford Goldstein, "Translators' Afterword" in *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond* (Tuttle, 1985), 326.
8. See Kinmonth, Chapter 6 "Anguished Youth," 206-240.
9. Karl Beckson, *London in the 1890s: A Cultural History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1992), 35.
10. Hannah Arendt, "Introduction" in *Walter Benjamin, Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 22.
11. Reiko Abe Auestad, *Rereading Sôseki: Three Early Twentieth-Century Novels* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998), 91.
12. Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 148.
13. Jay Rubin, "Sanshiro and Soseki: A Critical Essay" in *Sanshiro*, trans. Jay Rubin (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 213-48, 239.
14. See for example Haruo Shirane, *The Bridge of Dreams: A Poetics of 'The Tale of Genji'* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987). Especially, Chapter One, "Kingship and Transgression."
15. Henry David Thoreau, "Walking" in *The Writings of Henry David Thoreau*, vol. 9 (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1896), 251-304, 251-52.
16. Mark C. Taylor, *Erring: A Postmodern A/theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 150.
17. James Fujii, "Writing Out Asia: Modernity, Canon, and Natsume Sôseki's *Kokoro*" *positions* 1:1 (1993), 194-223, 199.
18. See Joshua Fogel's introduction and his translation of Yosano's "Travels in Manchuria and Mongolia" in Joshua A. Fogel, *Travels in Manchuria and Mongolia: A Feminist Poet from Japan Encounters Prewar China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).
19. Ôgai has not escaped criticism entirely. Uchida Michio lists six recent articles in Japanese, all from the 1990s, that take up the subject of *Man-Kan tokoro dokoro* and that made an impression on him, including one called "Mori Ôgai ni okeru Kankoku" (Korea in the Case of Mori Ôgai). See Uchida Michio, "Natsume Sôseki in Manchuria and Korea" *Acta Asiatica* 79 (September 2000), 1-29.
20. See Inger Sigrun Brodey and Sammy I. Tsunematsu, *Rediscovering Natsume Sôseki: With the First English Translation of Travels in Manchuria and Korea* (Kent: Global Oriental, 2000).
21. Uchida Michio, "Natsume Sôseki in Manchuria and Korea" *Acta Asiatica* 79 (September 2000), 1-29, 1.
22. See also Kang Sangjung, Ishihara Chiaki, and Komori Yôichi "Teidan: tekisuto, shutai, shokuminchi" (Three-way conversation: Text, Subject, and Colony) *Sôseki Kenkyû* (Sôseki Studies) 11 (1998).

**Chapter 8**      **In Conclusion: *Matome* / Recapitulation**

1. See Takayuki Yokota-Murakami, *Don Juan East/West: On the Problematics of Comparative Literature* (Albany: State University of New York, 1998).
2. Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit, "'To Learn What Fear Was': Comparative Studies in the Abyss" *Monumenta Nipponica* 54:2 (1999), 259-265, 262-263.
3. See Yokota-Murakami's detailed discussion of these terms and concepts in his chapter "The Introduction of Love," *Don Juan East/West*, 35-80.
4. Tsutomu Takahashi, *Parallelisms in the Literary Vision of Sin: Double-Readings of Natsume Sôseki and Nathaniel Hawthorne; Akutagawa Ryûnosuke and Ambrose Bierce; and Hagiwara Sakutarô and Stephen Crane* (Ph.D. Diss., Pennsylvania State University, 1991), 43. Forthcoming from Peter Lang (December 2002).
5. Michael Kane, *Modern Men: Mapping Masculinity in English and German Literature, 1880-1930* (New York: Cassell, 1999), vi.
6. Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 8.

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## Natsume Sôseki: A Selected Annotated Bibliography

Natsume Sôseki (1867-1916) is a publishing phenomenon, a cottage industry whose vigor and momentum show no sign of abating. In fact, the 1990s witnessed a Sôseki boom in Japan. Ishihara Chiaki commented in the 1993 inaugural issue of *Sôseki Kenkyû* that twenty to thirty books and two to three hundred scholarly articles on Sôseki are being published every year in Japan. That same issue features an editors' *taidan* with, appropriately enough, Karatani Kôjin, titled "Nihon ni tojirarenai sekai de tsûyô-suru Sôseki no tankyû o" (Exploring Sôseki in a Manner that is Open to the World Outside Japan). It was Karatani Kôjin, after all, who put Sôseki "in a central position" in his discussion of the "origins" of modern Japanese literature in 1980 (*Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*, though not translated until 1993). Amid this deluge of Sôseki scholarship, my bibliography focuses mainly on the holdings of the University of Hawaii Hamilton Library and is necessarily selective and personal. Topics of interest to me, therefore, are reflected in and guide my choices: gender/sexuality, canonicity, narrative, critical theory, comparative literature. Intended for the serious student of Japanese literature, my bibliography has many Japanese titles left untranslated; and because of its length, titles are usually listed only in *Romaji* and not in *kanji*. For ease of use, it has been divided into six sections: 1) Reference Works in Japanese; 2) Criticism in Japanese - Books; 3) Criticism in Japanese - Articles; 4) Biographical/Critical Studies in English; 5) Ph.D. Dissertations; and 6) Translations in Foreign Languages. Annotations are extremely random, but an attempt has been made to show the development of Sôseki scholarship from Komiya Toyotaka, Morita Sôhei and Ara Masahito, to Etô Jun, Karatani Kôjin and Komori Yôichi.

### Reference Works In Japanese

List of volumes in encyclopedias of literature, *zenshû* 全集 (Complete Works), *jiten* 事典 (encyclopedia dictionaries) and other reference works. Note: all publishers are located in Tokyo unless indicated otherwise.

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*Natsume Sôseki shû*. Vol. 15. *Gendai bungô meisaku zenshû*. Kawade Shobo, 1953. Includes *Nenpu* and *kaisetsu* by Nakamura Shin'ichirô. [PL812.A8 A15 1953]

*Natsume Sôseki shû*. Vol. 59. *Shôwa bungaku zenshû*. Kadokawa shoten, 1953. [PL755.65 .S5 v.59]

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*Sôseki zenshû* 漱石全集 (Complete Works). 20 vols. Sôseki Zenshû Kankôkai, 1928.  
*Sôseki zenshû* 漱石全集 (Complete Works). 34 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1956-57.  
*Sôseki zenshû* 漱石全集 (Complete Works). 17 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1965-1967 and 1974-76.  
*Sôseki zenshû* 漱石全集 (Complete Works). 28 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1993 (in celebration of the publisher's 80th anniversary). Includes three volumes of letters, two *bessatsu*, index (frequently nonexistent in most Complete Works), and one *bekkan*.

Iwanami was long considered to be the publisher of the authoritative Sôseki; they published their first volume not long after his death. But today other scholars have questioned this authority and have helped produce other versions of Complete Works which differ mainly in their variant texts. Since Natsume Sôseki entered the public domain (1946), 30 years after his death, it is not unusual for publishers to roll out a new edition of Sôseki to boost company revenue. Still, most scholars will turn to Iwanami for the definitive texts.

#### Criticism in Japanese — Books

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 Akagi Ketahei. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shinchôsha, 1917. [PL812.A8 Z52]  
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 Ara Masahito. *Hyôden Natsume Sôseki*. Jitsugyô no Nihonsha, 1960. [PL812.A8 Z53 1960]  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki nyûmon*. Kôdansha, 1967. [PL812.A8 Z531]  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Kaisetsu to Natsume Sôseki: Garasudo no uchi*. Shinchô Bunko series. Shinchôsha, 1968.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki kenkyû nenpyô*. Edited by Ara Masahito. Shûeisha, 1984. [PL8112.A8 Z565]  
 Literary critic Ara Masahito (1912-79), was first to apply Freudian theory to literature and noted for his groundbreaking studies of Natsume Sôseki, the last of which, his *nenpyô*, completed a few years before his death, is an exhaustive cataloguing to the minutest detail of Sôseki's life.  
 Chitani Shichirô. *Sôseki no byôseki: byôki to sakuhin kara*. Keiso Shobô, 1963.  
 Doi Takeo. *Sôseki no shinteki no sekai*. Shibundô, 1969.  
 Etô Jun. *Natsume Sôseki*. Keiso Shobô, 1965. First published by Tôkyô Raifusha in 1956.  
 [PL812.A8 Z585 1965]  
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 The four volumes completed by Etô Jun (1933-99), who made his literary debut with his *Natsume Sôseki* in 1956, not only supplement the previous Sôseki scholarship of Komiyama and Ara but in some ways supersedes it. The definitive Sôseki biography except for the fact that it remains uncompleted. First Sôseki biographer to focus on the author's milieu with encyclopedic detail.  
 Fujita Kenji. *Sôseki sono kiseki to keifu (Ôgai, Ryûnosuke, Yûzô; Bungaku no tetsugakuteki kôsetsu)*. Kinokuniya Shoten, 1991. [PL812.A8 Z666]  
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 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki tokuhon: sono shôgai to sakuhin*. Gakushû Kenkyûsha, 1958. [PL812.A8 A6]  
 Fukuhara Rintarô. *Natsume Sôseki*. Aratake Shuppan, 1973. [PL812.A8 Z63]  
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- Hiraoka Toshio. *Sôseki josetsu*. 1976. Reprint. Azuma Shobô.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. Jisaburô. *Natsume Sôseki*. Chûô Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1969. [PL812.A8 Z672]  
 Hando Kazutoshi. *Sôseki Sensei zo na, moshi*. Bungei Shunjû, 1992. [PL812.A8 Z6857]  
 Honda, Akira. *Sôseki sanmyaku: kodoku no bungakusha*. Yagumo Shoten, 1948. [PL812.A8 Z675]  
 Iida Rigyo. ed. *Sôseki, ten no okite monogatari*. Kokusho Kankôkai, 1987. [PL812.A8 Z863] Selections from works by Natsume Sôseki and Ôtsuka Kusuoko.  
 Iida Yûko. *Karera no monogatari: Nihon kindai bungaku to jendaa*. Nagoya Daigaku Shuppankai, 1998. [PL 726.57 G44 I37]  
 You wouldn't know it from the title, but this book takes Sôseki's texts as its discursive space for gender topics. Keywords such as ホモソシャル(homosocial) express its contemporary critical stance and indebtedness to the likes of Sedgwick, Foucault, and Komori Yôichi. Recommended to me by Sasaki Atsuko, I was thrilled to find a copy in UH Library (still in its virginal unchecked-out condition).  
 Ikezaki Chuko. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shinchôsha, 1919. [PL812.A8 Z71]  
 Imanishi Junkichi. *Sôseki bungaku no shisô*. Chikuma Shobô, 1988.  
 Inoue Yuriko. *Natsume Sôseki to sono shûhen*. Kindai Bungeisha, 1992. [PL812.A8 Z73663]  
 Ishikawa Teiji. *Natsume Sôseki: sono kyojô to jitsuzô*. Meiji Shoin, 1980. [PL812.A8 Z676]  
 Ishizaki Hitoshi. *Sôseki no hôhô*. Yûseidô, 1989.  
 Itagaki Naoko. *Sôseki, Ôgai, Tôson*. Ganshōdô, 1946. [PL812.A8 Z68 1946]  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki bungaku no haikai*. Masu Shobô, 1956.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki denki to bungaku*. Shibundô, 1973. [PL812.A8 Z692]  
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 Izu Toshihiko. *Sôseki to tennôsei*. Yûseidô, 1989. [PL812.A8 Z5956]  
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 Kamiyama Mutsumi. *Natsume Sôseki ron: josetsu*. Kokubunsha, 1980. [PL812.A8 Z745]  
 Kamo Akira. *Natsume Sôseki: sôzô no yoake*. Kyôiku Shuppansha Sentaa, 1985. [PL812.A8 Z734]  
 Kaneko Kenji. *Ningen Sôseki*. (1956) Revised edition. Kyôdô Shuppan, 1965. [PL812.A8 Z7]  
 Kawaguchi Tsukasa. *Natsume Sôseki ron*. Kindai Bungeisha, 1982. [PL812.A8 Z7463]  
 Karaki Junzô. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shûdôsha, 1956. [PL812.A8 Z715]  
 Karatani Kôjin. *Sôseki ron shûsei*. Daisan Bunmeisha, 1992.  
 Literary critic Karatani Kôjin (1941- ) began his career with *Ishiki to shizen: Sôseki shiron* (Consciousness and Nature: Essays on Natsume Sôseki, 1969), but is best known for his *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. Clearly, Natsume Sôseki is the inspiration behind this book. Parallels have been drawn between Sôseki turning to theory at a late age in London and Karatani turning to theory at a late age in the U.S. Karatani's deep admiration for Sôseki is seen in his pseudonym taken from the name of a Sôseki novel (*Kôjin*, *The Wayfarer*). *Origins* begins and ends with a discussion of Sôseki, the framing device for his analysis. Sôseki is an abiding interest, about which he continues to participate in academic discussion and publishing.  
 Karatani Kôjin, Koiki Seiji, Komori Yôichi, Haga Tôru, and Kamei Junsuke. *Sôseki o yomu*. Iwanami Seminar Books 48. Iwanami, 1994.  
 Kataoka Yoshikazu. *Arishima Takeo to Natsume Sôseki*. Gakuyûsha, 1947. [PL801.R5 Z74]  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki no sakuhin*. Kôbunsha Shoten, 1965. [PL812.A8 Z72]  
 Kindai bungaku kenkyûkai hen. *Natsume Sôseki no kotoba*. (PL812.A8 A61). Kindai bungaku kenkyûkai. Haga shoten, 1966.  
 Kitagaki Ryûichi. *Sôseki no seishin bunseki*. Revised edition. Kitazawa Shoten, 1968.  
 Komiya Toyotaka. *Sôseki no geijutsu*. Iwanami Shoten, 1942.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki zakki*. Koyama Shoten, 1941. [PL812.A8 Z733]  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki*. 3 vols. Iwanami Shoten, 1938. [PL812.A8 Z73]  
 Sôseki's *deshi* and first biographer, Komiya (1884-1966) laid the foundation for future Sôseki scholarship. Perhaps somewhat critically unsophisticated by today's standards, but a detailed analysis nonetheless. Komiya was Professor Viglielmo's sensei at Gakushûin, making him Sôseki's *mago-deshi*, and in turn making Viglielmo's pupil William Ridgeway, Sôseki's *hiimago-deshi*.  
 Komori Yôichi. *Kôzô to shite no katari*. Shin'yôsha, 1988.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki o yomu*. Booklet 325. Iwanami, 1993.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki o yominaosu*. Chikuma Shinsho, 1996.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *Yuragi no Nihon bungaku* <ゆらぎ>の日本文学 (Japanese Literature of 'Deviation'). NHK Books, 1998.

Chapter 2 is about Natsume Sôseki and the estranged subject. Deconstruction of “Japanese literature.” Sôseki was actually one of the first writers to do this in his *Bungakuron*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Seikimatsu no yogensha Natsume Sôseki* 世紀末の予言者夏目漱石 (Natsume Sôseki: Fin de Siècle Prophet). Kôdansha, 1999.

Of particular interest to me is Chapter 5, *Ren'ai to kekkon no aida de* (between love and marriage) which discusses *dôsei shakai o iji-suru setchi* (mechanisms for maintaining same-sex society); *hōkenteki seishin to ren'ai* (feudal spirit and love); and *kindai shakai ni okeru kekkon no genjitsu* (the reality of marriage in contemporary society). Sôseki again proves to be a rich text for discussing theoretical aspects of love, sexuality, personal freedom.

Komori Yôichi and Ishihara Chiaki. ed. 漱石を語る (Sôseki o kataru). 2 vols. Kanrin Shobô, 1998.

This appears to be recycled articles from the journal *Sôseki Kenkyû* published in book form, including in Vol. 1 Inoue Hisashi, “Sôseki and Shiki”; Tsushima Yûko, “Women in Sôseki”; Kojima Nobuo, “Sôseki and Meiji” and others. Volume 2 contains Karatani Kôjin, “Sôseki and Fin de Siècle” and Serizawa Shunsuke, “Family in Flux” among others.

Komori Yôichi, Nakamura Miharuru, Miyakawa Kenrô. *Sôryoku tôron: Sôseki no Kokoro*. Kanrin Shobô, 1994.

New readings from a historical positioning of the *Kokoro* debate.

Kosaka Shin. *Sôseki no ai to bungaku*. Kôdansha, 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki kenkyû: denki to bunseki no aida o motomete*. Ôfûsha, 1986. [PL812.A8 Z7714]

Koyano Atsushi. *Natsume Sôseki o edo kara yomu: atarashii onna to furui otoko*. Chûô Kôronsha, 1995.

*Kôza Natsume Sôseki: Sôseki no jidai to shakai*. Edited by Miyoshi Yukio et al. 5 vols. Yûhikaku, 1982.

Kubota Yoshitarô. *Sôseki: sono shikô suru mono*. Miyai Shoten, 1994. [PL812.A8 Z753]

Kumazaka Kyôko. *Natsume Sôseki no sekai*. Kanrin Shobô, 1995.

Another collection of the author’s “Sôseki-ron”: “Encountering Shiki,” “Sôseki’s Poetry,” Sôseki’s ‘shaseibun’-sketching,” Asahi Shinbun’s Art and Literature Column,” “Sôseki’s Letters,” and others.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Mayoi hitsuji no yukue: Sôseki to kindai* (Where Did the Stray Sheep Go: Sôseki and Today).

Kanrin shobô, 1996.

Kume Masao. *Sôseki sensei no shi*. Shunyôdô, 1921. [PL832.UF A15]

Kurihara Shin’ichi. *Sôseki no bungei riron*. Teikoku Tosho Kabushiki Kaisha, 1944. [PL812.A8 Z741]

Matsumoto Hiroshi. *Natsume Sôseki: gendaijin no genzô* [PL812.A8 Z7875 1986] Shinchi Shobô, 1986.

Matsuoka Yuzuru. *Sôseki sensei*. Iwanami Shoten, 1934. [PL812.A8 Z7423]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki, hito to sono bungaku*. Chôbunkaku, 1942. [PL812.A8 Z7421]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki*. Kawade Shobô, 1954. [PL812.A8 Z742]

Miyai Ichirô. *Sôseki no sekai*. Kôdansha, 1967. [PL812.A8 Z721]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki no koi*. Chikuma Shobô, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki bungaku no zenbo*. Kokusho Kankôkai, 1984. [PL812.A8 Z7927]

Mizukawa Takao. *Sôseki to rakugo. Edo shomin geinô no eikyô*. Sairyûsha, 1986. [PL812.A8 Z7928]

Mizumura Minae. *Zoku Meian*. Chikuma, 1990.

One of two writers to pen an ending to Sôseki’s unfinished *Meian*, this bilingual author surprised a lot of people with her accomplished narrative, by reproducing Sôseki’s style. Her theoretical concerns (see Articles below) show she is interested in more than just telling a good story.

Mizutani Akio. *Sôseki bungei no sekai*. Ôfûsha, 1974. [PL812.A8 Z76]

Morita Sôhei. *Bunshodô to Sôseki sensei*. Shun’yôdô, 1919. [PL812.A8 Z7662]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki*. 2 vols. Kôchô Shorin, 1943. [PL812.A8 Z765]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Zoku Natsume Sôseki*. Kôchô Shorin, 1943. [PL812.A8 Z766]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki sensei to watashi*. Tôzai Shuppansha, 1947. [PL812.A8 Z7663]

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki no bungaku*. Tôzai Shuppansha, 1947. [PL812.A8 Z7661]

Translator of Western literature and novelist Morita Sôhei (1881-1949) was, like Komiya, an actual *deshi* of Natsume Sôseki and an avid chronicler of their relationship. He was on two occasions a border in the Sôseki home.

Murakami Yoshitaka. *Natsume Sôseki ronko*. Keiryukaku, 1972. [PL812.A8 Z7665]

Nagao Takeshi. *Sôseki goshippu: shôsetsu no sukima o yomu*. Bungei Shunjû, 1993.

Nakamura Mitsuo. *Sakka no seishun*. Sobunsha, 1952.

Natsume Kyôko (Nakane). *Sôseki no omoide*. Kaizôsha, 1928. [PL812.A8 Z77]

Sôseki’s wife reminisces of their life together and reveals a very human, not always likeable, Kinnosuke. Dictated to son in law, the father of Yôko McClain (Sôseki’s granddaughter) who until

- recently could be heard lecturing on her famous literary relative.
- Natsume Shinroku. *Chichi Natsume Sôseki*. Bungei Shunjû Shinsha, 1957. [PL812.A8 Z773]  
 Number Two son remembers life with father.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Neko no haka*. Bungei Shunjû Shinsha, 1960. [PL812.A8 Z775]
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki to sono shûhen*. Haga Shoten, 1967. [PL812.A8 Z774]
- Natsume Sôseki. *Shakai to jibun*. Jitsugyo no Nihonsha, 1913. [PL812.A8 S4]
- Ôchi Masao. *Sôseki shiron*. Kadokawa Shoten, 1971.
- Ogura Shûzô. *Natsume Sôseki: William James yuyô na shûhen*. Yûseidô, 1989.
- Ôhashi Kenzaburô. *Natsume Sôseki: kindai to iu meizu*. Ozawa Shoten, 1995. [PL812.A8 Z8285]
- Okazaki, Yoshie. *Sôseki to bishô* [PL812.A8 Z653 1947]
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ôgai to Sôseki*. Kaname Shobô, 1951. [PL811.O7 Z785]
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki to sokuten kyoshi*. Hôbunkan, 1968.
- Oketani Hideaki. *Natsume Sôseki ron*. Kawade Shobô Shinsha, 1976.
- Ôtake Masanori. *Sôseki shoki sakuhinron no tenkai*. Ôfusha, 1995. [PL812.A8 Z83395]
- Ôoka Shôhei. *Shôsetsuka Natsume Sôseki*. Chikuma Shobô, 1988.
- Sakai Hideyuki. *Sôseki: sono in'ei*. Yûseidô, 1990. [PL812.A8 Z83418]
- Sakaguchi Yoko. *Tsumazuki to shite no bungaku: Soseki Meian ron*. Kawade Shobô Shinsha, 1989. [PL812.A8 M437 1989]
- Sako Jun'ichirô. *Sôseki ronkyû*. Chôbunsha, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Natsume Sôseki no bungaku*. Chôbunsha, 1993. [PL812.A8 83428]
- Satô Tasumasa. *Natsume Sôseki ron*. Chikuma Shobô, 1986. [PL812.A8 Z83458]
- Sasaki Hideaki. *Natsume Sôseki to josei*. Shintensha, 1990.
- Senjû, Kimura, and Steven. ed. *Sanshirô no sekai Sôseki o yomu*. Kanrin Shobô, 1995.  
 New Zealand authors discuss Sôseki from feminist and other critical perspectives.
- Senuma Shigeki. *Natsume Sôseki*. Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 1962. [PL812.A8 Z836]
- Shibata Shokyoku. *Sôseki oboegaki*. Nihon Kosho Tsushinsha, 1963. [PL812.A8 Z837]
- Shigematsu Yasuo. *Sôseki: sono arata naru chihei*. Ôfusha, 1997. [PL812.A8 Z8423]
- Shima Tameo. *Natsume-san no hito oyobi shisô*. Daidokan Shoten, 1927. [PL812.A8 Z838]
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Shiden Natsume Sôseki: ningen Sôseki kaitai no kokoromi*. Izumi Shuppan, 1972. [PL812.A8 Z839]
- Shimada Masahiko. *Sôseki o kaku*. Iwanami Shinsho, 1993.
- Shiozaki Toshio. *Sôseki, Ryûnosuke no seishin ijô*. Hakuyôsha, 1957.
- Sugiyama Kazuo. *Sôseki no bungaku*. 1970. [PL812.A8 Z882]
- Sukegawa Noriyoshi. *Sôseki to Meiji bungaku*. Ôfusha, 1983. [PL812.A8 Z93]
- Takahama Kyôshi. *Sôseki-shi to watakushi*. Nihon Tôsho Sentaa, 1983. [PL812.A8 Z89]
- Takaki Fumio. *Sôseki no dôtei*. Shinbisha, 1967. [PL812.A8 Z91]
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki sakuhin no uchi to soto*. Izumi Shoin, 1994.
- Takeda Katsuhiko. *Sôseki no Tôkyô*. Waseda Daigaku Shuppanbu, 1997. [PL812.A8 Z8966]
- Takemori Ten'yû. *Sôseki bungaku no tansho*. Chikuma, 1991.
- Takizawa Katsumi. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shimizu Shobô, 1946. [PL812.A8 Z92]
- Tamai Takayuki. *Natsume Sôseki ron*. Ôfûsha, 1976. [PL812.A8 Z917]
- Tanaka Yasutaka. *Natsume Sôseki*. Meiji Shoin, 1969. Series Title: Shashin sakkaden soshô, 4. [PL812.A8 Z924]
- Tsuda Seifû. *Sôseki to jûdeshi*. Sekai Bunko, 1949. [PL812.A8 Z937]
- Tsukamoto Toshiaki. *Sôseki to Eikoku: ryûgaku taiken to sôsaku to no aida*. Sairyûsha, 1987. [PL812.A8 Z936]
- Uchida Hyakken. *Sôseki sanbô no ki*. Chikuma Shobô, 1941.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sôseki zakkicho*. Kôzansha, 1949. [PL812.A8 Z94]
- Yamagishi Gaishi. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shimizu Kobundo Shobô, 1968. [PL812.A8 Z95]
- Yoneda Toshiaki. *Watashi no Sôseki*. Keisô Shobô, 1990.
- Yoshida Rokurô. *Sôseki bungaku no shinri-teki tankyû*. Keiso Shobô, 1970. [PL812.A8 Z965]
- Yoshida Seiichi. ed. *Natsume Sôseki hikkei*. Gakutôsha, 1967.
- Yoshikawa Kôjirô. *Sôseki shichû*. Iwanami Shoten, 1967. [PL812.A8 A175]
- Yoshimoto Takaaki and Satô Yasumasa. *Sôseki-teki shudai*. Shunjûsha, 1986. [PL812.A8 Z974]
- Yoshimura Yoshio. *Natsume Sôseki*. Shunjûsha, 1972. [PL812.A8 Z985]

## Criticism in Japanese — Articles (with emphasis on *Meian*)

- Aihara Kazukuni. "Meian no hyôgen." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 592 (June 1981): 49-54.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Gentaiken to shite no onna." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kyôzai no kenkyū* 34, 5 (April 1989): 38-43.
- Andô Kumiko. "Kosaka Shin 'Sôseki no ai to bungaku'; Miyai Ichirô 'Natsume Sôseki no koi'; Ishikawa Teiji 'Natsume Sôseki: sono jitsuzô to kyozô'." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 683 (October 1984): 154-61.
- Endô Yû. "Meian no ningen kankei: Tsuda to Kiyoko o chûshin." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 592 (June 1981): 37-42.
- Hasumi Shigehiko, Karatani Kôjin, Yoshikawa Yasuhisa, Kômorî Yôichi, Ishihara Chiaki, and Asada Akira. "Sôseki o megutte—sono yutakasa to mazushisa." *Hiyô kûkan* 8 (January 1993): 6-43.
- Hiraoka Toshio. "Meian: Shin to heiwa no kagayaki." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 686 (August 1988): 131-37.
- Inoue Yuriko. "Kindai bungakushi ni okeru Meian." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 592 (June 1981): 55-58.
- Iwahashi Kunie. "Meian no onnatachi." In *Shin bungei dokuhon: Natsume Sôseki*. Kawade Shobô Shinsha, 1990.
- Karatani Kôjin. "Sôseki no tayôsei: Kokoro o megutte." In *Kotoba to higeki*, 29-44. Daisan Bunmeisha, 1989.
- Karatani Kôjin and Miyoshi Yukio. "Taidan: Sôseki to wa nani ka." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kyôzai no kenkyū* 34, 5 (April 1989): 6-22.
- Katô Jirô. "Meian ron: Tsuda to Kiyoko." *Bungaku* 56 (April 1988): 97-122.
- Koizumi Kôichirô. "Tsuda to O-Nobu." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kanshō* 592 (June 1981): 32-36.
- Komorî Yôichi. "Sôseki no onnatachi to imôtotachi no keifu." *Bungaku* 1 (Winter 1991): 27-40.
- Komorî Yôichi, Gomi Fumihiko, Kanda Tatsumi, Takada Mamoru, and Watanabe Moriaki. "Zadankai: Nihon bungaku ni okeru nanshoku." *Bungaku* 6 (Winter 1995): 2-29.
- Mizumura Minae. "Karatani Kôjin to Pôru do Man." *Kokubungaku: kaishaku to kyôzai no kenkyū* 34, 12 (October 1989): 89-95.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Zoku Meian kara Meian e." An interview with Ishihara Chiaki. *Bungaku* 2 (Winter 1991): 80-94.
- Ôhashi Yôichi. "Homofobia no fûkei." *Bungaku* 6 (Winter 1995): 135-45.
- Reichert, James. "Sôseki no *Nowaki* ni okeru otoko dôshi no aijô no imi." *Bungaku* 6 (Winter 1995): 84-96.

## Biographical / Critical Studies in English and other Languages - Books & Articles

- Anderer, Paul. "Sôseki's *Kokoro*." In *Masterworks of Asian Literature in Comparative Perspective: a Guide for Teaching*. ed. Barbara Stoler Miller. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1994.
- Auestad, Reiko Abe. "Against the Linguistic Constraints: Narratological Structure and Writing Style in Natsume Sôseki's *Meian*." *Japan Forum* 5, no. 2 (October 1993): 231-243.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Rereading Sôseki: Three Early Twentieth-Century Japanese Novels*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998.
- This is a book-length expansion of Auestad's dissertation, who now teaches at University of Oslo. Extended bibliography. Well-read in theoretical concerns such as feminism and narrative authority, Auestad cites much recent scholarship in both Japanese and English (which makes it worthwhile reading for this reason alone) and does some very effective name-dropping. The three novels of the title are *Botchan*, *Kôjin*, and *Meian*. A truly helpful resource: up-to-date, savvy, theory conversant, but very readable.
- Brodey, Inger and Sammy Tsunematsu. Trans. *Rediscovering Natsume Sôseki: Travels in Manchuria and Korea*. Global Books, 2000.
- Chen, Yu-hsiu. "Identity Crisis: Meiji Intellectuals in Natsume Sôseki's *Sanshirô* and *And Then*." *Tamkang Journal* (Taipei) no.30 (January 1991): 227-245.
- Chen, Yu-hsiu. "Sin and Punishment in Love in Natsume Sôseki's Novels: with a Focus on *The Gate*."

- Tamkang Journal no.27 (February 1989): 321-336.
- de Bary, Brett. "Karatani Kôjin's *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*." In *Postmodernism and Japan*. Edited by Miyoshi Masao and H. D. Harootunian. Durham: Duke University Press, 1989.
- de Rougemont, Denis. *L'Amour et l'occident*. Paris: Plon, 1939. Translated by Montgomery Belgium from the French as *Love in the Western World*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983.
- Essential for making crosscultural comparisons. Used by Janet Walker (*The Japanese Novel of the Meiji Period*) in discussing Kitamura Tôkoku and also by Karatani Kôjin in his discussion of Tôkoku (*Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*).
- Doi Takeo. *The Psychological World of Natsume Sôseki*. Translated by W. J. Tyler. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976.
- Biddle, Ward. "The Authenticity of Natsume Sôseki." *Monumenta Nipponica* 38, 4 (1973).
- Gessel, Van. C. *Three Modern Novelists: Sôseki, Tanizaki, Kawabata*. Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1993.
- Etô Jun. "Natsume Sôseki: A Japanese Meiji Intellectual." *American Scholar* 39, 4 (1965).
- Fujii, James A. "Contesting the Meiji Subject: Soseki's *Neko* Reconsidered" in *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 49, no.2 ((Cambridge, Mass., Dec 1989): 553-574.
- Hibbett, Howard. "Sôseki and the Psychological Novel." In *Tradition and Modernization in Japanese Culture*, ed. Donald N. Shively. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Homma Kenshiro. *Natsume Sôseki: a Comparative Study*. Hirakata, Osaka: Intercultural Research Institute, University of Foreign Studies, 1990. IRI monograph, no. 21.
- Another fascinating study, like Matsui Sakuko's, which bears out Sôseki's debt to English literature. Homma pairs up Sôseki novels with their English "counterparts" such as *Sanshirô* and *Sorekara* with *The Egoist*; *Mon* with *The Scarlet Letter*; *Kôjin* with *Jane Eyre*; *Michikusa* with *Sense and Sensibility*; and *Meian* with *Pride and Prejudice*. Not the same keen critical edge that Matsui has, in my opinion.
- Iijima Takehisa and J. M. Vardaman Jr. ed. *The World of Natsume Sôseki*. Kinseidô, 1987.
- Jameson, Fredric R. "Sôseki and Western Modernism." *boundary 2* 18, 3 (1991):123-141.
- This article on Sôseki (the novel *Meian* in particular) and Henry James is a rare example of interest (and considerable insight) from a writer who stands outside the tradition/discipline of Japanese literature and is also an indication of a cleavage from the past Sôseki canonical works such as *Kokoro* which alone have been the subject of international scholarship.
- Japan. Mombusho. Nihon Yunesuko Kokunai Iinkai. *Essays on Natsume Soseki's Works*. Tokyo, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science 1972.
- Kawasaki Toshihiko. "Topoanalyses of Sôseki's Novels." *Literature East and West*. 21 (Austin, TX, 1977): 183-194.
- Karatani Kôjin. *Origins of Modern Japanese Literature*. Translation edited by Brett de Bary. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993.
- Lin, Lien-hsiang. ed. *A Symposium on Natsume Sôseki's Kokoro: a Selection from the Proceedings*. Singapore: Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore, 1994. Japanese Studies Monograph Series No. 4.
- Fourteen papers by scholars from eight countries. No surprises here: the orthodox scholarship of Edwin McClellan, Ueda Makoto, Kin'ya Tsuruta et al. Ohsawa Yoshihiro's idea of the double in the person of Watakushi/Sensei as in a Noh ghost play was the most radical. Brief bibliography.
- Marcus, Marvin. "The Writer Speaks: Late-Meiji Reflections on Literature and Life." Hare, Thomas; Borgen, Robert; Orbaugh, Sharalyn, eds. *The Distant Isle: Studies and Translations of Japanese Literature in Honor of Robert H. Brower*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Literary Reminiscence in Meiji-Taisho Japan*. Luk, Bernard Hung-Kay, ed. *Contacts between Cultures. Eastern Asia: Literature and Humanities*. Volume 3. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992.
- Matsui, Sakuko. *Natsume Sôseki as a Critic of English Literature*. East Asian Cultural Studies Series, no. 16. Center for East Asian Cultural Studies, 1975.
- Probably the only discussion in English on Sôseki's early essays (on Whitman, Tristram Shandy, Macbeth, etc.) and important lectures ("Bungakuron" and "Bungaku hyôron"), which remain untranslated. Shows a deep knowledge of Sôseki's material and of English literature in general. Detailed bibliography and an appendix with a list of works translated into European languages as well as a list of critical studies in English. Matsui's work is monumental in scope, breadth and depth.
- Mertz, John P. "Situating Westernism in Meiji literary Development". Sekine, Eiji, ed.. *Revisionism in*

- Japanese Literary Studies*. West Lafayette, Ind.: Midwest Association for Japanese Literary Studies, 1996. (Proceedings of the Midwest Association for Japanese Literary Studies, v.2.): 82-96.
- Milward, Peter. *The Heart of Natsume Sôseki: First Impressions of his Novels*. With notes by Kii Nakano. Azuma Shobô, 1982.
- Miyoshi, Masao. *Accomplices of Silence*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974.
- McClellan, Edwin. *Two Japanese Novelists: Sôseki and Tôson*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.
- Pollack, David. *Reading Against Culture: Ideology and Narrative in the Japanese Novel*. Cornell University Press, 1992.
- Contains a close reading of *Kokoro* based on Hsün Tzu's negative view of human nature and the absence/destruction of father figures which make the novel the disturbing, suffocatingly interiorized novel that it is.
- Ridgeway, William. "Natsume Sôseki and Male Identity Crisis." *Japan Quarterly* 45, 2 (1998): 82-90.
- Derivative and explanatory rather than analytical, but not without its own charm and insights, this modest article claims that the typical Sôseki protagonist, characterized as he is by *yûjûfudan* (irresoluteness) by ennui and inertia actually represents the modern predicament before Eliot's Prufrock and the modernists' antihero, who is not only totally lacking in heroic qualities but mired in moral dilemmas from which he is incapable of extricating himself or unwilling to do so.
- Roske-Cho, Wha Seon. *Das japanische Selbstverständnis im Modernisierungsprozess bei Natsume Sôseki*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1973. [PL812.A8 Z834 1973]
- Rubin, Jay. "Sôseki on Individualism: Watakushi no kojinchugi." *Monumenta Nipponica* 34, 1 (1979): 21-48.
- Sasaki, Hideaki. "A Feminist View of Natsume Soseki—His Attitude Toward Western and Eastern Notions of Woman." *Hikaku bunka zasshi* (Annual of Comparative Culture), 5 (Tokyo, 1991): 1-9.
- Shively, Donald H. ed. *Tradition and Modernism in Japanese Culture*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Takahashi Tsutomu. *Parallelisms in the Literary Vision of Sin: Double-Readings of Natsume Sôseki and Nathaniel Hawthorne, Akutagawa Ryunosuke and Ambrose Bierce, Hagiwara Sakutarô and Stephen Crane*. UMI, 1991
- Tsuruta Kin'ya and Thomas E. Swann. ed. *Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel*. Tokyo: Sophia University, 1976.
- Ueda Makoto. *Modern Japanese Writers*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976.
- Viglielmo, V. H. "Sôseki to Meredeisu." In *Tô* (1949).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Watakushi no mita Sôseki" (Sôseki in My Eyes). In *Natsume Sôseki Dokuhon*. Kawade Shobô, 1954.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Introduction to the Later Novels of Natsume Sôseki." *Monumenta Nipponica* Vol. 19 (1964): 1-36.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Meian: O-Nobu o chûshin ni" (Meian: Centering on O-Nobu). *Kokubungaku* 15: 5 (April 1970).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Meian* (Light and Darkness). trans. V.H. Viglielmo with "Afterword." London: Peter Owen, 1971.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Concept of Nature in the Work of Natsume Sôseki." *The Eastern Buddhist* 8 (1975): 143-153.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Sôseki's *Kokoro*: A Descent into the Heart of Man." In *Approaches to the Modern Japanese Novel*. ed. Tsuruta Kin'ya and Thomas E. Swann. Tokyo: Sophia, pp. 166-179.
- Yamanouchi Hisaki. *The Search for Authenticity in Modern Japanese Literature*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- Yiu, Angela. *Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sôseki*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998.
- Yu, Beongcheon. *Natsume Sôseki*. New York: Twain Publishers, 1969.
- Still, for my money, the best and most comprehensive general introduction to Sôseki and his major works in less than 200 pages.
- Walker, Janet A. *The Japanese Novel of the Meiji Period and the Ideal of Individualism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979.
- A sensitive reading of *Ukigumo*, *Futon*, and *Hakai* (with Sôseki mentioned only briefly). Seems to essentialize notions of self. Makes no attempt to deconstruct confessional literature and autobiography (all the rage nowadays). Does not take into account Japan's own tradition of "confessional" literature from the past.
- Washburn, Dennis C. *The Dilemma of the Modern in Japanese Fiction*. New Haven: Yale University Press,

1995.

Washburn Dennis C. and Alan Tansman. ed. *Studies in Modern Japanese Literature: Essays and Translations in Honor of Edwin McClellan*. Ann Arbor: Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan Press, 1997.

Contains the excellent article Resisting Woman—Reading Sôseki's *Gubijinsô*" by Minae Mizumura. Also on Sôseki: Ken Ito's "Writing Time in Sôseki's *Kokoro*" and Angela Yiu's "In Quest of an Ending: An Examination of Sôseki's *Kanshi*." Like many a festschrift, a mixed bag.

#### **P h . D . D i s s e r t a t i o n s**

Gleaned from the AAS bibliography, Hamilton Library holdings, and the comprehensive UMI database, this short list of dissertations indicates the dearth of graduate student research on Natsume Sôseki in English (two dissertations in fact are from the University of Hawaii, both written under the guidance of Professor Viglielmo; the two MA theses are also from University of Hawaii). Some are concerned with Natsume Sôseki only indirectly or marginally, and only one being directly concerned with the novel *Meian*. Dissertation research on Natsume Sôseki seems to have begun with V. H. Viglielmo in 1956. Both Reiko Abe Auestadt and Angela Yiu's dissertations have been published in book form and are available in the Hamilton Library. Kathryn Sparling's is "non circulating" and doesn't seem to be available anywhere.

Auestadt, Reiko Abe. "Natsume Sôseki's *Kôjin* (The Wayfarer) and *Meian* (Light and Darkness)

Reconsidered." University of Oslo, 1994.

Chung, Chong-hae. "Natsume Sôseki: The Spiritual Basis of His Art." University of Minnesota, 1981.

Flutsch, Maria. "The novels of Natsume Sôseki's "Middle road": a critical examination of the development of Sôseki's thought and art in his creative writings from 1907 to 1910, with a detailed study of the major works of this period, the trilogy *Sanshirô*, *Sore Kara*, and *Mon*, and some investigation of Sôseki's artistic standpoint in relation to their dominant school of literature, naturalism." University of Sydney, 1974.

Fujii, James A. "The Subject in the Modern Japanese Prose Narrative." University of Chicago, 1987.

Hio Noriko. "The Influence of Victorian Literature Upon Japanese Literature of the Meiji Period." University of Exeter, 1989.

Kojima Shigeru. "Career Change and the Life Course: The Case of Modern Japanese Writers." University of California, Berkeley, 1985.

Nakayama Etsuko. "A Study of Conflict in the Life and the Later Novels of Natsume Sôseki." University of Hawai'i, 1988. [AC1. H3 no.2327. 1988]

Lee, Stacy A. "Dazai Osamu and Natsume Sôseki: a Comparative Reading on Japan's Modern Mind." University of Hawai'i (MA), 1992. [CB5 .H3 no.2181. 1992]

Ogawa, Carole Cavanaugh. "1916: A Year in the Life of Akutagawa Ryûnosuke." Yale University, 1991.

Peterson, Cynthia. "Contesting Authorities : Feminine Voices of Desire in Four Literary Texts by Natsume Sôseki." Princeton University, 1995.

Reichert, James. "Representations of Male-Male Sexuality in Meiji-Period Literature." University of Michigan, 1998.

Ren, Shyh-jong. "Some English Influences on Natsume Sôseki's Criticism and Novels." University of Minnesota, 1979.

Sparling, Kathryn. "Early Natsume Sôseki: Images and Patterns of the Absolute." Harvard University, 1974.

Summersgill, Harue. "Natsume Sôseki's *Higan sugi made*: A Critical Study and Complete English Translation." University of Hawai'i, 1985. [AC1. H3 no1968. 1985]

Takahashi Tsutomu. "Parallelisms in the Literary Vision of Sin: Double-Readings of Natsume Sôseki and Nathaniel Hawthorne; Akutagawa Ryûnosuke and Ambrose Bierce; Hagiwara Sakutarô and

- Stephen Crane."Pennsylvania State University, 1991.
- Tatsuguchi, Emmeline S. "Letting Go." M.A. Thesis on Henry James and Natsume Sôseki. University of Hawai'i, 1969. [CB5 .H3 no.904]
- Turney, Alan. "Sôseki's Development as a Novelist until 1907: with Special Reference to the Genesis, Nature, and Position in his Work of *Kusamakura*." British Library Document Supply Centre, 1978.
- Viglielmo, V. H. "The Later Natsume Sôseki: His Art and Thought." Harvard University, 1956.
- At Harvard Viglielmo (1926- ) was a pupil of Russian émigré Serge Elisséeff (1889-1975) who was himself a student at Tokyo University where he, as the first Westerner to be enrolled as a regular student, specialized in Japanese literature. Introduced to Sôseki by Komiya, he attended the famous Mokuyôkai salon. He was director of the Harvard-Yenching Institute, founder of *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*. Viglielmo's dissertation was the first one at Harvard written on modern Japanese literature and he was the first Western scholar to treat Sôseki in a substantive way.
- Wren, James Allan. "Differences without Distinction: Ideology and the Performative Contexts of Fictional Self-Representation in Modern Japanese Literature (Mori Ôgai, Natsume Sôseki, Kawabata Yasunari)." University of Michigan, 1997.
- Yiu, Angela. "Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sôseki." Yale University, 1992.

### **Publishing History of Natsume Sôseki's Works Translated Into Foreign Languages**

Full length translations (not excerpts or shorter works) were selected from the following sources: *Japanese Literature in European Languages: A Bibliography*, compiled by Japan p.e.n. Club, 1961; *Modern Japanese Literature in Western Translations: A Bibliography*, International House of Japan Library, Tokyo 1972; and *Japanese Literature in Foreign Languages, 1945-1995*, compiled by Japan P.E.N. Club, 1995. One of many Natsume Sôseki topics of interest to me is canonicity which in its most mundane form is simply a market-driven indicator of what is published and what gets translated (only what is published—and stays in print—and what is translated is read and taught, thereby becoming canonical). This list of translated titles suggests by its sheer volume the conviction that *I am a Cat*, *Botchan*, and *Kokoro* are the Sôseki canonical works. Canonicity is a much more complex phenomenon than *that*, of course, but this list does open up some other interesting areas of research in, for example, comparative literature and translation studies.

#### **Rondon tō 倫敦塔 *The Tower of London* (1905)**

- Der Londoner Tower*. Translated by K. Koike. Tokyo and Kyoto: Nankôdô, 1925.
- La Turo de Londono*. Translated by Seiho Nishi. Tokyo: Japana Esperanto Instituto, 1960.
- The Tower of London*. Translated and edited with introduction, commentary and notes by Peter Milward and Kii Nakano. London: In Print, 1992.

#### **Wagahai wa neko de aru 我が輩は猫である *I Am a Cat* (1905-06)**

- I Am a Cat*. Translated by Andô Kan'ichi. Tokyo: Hattori shoten, 1906; Tokyo: Ôkura, 1909.
- Vash pokornii sluga kot*. Translated by L. Korshkov and A. Strugastkii. Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1960; and translated by Ivan Dziub. Kiev: Dnipro, 1973.
- I Am a Cat: a Novel*. Translated by Katsue Shibata and Kai Motonari. Tokyo: Kenkyûsha, 1961; London: Peter Owen, 1971; New York: Putnam, 1982.
- I Am a Cat*. Translated by Aiko Ito and Graeme Wilson. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972.

*Yo soy un gato: la vida humana vista por un gato.* Translated by Jesus Gonzalez Valles. Centro de Estudios Humanisticos, Universidad Seisen, 1974.

*Motanul are cuvintul.* Translated by Mihai Matei. Bucuresti: Editura Univers, 1975.

*Jestem kotem.* Translated by Mikolaj Melanowicz. Warszawa: Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1977.

*Je suis un chat.* Translated by Jean Cholley. Paris: Gallimard, 1978.

*Ich der Kater: Roman.* aus dem Japanischen ubertragen und mit einem Nachwort versehen von Otto Putz. Japanische Bibliothek im Insel Verlag, 1996.

**Botchan** ぼっちゃん (1906)

*Botchan: Master Darling.* Translated by Yasotarô Môri. Tokyo: Seibundô, 1918, 1922; Tokyo: Kinseidô, 1947.

*Botchan, ou jeune homme irréflechi.* Translated by Ogata Naota. Tokyo: Maruzen, 1923.

*Botchan: ein reiner tor.* Translated by Alexander Spann. Osaka: Kyôdô Shuppansha, 1925.

*Barchuk.* Translated by M. P. Gigorieva. Dairen: South Manchuria Railway Co., 1943.

*Mal'chugan.* Translated by R. Karlina. Moskva: Goslitizdat, 1956.

*Nije kriva samo Madona.* Translated by Dusan Stojiljkovic. Beograd: Narodna Knjiga, 1957.

*Der tor aus Tokio.* Translated by Jurgen Berndt und Shinohara Seiei. Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 1965.

*Botchan.* Translated by Sasaki Umeji. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1968.

*Botchan, el joven minado.* Translated by Jesus Gonzalez Vallez. Tokyo: Sociedad Latino Americana, 1969.

*Botchan.* Translated by Alan Turney. London: Peter Owen, 1973; Tokyo: Kôdansha, 1972.

*Botchan.* Translated by Mokhtar Ahmad. De wan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1986.

*Botchan.* Translated from the English by Lilia F. Antonio. Solidarity Foundation, 1991

*Botchan.* Translated by alih bahasa Haryono. Yayasan Karti Sar ana dalam kerja sama dengan Universitas Katolik Soegijapranata, 1992.

*Botchan.* Translated by Helene Morita. Paris: Le Serpent à Plumes, 1993.

*Botchan (chiquillo).* Translated by Fernando Rodriguez-Izquierdo. Gendaikikakushitsu, 1997.

**Kusamakura** 草枕 (1906)

*Kusamakura and Bunchô.* Translated by Sasaki Umeji. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1927.

*Unhuman Tour.* Translated by Takahashi Kazutomo. Tokyo: Japan Times, 1927.

*Polstar z travy.* Translated by Vlasta Hilská. Praha: SNKHLU, 1958.

*The Three-Cornered World.* Translated by Alan Turney. London: Owen, 1965.

*Kusamakura.* Translated by Mirela Saim. Calatoria: Sovaaiala, 1983.

*Guanciale d'erba.* Translated by Lydia Origlia. Milano: Nuova, 1983.

*Oreiller d'herbes.* Translated by R. de Ceccaty et R. Nakamura. Paris: Rivages, 1989.

*Kar ha-deshe.* Translated by Yohan Sidrer and Isao Imai. Tel Aviv: Yaron Golan, 1992.

*Yume jûya, Koto no sorane, Shumi no iden* "Ten Nights of Dreams, Hearing Things and Heredity of Taste" 夢十夜、ことのそらね、趣味の遺伝 (1908)

*Ten Nights' Dreams.* Translated by Hata Sankichi and Dofu Shirai. Tokyo: Tokyo News Service, 1949.

"Ten Nights of Dream," "Hearing Things," "The Heredity of Taste." Translated by Itô Aiko and Graeme Wilson. Tokyo, Tuttle, 1974.

**Kôfu** 坑夫 The Miner (1908)

*The Miner.* Translated by Jay Rubin. Seattle: Washington University Press, 1977.

*Le Mineur.* Translated by Helena Morita. Paris: Le Serpent à Plumes, 2000.

**Sanshirô** 三四郎 (1908)

*Sanshirô, Zatem, Vrata.* (Sanshiro, Sore Kara, etc.) Translated by A. Riabkin. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1973.

*Sanshirô.* Translated by Jay Rubin. Tokyo University Press, 1977.

*Liku-liku kehidupan mahasiswa.* Pentja Simpati, 1987

*Sanshirô.* Translated by A cura di Maria Teresa Orsi. Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 1990.

*Sanshirô.* Translated by J.P. Liogier. Paris: Philippe. Picquier, 1990.

*Sanshirô*. Translated by Estrellita Wasserman. Paris: Gallimard, 1995. [Connaissance de l'Orient; serie japonaise]

**Sorekara** それから (1909)

*Und dann?* Translated by Iwako Ryôichi and Rose Takahashi. Kyoto: Doitsu Bunka Kenkyûsho, 1943.

*Zatem*. Translated by A. Riabkin. Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia Literatura, 1973.

*And Then*. Translated with an afterword and selected bibliography by Norma M. Field. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978.

**Mon** 門 (1910)

*A kapu*. Translated by Mózes Kolumbán. Budapest: Europa Konyvkiado, 1962.

*La porte*. Translated by R. Martini. Paris: Rieder, 1927; Paris: Philippe Picquier, 1987.

*Mon (The Gate)*. Translated by Francis Mathy. London: Peter Owen, 1972; Tokyo: Tuttle, 1972.

*Mon*. Madrid: Miraguano Ediciones, 1991.

*La porte*. Translated by Corinne Atlan. Arles: Philippe Picquier, 1992.

**Higan sugi made** 彼岸過ぎまで *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond* (1912)

*To the Spring Equinox and Beyond*. Translated by Ochiai Kingo and Sanford Goldstein. Tokyo: Tuttle, 1985.

*Until After the Spring Equinox*. Critical study and complete English translation by Harue Summersgill. Ph.D. diss., "Natsume Sôseki's *Higan sugi made*: A Critical Study and Complete English Translation." University of Hawai'i, 1985.

*A l'équinoxe et au-delà: roman*. Translated by Helene Morita. Le Serpent a Plumes, 1995

**Kôjin** 行人 *The Wayfarer* (1912-13)

*The Wayfarer*. Translated by Beongcheon Yu. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1967; Tokyo: Tuttle, 1969; New York: Putnam, 1982.

*Le voyageur*. Translated by R. Ceccatty et R. Nakamura. Paris: Rivages, 1991.

**Kokoro** 心 (1914)

*Kokoro*. Translated by Kondo Ineko. Tokyo: Kenkyûsha, 1950.

*Serdse*. Translated by N.I. Konrad. Leningrad: Goslitizdat, 1935; Moskva: Nauka, 1973.

*Les pauvres coeurs des hommes*. Translated by Daigaku Horiguchi and Georges Bonneau. Paris: Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1939; Paris: Gallimard, 1957.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Kondô (Satô) Ineko. Tokyo: Hokuseidô, 1941, Tokyo: Kenkyûsha, 1948.

*Kokoro (Serdce)*. Translated by S. Shakhmatov. Dairen: Vostochnoe Obozrenie, 1943.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Mirko Paut. Zagreb: Zora, 1953.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Edwin McClellan. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1957; Peter Owen: 1968; Tokyo: Tuttle, 1969.

*Sedno rzeczy*. Translated by Mikolaj Melanowicz. Waszawa: Pantstwowy Instytut Wydawnicy, 1973.

*Serdse*. Translated by N. I. Konrad. Moskva: Nauka, 1973.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Oscar Benl. Zurich: Manesse Verlag, 1976.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Yerushalayim: Keter, 1983.

*Zbuciumul inimii*. Translated by Elena Suzuki si Doina Ciurea. Bucuresti: Univers, 1985.

*Kokoro*. Translated by Kai Nieminen. Helsinki: Tammi, 1985.

*Sertse*. Translated by Dora Barova. Sofii: Narodna Kultura, 1987.

*Kokoro: A Novel and Selected Essays*. Translated by Edwin McClellan and Jay Rubin. (The Library of Japan Vol. 1) New York: Madison Books, 1992.

**Garasudo no uchi** 硝子戸のうち "Within my Glass Doors" (1915)

"Within my Glass Doors." Translated by Matsuhara Iwao and E. T. Iglehart. Tokyo: Shinseidô, 1928.

*A travers la vitre*. Translated by Rene de Ceccatty and Ryoji Nakamura. Rivages, 1993.

**Mankan tokoro-dokoro** 満韓ところどころ *Travels in Manchuria and Korea* (1909)

*Haltes en Mandchourie et en Corée*. Translated by Olivier Jamet and Elisabeth Suetsugu. Quinzaine litteraire-Louis Vuitton, 1997.

*Rediscovering Natsume Sôseki with the first English translation of "Travels in Manchuria and Korea."*  
Introduction and translation by Inger Sigrun Brodey and Sammy Tsunematsu. Kent: Global Books,  
2000.

*Michikusa* 道草 *Grass on the Wayside* (1915)

*Grass on the Wayside*. Translated by Edwin McClellan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.

*Les herbes du chemin*. Elisabeth Suetsugu. Arles: Philippe Picquier, 1992.

*Meian* 明暗 *Light and Darkness* (1916)

*Light and Darkness*. Translated by Valdo Viglielmo. London: Peter Owen, 1971. Tuttle paperback 1972.

*Clair-obscur*. Translated by R. de Ceccatty and R. Nakamura. Paris: Rivages, 1989.

*Ming An*. Translated by Lin Huai Qiu. Taiwan: Yuan Jing Chuban Shiye, 1989.

### **The Only Journal Devoted Solely to Scholarship on Natsume Sôseki the Man and his Writing**

*Sôseki Kenkyû*. 12 vols. (on-going) Edited by Komori Yôichi and Ishihara Chiaki. Kanrin Shobô, 1993-.

Considering the abundance of *gakkai* (academic societies) and academic journals in Japan devoted to Western authors such as T. S. Eliot or Oscar Wilde among many others, how strange it is that Japan's celebrated man of letters, titan of modern Japanese literature, and champion of the modern novel in Japan, did not have his own academic journal until 1993 when Komori Yôichi and Ishihara Chiaki founded *Sôseki Kenkyû*. This journal quickly become the premiere source of cutting-edge scholarship on Natsume Sôseki. Each issue is a *tokushû* (special issue) focusing on a single major work or on a topical, thematic analysis of several works. The journal also provides reviews and *bunken mokuroku*, a catalogue of recent publications, as well as dialogues (usually "trilogues" since there are two editors) with leading Japanese literati. A recent acquisition, soon to be in UH library holdings.

*Sôseki Kenkyû* back numbers: [Note: from No. 11, issues are published once a year in October]

- No. 1 (October 1993). Tokushû: "Natsume Sôseki and Seikimatsu" (Natsume Sôseki and Fin de Siècle). Trilateral discussion with Karatani Kôjin.
- No. 2 (May 1994). Tokushû: "Sanshirô." Trilateral discussion with Shimada Yukihiko?
- No. 3 (November 1994). Tokushû: "Natsume Sôseki to sekushariti" (Natsume Sôseki and Sexuality). Trilateral discussion with Tsushima Yûko.
- No. 4 (May 1995). Tokushû: "Gurasudo no uchi, *Michikusa*" ("Within my Glass Doors" and *Grass on the Wayside*). Trilateral discussion with Yasuoka Shôtarô.
- No. 5 (November 1995). Tokushû: "Sôseki to Meiji" (Sôseki and Meiji Era). Trilateral discussion with Kojima Nobuo.
- No. 6 (November 1995). Tokushû: "*Kokoro*." Trilateral discussion with Hasumi Shigehiko.
- No. 7 (December 1996). Tokushû: "Natsume Sôseki to Shiki" (Natsume Sôseki and Shiki). Trilateral discussion with Inoue Hisashi.
- No. 8 (May 1997). Tokushû: "*Yume jûya*" (Ten Nights of Dream). Trilateral discussion with Furui Yoshikichi.
- No. 9 (November 1997). Tokushû: "Sôseki to Kazoku" (Sôseki and the Family). Trilateral discussion with Serizawa Shunsuke.
- No. 10 (May 1998). Tokushû: "*Sorekara*" (And Then). Trilateral discussion with Mizuta Noriko.
- No. 11 (October 1998). Tokushû: "*Higan Sugi Made*." Trilateral discussion with Kang Sangjung.
- No. 12 (October 1999) Tokushû: "*Botchan*."