Evolution in literature: Natsume Sōseki's theory and practice

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Abstract

In *Bungakuron* (Principles of Literature), Natsume Sōseki applies concepts of evolution to dynamics in literature, consciousness, and society. Although he posits that transformations occur in literature and literary movements in a largely contingent and non-teleological manner, he also suggests that development and progress occur in these domains in the direction of ever-increasing differentiation and complexity. In response to the alienating effects of such differentiation and individualization over the course of modernization, he explores the potential for other relations to arise. Such potentiality is largely conceived in terms of affective processes, including forms of "pure experience." This thesis explores Sōseki's theory and works of literature including *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (I am a Cat), *Koto no sorane* (Hearing Things), *Shumi no iden* (The Heredity of Taste), and *Kusamakura* (Grass Pillow), considering ethical questions raised in the context of themes of war, trauma, and the relation between subjects and the nation-state.

Résumé

Dans *Bungakuron* (Principes de littérature) de Natsume Sōseki, il s'agit d'une dilatation des concepts d'évolution aux domaines de la littérature, de la conscience et de la société. Bien que Sōseki souligne que certaines transformations prennent place dans les domaines de la littérature et des mouvements littéraires de façon largement contingente et non-téléologique, il suggère également que le développement et le progrès effectués dans ces domaines sont orientés vers une différentiation et une complexification grandissantes. En réponse aux effets aliénants de la différentiation et de l'individualisation qui accompagnent la modernisation, il explore les possibilités pour que d'autres types de relation émergent. Ce potentiel est largement exploré en termes de processus affectifs, incluant des formes d'expériences pures. Ce mémoire amorce une série d'analyses des théories et des travaux littéraires de Sōseki incluant *Wagahai wa neko de aru* (Je suis un chat), *Koto no sorane* (Entendre des choses), *Shumi no iden* (L'hérédité du goût) et *Kusamakura* (Oreiller d'herbe) en considérant les questions éthiques soulevées dans le traitement des thèmes de la guerre, du traumatisme et du rapport entre sujets et l'état-nation.

Acknowledgment

Introduction

      The major Meiji novelist Natsume Sōseki (2009) opens his work *Bungakuron* (Principles of Literature) by defining the set of symbols F+f:

> One can perhaps approach the form of literary substance with the expression (F+f). F here indicates impressions or ideas at the focal point of consciousness, while f signifies the emotions that attend them. In this case, the formula stated above signifies impressions and ideas in two aspects, that is to say, as a compound of cognitive factor F ("large F"), and the emotional factor f ("small f"). (52)

His effort to approach the study of literature in a largely scientific manner has led some to criticize the work as mere scientism, and the work has often been largely ignored, considered an unsuccessful or incomplete project that does not offer much in the way of insight into his literary writings. On the other hand, several scholars have recently given the work renewed attention, considering it as part of a 10 year project in which Sōseki continued to develop his ideas in other theoretical writings and through the practice of his literary writing (Bourdaghs, Murphy, and Ueda 2009, 1-12). Following preparatory work done during his stay in London, the work originally took the form of a series of lectures at Tokyo Imperial University (1903-5), and was later published in 1907. After he began his career in fiction, publishing *I Am a Cat* and *Tower of London* in 1905, he would publish several more lectures that expanded on and reworked material from *Bungakuron*, including the 1907 "Philosophical Foundations of the Literary Arts" (Bungei no testsugaku-teki kiso), which I will frequently refer to in this thesis.

      Some have found value in *Bungakuron* as an early example of a kind of reader response theory, or as a form of dialogue with thinkers such as William James. Like William James, Sōseki explores dynamics of the stream of consciousness, which is described as a stream of focal points (F) in a continuous wave-form. James attempted to understand the workings of the mind and feeling through an expanded empiricism. Sōseki's own emphasis on the conscious and affective aspects of the *experience* of literature is evident in the above definition of F+f. Although in the above

quotation that defines these symbols the terms "cognitive" and "emotional" are used, translating

such terms proves quite difficult. Rather than "cognition," *ninshiki* could be translated as

"perception/intellect" or "consciousness," thereby avoiding connotations of information processing

from recent cognitive science. Instead of "emotional," *jōsho-teki* could equally have been

translated as "feeling," connoting a bodily process closer to "affect." Although definitions for terms

such as affect, feeling, emotion, and so on, continue to be contested, I follow others such as Brian

Massumi (2002) who have emphasized the importance of the distinction between affect (conceived

as pre-individual and non-individual) and emotion (personalized). In the translator's introduction to

A Thousand Plateaus, Massumi (1987) writes:

> AFFECT/AFFECTION. Neither word denotes a personal feeling (sentiment in Deleuze and
> Guattari). *L'affect* (Spinoza's *affectus*) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a
> prepersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to
> another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act.
> *L'affection* (Spinoza's *affection*) is each such state considered as an encounter between the
> affected body and a second, affecting, body. (xvi)

Such a concept of potentiality in affect resonates strongly with Sōseki's exploration of "pure

experience" and emergent feelings that are transmitted unconsciously.

　　　Not all have agreed with recent research that explores the work in its psychological

dimensions, as a theory of literary experience, such as Atsuko Ueda (2008), who rather stresses the

importance of situating the work as part of contemporary discourses defining literature largely in

terms of its rhetorical qualities (39). However, *Bungakuron* moves freely between discussing F+f in

terms of the rhetorical qualities of literature and as a model for conscious experience itself, and

psychological workings often appear to be critically at stake for Sōseki.

　　　 Further, I argue that his theoretical writings can be productively examined in relation to his

fiction. As Josephy Murphy (2009) has stated, there has yet to be a study tracing the dialogue

between Sōseki's theoretical thinking as begun in *Bungakuron* and the overall body of his fictional

works (9). I will discuss four early works of fiction by Sōseki that interrelate in significant ways

with his theoretical writings and expand on his theory performatively and at times through

explicitly theoretical material.

The thesis explores the relations between science and literature, particularly the ways in which Sōseki's concept of literature and consciousness also becomes a model for thinking a general "evolution," social and cultural. As in the philosophy of Sōseki's contemporary Henri Bergson, the term "evolve" here signifies both the Darwinian technical meaning, and its long-held meaning of "to unfold." Sōseki makes use of both senses of the term in bringing together concepts of evolutionary science and a theory of unfolding (un)consciousness that functions according to evolutionary principles such as variation, selection, and competition. Although from a contemporary perspective, Sōseki's general theory of evolution often appears reductive, it can be viewed as part of a dialogue with other such theories of his era that applied evolutionary principles to domains such as culture and consciousness. Indeed, this work continues today, in fields such as evolutionary psychology and wide-ranging studies of art and culture that apply concepts and analogies from evolutionary theory and the philosophy of biology.

Many studies of Sōseki, including Karatani Kōjin's well-known studies, center around questions of modernity: the concern with the emergence of "individuals" with interiorities, social alienation and anxiety, and the particular and the "universal" (often associated with science and technology). In each of the works examined in this thesis, which were written around the time of the Russo-Japanese war (1904-1905), such questions of modernity feature prominently. By examining in greater depth Sōseki's evolutionary theory, which is largely tied to questions of modernity and "universality," we can pose these questions from a different angle. Although the notion of universality has of course been challenged in many strands of literary and science studies, the idea still holds considerable sway, as in the recent movement of "Literary Darwinism," which calls for the study of literary texts for insight into universal aspects of "human nature" linked to common genes (Gottschall and Wilson 2005). Although I focus on evolution and literature and Sōseki's own concept of universality, and I discuss other theoretical models pertaining to science

and literature that offer insight into Sōseki's own approach, I will attempt to avoid mapping "universals" of science or "human nature" onto literature.

Chapter 1 introduces several aspects of Sōseki's theory of evolution, attempting to situate it in terms of its orientation and directionality. Some have commented that Sōseki seems to give credence to theories of the evolution of civilizations that are marked by teleologies of progress (such as Spencer's social Darwinism) but avoids attributing a progressive teleology to literature. I argue that Sōseki's theory of literature and literary experience incorporates contingency and non-teleological aspects, but also implied a telos of progress. Further, although he often delineates aspects of evolution specific to literature as opposed to societies and "civilizations," his is a theory of evolution in which general principles bleed across spheres. Despite the potential dangers of conflating various scales and domains of evolution and development, his thinking on literature thus has value as it suggests alternate ways of thinking social evolution. This becomes particularly evident in his discussion of parallel processes of transformation in consciousness, in literature, and in history, as we will discuss in Chapter 3.

I will also discuss in this chapter how Sōseki's theory of evolution is largely intertwined with his thinking on modernization and experiences of modernity. Although he continues to stress the importance of spontaneous variations and transformations that do not follow a steady or linear path of progress, he also continually posits a teleological notion of ever-increasing complexity; branching differentiation in society, mind, and "ideals" in art. He expresses an ambivalent view toward this process of differentiation, which he associates with modernization. He argues that it threatens the possibility of connectedness among increasingly alienated modern individuals. In response to this threat, however, he explores various forms of "pure experience," which have in common a sense of shared affect or unity of experience. I will argue that the novel *I am a Cat* (*Wagahai wa neko de aru*) stages these dynamics. In its linguistic and formal heterogeneity, the

work can be viewed as a form of dialogue with literary movements and forms that were held by many to be the result of a linear progress.

Chapter 2 discusses Sōseki's efforts to achieve diversity in his works in terms of his approach to scientific and literary theory and practice. With LaMarre (2008), I discuss Sōseki's theory as tending toward a kind of expanded empiricism that seeks to explore continuous dynamics of feeling together with conscious experience. Rather than thinking F+f as a "formula" of addition (focal impressions plus feelings), we can find Sōseki treating it as a contiguous and continuous relation. I will discuss Sōseki's work *Koto no sorane* (Hearing Things), which stages an encounter between an experience of the mysterious workings of affect and "suggestion" (a notion common in discourses on hypnotic states and other forms affective transmission or "influence") and an effort to appropriate those experiences for science.

The focus on questions of affect and unconscious suggestion in this thesis is part of an effort both to historicize Sōseki's dialogue with scientific, philosophical, and other discourses on affect and largely unconscious transmissions, as well as to highlight aspects of Sōseki's work that are provocative in their ambitious interdisciplinary scope and remain topical today. The thesis follows other studies on Sōseki that discuss his work in relation to thinkers such as William James. More broadly, it engages with current work on affect in the humanities and social sciences that have attempted to reengage with concepts such as "suggestion" traced back to the thinking of Gabrielle Tarde, James, and others (Blackman 2008, 28).

Chapter 3 posits that an exploration of Sōseki's thinking on the largely unconscious mechanism of suggestion offers insight into his view of evolution as largely "unconscious" rather than consciously manipulable. I begin by tracing the concept of suggestion in Sōseki's discussion of consciousness and group consciousness, which he classes into three categories: the group consciousness of imitation, of talent, and of genius. Sōseki puts forward several possibilities for explaining the group consciousness of genius, but in each case, the role of unconscious suggestion

is dominant, as opposed to the role of conscious will. I will attempt to show how this kind of

distinction between conscious/willed and unconscious processes is common to theories of cultural

and biological evolution. Rather than stress that evolution can be consciously manipulated, as in

Spencer's social Darwinist thinking, Sōseki's vision of evolution has more in common with the

thinking of William James, who argued that spontaneous variations could emerge and be fostered

but not produced (LaMarre 2008, 72). I argue that Sōseki's novel *Shumi no iden* (*The Heredity of

Taste*) is in dialogue with such concepts, and dramatizes what is a particularly problematic aspect of

Bungakuron—its notion of collective (un)consciousness.

Chapter 4 attempts to bring together many of the notions of "evolution" and affective

experience explored in the first three chapters, examining temporal and spatial aspects of several of

the literary techniques that Sōseki discusses in *Bungakuron*. I argue that the techniques of realism,

shasei (sketching), and romanticism are brought together in various ways in Sōseki's literature in a

manner that can be compared to Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope. These "genres" or

"techniques" take on various spatio-temporal qualities and combine or otherwise encounter one

another in literature. I briefly discuss how Sōseki employs such techniques in the opening scene of

Shumi no iden in expressing a potential for the emergence of waves of group affect or pure

experience. I then focus on the experimental work *Kusamakura* (Grass Pillow), which stages a

conflict between what the narrator opposes as temporal novelistic prose (associated by the narrator

with the West) and spatial *shasei* ("sketching," associated with the East), as the narrator attempts to

live his own particular artistic ideal outside of historical time, the forces of modernization, and

affective entanglements with others. I will argue that, as in other works, Sōseki both expresses the

potential of non-transcendent affective experience, as in the final scene in which the chronotopes of

shasei and prose seem to come together in a moment of "compassion," and continuously establishes

an ironic distance. In the case of *Kusamakura* this irony yields an awareness that the various

literary forms and artistic attitudes that the narrator has opposed and reified along the lines of East

and West not only have aspects in common, but are malleable and transform through time.

Common to these chapters is thus a discussion of Sōseki's exploration of dynamics of the "one and the multiple." While Sōseki expresses a desire for diversity (as with hybrids of literary form and "ideals" of consciousness), he also explores the potential for a kind of "unity" through "pure experience," non-transcendent affective relations, and the bonds of suggestion. Sōseki is continuously ambivalent toward both the one and the multiple—increasing differentiation can threaten the potential for experiences of unity, while such unities of experience can be mobilized for war or lead to social or cultural stagnation and continuities of inherited power.

In order to approach the rich diversity in Sōseki's works I will pose questions from a variety of perspectives and engage with various conceptual models: theories of evolution, mimesis and affect, and Bakhtin's theory of the chronotope. Although this thesis follows others who have engaged with Sōseki's theory and largely theoretical and experimental literature, I will seek to highlight the rich ways in which his literature performs and "evolves" in events of artistic communication.

Chapter 1

Evolution and "pure experience" in *Bungakuron* and *I am a Cat*

Sōseki, like many thinkers of evolution such as Herbert Spencer or Henri Bergson, attempts to arrive at a broad conception of evolution: his model of literary evolution is also a model for the evolution of individual and collective consciousness. In linking these various domains Sōseki expresses the hope that a different understanding of evolution in literature could suggest alternate possibilities for society.

This chapter will explore Sōseki's conceptualization of "progress" and "complexity" in the context of contests in Meiji Japan to appropriate notions of evolution in service of ideologies of modernization and progress. Some have argued that while Sōseki's writing at times suggests that he accepts Spencerian social Darwinism, he avoids attributing a teleology of progress to the domain of literature. I concur that it is critical to highlight aspects of *Bungakuron* that feature contingency and counter linear concepts of progress. However, I argue that there is a tension in the theory between non-teleological and teleological aspects. Sōseki puts forward a teleological notion: evolution leads to ever greater heights of complexity in society, consciousness, and experiences of literature alike. However, this is not viewed as necessarily progressive in a positive sense: there is a concern that this process will lead to greater alienation and individualization in society and threaten the possibility of achieving "pure experience," an experience of non-individual affect.[1] Sōseki conceives of the pure experience of literature in terms of relations of "receptive affinity"—in its ideal form a perfect affective receptiveness to a literary work which, as we will discuss in Chapter 3, opens up a kind of channel for a transmission of the author's self. Pure experience will take on other forms in Sōseki's thinking, including concepts of zen enlightenment and sympathy. As I discuss in later chapters in more depth, Sōseki suggests the dangers of such experiences of unity at

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1. Sōseki sometimes uses the term "*hinin*," which could be translated as non-human or non-individual.

the level of the nation, but nonetheless explores multiple avenues toward non-individual experience.

The ways in which Sōseki conceives of aspects of "evolving" literary form and individual or group experience are by no means fixed or stable, and he continues to experiment with them performatively throughout much of his fiction and other theoretical writings and lectures. This chapter focuses on one such fictional work, *I am a Cat* (*Wagahai wa neko de aru*), which engages with these concepts, and performatively challenges notions of progress through humor and a diversity of voices (characters of various "ideals") and literary forms.

"Progress"

In an often quoted passage in the preface to *Bungakuron*, Sōseki (2009) states: "I came to believe that trying to learn what literature was by reading works of literature was like washing blood with blood. I vowed to determine what need there was for literature psychologically, for its birth, development and decline in this world. I vowed to elucidate what need there was for literature sociologically, for its existence, for its waxing and waning" (10). Here we can perceive that Sōseki was interested in questions of the "development" of literature, which he will discuss in terms of evolution in a sustained manner. Further, he seeks to explore these dynamics in relation to psychology and social science. Let us here briefly sketch some of the strands of evolutionary theory that had a high circulation around the Meiji period with which Sōseki was evidently familiar.

As many have noted, the works of Herbert Spencer (known for his general theory of evolution, "survival of the fittest," and social Darwinism) had a high circulation in Japan, beyond that of Darwin's work (Thomas 2001, 104). Spencer's theory consisted of a teleology of progress that held that, over time, equilibrium and perfection would be reached in various domains (117). This teleology was buttressed by a material determinism. As Aviezer Tucker (2006) has discussed, teleologies have long used "necessity as a tool," as in Marx's notion of necessity (material

determinism) in his theory of the emergence of a classless society (30).

In addition to necessity, however, teleologies of progress can also comprise concepts of contingency, a major example of which is found in Darwin's thinking. Although there has been disagreement over Darwin's body of work, and many thinkers and scientists downplay his own teleologies of progress (in society and species), stressing rather his introduction of contingency into evolutionary theory (the role of chance mutation) it seems clear that Darwin also entertained a teleological vision of absolute progress in evolution (Richards 1998, 600). Darwin and Spencer both tended to see evolutionary progress in terms of branching differentiation and increasing complexity, and Richards notes that while progress for Darwin was not an invariable rule, it was a general rule (600-07).[2] It is of course important to stress the significance of Darwin's introduction of contingency, which likewise plays a major part in Sōseki's theory.

As Thomas has shown, teleological concepts of evolutionary progress and survival of the fittest were appropriated in Meiji Japan not only by conservatives who sought scientific and sociological support for an elite government leadership, but also by social progressives (83-157). In Katō Hiroyuki's thinking, social Darwinism was combined with organic social theory to promote an inventive elite that could properly control the evolutionary direction of the nation. For Baba Tatsui, the concept of natural selection was used to promote progressive evolutionary change to bring about a government governed by reason "commensurate with the natural order" (112). Thomas thus argues that conceptions of nature and invention were contested and manipulated in the Meiji period. At stake were notions of progress and evolutionary determinations at various scales ("natural" and "cultural"), and the relation between such determinations and human will and invention (*sakui*).

Modernization conceived in terms of evolutionary progress was often argued to be a universal process that Japan needed to join in to compete with other nation-states. The concept of a

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2. Richards writes that Darwin "thought that evolution gradually produced ever more complex creatures . . . and that the most conspicuous instances of evolutionary progress were greater intelligence and a moral sense in the human species" (597). I should note that theories of progress are not necessarily teleological—one can posit a principle of competition which leads to a survival of the fittest without adhering to a particular telos (Tucker 2006, 30). However, insofar as Darwin's theory posits that the evolution of human societies leads to "ever more" complexity, I would argue that it is teleological.

linear and universal progression of modernization had considerable currency in the sphere of

literary discourse as well. *Bungakuron* is often discussed in terms of its attempt to arrive at

"universal" principles for literature, and to understand universal and local tastes, but, as Karatani

has argued, Sōseki demonstrates an awareness of "literature" as a "historical product specific to the

nineteenth century" (quoted in Ueda 2008, 44). Did Sōseki completely avoid discussing literature

in terms of universal progress?

In the introduction to the English translation of *Bungakuron*, Michael Bourdaghs (2009)

comments that although Sōseki's views of the evolutionary progress of civilizations largely match

those of English Sociology, his theory of the development of literature is importantly lacking in

such a conception:

> Sōseki insists that while biological organisms, sense perception, society, and scientific
> knowledge may all undergo progressive evolution into superior forms, such is not the case
> for literature and literary taste. He argues that there is a constant shifting in the focal point F
> of our collective consciousness toward literature due to the discomfort caused by the
> boredom or stress that arises when any given focal point stays in place for too long. But the
> fluctuations that result are in no way arranged in a progressive form. Literature may evolve
> through history, but it does not follow the sort of developmental model of civilization and
> enlightenment that held sway in English sociology. (16)

While the claim is largely valid that, for Sōseki, literature is not subject to the same principles of

evolutionary progress, there remains a significant tension in his theory of literature between a

teleology of progress (the telos of ever greater complexity) and non-progressive and largely

contingent evolution. Let us begin by examining the areas where Sōseki avoids conceptions of

progress.

To find support for his theory, Sōseki quotes a passage from W. M. Conway, who writes that

despite the steady progression of civilization and growth of societal systems toward greater

complexity and efficiency, "Art takes a course of its own," and the nature of emotions remains the

same (Natsume 2009, 149). As Bourdaghs mentions, Sōseki argues that boredom is the main force

ensuring change or variation in literary form over time. Sōseki writes:

I stated earlier that transformation is natural and necessary. I also pointed out that it is

nothing more than boredom that governs this transformation. For this reason it is natural to assume that when we compare the F of one period to the F' of the next, the latter does not necessarily represent an advance or improvement over the former. This is all the more true in literature, where taste is of such vital importance. (148)

Here we can perceive a clear distinction between two kinds of transformation. Civilizations, according to the passage Sōseki quotes from Conway, steadily grow and progress in complexity and efficiency. Literature, as with consciousness, is subject to the contingencies of shifting attentions. In this section, however, Sōseki continues on to argue tentatively that literary progress may be possible:

> It would be extremely useful to examine the transformations of taste to determine whether they represent development [*hattatsu*] or mere change [*henka*]. My shallow learning affords me neither the materials nor the knowledge necessary to consider this in a very thorough fashion. But if I were to apply what meager brain power I do have to the question, I might venture to say the following. When the transformation of F takes place within a single sphere, one can identify some elements of progress. But if the transformation possible within that sphere are exhausted or abandoned and, under certain conditions, transformation moves into another sphere, the relation between F and F' will no longer display any signs of it being a matter of progress or development. (148)

Sōseki here leaves room for the possibility of progress in literature within certain limits (relative progress as opposed to absolute). However, some sections of his theory argue more directly that literature is progressing. While transformations in literary form are subject to the boredom of the individuals who create and read them, it is also the case that, for Sōseki, literature changes along with consciousness. LaMarre (2008) notes that, in a real sense, literature *is* consciousness itself for Sōseki:

> It is crucial to note (for this conceptualization affects much of Sōseki's work) that literature is not simply a model for consciousness or for experience: literature *is* consciousness, it is experience. Consequently, for all the axiomatic overtones of F+f as a formula, Sōseki does not suggest that we can really grasp literature from without, as an object, as an ensemble of data. We are always within it, already in the set of relations, part of the event, so to speak. (65)

Indeed, Sōseki moves freely in his discussions of the relations of F+f in literature and consciousness. And for Sōseki, if in some sense modern society and "civilizations" are becoming more complex, the minds and ideals of individuals also tend to branch off, differentiate, and grow in

complexity. In a provocative section of his lecture "Philosophical Foundations of the Literary

Arts," he writes of this evolution of "continuities of consciousness" to grow progressively more

complex and capable of making finer and finer distinctions:

> The process of internal differentiation and unification of consciousness naturally develops
> as a result of this fundamental tendency. We can hardly imagine how far this differentiation
> and unification will go in the future. Nor can we know how complex our senses will
> become in response to this. I believe that things that we cannot see today, things that we
> cannot feel, perhaps even things that evade our five currently known senses, will gradually
> emerge into the stage of consciousness. We simply have to be patient and wait. (Natsume
> 2009, 168)

If literature in a sense is conscious experience, he expresses by extension the possibility that it will

continually "progress" or advance, whether this advance is conceived as an increase in complexity

or a heightening of our perceptive abilities. In Book 2 of *Bungakuron*, Sōseki writes that as a

consequence of this tendency toward increase in complexity, F and f each tend toward "absolute

increase" (Natsume 2009, 85). As for F, Sōseki writes that there is an increase in both the capacity

for distinction and the quantity of material experienced. He characterizes the former increase as

follows:

> In the world of a child, or in a precivilized world, what was initially thought to be the case
> of a single, unifed F is, through the long accumulation of time and experience, gradually
> discovered to be two or more distinct F's. That is to say, with the development of the
> capacity for distinction, one reaches the point where an individual F proliferates into F', F'',
> F''', and so forth. In light of this point, the quantity of F increases as time goes on. (77)

Regarding the increase in quantity or scope of F, LaMarre has commented that for Sōseki F

> tends to grow or augment over time . . . [bringing] more into its embrace. . . . While this
> may appear to be a simple evolutionary or developmental conceit, the implications are
> profound. On the one hand, it is clear that waves [of F in the stream of consciousness] are
> not standing or persisting patterns, but augmenting patterns. . . . On the other hand, there is
> something like a vitalist bias at work, an emphasis on positive or active forces (rather than
> negation or contradiction). (LaMarre 2008, 68)

As F proliferates and augments, Sōseki argues that f also tends toward increase through

transformations in the form of three principles: the laws of displacement of feeling, expansion of

feeling, and persistence of feeling (Natsume 2009, 79). While this notion of a tendency toward the

augmentation of F and f does to an extent seem vitalist, and Sōseki tends to focus in his theoretical

writing on the potential and freedom of choice that comes with this newness and growth in complexity, there are also times when this tendency toward absolute increase is associated in Sōseki's writing with modern anxieties. For instance, Joseph Murphy (2008) has commented on Sōseki's reference to Max Nordau, who in the work *Degeneration* links the condition of "neuraesthenia" to the over-stimulation and stress of modern life (118-19). Sōseki suggested that the recapitulation of phylogeny by ontogeny is "vastly accelerated in Japan's case, leading to reverberation at all scales, that is to say, that accelerated social development leads to higher levels of neurasthenia. This should, to reformulate Nordau, 'move from the sociocultural, through the psychological, to the physical', and the ultimate residence of the problem in the viscera of the protagonist is a theme in Sōseki's fiction from *Sorekara . . .* to *Meian*" (119). This view of "reverberation at all scales" seems to follow from Sōseki's wave-form model of consciousness, in which F somehow seamlessly scales up from moments in the time of an individual consciousness to "F within a span of time of a society's evolution" (also called the zeitgeist) (Natsume 2009, 56). We can perceive here the risks of flatly conceiving processes of evolution in various domains and at different scales.

Nevertheless, it seems the case that Sōseki was being pulled toward various models and conceptions of evolution, both teleological and non-teleological. As literature is in a sense consciousness for Sōseki, and consciousness and society develop in a highly interrelated manner, he expresses the hope that a model for literature with aspects of non-teleology and contingency could suggest alternate possibilities for individual and social development or "evolution."

Complexity and pure experience

In Sōseki's thought, as we will see, evolving complexity affects the future of literature and literary experience. Complexity (thought in terms of differentiation and heterogeneity) at once

constitutes "good" literature, and puts the possibility of "pure" or non-individual experience at risk. It is worth considering, then, what "complexity" can mean or imply in evolutionary discourse.

Ruse, among others, has discussed how the term "complexity" is often charged with a sense of progress.[3] In "Complexity and Evolution: What Everybody Knows," Daniel W. McShea (1998) writes that despite doubts as to the trend toward increasing complexity over the course of biological evolution, the notion still remains conventional wisdom among many scientists and in popular thought (625). He argues that biases exist: we doubly "read progress into evolution . . . [and] connect complexity with progress" (645). Yet, according to McShea, sufficient evidence does not exist either for or against the notion of progressive growth in complexity, and intuitions have often proven to be misguided (626).

He argues as well that not only should complexity not be equated with progress or organismic improvement, but the way in which "complexity" is defined must be clarified in different contexts. He describes a general consensus that "the structural or morphological complexity of a system (biological or otherwise) is some function of the number of different parts it has and the irregularity of their arrangement. . . . Heterogeneous, elaborate, or patternless systems are complex."[4] He argues that the opposite of this type of system is "ordered" in the sense of being composed of "few different kinds of parts arranged in such a way that the pattern is easily specified." However, he stresses that "organization" refers to the "degree of structuring of a system for some function, independent of its complexity and order. . . . Complex systems may be organized, as an automobile is, or disorganized, as a junk heap is (ordinarily). Both the automobile and the junk heap are complex, because they have many parts and the parts are irregularly arranged" (626-27).

I would argue that these distinctions are useful not only in allowing us to consider what

3. "[As for] the positive case for absolute progress, the most venerable criterion of improvement—with roots back to Aristotle's De Anima—is that centering on complexity. . . . It is not that people value complexity in itself, but that they regard it as a flag for other desirable qualities, like intelligence." (Ruse 1998, 617-45).

4. Although other kinds of complexity theory are well-known, as with theories of emergent phenomena, I will only be using the term as it relates to this conception from complex systems theory.

"complex" means in the context of the specific types of systems under analysis, but that they can also perhaps be useful in beginning to consider what manner of complexity is found in literary works or bodies of works. In *Bungakuron*, Sōseki's notion of literary complexity is in an important sense similar to what McShea has outlined (heterogeneity). In addition to associating complexity with branching differentiation and the growth in the capacity for finer distinctions of perception, Sōseki has stressed the potential in art for bringing together diverse forms and ideals. Much of his fiction, including *I am a Cat*, experiments with such a diversity of forms. The manner of complexity and organization will differ among individual works, and fixing definitions of complexity in narrative would be a slippery affair. However, we can begin to sketch the nature and significance of complexity in Sōseki's works, and their historical context—their relation to literary paradigms that posed as modern "progress."

While Sōseki aims to achieve complexity in his works, he also expresses concern that complexity growth could take the form of greater and greater individualization, segregation, and alienation, and thus interfere with what for him often seems to be at stake in his theory; "pure experience." This concept in William James's writing, which would also find a place in changed form in the work of Nishida Kitarō, posits a pre-individual ground of experience prior to the bifurcations and differentiations of subject and object. Although both James and Nishida conceive pure experience in terms of the bodily experience of becoming prior to consciousness, Nishida diverges from James in conceiving the potential to actually achieve a pure experience in practice, as through artistic or religious experiences (Krueger 2006). As LaMarre has discussed, Sōseki explores the possibility of achieving pure experience in terms of Zen in *Bungakuron* and in much of his fiction (LaMarre 2008, 68). LaMarre writes: "Like Nishida Kitarō, he will link James's notion of 'pure experience' with Zen, as an experience of the full void. This is where principles of psychology mesh with procedures of cultural national disciplinization" (51). Indeed, we are reminded that notions of a pure experience can become tied to notions of a unified national body—

hence the danger of Sōseki's notions of "group consciousness" and zeitgeist. Ultimately, this chapter seeks to explore the tension in Sōseki's celebration of complexity—the diversity of ideals and literary forms—and his desire to overcome the gaps engendered through this process of differentiation through "pure experience."

As mentioned above, in many of his theoretical writings, Sōseki discusses branching differentiation and the growth of complexity in terms not only of an increase in the capacity of the mind to make finer distinctions, but also of ideals of consciousness that similarly branch off and proliferate. These ideals constitute ways of life, and as we grow in mental complexity, we have more freedom of choice among these ideals. In "Philosophical Foundations of the Literary Arts," he writes of four overarching ideals of humankind (truth, goodness, beauty, and the heroic): "Each of the four ideals undergoes internal differentiation. These internal differentiations give rise to transformations. As they give rise to transformations, they present opportunities for progress. In this process of transformation a person who actualizes the newest ideal is a person who has recognized a new meaning in life" (Natsume 2009, 208). Later, he writes:

> By our nature we are imbued with a rather base desire to live—to live and nothing more. It is on the basis of this rather base motive that our distinction between subject and object rests. This, in turn, gave rise to the possibility of choosing what sort of continuity of consciousness we would like to live out, and as our range of possible choices expanded, it gave rise to certain ideal types. These ideal types branched out along several pathways: we have the philosopher (or scientist), the literary writer, and the man of action. The literary writer, in turn, created four ideal types, which branched off into various distinct paths, so that each carries on the process of actualizing that specific continuity of conscious that he or she individually desires. (211)

As in this passage, Sōseki continually appeals to the benefits of newness and creativity. However, it is clear that, for Sōseki, such branching differentiation and growing complexity may come at some cost, as the gaps between these ideals and chosen paths of life may widen over the course of evolution, making more rare the potential for pure experience in the form of what Sōseki calls perfect correspondence or receptive affinity. Sōseki defines these terms:

> When highly developed ideals and flawless technique come together, the literary arts reach a kind of perfection. (Therefore, it is, in fact, logical to interpret literary perfection as

something that varies from age to age.) When literary art achieves perfection, those who come into contact with it will find themselves falling into perfect correspondence with it— assuming the times are right for this. This perfect correspondence is the ultimate effect that the literary arts can bestow upon us. The times are right for this when the ideal manifested within a work of literary perfection is in agreement with our own ideal, or, again, when our own ideal finds itself being pulled along by the work toward something new, something deeper or more extensive, and thereby undergoes a moment of awakening, a moment of enlightenment. The difficulty for the ordinary masses to achieve enlightenment is not limited to the world of Buddhist law. One who is limited to an ideal of a different order will be unable to experience this effect, no matter how hard he may try. (208)

Sōseki then goes on to define "receptive affinity" as a non-individual experience of harmony between subject and object (reader and text/author):

The expressed ideal [in a work] is nothing more than the exact depiction of a certain model of consciousness, a certain mode of continuity of consciousness. Therefore, to say a work produces pleasure is to say that one is in harmony with the continuity of consciousness expressed by the artist. We cannot experience this sort of pleasure if our own continuity of consciousness does not correspond to that of the artist. "Receptive affinity" is the phenomenon that occurs when this correspondence reaches its highest possible degree. (209)

For Sōseki, this kind of experience can be a rare event, limited not only by the sophistication of the reader and the degree to which they can, not becoming distracted, lose themself in the act of reading, but also the degree to which they share the ideals of the author as expressed in the work. As evolution proceeds and ideals continue to branch and proliferate, this form of pure experience becomes even more rare. This is made clear in a passage from Sōseki's "Preface" introducing the work *Literary Criticism* (*Bungaku hyōron*), in which he discusses universal taste (which he argues can be found in structural aspects of art of different cultures as well as in universal content or themes) vs. non-universal or local tastes (conditioned by "local emotions and customs . . . historical period and nationality"), which for Sōseki tend to outweigh universal taste (Natsume 2009, 235).

There is one thing that interferes with this correspondence [receptive affinity]: Certain things in literature are constructed through simple elements. It is possible that those simple elements produce refined verse and prose. However, simple things tend to be lacking in variation. Without variation, people get tired of them. Moreover, social conditions and the human mind—the main source of materials for literature—become increasingly complex every day. Because of this, the literature of our latter-day world tends to become more complex, just as it tends to seek out variation, thereby leaving behind basic universal taste. (231-32)

He proceeds to give an example of such a growth of complexity: a basic theme of love between a

man and woman will branch off into more intricate kinds of romantic relations, and people from different cultures will react differently to tales of adultery or public displays of kissing.

In sum, there is a growing diversity of new ideals and tastes arising through evolution, and occasions for a kind of non-individual sharing or "unity" of these worlds. With the growth of complexity, there emerges a personalization and segregation of worlds threatening this possibility of pure experience. Along with differentiation and localization, however, there is simultaneously a "universalizing force" as travel and communication increase in the world (235). For heuristic purposes, these dynamics can be schematized with the following pairs:

Pure/non-individual experience	Individual/private experiences
Unity	Diversity/multiplicity
Simplicity (non-differentiation)	Complexity (differentiation)
Universal taste	Particular tastes
World	Region/nation

 We may thus perceive in his thinking a tension between two kinds of unifying forces—universalizing modernization and pure experience—each with its own risks. Further, as Sōseki suggests that there is contingency in the manner in which complexity emerges through branching differentiation, it is possible to imagine other possible configurations of modernity, other forms of "progress."

I am a Cat—modernization and failures of pure experience

We have discussed the view in *Bungakuron* that the growth of complexity—continual differentiation in society, mind, and literature—poses a threat to the possibility of pure experience. Let us turn to the work *I am a Cat*, which depicts the failure of various forms of pure experience.

The novel features a cat narrator who finds a home in the house of a school teacher and literary dilettante named Sneeze. Much of the novel consists of the cat's observations of the

interactions among Sneeze and his friends, of various occupations and ideals including businessmen, literary intellectuals and writers, and a scientist. As with characters in other works by Sōseki who suffer from modern experiences of alienation and anxiety, Sneeze has a near nervous breakdown as a result of being tormented by a powerful businessman in his neighborhood. Heeding the advice of a philosopher friend, Singleman, he turns to Zen.

Just as the protagonists of several of Sōseki's works fail to achieve enlightenment or experience purity, as we will discuss later with *Kusamakura*, the attainment of pure experience in *I am a Cat* is thwarted, and notions of Zen enlightenment are comically, and often bitingly, deflated. Despite the sympathy the cat expresses for Sneeze's efforts to come to some understanding of himself through meditation, both Singleman and Sneeze's efforts are mocked. The cat remarks that the last thing his generally idle and sequestered master needs is more sitting and pondering over the positive and the negative (Natsume 2002, 312). We discover that the Zen bent friend, for all his pompous claims to enlightened single-mindedness, is just as easily riled and closed off to ideals and worlds that do not interest him as the other characters.

I would also argue that the notion of "sympathy" is thought in the novel in terms of both evolution and pure experience. Susan Lanzoni (2009) has explored the diverse body of literature surrounding the subject of sympathy in the American journal *Mind*. She discusses theories on feeling and emotion such as that of William James, who emphasizes the bodily nature of feeling-states, and theories that compare sympathy to processes of unconscious "imitation" or "suggestion," a process of transmission or "contagion" (274-277). As I have argued, such an understanding of feeling as a bodily, largely pre-conscious and pre-individual process seems to inform Sōseki's exploration of feeling and pure experience. In contrast, Lanzoni describes how many evolutionary thinkers and contemporary intellectuals around the turn of the century held that "higher emotions" such as sympathy and love were of a different nature—more highly evolved and "not marked by clear physiological changes" (265). Spencer was one such thinker, considering sympathy to be a

conscious act of imagination characteristic of adults of more highly evolved races. Darwin on the

other hand, observed what he thought to be instinctual sympathy in the feelings of animals (270).

In *I am a Cat*, we find characters expressing the potential of sympathy as a force in society,

and the evolution of sympathy (or its lack in humans) is a frequent concern of the cat, who often

finds himself abused at the hands of humans. The cat likes to proclaim that he is far more sensitive

and sympathetic (as with his affection for a female cat in the neighborhood), and in a moment of

meta-narrative humor, asks the audience to accept that the reason for his ability to narrate the

thoughts the characters of the work is his ability to mind-read. In a passage in which the cat

criticizes his scatterbrained and eccentric master, he comments on the tendency of humans to carve

out private spaces without really connecting with others:

> Despite the fact of obvious differentiation [in cats], humans, their eyes turned up to heaven
> by reason of the elevation of their minds or some such rubbish, fail to notice even obvious
> differences in our external features, that our characters might be characteristic is beyond
> their comprehension. . . . And inasmuch as humans are, in fact, far less advanced than they
> fancy themselves, they will find it difficult even to start learning about cats. And for an
> *unsympathetic man* like my master there's really no hope at all. He does not even
> understand that love can never grow unless there is at least a complete and mutual
> understanding. Like an ill-natured oyster, he secretes himself in his study and has never
> once opened his mouth to the outside world. (Natsume 2002, 19-20; emphasis added)

The cat continually criticizes the tendency of humans to hold themselves above other animals,

questioning their monopoly on the supposedly highly evolved sentiment of sympathy. They seize

property as if it were their natural right (whereas the cat insists that he can move through any

space), and like the oyster-like master, selfishly carve out niches for themselves, over which they

bicker and compete (66). Increasingly self-conscious and concerned with their property and

particular ideals as individuals, they fail to connect through real feeling.

Finally, pure experience in the form of "receptive affinity" is also discussed in a manner

similar to *Bungakuron*. In the final scene of the work, Sōseki's notion of the threat to pure

experience posed by the differentiation of ideals is staged in a confrontation among characters of

differing ideals and tastes. Their dialogue reaches comedic heights, but there is a sad sense in

which they are most often speaking at each other and competing intellectually, rather than connecting in any meaningful way. In the climax of this scene, the character Waverhouse gets to lecturing about the troubling direction of evolution and the future of Japanese society given the advance of individualization. He proclaims that as evolution drives forward, individuals will choose to live alone and unmarried, and the arts will cease to exist. Despite his literary friend Beauchamp's protest that love, beauty, and sympathy will remain as "eternal guidestars of mankind," Waverhouse says:

> In a world where I and you both insist that "I am I, and you are you," how can any art perdure? Surely the arts now flourish by reason of a harmony between the individualities of the artist and each appreciative member of his public. That harmony is already being crushed to death. . . . When anything that either of us might write has become quite meaningless to the other, then there will be nothing, let alone, art, which we can share. (456-57)

At the end of this scene, the cat comments on the sadness of the paths of these characters, who have left the room, leaving it "desolate, like a variety hall when the show is over" (466). Speculating on the possibility that cats will follow humans in their growing isolation from one another, he becomes depressed and accidentally drowns in a pot after drinking some beer to console himself. Nonetheless, as he drowns, he gives thanks and issues one last expression of hope for a kind of pure experience, a state of "peace" and "divine quiescence" in death (470). In eliciting our sympathy for the dying cat it is as if Sōseki is attempting to keep alive the hope for an experience of connection through literature.

James Fujii (1989) has written on the diversity of forms and voices in the novel, interpreting it as a form of protest against the *genbun'itchi* movement in Meiji Japan, part of a drive toward linguistic unity and modernization. *Genbun'itchi* was not simply a set of stylistic changes that brought written language closer to spoken language, eliminating prior markers of status. It could be considered as a tool toward a particular kind of subjectivity—an individuated or "private" subject (560). He argues that the formal and stylistic developments of *genbun'itchi*, including the literary device of the omniscient narrator, were part of an effort toward a "monologic (single voice)": "the

gen-bun'itchi movement was empowered by the impulse to elevate the authority of the written word by concealing its subject" (560). Karatani Kōjin (1993) has also discussed what he sees as Sōseki's resistance to aspects of *genbun'itchi*, particularly the use of the past tense '*ta*' ending, which sacrifices diversity:

> *Ta* unifies into a single form the many complex suffixes used in *bungo*, the classical literary language, to correspond to what in English would be the perfect, past perfect, as well as other tenses. . . . Once *ta* is used, the narrator's presence is not made explicit, even though the function of the narrator remains. Narrator and protagonist become subtly fused. . . . This produces a sense of 'reality' in the text. It also makes possible a temporality from which the development of events in the tale can be surveyed retrospectively from a single point. (72)

At stake in Sōseki's experimentation with literary form, Karatani argues, was "linguistic diversity" (74). Fujii writes that this diversity consists of stylistic and formal elements such as the cat's colloquially based but "non-standard looking" style and status as a "first-person participating narrator-cat," "rakugo, popular songs, and a host of other forms with strong traces of orality" (Fujii 1989, 562). He argues that the cat's largely present-centered narration, which avoids cutting, enables a strong dialogism (in the Bakhtinian sense). There is a sense of interaction among the many literary forms and dialogue among characters of a diversity of ideals. Further, he argues that the work explores the "private" subjects of Meiji society and often brings them together, challenging notions of "privatized space" along with the mobilization of private subjects occurring in the Meiji period.[5]

I would add to this discussion of Sōseki's work in relation to the *genbun'itchi* movement, however, that while it may be the case that he often seeks to avoid an authoritative omniscient narrator, there is evidence that he was also interested in exploring techniques of narration that in a sense "disguise" the narrator. He even conceives a potential for pure experience through such techniques. LaMarre has explained Sōseki's argument in *Bungakuron* in chapter 8 of Part 4 entitled

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5. Michael Bourdaghs (2008) has also interpreted *I am a Cat* as a work that challenges notions of property: "Sōseki's novels also frequently toy with the idea that the personal experiences of one person might somehow be acquired by another. In *I Am a Cat*, for example, the bulk of the narrative consists neither of the cat-narrator's own experiences nor the experiences that others have willingly given to him. Rather, it consists mainly of experiences he has inadvertently obtained from others, stolen glimpses (*nusumi-mi*) and pilfered conversations (*nusumi-giki*), a device widely used in the fiction of the Meiji (and earlier) eras. . . . But who properly owns these experiences?" (89).

"Principles of Spacing" (*Kangekiron*):

> [Sōseki] announces a preference for literary moments in which one eliminates the shadow of the author. There are two ways of achieving this: either by "attracting the reader to the author's side and making the two stand in the same position" or by "the author moving himself toward, and fusing with, a character in the story." Thus there is a collapse of distance between two fs—between that of reader and of writer or between that of writer and of character. While this suggests that the important relation for Sōseki is between reader and character/text, he seems to be interested primarily in a collapse of intentionality rather than in readers' responses to texts as such. (73-74)

We have seen that in Sōseki's theory of evolution complexity and unity emerge together, as in processes of modernization, and thus Sōseki's interest in the "elimination of the shadow of the author" should be included in any discussion of his efforts toward achieving complexity or diversity. We can perceive, however, that Sōseki's experimentation with collapsing distance among author, narrator, and characters is not undertaken in an effort to shore up his authority. As we will see in the works examined in this thesis, Sōseki seeks to challenge structures of authority through the push and pull of layers of narrative form, alternations of affective closeness and ironic distance, and a plurality of voices and forms.

I concur that the question of the private modern subject or subjectivity is very much a concern in *I am a Cat*, as with many of Sōseki's works, and Bourdaghs and Fujii have both gestured toward the relation of such conceptions of private property and private selves with conceptions of evolutionary progress. However, it is possible to view Sōseki's exploration into shared or pure experiences as, in part, a reaction to the growing plurality of voices and forms toward which he feels deeply ambivalent. Further, pure experience itself can become associated with unity in both a positive and negative sense, as with forces of modernization. Although Sōseki posits a teleology of progress, we will see in later chapters that Sōseki explores the potential to be surprised by the contingent—transformation in conscious and affective registers, including awakenings to pure experience. We have seen that in Sōseki's conceptions of literature and pure experience, affective relations come to the fore.   The next chapter will examine the status of science and affect in

Sōseki's thinking in greater detail.

Chapter 2

Expanded empiricism and suggestion in *Koto no sorane*

In the previous chapter, we discussed how Sōseki's theory of an "evolution" in conscious experience, literature, and society incorporated concepts of complexity and psychology. In this chapter, we will further explore the relation between science and literature for Sōseki in *Bungakuron* and in his short novel *Koto no sorane* (published in English as *Hearing Things*). I will discuss the history of the reception of this novel, which critics have tended to characterize as the staging of a conflict between modern science and rationality on the one hand, and mysticism and superstition on the other. It is possible to conclude that the scientific/intellectual material in the work is merely a supplement to the ends of a literary ideal ("truth" related to feeling or emotion). However, I will argue that, as he attempts to create a synthesis of hybrid "ideals" in literature, Sōseki produces an expanded literature that interweaves both scientific/intellectual material and material designed with affective qualities in mind. As with the expanded empiricism of Sōseki's theoretical work, the novel explores affective and conscious processes from within the event of the continuous unfolding of F and f. At stake in Sōseki's expanded empiricism through literature is the nature of "suggestion," which factors importantly in Sōseki's theory of evolution, as we will explore in Chapter 3.

Science and literature

The narrative of *Koto no sorane* takes the form of the turbulent stream of consciousness of a young man who enters a state of intense anxiety as he fears for the death of his fiancé and passes a night of what seem to be either supernatural happenings or acute hallucinations. It opens with his visit to the home of his friend Tsuda, a literary scholar who is researching the paranormal for a book

he will write on ghosts.[6] The narrator relates his domestic woes to Tsuda: having recently moved,

his housekeeper insists for superstitious reasons (his new house faces an unlucky direction) that he

must move. She insists that if they do not someone close to him will fall ill. While refusing to give

credence to this superstition, the narrator admits to Tsuda that his fiancé has recently become sick.

Tsuda sides with the housekeeper, however, relating a story of a soldier in the Russo-Japanese war

who was visited by the ghost of his wife who had been sick with influenza. The narrator feels

himself "infected" by Tsuda's sudden gravity as he tells the story, as if he is entering a hypnotic

trance. Considering his friend to be intellectual and therefore more believable than his housekeeper,

he finds himself becoming increasingly anxious. He seems to hallucinate during their conversation

and throughout his journey back home in the rainy night.

When he arrives home he discovers that his housekeeper has also been in a state of great

anxiety and that she has been hearing strange sounds. She can tell from the barking of dogs at such

an hour that something has gone wrong. Deciding that he should wait until morning to visit his

wife, he is kept up throughout the night, disturbed by the storm, bizarre sounds that penetrate his

home, and his own inability to break out of his current state. During the night, however, a

policeman stops by who informs them that the dogs may have been barking at a wandering thief in

the neighborhood. When the narrator nonetheless rushes to see his fiancé the next morning, he

discovers that she had already recovered. Although he comes to feel that he was a fool for his lapse

of resolve and rationality, in the final lines of the story he describes how his fiancé seems to love

him more deeply for it, and, on top of that, his experience may have some scientific value:

> Perhaps I just imagine it, but since that day Tsuyuko seems to love me much more than
> before. When I saw Tsuda later, I told him in full detail of the happenings of that night. He
> remarked that it would make excellent material for the book which he was then in the
> process of writing, and he sought my permission to make use of it. The experience of Mr. K.
> which you can find on page seventy-two of An Essay on Ghosts by Tsuda Masakata B.A., is,
> as you will realize, mine. (Natsume 1974, 115)

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6. Muta (2004) has noted that some critics have drawn a comparison between Tsuda, who engages in both literary and psychological work, and Andrew Lang, the author of *The Book of Dreams and Ghosts*. Lang, like William James, was a member of the Society for Psychical Research. Sōseki is known to have had an interest in Lang and referenced his book on several occasions, including a reference by Tsuda.

What are we to make of such a resolution, in which the ideals of intellect and science (albeit a "romantic" science of ghosts) and feeling (literature) come together in a happy ending? Is this a marriage in which each ideal receives an equal weight in a dynamic and mutual relation? Or is there a relationship of supplementation: as an example of theoretical literature, the novelette seeks to produce effects of feeling in order to arrive at some theoretical or philosophical insights into affect. Or perhaps the opposite: Sōseki is only using what many view as a kind of bogus science as material to enhance the emotional appeal of a literary work. One would not be alone in coming to the latter interpretation that the intellectual material (what Sōseki calls "intellectual F") in this case is more like "supernatural F." This type of F, according to Sōseki, is quite "literary," ripe with "emotional truth" and effects. Muta (2004) quotes the following passage from *Bungakuron*:

> Supernatural phenomena can generally produce strong emotion, and this is evidently manifested in literature where these phenomena exist as literary materials. Needless to say, these phenomena are totally irrational if judged by one's mind. . . . The value of literature ultimately depends not on whether it is rational or irrational, but on whether or not it enables us to capture an incident or situation which can produce emotions. . . . If one evaluates this material as not suitable as a literary element in the age of enlightenment, simply because it is not rational even though it is interesting, he is confusing literature with science. He must have forgotten the meaning of literature for which the principle requirement is not reason but emotion. (quoted in Muta 2004, 11)

This passage viewed in isolation would seem to suggest that we should not look to works of literature for intellectual or scientific value, but principally for what Sōseki calls "literary truth" relating to feeling or emotion.[7] On the other hand, Muta has described how critics of *Koto no sorane* have tended to judge the work according to their own view of the value of scientific rationality:

> The majority of critical comments about the story from the time of its publication to this day share one stance, that is the supernatural must be treated as a form of hallucination. From this vantage point, the story is interpreted as a rejection of the supernatural either by the narrator's coming to his senses in the morning or by the badger's theory of hypnotism. On the other hand, for those who are critical of the story as a failure, the scientific paradigm seems to influence their interpretation, as they criticize the story as being ambiguous and not

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7. In the above translation by Muta, she uses the term "emotion" for *jōsho*, although it could also be translated as "feeling." As discussed in the introduction to this thesis, "feeling" implies a bodily process closer to pre-individual affect.

satisfying their own expectations of only one solution: victory of rationality over the supernatural in the age of enlightenment. (16)

Thus it is possible to view *Koto no sorane* as a kind of tug of war between the values of scientific rationality and (emotional) mysticism; at least this is how much of the criticism has operated.

Indeed, a cursory reading of *Bungakuron* would seem to reinforce the sense of a divide between the proper domains of literature and science. One could point to its discussion of scientific practice as dissecting and fragmenting, as opposed to literature, the purpose of which is synthesis, to engender an experience of the continuity of the whole (Natsume 2009, 91). However, as discussed in the previous chapter, in both his theoretical works and literature such as *I am a Cat*, Sōseki explores the potential for various literary forms and ideals of consciousness, including the ideals of literature (relating to feeling) and science or intellect, to be synthesized and form hybrids. If we examine a passage from "Philosophical Foundations of the Literary Arts," for instance, it is made clear that these ideals are never totally discontinuous from one another:

> Strictly speaking, I should here explain how the feelings that arise through association from these four broadly distinguished ideals merge into one another, but time constraints do not permit that. . . . We can distinguish between three kinds of mental functioning— intellect, emotion, and will—these do not manifest themselves in isolation from one another. Moreover, in the literary arts their functioning is always manifested through sensible objects. Therefore the sentiments aroused in response to these four types are always mixed up together, so that in reality they do not appear in works in such clearly distinguished form. (Natsume 2009, 185-86)

Thus Sōseki describes how ideals of consciousness, the "sensible objects" in literature (F) through which they are manifested, and the feelings that "arise" are not separable. While Sōseki does characterize some kinds of F, such as superstitious F, as being more concrete and thus affectively charged and "literary" than the more abstract and potentially less affectively charged intellectual F, he does not rule out the potential of scientific/intellectual F as literary material (Natsume 2009, 64).[8] Although Sōseki discusses a limit case in which scientific or intellectual material can be utterly

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8. Indeed, in works such as *Shumi no iden*, in the opening scene of which the narrator attempts to analyze his own affective experience as he is caught up in waves of nationalist sentiment in a crowd, Sōseki seems to experiment with combinations of intellectual F and more affectively charged material. As we will discuss later in this chapter, Dan O'Neill (2002) has characterized such interruptions in the form of intellectual abstractions as part of a process of achieving distance from affective relations.

lacking in feeling (F without f) and more "literary" F which can approach the limit of feeling (f), he suggests that in practice both kinds of F are in a continuous relation with other Fs and with feeling. If in our analysis of *Koto no sorane* we oppose scientific or "rational" material (treated as pure F) and emotional material (treated as pure f) as if in a relationship of supplementation, we are in a sense replicating a kind of fragmented thinking that Sōseki seeks to counter in his exploration of the continuous relation between F+f and the inseparability of various types of F.

Despite the relative lack of attention to early works such as *Shumi no iden* and *Koto no sorane* in past scholarship (Muta 2004, 1), several scholars have recently posed questions regarding the relation between science and literature in these works. In '"Kagaku" to iu shinkō*"* (The faith called 'science'), Kanda Shōko (2010) notes that, as with scholars including William James, Carl Jung, and Henri Bergson, who were members of the Society for Psychical Research in the late 19th century, Sōseki had an interest in attempts to understand the unknown and the "supernatural" through science. She describes this movement to study apparently supernatural phenomenon through science as a uniquely modern romanticism, an obsession and faith in the ability of science to discover the unknown (168). She notes that while science and rationality came to pervade modern society, Sōseki is critical of this obsession (as with his characters who make themselves miserable through their intellect and ceaseless self-consciousness), while he simultaneously operates within science and rationality (170). Further, she suggests that these works bring literature and science together through a kind of mystical or romantic science (172). Indeed, it seems that these works may be exploring the possibilities of a kind of synthesis of the ideals of feeling and intellect. However, with LaMarre, who explores Sōseki's thinking alongside that of William James, I would add that it is essential to explore in more detail what manner of science and philosophy Sōseki is employing both in his theoretical work and literary works such as *Shumi no iden* and *Koto no sorane*. Given the interest in the science of the "supernatural" on the part of Sōseki and thinkers who participated in the Society for Psychical Research, one place to begin would be the thinking of

William James regarding this organization.

In his essay "What Psychical Research Has Accomplished," James (1978) makes the case that phenomenon that are often ignored by mainstream science should be given attention. He asserts that, while many look to science for "closed and completed systems of truth," studies of phenomena including hallucinations, hypnosis, and trance states are avoided for their inherent difficulty. Among his reasons for taking seriously such topics of research, James argues that over time phenomena that are treated as supernatural nonsense often come to have a scientific explanation through extensions of knowledge of previously known phenomena (e.g. demoniacal possessions become classified as "hystero-epilepsy"). He suggests that many of these phenomena may have a common thread in the workings of the subconscious and affective relations (234). Despite having been rejected by "mechanical rationalism," these phenomena make up a huge part of human experience and thought, and he seeks to restore the "continuity of history" ruptured by such a narrowly conceived science (240).

I would argue that moments in these fictional works in which Sōseki deflates science or seeming pseudo-science and the edifice of common sense of his narrators should not cause us to forget that Sōseki was indeed serious about his own scientific thinking and that of thinkers such as William James. Literary critics have been divided in how they value science or rationality, both generally and in Sōseki's work. Some have characterized Sōseki's scientific approach to understanding literature in *Bungakuron* as authoritative and dissecting. As LaMarre has discussed, however, a consideration of commonalities between Sōseki and William James can illuminate the potential in Sōseki's efforts toward an expanded empiricism that seeks to discover the workings of feeling and the continuity of conscious and affective experience. This is not done merely through dissection or categorization of aspects of literature and literary experience, but through the exploration and performance of the experience of being a part of continuously unfolding relations in the "stream of consciousness."

In addressing what is at stake in situating Sōseki's approach to science in *Bungakuron,*

LaMarre discusses a distinction between two ways of approaching science—sciences of axiomatics

(of extensive multiplicities or sets) and of problematics (differential multiplicities). Referring to

Daniel Smith's (2004) work discussing this distinction from mathematics, LaMarre (2008) writes

that in the context of attempting to situate *Bungakuron* as either empiricism or positivism,

> To say that the problematic pole of sciences deals with "differential multiplicities" means, first and foremost, that one works with the continuous rather than the discrete. . . . This is precisely how Sōseki proposes to conceptualize literature, on the basis of its dynamics (*katsudōryoku*), and in the case of literature, as with James's psychology, this is a matter of thinking perception (and then the self) in terms of continuous variation. (55)

LaMarre notes that these modes of science and mathematics co-exist, but that the problematic pole

and its results are "translated" or appropriated through a process of axiomatization. In other words,

problematic sciences that deal with process and continuum feed systems which deal with the

discrete. In terms of the problematic pole, James and Sōseki both aim to think continuous relations

between consciousness and feeling in the stream of consciousness.

Massumi (2000) distinguishes between William James's expanded empiricism and classical

empiricism:

> According the association theory adopted by classical empiricism, what is given in experience are collections of discrete, unconnected appearances or "sense-data." Their connection is added by a subsequent mental operation (following an inductive logic). James counters this, arguing that relationality is already in the world, and that it registers materially in the activity of the body before it registers consciously. This is the sense of his famous dictum that we do not run because we are afraid, but that we are afraid because we run. We become conscious of a situation in its midst, already actively engaged in it. Our awareness is always of an already-ongoing participation in an unfolding relation. It is only after we have stopped running and can look back that we are clearly cognizant of what it was that set us dashing. (26)

While stressing the areas of *Bungakuron* that can be considered as part of an expanded empiricism,

LaMarre has discussed aspects of the work that may seem to stray from the emphasis on thinking

F+f as a continuous relation. For instance, while early in *Bungakuron* Sōseki asserts strongly that

he is not conceiving F+f in the manner of an equation (addition or supplement) but rather as a

relation of continuous variation, there are sections in which it seems as if he is conceiving f as a

source of continuity between instances of F (which seem to be treated as if they were the discrete "sense data" of classical empiricism) (LaMarre 2008, 57). Furthermore, perhaps due to the difficulty of theorizing dynamics of feeling and emotion, Sōseki focuses largely on F (58). LaMarre writes:

> Sōseki's reluctance to deal with f and his difficulties with it make possible a sort of deconstructive reading of *Bungakuron*. It might be said that, rather than thinking the relation of F and f, Sōseki calls on f as a supplement to F. . . . Such a reading is important because it suggests a relation of supplementation between the axiomatic and the problematic poles of science. From this angle, we might look at how the sciences of continuous variation appear to step in only when the sciences of the discrete threaten to lose their purchase, to lapse or fail. . . . Sōseki's emphasis on distinguishing and classifying kinds of F, for instance, suggests that his bid for a science based on differential multiplicities (monadic perception and the stream of consciousness) serves only to shore up the importance of positivistic schema of classification. Sōseki's f then appears as a call to the emotions and affective experience designed to cover up for the apparent lapses of positivism and axiomatization. (58)

Again, an interpretation that finds a relation of supplementation between rational science and the emotions is very possible with *Koto no sorane*. From this perspective, we can read the narrator's fall from "common sense" to his emotional turmoil and seeming hallucinations as an expression of anxiety for a rationality that was compromised beginning with his encounter with Tsuda. This lapse is "filled in" with the emotions and impressions of the narrator, who in his trance state feels and perceives mystical connections with his environment. We could also note that women often function in Sōseki's stories to introduce elements of superstition (as with the fortune teller in *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond*) or seem more immediately attuned to their feelings. In *Koto no sorane*, the narrator's old-fashioned and superstitious house keeper serves this role. Despite the narrator's lapse of rationality, the deepened affection of his fiancé merely serves to reinforce the narrator's own safe return to modern rationality (his return to common sense and Tsuda's inclusion of his strange experience in his book on ghosts). This reading finds the problematic pole feeding the axiomatic.

However, this "marriage" of ideals in the final scene could also be interpreted as to some extent genuine insofar as we take seriously Sōseki's own engagements with the science and

philosophy of feeling. Rather than stress the seeming sexism in the story, we could emphasize, as Kanda (163) and Muta (14) have, that Sōseki suggests a real equality between the housekeeper (initially viewed by the narrator as low class and lacking reason) and the narrator (whose status as educated and "rational" loses meaning over the course of his strange evening). With James, we could acknowledge that, despite the possibility that the experiences of the characters may be based on hallucination, there is nonetheless value in that knowledge and perhaps something to be gained in the way of scientific knowledge and insight into the nature of feeling (James 1979, 233). We could consider the work as a form of expanded empricism in which author and readers participate. Attributing irony to the work, it can also be argued that it stages a conflict between the literary and intellectual ideals in order to critically dramatize such a translation of the problematic into the axiomatic, the manner in which continuous affective experience is closed off, becoming data for his friend's research.

I wish to show that what is at stake in an expanded empiricism through literary experience in *Koto no sorane* is an understanding of dynamics of "suggestion," a concept that not only receives sustained attention in this work but also in sections in *Bungakuron* which relate to evolution.

Affect and suggestion

In this and the next chapter, I will discuss recent scholarship that has explored historical conceptions of suggestion and the transmission of affect, from the psychology of William James to psychoanalysis and sociological theories, in order to begin to situate Sōseki's own theory and literary practice. In her account of the importance of William James in the history of such theories, Blackman (2008) writes that James studied affect and suggestion in an attempt to account for a diverse range of experiences with largely subliminal or unconscious aspects such as trance states, hallucinations, hysteria, and processes of "influence" during hypnosis:

These experiences were seen to be unified or linked through the mechanism of suggestibility, that was both inside and outside, individual and collective, psychological and social. For James, the "problem of personality" referred to what we might term our aliveness—our capacity to affect and be affected such that we neither have a static continuity nor are continually in movement. There is a principle of individuality existing simultaneously with the possibility of cleavages, accidents and ruptures, animating the more porous and permeable aspects of the self. This was aligned to the existence of a multi-layered consciousness, which was seen to produce the possibility of different modes of action, conscious and non-conscious. (30)

We have seen that the 'problem of personality' is very much a concern in Sōseki as well, as he seeks to understand the nature of experiences that are non-individual (*hinin-teki*) or more-than individual. Although I will focus in the next chapter in detail on Sōseki's theory of suggestion, paying attention to the way in which he negotiates between these poles of individual consciousness and "group consciousness," I will here discuss the way Sōseki explores affect and the mechanism of suggestion in *Koto no sorane*. One of the prominent narrative devices in the work that relates to this is the play of images of various sense modalities.

LaMarre discusses how a critique of *Bungakuron* that characterizes the relation between F and f as one of supplementation might also find a seeming "ocularcentrism" in its tendency to emphasize F of visual perception:

It is fair to ask whether F is not an instance of ocularcentrism, relegating all that is not modal (the modality of vision) to the status of supplement and making all that is visually indistinct or obscure into a prop to support vision when it appears to flag. Here, too, Sōseki will turn to ghostly women and insane chatter in an attempt to glue supplemental continuities to the modality of vision (ocular F) as if to compensate for F's inability to stand on its own. (LaMarre 2008, 58)

Indeed, in *Koto no sorane* the continuity of affective relations is depicted in large part via the experience of sound, as in passages in which the narrator seems to hallucinate. Early in the story, he feels himself influenced by Tsuda's cold countenance and by the penetrating sound of his voice:

"Influenza?" Tsuda's question came suddenly and in so loud a voice that I was astonished. This time I really was frightened, and I stared at Tsuda's face without a word. "Take great care," said Tsuda, speaking now in lowered tones. Unlike his brash noisiness, this new hushed voice seemed to penetrate to the very bottom of my ears, to pierce deep into my head. (Natsume 1974, 76)

In this passage, the narrator describes the beginning of a process of suggestive influence, an

experience of affective transmission. Rather than a dynamic in which the modality of sound serves

as a prop, Sōseki appears to be staging "F+f" in terms of a continuous and contiguous relation

between various sense modalities and affect. In the scene described above, various modes of

perception begin to blend together:

> Perhaps a penetrating voice, even if pitched low, can chill the marrow in one's bones. I felt
> as though a black dot no bigger than the pupil of an eye were suddenly hard-struck high in a
> clear blue sky. The black dot might melt into nothingness. But I felt there was absolutely no
> guarantee that, on the contrary, it would not develop into a mountain-gale. Which way this
> dot, no bigger than one's eye, developed would be determined by Tsuda's next remarks. . . .
> "You must take great care," Tsuda repeated the same statement in the same solemn voice.
> The eye-sized dot grew darker in its blackness. But it remained uncertain whether it would
> melt or spread. (76-77)

O'Neill (2002) notes that "In its metaphoric spiral, the voice appears at times to acquire the ability

to project vision" (91). In addition to considering the way in which Sōseki experiments with the

suggestive potential of metaphoric language, we can perhaps consider passages like this one as

evoking relations between focal impressions which turn synaesthetic. This merging of the senses, a

shift toward sensory amodality, seems to correlate with the collapse in intentionality in processes of

suggestive influence occurring in these scenes.[9] Returning to Sōseki's theory of affective "pure

experience," such passages are suggestive of pre-individual affect, points of contingency from

which bifurcation and differentiation into progressively discrete sensations emerge.

Moreover, sound in this story is used to emphasize the physicality of the interrelations

among bodies—waves of sound collapse distances. After falling into a kind of hypnotic state at

Tsuda's, the narrator senses things that he fears forebode death for his fiancé. At one point, a bell

rings, and he feels himself resonating with its waves of sound:

> One single booming sound, as though a very sticky dumpling were being patchily torn off,
> disintegrates to become a multitude of sounds. As that boom disintegrates, one begins to
> think that it is finished. But as the sound grows thin, its resonance links with the sound that
> follows. It swells again, and then again goes thin, thin as the tip of a writing-brush. I
> walked on thinking that the sound really does stretch and really does shrink, and that my

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9. See Massumi (2002) for a theory of intermodality and amodality in relation to affect. He gives an account
informed by philosophy and science of a process in which sensory perceptions fold into and out of amodal virtual
states. He describes studies which indicate that all perception has a background "fringe" of synaesthesia
(intermodality), and that for babies in particular, synaesthetic experiences are the norm.

own heart seems to be stretching and shrinking with the pulsing of the bell-born waves. I come to feel the need to synchronize the beating of my heart with the squeezing of the bell. (Natsume 1974, 86)

In this quite synaesthetic passage, the sound of the bell also stimulates in the narrator (and, through a transmission of affect or "suggestion," the reader and writer) the senses of sight and touch (the sticky dumpling, the pulsing and stretching of his heart). O'Neill comments that in this passage, with its metaphor likening the sound of the bell to the tip of a writing brush, Sōseki is expressing the power of literature itself as a suggestive medium:

> The simile "like the tip of a writing brush," expresses the thinness of the sound. In its capacity as a synecdoche for the generation of the written word, the image also establishes a link between reading and influence. In the passage, the image of the brush is precisely where the narrator identifies with the sounding bell. This almost mystical identification raises a host of questions concerning the nature of reading and the undue influence that words may have on their readers. (O'Neill 2002, 97)

To what extent is Sōseki exploring affective transmission and suggestion in an effort to convey the "undue influence" of these processes in literature and society, as O'Neill here remarks? Is there not also a sense in which Sōseki is expressing a positive potential in these dynamics? If we consider the end of the narrative once more, in which the narrator feels that his fiancé has come to love him even more, is it going too far to suggest that this new found affection arose in response to his experience of this opening of affective relations, his letting down his guard as a collected self? As mentioned earlier, several scholars have commented on the leveling effect of his experience: it seems as if the narrator is placed alongside the lower-class and superstitious old woman who works as his housekeeper. When his fiancé visits him in the final scene and they all laugh together about the incident, the narrator even seems to express a feeling that economic differences have been rendered irrelevant:

> [Tsuyuko] looks at the old woman and laughs and laughs. The old woman, too, laughs happily. Tsuyuko's silver laughter, the old woman's brass-like laughter and my own laughter of plain copper mingle in harmony, and it is as gay as though the Spring of the whole wide world had flowered within this seven-and-a-half yen's monthly worth of my modest rented house. (Natsume 1974, 114)

The laughter, which is compared to metals of different values and resonates outside the confines of

his private house in the Spring air, recalls Sōseki's earlier use of synaesthetic images of sound to express a merging or leveling of perceptions and bodies during moments of affective transmission.

Ruth Leys (1993) describes how in American sociology of the time, the manner of conceiving relations in terms of "suggestive influence" grew popular in reaction against Cartesian conceptions of autonomous selves as well as contractual and biological models of society (279). These thinkers were seeking another possible form of glue for society: "As the greatest force in the development of habits, mental attitudes, and character, imitation-suggestion explained how social assimilation and political consensus could be brought about in a rapidly changing American society marked by heterogeneity and difference" (280). We can perhaps sense this kind of positive association between suggestion and social unity in this concluding scene, whether or not we critically interpret the affection between the narrator and his fiancé as a supplemental "glue" reinforcing their relationship as a family and his reentry into a rational modern society.

On the other hand, thinkers have often distanced themselves from theories of suggestion. Chertok and Stengers (1992) write: "Like hypnosis, suggestibility has taken on a predominantly pejorative meaning denoting an illegitimate influence, that is, an influence the acceptance of which cannot be rationally justified by the one who accepts it. Suggestion is impure; it is the uncontrollable par excellence" (quoted in Blackman 2008, 33). Blackman (2008) describes how suggestibility was often attributed to "women, the working classes, colonial subjects and children," in contradistinction to men of strong will, leaders as opposed to the easily influenced "masses" (35). Indeed much of the novel carries such associations. As the narrator falls under the influence of Tsuda, he expresses the fear of "infection," calling to mind such discourses surrounding the suggestibility of the masses. When the narrator arrives home in the middle of the night in his trance-like state, he expresses a sense in which he is carrying impurity into the space of his home:

> "The water: look, it's dripping," and she pointed. Indeed, from the hems of my sopping overcoat and from the brim of my soft hat cold globs of water leaked steadily on to the floor-mats. Lifting my hat by pinching the crease of its crown, I flung it down on the floor. The hat rolled soggily away, fetching up against the old woman's knees, its bright white-satin

lining shining up at the ceiling. I shrugged off my thick grey overcoat and, after shaking it once or twice, flung it down. . . . I changed into a kimono and, after I had quite literally shaken myself several times, began again to feel more like my own man. . . . I tried to mask my earlier feelings of weakness. (Natsume 1974, 94)

In this scene, the narrator and the housekeeper share an anxiety over the fate of Tsuyuko, though the narrator attempts to cast off his sense that he has become weak, like an "invalid." In the above passage, the objects he exchanges with her, such as his soggy hat that rolls over and graces her knees, become associated with a compromise in purity or cleanliness. Further, they seem to mediate the affective transmissions between these characters. Other objects in this scene come to carry a sense of affective contamination as well. Over the course of the night the narrator is kept awake as the sounds of howling dogs outside are carried into his home by rough wind from all directions; he keeps running his fingers through his dirty greasy hair causing his stomach to "stop its genial activity"; eventually soaked with greasy sweat, he feels as if a snake is slithering all across his body (99-103). Following his discovery that Tsuyuko had recovered after all, he gets his hair cut, trying to clean himself up and gather himself as a collected and rational individual. At the barbershop, the employees read and laugh over a tale written by a *tanuki*, an animal that in folklore often has supernatural powers and possesses or otherwise causes mischief among humans. The tanuki decries fancy talk of hypnosis as nothing more than a continuation of the ancient techniques of the tanuki. The men in the shop laugh at a man in the tale who, in his weakness as he attempts suicide, falls victim to the tanuki's influence. The narrator, concluding disgustedly that his own strength of will had been compromised, leaves the shop in a huff. Are we simply to equate the narrator's judgment on the dangers of suggestion with Sōseki here?

O'Neill (2002) has rather interpreted this scene as an ironic commentary by Sōseki: the narrator has yet again been "influenced" by the talk of the men in the barbershop. O'Neill argues that in seeking to "counter the potential move toward mysticism" Sōseki employs a "tableau" of various contexts of storytelling and reading: the housekeeper's superstitious stories, ghost stories relating to the Russo-Japanese war, the narrator's experience as it becomes material for a book, and

the conversation among men in a barbershop (104). "The circulation of affects through the different modes of storytelling makes visible a cross-section of the different cultural sites that produce the affects, and how we may think about them as readers inheriting them" (105). As O'Neill suggests, the way in which we think affective circulation and suggestion bears on ethical questions of social relations. Given that Sōseki wrote these stories around the time of the Russo-Japanese war, in which group affects and their manipulation were at stake, we can view this work not as entertaining escape into mysticism (as O'Neill indicates Sōseki was accused of at the time), but rather as encouraging a critical engagement with these questions (105).[10]

However, I have argued that there seems to be a tension in Sōseki's manner of thinking "suggestion." As with his various concepts of pure experience, Sōseki is both wary of their potential risks, and hopeful for their potential. This tension is embodied in the ambiguity of the final scene of reunion and affection in *Koto no sorane*, the uncertainty over the nature of the mysterious events of that night and the future of a new family entering modern society.

In the previous chapter, we discussed the various manners in which Sōseki conceives pure experience in relation to notions of sympathy, Zen, and receptive affinity. These concepts of pure experience tend to center around non-individual experiences of affect. In this chapter, we have discussed affective transmissions via suggestion as another manner in which Sōseki conceives of such experience. Although Sōseki remains wary of the negative potential of such experience (hence perhaps his efforts toward an intellectual distancing), he also explores the positive potential of non-transcendent experiences of relations, just as he aims for a practice of expanded empiricism rather than a positivism in his theoretical work.

In Chapter 5 of *Bungakuron*, which will be explored in the next chapter, he theorizes the role of suggestion in individual and group consciousness. I will attempt to show the significance of

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10. O'Neill (2002) discusses a tension between affective passages and intellectual distancing and irony in this story as well as in *Shumi no iden*. This relates to our earlier discussion of affective literary F and intellectual F of weaker affective force. Indeed, Sōseki does seem to explore the potential for such materials employed in combination.

Sōseki's conception of imitation-suggestion as a largely unconscious as opposed to conscious/willed

process as it factors into his theory of evolution.

Chapter 3

Mimetic transmissions—*Shumi no iden*

In this chapter, I will draw from Ruth Leys's (1993) discussion of what she calls mimetic and antimimetic conceptions of unconscious "suggestion" and conscious imitation, respectively.[11] I will trace Sōseki's argument in *Bungakuron* on imitation, talent, and genius in group consciousness, and argue that in his conception of the transformation and selection of F, his argument is primarily mimetic. As with *Bungakuron*, the novel *Shumi no iden* explores questions of mimesis and evolution together: processes of evolutionary transmission and selection at various levels, cultural and biological, are conceived largely as unconscious rather than conscious or willed. These processes correspond with theories of "natural selection" and "cultural selection." Historically, selection processes in both of these domains have been conceived according to a distinction between "artificial" (consciously produced) and "innate" (largely unconscious) processes. As with the distinction between "mimetic" and "antimimetic," however, we find these distinctions largely unstable. Both the novel and *Bungakuron* explore the nature of transmissions of "*shumi*." Although commonly translated as "taste," I will explore the manner in which this term comprises a wide range of meanings, including affective and cultural dispositions.

Mimesis and antimimesis in *Bungakuron*

In book 5 of *Bungakuron*, entitled "Group F," Sōseki reiterates his conception of F: focal impressions in a waveform in individual consciousness that flows continuously through time and extends to waves of group consciousness.[12] Sōseki distinguishes between three main kinds of group

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11. I will not be discussing "mimesis" in the sense of artistic representations of nature.

12. In the 2009 translation of *Bungakuron*, "*shūgō ishiki*" is translated as "group consciousness." I will at times use the term "collective consciousness" in my discussion, which I feel is also compatible and carries less of a sense of spatial boundedness.

consciousness: consciousness of imitation, of talent, and of genius (Natsume 2009, 123). He

introduces the first type as follows:

> We call "imitative" that consciousness easily dominated by outside forces. By "dominated"
> we mean to say that as it moves from A to B, it naturally falls into step with others and takes
> a similar course of action. In other words, it is the type of consciousness that arises from the
> imitation of the taste, the "isms," and the experience of others. Imitation is a necessary
> social glue. A society without imitation would be like a heavenly body ungoverned by the
> laws of gravity. It would splinter into pieces and before long it would collapse altogether. It
> is for this reason that scholars claim that society rests upon imitation. And it is our great
> love of imitation that makes them say so. (123-24)

In this passage, we can detect a tension in Sōseki's thinking regarding whether "imitation" is

unconscious or willed. Throughout *Bungakuron*, Sōseki uses several related terms for processes of

influence and "imitation." Imitation (*mogi* or *mohou*) is a term that in popular usage signifies a

process of modeling or copying. It can thus be associated with conscious or willful acts. On the

other hand, elsewhere in book 5 Sōseki uses the term "suggestion" (*anji*), which can signify

unconscious processes of influence and mimicry. This distinction is especially clear when Sōseki

discusses suggestion in connection with hypnosis and everyday unconscious processes. However,

in the above passage we will notice that the term "imitative" is used in this sense of a "natural"

process, "dominated" by forces beyond one's control.[13]

Shortly after the above passage, Sōseki discusses imitation in terms of the "imitation of

pathological tastes," comparing the process to the spread of disease, and writes: "To those who

would say that this is not a case of imitation, I would argue that while normal imitation is done with

subjective intention, the imitation in this case is commanded by nature. It is an imitation that is

forced upon us by something stronger than the individual will" (125). Thus, this passage confirms

that "imitation" could carry both senses of conscious/willed and unconscious for Sōseki.

In "Mead's Voices: Imitation as Foundation, or, The Struggle against Mimesis," Ruth Leys

documents a history of what she characterizes as conflict between mimetic and antimimetic

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13. In the above translation "dominated" has been chosen for *shihai seraruru*, which can also carry the
meanings of being ruled, controlled, influenced, or swayed. It is thereby ambiguous as to whether there is a negative
connotation.

thinking, particularly in psychology and sociology from around the turn of the 20th century. She

associates the mimetic pole with theories emphasizing unconscious processes of suggestion, as with

relations during hypnosis. Antimimetic thinking argues these are actually cases of conscious or

willed acts of imitation. Although Leys emphasizes that many conceptions tend to fall somewhere

in between these two poles, and that in actuality it is a slippery distinction, she argues the need to

heuristically draw this clear distinction in order to discuss their respective tendencies:

> *Mimesis* . . . will be reserved for the hypnotic paradigm in its most radical form, and that
> of *imitation* . . . will be used in a looser, at times explicitly *anti*mimetic way. Only by so
> doing can we avoid using the notion of imitation in both senses, which on the one hand
> would be faithful to the confusions of the period under investigation and indeed would
> reflect the constitutive instability of the distinction, but on the other hand would make an
> analysis . . . all but impossible. (286)

As with the tension in *Bungakuron* discussed above, Leys notes that in the discourse of several

thinkers such as Gabriel Tarde, there can be polysemy and instability in the usage of terms such as

"imitation," which Tarde also used in the sense of a hypnotic mimesis, "the action of one mind upon

another." She quotes him as follows:

> I shall not seem fanciful in thinking of the social man as a veritable somnambulist. . . .
> Society is imitation and imitation is a kind of somnambulism. . . . The social state, like the
> hypnotic state, is only a form of dream, a dream of command and a dream of action. To
> have only ideas that have been suggested and to believe them spontaneous: such is the
> illusion of the somnambulist and such also of the social man. (279)

As described in the previous chapter, Leys shows how suggestion was often conceived as a force

promoting the public good, a kind of social glue. We can find similar strands of thinking that tend

toward the "mimetic" pole in Sōseki's work. He continually insists that there is a necessity for such

imitation/suggestion, and writes of the basic necessity of "survival," of following "nature's

command" (Natsume 2009, 124). As examples of this "primary" imitation, Sōseki cites

Mantegazza's account of unconscious gestures that arise automatically in response to cries of "fire."

When it comes to literature, Sōseki likewise emphasizes that in order to survive, authors would do

best not to stray too far from the imitative parameters of a given group consciousness (128-29).

While the "love of imitation" that Sōseki describes in this section largely relates to survival and

social coherence, we have seen how he has also explored the positive potential in a kind of mimetic

relation thought in terms of pure experience, as with relations of sympathy and receptive affinity; a

shared experience of affect or emotion through art. In the final portion of "Philosophical

Foundations of the Literary Arts," we find this language of suggestion and influence together with

his idea of receptive affinity as he describes the potential for great writing to be passed on:

> If one person in a hundred—even one in a thousand—should encounter this literary work
> and find themselves falling into correspondence with its continuity of consciousness; if they
> should go a step beyond this and carry forward into their future life some indelible trace that
> matches the truth, the good, the beautiful, and the heroic that flashed up from the depths of
> that literary work; if they should attain that rare domain of receptive affinity—if this should
> happen, then the literary writer's spirit and soul would be transformed into a kind of
> intangible heredity that influences the consciousness of society at large. (Natsume 2009,
> 213)

We will see this idea of an "intangible" or unconscious "heredity" at work in *Shumi no iden*.

Nonetheless, Sōseki thinks in antimimetic terms as well, particularly when he accounts for the

"consciousness of genius."

Leys argues that in the wake of influential social theories of mimesis such as that of Tarde,

there was a profound counter-reaction and a repression of concepts of mimesis even within those

who worked within the mimetic paradigm. She calls this the "antimimetic turn within the imitation-

suggestion paradigm."

> By dissolving the boundaries between self and other, the theory of imitation-suggestion
> embodied a highly plastic notion of the human subject that radically called into question the
> unity and identity of the self. Put another way, it made the notion of individuality itself
> problematic. But at a certain stage in the development of the social sciences there arose a
> fundamental methodological requirement to substitute for a self defined as continually
> permeable to the influence of others a self conceived as having fixed boundaries and a stable
> center—that is, to determine a conceptual entity or "theoretical object" that made possible a
> typology of selves and permitted an analysis of the self's relation to other selves, to the
> community, and to the state. (Leys 1993, 281)

In Sōseki's account of the consciousness of genius, among the several possible explanations of

genius he gives, we can perhaps perceive a gesture on Sōseki's part toward this kind of grounding of

the self, of consciousnesses that can develop with relative autonomy and "centeredness."   Let us

first examine his conception of the group consciousness of talent, which still accords with a largely

mimetic thinking of group consciousness. In this account, he writes that in relation to the imitative, the talented occupy different stages along the wave form of group consciousness and move at different speeds:

> When confronted with an F that is about to change, we have no choice but to imagine a series of at least three states of F: a, b, and c. If the group (imitative) consciousness of a certain era is at b, the a that precedes it exists as a faint flicker on the edge of consciousness. At the same time, we can hypothesize that the c which will come next is readying itself in the darkness to gradually emerge from the subconscious and take its place at the top. In other words, while b currently occupies the focus of consciousness, like the proud Heike it will sooner or later yield its dominion to c. Thus, the tendency of b is gradually to transform itself into c and proceed to shape the contents of consciousness accordingly. Because the F of the common masses usually moves in the same direction, those who are one step ahead will reach the destination of c that much faster. . . . People with the F of talent are ten or twenty steps ahead of the masses. (Natsume 2009, 127)

In speculating about the nature of the group consciousness of genius, Sōseki argues that one possible explanation could be that they are even faster and further ahead on the wave of consciousness than the talented. According to this hypothesis, there is no significant difference between the minds of genius and those of imitators: "The process and order of their transformations do not contradict each other in the slightest—indeed, they are in perfect accord with one another" (130). This account of genius does not rely on notions of conscious will, but simply describes a more advanced position along the wave of consciousness. He stresses that while the talented and geniuses may be further ahead on the curve, there is nothing wrong with imitators, who will eventually reach the same destination. Further, Sōseki emphasizes that the difference in speed or positioning can often be accounted for in terms of environmental influence. This can be perceived in the following account of the F of talent and imitation in a classroom setting:

> The unevenness of these wave movements is sometimes the result of conscious effort and planning, but *in most cases it is simply caused by physical and mental constraints*. For example, when a lecture is being given in a hall there are many things that might induce a feeling of boredom in the students, including the subject of the lecture, the relative skill with which it is delivered, the weather outside the hall, and the air quality inside. In this instance, while boredom is the inevitable destination of all the listeners, there is no way to know in advance at which point one of them might, in fact, become bored. (127; emphasis added)

In the first line of this passage, Sōseki draws a distinction between conscious effort and other

factors (physical, mental, environmental) which may presumably largely affect one unconsciously. As he goes on to write, the first to yawn will demonstrate their talent—they are ahead of the others in becoming bored—and others will follow (whether consciously or unconsciously influenced by their peers). Although Sōseki is beginning to draw differences between those who imitate and those who attain some distance from these imitators, this conception remains largely mimetic. He argues that there may sometimes be conscious factors that account for differences of speed, but unconscious factors and suggestion largely prevail. Furthermore, rather than suggesting that the consciousness of genius or talent consists of individuals with autonomous mental waveforms, it should be stressed that those who are faster or further ahead nonetheless remain part of "group consciousness." They are considered to be situated on a waveform that is continuous with imitative group consciousness, which merely lags behind.

However, Sōseki goes on to provide another possible explanation for genius: there may be some internal "core" in the minds of genius which can account for their creativity. It is here that I feel we can perceive a gesture toward the pole of "antimimetic" theory, a stress on a greater degree of autonomy or centeredness in the internal makeup of the mind of a genius. Sōseki describes this core as an invisible, vital part of the focus of consciousness of the genius that holds its position, "lending a kind of unity to the irregular and unruly variations of F" (130). Always present in their consciousness, it inflects their experience in a particular manner: "Once they have established this perspective as they make their way through heaven and earth, the phenomena that reach their eyes and ears may be the same as those of ordinary people, but their consciousness will be radically different" (131). Although Sōseki does not venture a guess as to what this "core" might consist of, it is something that grants a degree of autonomy or difference to this consciousness. The sense that these consciousnesses of genius diverge in kind from imitative group consciousness is captured when Sōseki writes that "it is the existence of this core that makes it impossible for the genius to mix with the common lot of human beings" (132).

One final possible explanation is offered for the group F of genius: there is a movement into depth and development of complexity in the mind of the consciousness of genius (evoking Sōseki's discussion of the evolving differentiation of ideals). In introducing this third possibility, it initially seems as if Sōseki may be introducing a degree of antimimetic thinking (conscious will) into the account of genius: "Because ordinary people are dominated by ordinary consciousness, they move from F to F' and then from F' to F" without ever coming to a halt. The consciousness of genius is not under the sway of the factors that control the ordinary person, so they move from F to A and from A to B without ever stopping" (132). Sōseki here uses the language of "domination" and control, associated with the mimetic pole (unconscious activity and influence), in describing imitative consciousness. However, Sōseki then emphasizes that if the consciousness of genius moves into greater depth, it is not through a greater exercise of conscious will: "Most likely, the decision not to move along with all the rest (a decision that is not intentional but rather the result of the urgings of nature) is evidence of the comparatively greater force exercised by the current F on the person in question" (132-33). Thus, in his theory of the workings of imitation F, the F of talent, and the three possible accounts of the the F of genius, Sōseki tends to emphasize the role of "dominating" or "controlling" factors in one's environment, body, and mind, and his theory largely emphasizes the role of unconscious suggestion.[14]

Just as Sōseki seeks to challenge teleologies of progress, particularly in the realm of art, his manner of emphasizing suggestion as underlying evolutionary transformations, even in thinking the innovations of genius, allows him to avoid conceptions of social and evolutionary engineering ("artificial" selection) characteristic of Spencer. LaMarre (2008) compares Sōseki's thinking on evolution to that of William James: "In his defense of genius . . . James argues against Spencer's social Darwinism, saying selective variation means that societies may embrace and maintain a

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14. In Sōseki's (1912) *Higan sugi made* (To the Spring Equinox and Beyond), genius, imitation, and questions of mimesis come to the fore as the main character struggles to choose a path in life. The novel explores the pain of living the life of a genius, as with Sunaga, and the relative ease of the consciousness of talent of a dilettante (Sunaga's uncle, who stresses to the narrator the relative healthiness of flowing with the times).

spontaneous variation, but they do not produce it. Spontaneous variation in the social field—innovation or creation—is a matter of genius, and society does not invent or otherwise control genius" (LaMarre 72).

The importance of the mimetic pole in Sōseki's thinking of such spontaneous variations and transformations becomes evident in the next section of book 5. He argues that the "laws of suggestion" "govern" the distribution of group consciousness, and that the transformations in consciousness between F to F', and so on, depend not only on "competition" among various stimuli, but competition among suggestions. He notes that based on habits of association, in the absence of competition from other Fs, consciousness will "proceed according to convention." This dynamic he likens to imitative consciousness. However, "when there are multiple suggestions at hand, it will choose to focus on the F' that is least damaging to its own tendencies" (139). The F' that is least damaging is that which is similar to the previous F, not something so far off or dissonant that it will be poorly received. This dynamic he likens to the consciousness of talent. In discussing this second dynamic (the tendency toward the selection of similar Fs) Sōseki returns to notions of associative psychology that he had discussed in Book 4, and it is in this section that he explicitly links historical evolution and the evolution of consciousness as governed by dynamics of suggestion.

Sōseki argues that as with associative techniques in literature, historical transformations work gradually. "The transformation of F should not be sudden or abrupt, working better in a gradual fashion" (140). Accordingly, Sōseki reiterates the advantages of smooth transitions in literature. If one wishes to introduce an F' which is "unrelated or in opposition to" the nature of the previous F, one could either wait for the force of the previous F to die down before introducing F', or "it must be very forceful indeed." Sōseki does not rule out the potential effectiveness of such abrupt changes, but he seems to emphasize their violence: "It attacks F by surprise and occupies its place to become F'" (140). While he does acknowledge that there are periods of such dramatic

forceful change (in literature as in conscious life and history), he emphasizes that transformation

tends to be gradual.[15] In a passage that I will argue relates importantly to the cemetery scene in

Shumi no iden, Sōseki relates what appears to be sudden but is actually gradual change in

consciousness and history to an experience of "enlightenment." He describes a process in which

two Fs become the same:

> If F does not change its focus while F' slowly moves from the subconscious to the edges
> of consciousness and then gradually toward the focal point of consciousness, we can say that
> in the end the two are effectively the same. There is such a thing in Zen as sudden
> enlightenment, whereby one approaches enlightenment without knowing it over many years
> of training, only to wake up one morning and find the whole universe transformed. This
> kind of experience is not limited to Zen. It happens in daily life as well. . . . We call the
> transformation instantaneous only because we are not aware of the new consciousness as it
> emerges. On the surface it appears sudden, but in reality it is gradual. It is a slow and
> steady transformation. In history we call this transformation a reaction [*handō*]. A reaction
> according to this interpretation is thus not something that happens suddenly but rather a
> gradual phenomenon. (141-142)

We find comparable ideas expressed in *Shumi no iden* when the narrator goes to visit a temple with

the family tomb of his friend Kō-san, who was killed in the Russo-Japanese war. Walking through

the temple cemetery and commenting on the desolate yet tranquil atmosphere of the temple with its

haunted ginko tree, he describes his emotional reaction finding a beautiful young woman already at

Kō-san's tomb:

> When I saw that girl standing against a background of bamboos, my reactions were not an
> alternation in the emotions I'd been feeling. On the contrary, that emotion deepened at the
> moment when I turned and saw her among falling leaves half-turned back toward me. The
> time-worn Buddhist temple and its damaged tablets, the haunted ginko and the motionless
> pine-trees, the jumble of tombstones, all of different sizes and with the names of the dead
> carved into them, that flower-like beautiful woman; all these images so flowed together and
> harmonized as somehow to have become truly one of another. My nerves carry from them a
> sensation of complete fullness. (Natsume 1974, 161)

At this point, the narrator, anticipating that his readers may be skeptical of such a claim to a kind of

pure experience, justifies himself by giving a scholarly account of techniques of continuity and

transformations in literature and corresponding dynamics in (un)conscious experience. This

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15. In chapter 7 of book 5 of *Bungakuron*, which was not included in the 2009 translation, Sōseki theorizes the
role of suggestion (*anji*) in history across realms of politics, science, philosophy, religion and art. In this section, while
Sōseki discusses the influences of major societal movements and transformations, he emphasizes that group
consciousness needs time to prepare for such changes (*SZ* 9, 518).

account largely echoes the above discussion of the workings of suggestion: we are conditioned by habits of association and become swept up in the underlying tone of a work (as with the focal tendencies across periods of consciousness). Thus he describes how, rather than leading to a contrasting feeling or jarring sensation, the feeling aroused from the contrasting sight of the woman's youthful beauty merged with and heightened the feeling of quiet desolation with which he entered the temple. It was the force of inertia of this initial feeling that conditioned his response to seeing her. His sudden feeling of fullness was actually a result of this gradual process. This moment in the narrative expresses a sense of potentiality in such moments of heightened affect—an experience of being part of a relation that is continuous but also transformative.

On the other hand, as O'Neill has discussed, the scene can be interpreted as a kind of aestheticization or spiritualization of the war dead, as the woman's youthful beauty merges with images of a Buddhist temple and an image of war (the sky which shines "clear as an armory of newly sharpened swords hanging in line from a high wall" (quoted by O'Neill 2002, 117). He argues that there is a displacement of brutal and bestial images of war for the purified and aestheticized images of the temple and the beautiful woman. This parallels the narrator's later effort to displace his own traumatic memory of the war with his project of investigating the woman's origins. Indeed, the narrator's account of surges of group affect in the opening scene in the train station similarly invokes Zen notions and risks tipping into such narratives of national spirit.

Nonetheless, we have seen how Sōseki's discussion of "suggestion" and "imitation" is often quite critical of the inertia of an "imitative consciousness" conditioned or controlled by forces of suggestion. As much as Sōseki finds potential value in such experiences of continuous relation (in this scene described in terms of "oneness"), he remains wary of their risks. We have begun to see how Sōseki conceives of suggestion in terms of evolution. In the next section, I will attempt to expand this discussion in light of the focus in *Shumi no iden* on "heredity" (*iden*).

Evolution and mimetic transmission

Although in *Shumi*, the narrator's "theory of heredity" and surrounding drama resist tidy analysis, the novel's themes of evolution are clearly tied to questions of mimesis. I will here describe the narrator's strange theory and the surrounding events in the narrative.

The novel takes place in the immediate aftermath of the Russo-Japanese war, opening on a scene at a train station where returning soldiers are welcomed home by a huge crowd. The narrator, having stumbled upon this crowd, finds himself drawn to the spectacle, and he joins in the surging waves of group affect. As he leaves, he sees the reunion of a mother and her son, whose striking resemblance to his friend Kō-san inspires the narrator to pay a visit to his grave, as described above. After the young woman leaves the temple, the narrator becomes increasingly obsessed with her identity. Although he had earlier tried to avoid upsetting Kō-san's mother, who remains in a terrible state of grief following her son's death, in his ambition to track the woman down, he asks her to allow him to read Kō-san's diary. In it, he discovers a section in which Kō-san writes from the war front that he has been dreaming of a woman he met at a post office back home. In spite of this seeming clue, the narrator comes to lose hope of finding her. However, in a passage in which the narrator's musings on evolution and heredity merge with the drama, he has an sudden epiphany that there is a connection between the two, that "heredity is the answer" (Natsume 1974,185). The following are the narrator's thoughts leading to this idea:

> Heredity may, at first sight, seem quite simple but, as one's study of it deepens, the real complexities emerge. One could easily devote one's whole life to its study. A great many people have said a great many things on this subject. I would instance Mendel and his pioneering work with peas; the theories of Weismann and of Haeckel; the interesting studies carried out by the latter's disciple, Hertwig, and Spencer's work on evolutionary psychology. Tonight I proposed to read a book recently published in English by Reade. I had skimmed through the first few pages when, for no particular reason, the events in that diary forced themselves into my head. Determined not to let my reading be interrupted, I read a further page; only then to be assailed by that woman from the temple. I managed to dismiss her from my mind and am at last peacefully reading when, at a point six pages on, Kō-san's mother, a jacket over her kimono and her hair dressed in the old-style widow's mode, appears upon the paper. (184-185)

It is clear that the narrator is familiar with a wide variety of theories of heredity and evolution. Like Spencer, although lacking his emphasis on material determinism, as we will see, the narrator will attempt to conceive evolution in a broad manner in relation to the natural world, society, and psychology. Later in this chapter, he describes his thinking on how the mysterious working of karma and heredity somehow mesh:

> In ancient times, such phenomena of cause and effect, cause in an earlier incarnation having inevitable effect upon one's present life, were known as Karma. Men accepted it unquestioningly, recognizing that one had no choice but to bow before its authority as one gives in to the power of that god behind the crying of a child. Indeed, to say "it is Karma" was to say that there was no more to be said. But in the context of twentieth century civilization, it is no longer regarded as satisfactory to explain events by attribution to indeterminable pre-existent cause. The only acceptable modern way of explaining such dramatic and fantastic phenomena as I have already described is in terms of heredity. (186)

Here, we perceive a kind of blending of spiritual forces of "cause and effect" through time, and "heredity." In his attempt to pinpoint some karmic connection between Kō-san and the woman, he begins to investigate into Kō-san's lineage. When he manages to find a knowledgeable old man in Kō-san's clan, a powerful Tokyo-based family in the Edo period that continues to enjoy material prosperity, he probes him for any scandalous stories of a "domestic nature" surrounding Kō-san's relatives. He eventually uncovers a connection that leads him successfully to the woman's identity: Kō-san's father had fallen in love with the most beautiful woman in the clan, who was stolen away by a more powerful suitor, and there happens to be a young woman in the clan today with a remarkably similar face who proves to be the woman from the temple. Thus, heredity and karmic connection come together—the beautiful features of two women in the same clan and what the narrator describes as "ancient ancestral feeling." The narrator then relates his views on his theory of what he now introduces as the "heredity of taste": "Romeo, on seeing Juliet, manifests, becomes the embodied realization of, ancient ancestral feeling. He immediately knows that this is the long-destined woman. Elaine meets Lancelot and is immediately consumed with love. This, too, is because memory of emotions originating long before even the birth of her parents revives in her

mind" (197).

There have been various interpretations of the meaning(s) of "*Shumi no iden*," which is here translated as "the heredity of taste." O'Neill notes that although *shumi* commonly refers to taste, interest, or hobby, Morita Sōhei has argued that Sōseki used it in the sense of "romance between a man and a woman, not an uncommon usage of the term during Meiji" (O'Neill 2002, 122). Thus, O'Neill writes of a "heredity of love" (154). Indeed, the above passage seems to support this idea. I would argue that "tastes" in the basic sense are also at issue. We discover that Kō-san and the young woman mysteriously happen to like the same kind of flower, and Kō-san and his father share a fondness for a certain face. As we explored in the first chapter of this thesis, it is the transformations of literary taste that Sōseki has explored in terms of both individual and collective or generational sensibilities and values. LaMarre (2008), in his discussion of Sōseki's emphasis on the continuity of F in the consciousness of individuals and groups, has argued that "*Shumi no iden*" could be taken as "transmission of a disposition": "The encounter with the past [in the novel] is disturbing and unsettling, and individuals appear to be re-enacting ancient dispositions that they have received or inherited subconsciously, in a kind of transgenerational haunting" (61). A benefit of this conception of *shumi* as disposition is its potential inclusiveness of the various forms being transmitted. A Princeton University dictionary defines disposition in one sense as "a natural or acquired habit or characteristic tendency in a person or thing." "Dispositions" could here include bodily ones, feelings, and habits, as well as other culturally transmitted or learned sensibilities and values. By thinking in terms of "transmission," we can think of the variety of processes that come together in the work—not only hereditary transmission, but affective, unconscious (or collective unconscious), and spiritual or karmic transmissions. What are we to make of this mix of various kinds of transmissions in relation to evolution and suggestion?

Some readers may dismiss the narrator's theory of heredity, pointing to the clearly romantic elements blended within it, or to the fact that the narrator himself expresses an ironic sense of

humor toward what he suspects are bogus ideas. However, as in *Koto no sorane*, we can perceive in

this theory of evolution, which incorporates emotional drama and affective transmissions, another

instance of an expanded empiricism within literature—in this case an expanded evolutionary

thinking. The work could even be said to go further in addressing affective dynamics in relation to

suggestion than *Bungakuron*, which, as we have seen above, deals mainly with F in theorizing

group consciousness. This expansion is dramatically foregrounded in the scene quoted above in

which the affective image of Kō-san's mother merges with the pages of the narrator's book on

heredity. Furthermore, *Shumi* interrelates with Sōseki's thinking on evolution and suggestion in

Bungakuron. To begin an attempt to sort through these broad manners of thinking evolution and

suggestion, we can consider conceptions of "natural" and "cultural" evolution. Tim Ingold (1986)

writes:

> Darwin, in *The origin of species*, presented a theory of adaptation by *natural* selection
> operating on what we now call *genetic* traits. This may be contrasted, on the one hand, with
> *artificial* selection and on the other hand with the natural selection of *cultural* traits. The
> former, transposed onto the world of ideas, corresponds to a theory of rational choice, with
> the agent as selector, purposefully fitting his chosen concepts into structures for subsequent
> realization as cultural artefacts. The latter treats individuals as no more than the carriers of
> traditions of which they are barely conscious: Their cultural forms are therefore innate
> rather than artificial, revealed in human conduct but not man-made. (371)

Ingold here sets out some distinctions that are useful, but, as he later discusses, binaries (nature vs.

culture and innate vs. artificial) that should be recognized as abstractions (as with Leys's mimesis

and antimimesis). We have seen that in *Shumi* the narrator is concerned with both biological

("natural") evolution of a sort (heredity of physical traits) and "cultural" evolution (the transmission

of tastes or dispositions insofar as they can be considered to be within the realm of cultural

transmission). Further, Ingold describes above how processes in cultural and natural evolution can

each be further classified as "artificial" (conscious or engineered selection) or "innate" (largely

unconscious): natural biological selection (with environmental factors playing a large part) is

opposed to artificial selection (i.e. humans breeding animals intentionally for certain traits), and

cultural selection can be thought to occur "innately" ("barely consciously") or "artificially" (with

conscious intention). Our discussion of the forces of unconscious suggestion and conscious

imitation relates to the latter distinction, as Sōseki argues for the importance of suggestion in the

evolution in both art and society.

In attempting to tease out where the the narrator's general theory of evolution lies between

these poles, we may sense that his thinking of heredity is largely mimetic—karmic connections that

are transmitted unconsciously and transgenerationally. There is arguably something comparable in

this transgenerational transmission of dispositions to the functioning of historical group

consciousness in *Bungakuron*. In both works, a kind of unconscious suggestion seems to underlie

innate processes of cultural evolution and, in the narrator's tale in *Shumi*, even seems to underlie

processes of biological evolution (bodily traits tied to instinctual or emotional dispositions—karmic

awakenings to love). However, as Ingold has argued, these binaries of "nature" and "culture," and

"innate" (unconscious) and "artificial" (conscious/engineered) become murky, as they do in *Shumi*.

We can consider, for instance, how the idea of "instinct" has been contested along these terms.

William James, in his writings on evolution and psychology, insisted on the importance of

"instincts such as fear, love and curiosity as driving forces of human behavior," contrary to those

who argued that humans are uniquely rational and, compared to other animals, lack inherited

instincts (Workman and Reader 2004, 11). We find a similarity here with Sōseki, who dramatizes

the human animal from the point of view of the cat in *Wagahai*, and in *Shumi* imagines the

transmissions of dispositions (of ancestral feeling or love) that invite a comparison with something

like "instinct." Workman and Reader go on to note, however, that the concept of instinct was

largely abandoned as a term in social science of the twentieth century, in part because of the term's

lack of clarity and in part because "many so-called instinctive behaviours are capable of being

modified by experience, in which case it is difficult to see where instincts finish and learning

begins" (11). When we attempt to conceive the meaning and limits of something like "instinct," we

will have a hard time separating the biologically inherited from the learned ("cultural") and the

innately (unconsciously) transmitted from the consciously acquired.

In *Bungakuron*, and seemingly in *Shumi*, what complicates these binaries even further is the notion of suggestion in the collective and transgenerational unconscious. We have seen how Sōseki asserts a continuity between focal impressions in consciousness (F) from moments in the consciousness of individuals to sustained focuses over longer periods, eventually extending to group (un)consciousness over periods of time. In *Shumi*, these dynamics of unconscious or innate continuity play out at individual and group or ancestral levels. It is somehow as if the transmissions of collective unconsciousness operate through culture and nature, through something like instinct or spirit, through time. It is here possible to consider the theories of Sōseki and his narrator in relation to other theories linking evolution and psychology of collective consciousness. A famous example is found in Freud, who applied Lamarckian thinking to notions of a collective unconscious.

Lamarck is largely known for his theory of the heredity of acquired characteristics, which holds that the physiological changes acquired during the life of an organism as a result of environmental factors and "needs" can be transmitted to offspring. Changes in an environment can lead to behavioral change, such as the greater use of a particular organ, which could develop and be passed on. This idea has been largely (though still not completely) rejected, although it held considerable sway for some time among thinkers of biological and cultural evolution, notably in aspects of the theories of Darwin and Spencer. In his discussion of theories of natural and cultural evolution, Ingold comments on Lamarck:

> The apparently Lamarckian nature of cultural adaptation has often been pointed out . . . and Steadman has gone so far as to suggest that the error of Lamarck's conception of organic evolution may have lain in the fact "that he was working by analogy: drawing analogies *from* culture *to* nature, and projecting an essentially cultural conception onto the natural world." . . . One might add that many contemporary neo-Darwinians have fallen into exactly the reverse error, projecting a naturalistic conception onto the entirety of culture. (Ingold 1986, 368)

As with Spencer, Freud applied Lamarck's idea of adaptive retentions of acquired traits to cultural evolution, arguing the potential for evolution in culture to occur progressively and speedily

(Sulloway 1992, 274).   In his writings on trauma and society, Freud also suggested that trauma

could be transmitted transgenerationally through a collective unconscious (Leys 2000), and such

ideas continue to circulate. In their exploration of the workings of collective unconsciousness, both

Shumi and *Bungakuron* open these lines of inquiry into the nature of cultural evolution or progress.

We can begin to address these questions by considering the structure of *Shumi*, a novel

which deals with mimetic transmission through repetitions both thematic and structural. There are

many small instances of repetition that punctuate the novel. As the narrator begins to investigate

like a detective into the identity of the woman at the temple, he looks for evidence of historical and

biological repetitions. He discovers that Kō-san and his father were remarkably similar in

personality, that two women share similar facial features, and that the young woman placed white

chrysanthemums (which are mysteriously also Kō-san's favorite) at Kō-san's tomb. As I will

describe in detail in the next chapter, in the scene at the train station Sōseki repeatedly describes the

movement of bodies and feelings as waves ricocheting back and forth, and the narrator is swept up

in these waves of group affect. Such a relay in the final moment of this scene sets off a greater

structural and thematic doubling and transmission in the novel in the moment in which the narrator's

initially sublime experience of group affect gives way to a focus on individual emotion. The relay

is initiated with the description of a soldier who reminds him of Kō-san:

> He so closely resembles my dear friend Kō-san that they could be taken for brothers.
> Indeed, when I saw this man descending the steps by himself I was so startled that I very
> nearly ran toward him. . . . How wonderful it would be if, instead of Kō-san, this sergeant
> had died in battle at Port Arthur; if Kō-san, not this sergeant, came safe and sound back
> home. How very very happy would Kō-san's mother be. (Natsume 1974, 136)

This striking encounter instills in the narrator a desire to visit his friend's grave, leading to his quest

to identify the young woman and eventually unite her with Kō-san's mother. O'Neill has explored

this shift in focus from the group to the individual in terms of a process of displacement: "The

reunion between mother and child underscores the affective strategies of the story and transposes

the feelings of kinship with the crowd to the domestic sphere. The play of affects appears to have

resolved itself on a more modest scale of the family" (O'Neill 2002, 150). He notes that while

many have interpreted *Shumi no iden* as a story of a man dealing with his grief at the loss of his

friend in the war, a large portion of the criticism becomes fixated on the story arc of the mysterious

woman. Thus, rather than attending to the theme of an attempt to mourn for a friend and the trauma

of war, we speculate, for instance, on connections between the work and Sōseki's own love life:

"What develops in the last chapter of the story—that the protagonist becomes obsessed with

unearthing the mysterious woman's identity and in the process forgetting the need to mourn—is

uncannily reproduced in the critical commentary" (124). O'Neill suggests that what is at stake is the

working through of traumatic memory: "[*Shumi no iden*] distills the traumatic entanglements raised

by the Russo-Japanese war into a story about the possibilities of family reunions, self-possessions

or, on a level more grand, the restoration of kin through a 'heredity of love'" (154). Here, we can

intuit the weight of such questions of traumatic disruptions and restorations of the continuity of

ancestral memory in relation to our questions of natural (bodily) and cultural evolution and

mimesis. In the context of Sōseki's focus on "collective consciousness," to what extent is there

something like a national trauma being invoked in *Shumi no iden*? When the novel turns from the

scale of the group to that of individuals, do these individuals stand in for the nation? In this

interpretation, we might perceive the emphasis in the story on familial lineages and the body as

evocative of race or nation. However, the novel continually creates layers of irony and critical

distance, and the narrator insists that he finds the tears of Kō-san's mother more "pure" than those

he shed in witnessing the return of the military. We may thus find in this conclusion the hope for a

different form of working through trauma,[16] one which does not make recourse to a national body,

just as he seems in his theory of evolution to seek to avoid thinking in terms of national teleologies.

  In addition to the stress on the potentially negative aspects of suggestion and group or

national (un)consciousness, the novel highlights continuity in the form of the transmissions of

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16. See Ruth Leys's (2000) *Trauma: A Geneology* for a discussion of mimetic and antimimetic theories and treatment practices relating to trauma.

dispositions of wealth and power. We find this when the narrator embarks on his investigation of

Kō-san's lineage confident that Kō-san and the mysterious woman (whom he notes is well dressed

and probably upper class) may have some connections extending back through the history of the

powerful clan. There seems to be a strong connection here to Sōseki's discussion of "imitative

consciousness" in *Bungakuron*:

> Imitation tends to banish irregularities from society and bring each of its members into an
> orderly and equal array. It gives the appearance of regularity to society's rough surface,
> bringing this and that into accord, and does not stop until it has done away with the
> difference between A and B. . . . The status quo is easily maintained in a society with many
> such people. This is because such a society is an extremely ordered one in which customs of
> the past will be followed, the patrimony will be protected, tastes handed down from past
> generations [*senzo no shikō*] will be relished again and again, and people will come and go
> and love and hate together with their old hometown friends. (Natsume 2009, 125)

Thus, we find that the transmission of power, material wealth, and the status quo is a concern in

Bungakuron and casts a shadow over the romance of *Shumi*. Hence the ironic ease with which the

narrator of *Shumi* tracks down the upper class young woman through an investigation into her

family heritage and his constant fear that some unromantic fact will come to light, such as the

possibility that Kō-san and the woman simply met at the household of the old clansman rather than

through a fated encounter in the post office.

Shumi no iden* does not simply celebrate the romance or beauty of imitative or mimetic

relations at these various scales. It challenges us to think critically about structures of power,

influence, and violence that are transmitted repetitively and continuously, as it persists with us in

imagining relations and emerging variations that are worth passing on.

I have argued that in *Bungakuron*, Sōseki thinks evolution largely in mimetic terms, as a

process of transformations, selections, and transmissions that occurs at different temporal scales and

in various domains of culture and consciousness. Likewise, in *Shumi no iden*, a kind of

unconscious transgenerational force is at work in the narrator's vision of cultural and conscious

evolution, and he more explicitly deals with biological and affective dispositions. In this sense,

Shumi no iden can be seen as a kind of imaginative expansion of the sphere of argument of *Bungakuron*, which, as we have seen, can veer from an attempt to discuss dynamics of feeling, as with his discussion of F (but not f) of group consciousness. Because Sōseki introduces something like a collective unconscious in both works, his treatment of issues of group and individual affect in the context of themes of war memory invites inquiry into how the text deals with trauma and memory at these different levels. We can perceive tensions in Sōseki's attempt to think a creative and largely non-teleological evolution attributing a large role to suggestive "influence" of both positive and negative potential.

Chapter 4

Chronotopes in *Shumi no iden* and *Kusamakura*

In Book 4 of *Bungakuron*, Sōseki conducts a formal analysis of literary techniques, focusing on realism and romanticism, characterizing them according to temporal, spatial, and affective qualities. Realism, for Sōseki, consists of a primarily spatial process, a "transcription" of fragments, as opposed to romanticism, which is marked by dramatic transformations in space and time. He thus sets up an opposition between techniques that are fragmented and "divorced from time" and techniques of temporal transformation, and he discusses their potential to come together to form hybrids in an artistic synthesis of the whole. Although Sōseki at times draws such dualistic oppositions between spatial and temporal techniques, he suggests that, in practice, time and space cannot be separated in such forms. Thus, I argue that we should view these techniques operating in Sōseki's fiction as similar to Bakhtin's chronotopes—generic space-time units. I begin by discussing how realism and romanticism function like chronotopes in the opening scene in *Shumi no iden*, and then turn to a different set of literary techniques in the work *Kusamakura* (grass pillow), *shasei* poetry (sketching) and narrative prose. The narrator of this "haiku-novel" establishes a tendentious opposition between temporal narrative prose and timeless spatial *shasei.* Further, the narrator associates the conflicting poles of these binaries with East and West. I argue that Sōseki reveals the limits of such a dualistic approach through irony, and suggests that *shasei* in fact takes on temporal as well as spatial relations, in the manner of a chronotope. As these forms encounter each other throughout the work, we are left with the question of their relation to each other, and relations between "East" and "West" in modern times.

Transcription and transformation, realism and romanticism

In Chapter 1 of Book 3 of *Bungakuron*, entitled "The Particular Character of Literary

Substance," Sōseki attempts to theorize the differences between science and literature. While, for

Sōseki, science is predominantly concerned with questions of "how" (cause and effect in time),

literature may take a freer approach to this question (Natsume 2009, 88). He writes:

> To observe something that is ceaselessly changing and fluctuating with an eye strictly to "How" is, like winding an infinite thread, an operation that has no end. The literary author has the right to take this endless chain of events and cut it at will, and exhibit it as if it is eternal. He has the special privilege of taking some part of human affairs and the natural world ruled by this ceaseless, endless development, cleave it at a point of his choosing, and exhibit a cross-section divorced from time. (89)

Thus, Sōseki discusses the potential of literature to operate within the realm of cause and effect in

time, as well as its ability to fragment and leap out of time, as in moments of description. He then

compares non-temporal forms in literature to paintings, cross-sections "separate from 'time.'" Such

a theory opposing spatial painting and temporal literature is well-known in Lessing's "Laocoon,"

which is referred to in *Kusamakura*. Sōseki categorizes various literary forms according to this

opposition of the spatial and the temporal: forms such as epic poetry or the novel largely operate

within "developing" time, while there are also forms of the "literature of the fragment" such as

realism and haiku, a form of *shasei* (sketching) associated with painterly qualities. These latter

forms enable a "feeling of pleasure at grasping a momentary, transitory phenomenon." After

positing this distinction, Sōseki turns to the "attitudes" of scientists and writers, noting that while

literature may take up forms that fragment time into cross-sections, it is not with the "dissecting"

attitude of scientists, who are "destructive," never content until they have carved up objects into the

smallest possible pieces (90). While writers of literature may dissect characters in novels in order

to draw out their features of interest, for instance, the ultimate goal is to arrive at literary truth,

which is distinguished "only in terms of affective impression" (92). "The dissection that goes on in

literary work always has as its goal capturing the activities of the whole. . . . The method of

dissection exists as a resource for the literary artist, with the goal of synthesis" (93).

Sōseki thus draws an opposition between literary forms of temporal transformation or

development, and those of timelessness and fragmentation (though still in the service of artistic

synthesis). In the next book of *Bungakuron*, "Interrelations Between Literary Substances," Sōseki posits an opposition between romanticism, characterized by transformations in time and space, and realism, a form of transcribed fragments and condensed potential. Although there is no discussion of haiku or *shasei* in this chapter, and Karatani Kōjin (2008) has argued that there are features of *shasei* that are distinctive to it, such as the lack of plot (10), it is clear that Sōseki finds similar qualities in realism and *shasei*.

Sōseki's discussion of realism follows a section on six literary techniques or modes of representation, organized according to the principles of associationist psychology of similarity, contiguity, and contrast: projection, introjection, dissociation, comic association, harmonizing, and counterposition (Natsume 2009, 96). He states that with each of these techniques, literary materials (F) are combined in ways designed to modify and most often heighten the reader's feeling state:

> When we seek to transform the emotion associated with a particular F by adding F', we find six types that tend toward the direction of intensity and richness, one type that moves in the direction of reduction and deletion, and two types that produce an entirely new emotion unrelated to the emotions typically associated with F and F'. Clearly, of the literary techniques discussed thus far, the majority have as their goal the intensification or enrichment of F by the addition of an F'. The technique of realism I am about to discuss arises precisely in response to the predominance of this type of method. (99)

While for Sōseki romanticism typically employs such techniques of "artifice" in order to produce heightened feeling states, realism is rather a kind of plain and "natural" technique of transcription that tends toward the lack of artifice (102-05). This sense of the tendency of realism toward a total lack of transformative or associative technique is reinforced by a chart in which Sōseki lists the 7 literary techniques with their effects in terms of transformation in feeling. While the 6 techniques of association each have an effect of f+f' (an intensification of f), f-f' (a reduction of the intensity of f), or x (undefined emotional effect as a result of an association), realism (type 7), as it is simply a non-associative process of "transcription," stands out as the only technique to have the effect of simply "f" (lacking emotional transformation through association) (117).

In the last chapter, we noted how in Sōseki's theory of conscious and historical

transformations he argues that unconscious "suggestion" is a determining force in processes of association. We may therefore question the status of suggestion and "influence" in relation to the techniques of realism and by extension *shasei*, which lie outside the domain of forces of association in Sōseki's schema. In the limit case of these non-associative techniques, does suggestion weaken or drop out as a mechanism of transformation? Or do these non-associative techniques imply something like free association via stream of consciousness, a method employed in psychoanalysis in order to avoid undue "influence"? Although there is not enough information to come to a conclusion about this, it seems that given the importance of the concept of suggestion in Sōseki's account of "evolution," this question will remain with us, as I will touch on more below.

Sōseki goes on to characterize realism as consisting of "natural" phrasing as opposed to poetic language that in romanticism can become artificial to the point of excess, emphasizing that this plain language was a kind of "reform" in response to this excess: "Because realism uses natural language—it does not pass through a process of refinement—because its speech is transient and disposable, it is the least exalted as a skill. It is so close to technique-free that it resists assessment. . . . It is pure artless expression" (104). Although Sōseki seems to get himself into tricky territory in attempting to attribute causality to the relation between plain language and the use of associative technique or structural artifice, it is clear that for Sōseki, this sense of a kind of "purity" is the greatest potential strength for the technique of realism. This relatively technique-free purity is described as a process of transcription: "Because the technique of realism follows faithfully the methods of expression of the real world, the implication is that this is a means for transferring fragments of the real world in miniature onto paper" (102). We may note here the resonance with Sōseki's discussion of timeless fragments in *shasei*.

Realism is discussed in terms of techniques and themes of a "natural," everyday-life sort. Just as realism tends toward the lack of artifice or structure—a simple process of transcription that does not strive to produce emotional effects from associative transformations of F—thematic

realism does not have to "appeal to novelty" (105). Sōseki attributes a special fullness or condensed potentiality to the fragments of the present inscribed in the realist mode. In discussing a passage written by Jane Austen, he writes: "The deepest meaning of this passage lies in the distillation of an entire life in a single page. The deep meaning, though, is not merely in the distillation. The point is that once we have grasped their character in its normal state of affairs through this distillation, we can foresee its potential transformations as well" (111).

Finally, Sōseki discusses the potential for hybrids of these techniques. He concludes that the potential for romanticism lies in "the intensity of its stimulus, its freshness, the vastness of its rhythms, its visceral tension," whereas realism presents the "unexpected profoundness in the fleeting ordinariness of the everyday" (119). Thus we have a kind of opposition between two forms, a form of fragments and condensed potential and a temporal form which can release potential, which are suggested to be in a complementary relation, able to come together in a "synthesis." The opposition between these techniques is lessened, however, as he emphasizes that, in practice, realism and romanticism fade into one another: "While the methods of romanticism and realism receive their identities from the two polar end points, it is rather a question of degree and more likely that hybrid forms would arise that would be too numerous to list, pressing closer now to one, now to the other" (118).

Romantic and realist space-times in *Shumi no iden*

In discussing how Sōseki employs literary techniques with various spatial and temporal qualities, I believe we can usefully draw a comparison to Bakhtin's model in the work *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel*. Bakhtin sets out by defining chronotope, which literally means "time-space," as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (84). The theory takes its inspiration from Einstein's theory of

relativity, exploring the potential for time, which Bakhtin sees as the primary dynamic in the novel, to be expressed and experienced in its concreteness, fullness, and concrete relation with space. I argue that, despite the appearance in Sōseki's theory that literary forms can be lacking in temporal dimensions, in practice, these forms have both spatial and temporal qualities in the manner of a chronotope.

As generic units of space-time, chronotopes consist of various spatial and temporal relations in a variety of modes. Temporal relations can be historical, biographical, personal, communal, empty and abstract, or full and concrete. Spatial relations can likewise be abstract or concrete. An analysis of chronotopes deals with questions of scale, relations among past, present, and future, and a host of narrative elements such as character development and the arrangement of the fabula in relation to plot. Of particular relevance to our study of Sōseki's work is Bakhtin's conception of chronotopes in relation to genre. He writes that "it can even be said that it is precisely the chronotope that defines genre and generic distinctions, for in literature the primary category is time" (85). It is the very historicity of such genres in literature that is of concern to Bakhtin, as he theorizes lineages that adopt chronotopes and variously combine them:

> Each chronotope can include within it an unlimited number of minor chronotopes. . . . Any motif may have a special chronotope of its own. Within the limits of a single work and within the total literary output of a single author we may notice a number of different chronotopes and complex interactions among them, specific to the given work or author; it is common moreover for one of these chronotopes to envelop or dominate the others . . . . Chronotopes are mutually inclusive, they co-exist, may be interwoven with, replace or oppose one another, contradict one another or find themselves in ever more complex interrelationships. (Bakhtin 1981, 252)

It is this kind of play with a hybridity of various techniques, each with its own kind of spatio-temporality, in which Sōseki expresses interest. What kind of spatio-temporal forms does Sōseki employ, and to what ends and effects? To begin with, it is perhaps possible to consider the techniques of romanticism, realism, and *shasei* as forms that function as chronotopes in Sōseki's fictional work. As discussed above, despite Sōseki's tendency in his theory to dichotomize techniques in terms of space and time (forms can be fragmented and "divorced form time"), in

practice temporal and spatial aspects are bound up together. The way in which these forms layer and combine in the narrative is what we shall examine now.

The opening of *Shumi no iden* presents a dramatic scene of what is revealed to be the narrator's daydream of the Russo-Japanese war:

> Under the influence of the weather, even the gods run mad. A voice came shouting from within the clouds, "Kill men. Let loose the hungry dogs." This voice shook the Sea of Japan into turbulence and rang as far as the ends of Manchuria. In immediate response to that voice, the Japanese and the Russians between them created a massive slaughter-house, two hundred miles long and two hundred miles wide, in the plains of Northern Manchuria. Then, from below the end of that almost endless plain, countless packs of ferocious hounds, like four-legged bullets all simultaneously discharged, came flying up to cut across and to slit lengthwise the wind that smelt of blood. (Natsume 1974, 117)

In these opening lines we can note the romanticism of the material depicted, and techniques of association that Sōseki would consider "artifice." It recalls Sōseki's example in *Bungakuron* of Milton's manner of boldly capturing a sense of war in the romantic line, "The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar" (Natsume 2009, 100). In the above passage, similar "artifice" in the form of associational techniques is employed in the personification of the voice of a war god. Further, the passage expresses a sense of spatial and temporal explosiveness, of sudden and dramatic transformation or "discharge." Throughout the narrator's daydream this uncoiling transformation is repeated: following moments of stillness in which the dogs of war lap up the gore of their victims, the god repeats his commands and the process continues. Following this scene, with little fanfare we leap to the everyday world of the protagonist: "Thinking how terrible was that vision and, as usual, indulging in idle fancies, I find I've reached Shimbashi."

Amidst a huge crowd awaiting the return of a triumphant general and other soldiers from battle, he depicts the sights and sounds around him with a technique of realist transcription in sharp contrast to the spatio-temporal qualities of his dream. In the majority of these descriptions, the narrator describes fragments of the scene around him:

> Standing beside the fireplace is an officer in a red cap who, talking very earnestly, every now and again rattles the sword in the scabbard at his side. Next to him, side by side, stand two silk hats; and around one of them a ring of cigar-smoke is slowly trailing. In the far

corner, a married woman in a white collar is whispering to another woman, aged about fifty. . . . Their voices are so low that, even standing right beside them, nothing would be heard. (Natsume 1974, 120)

After several pages of such wandering and observing, feeling self-conscious even of his own thoughts, the narrator describes the arrival of the train, personified much like the dogs of war: "A train came wriggling in like some long snake and, in one great gout, disgorged about five hundred stalwart lads onto the platform" (123). This snake image will be employed again when the protagonist has another vision of his friend Kō-san on the battlefield, carrying a flag with a unit of soldiers that collectively move like a snake. In the present passage, we have thus begun to feel a kind of echo of the vision of war depicted through romantic time: like the serpent or the beasts on the field of battle, there is a fitful coiling and uncoiling through space and time. Following the arrival of the train, the narrator begins to sketch his surroundings again in a brief moment of stillness. However:

> From the platform maybe 150 yards away, comes a shout of "Banzai." In deep successive waves of sound, the word roars ever nearer. Drowning out the tail-end of the starving man's remarks, "Banzai" bellowed everyone around me. Hardly had that greeting died away when a general, his right hand raised in military salute, passed directly in front of me. He is a light-built man, deeply sunburnt and sporting a grizzled beard. "Banzai." Once again the crowd around me shouted ten thousand years of honored memory onto the general's back. (123)

We feel the suddenness of this movement and the expansive temporality of the word "banzai."[17]

Later, the narrator describes how upon seeing the war-aged scraggly face of the passing general, "the whole spectacle of that fearful conflict raging across the vast plain of Manchuria is suddenly revealed to me." Then: "Around this little fragment, this feeble shadow of the war's reality, there now break the roaring waves of '*Banzai*.' That sound is nothing less than an echo of the battle-cry heard in Manchuria" (126). In addition to the battle-cry, cries of banzai, and the coiling and releasing of the images of dogs and snakes, the figure of the wave is used to describe the motions of the large group of onlookers, who later flow out of the station like a sea of "black waves" (129).

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17. Note that the original here lacks the translator's description of banzai as "ten thousand years of honored memory" (it is simply written "Banzai"). As the narrator later speaks of this meaning, the translator's intention was perhaps to emphasize here the sense of temporal expansion.

This recalls the importance of the wave-form of consciousness in *Bungakuron*: as in *Bungakuron*, these waves somehow move from individual consciousnesses to a "group consciousness," which makes up the "zeitgeist" (Natsume 2009, 121). It should therefore give us pause when the play of these spatio-temporal techniques seems to move in the direction of a totalizing image of a societal organism charged with nationalist zeal. Sōseki describes the beauty of the battle-cry, a kind of speech act of excess, which unlike "banzai" has "no semantic content" and so resembles a kind of pure experience, "pregnant with inexpressibly deep feeling" (Natsume 1974, 126). "There's 'Wah' and nothing else. Such crystallization of spirit, so totally exploded, sends shock-waves out in all directions. . . . When one listens and is able simultaneously to hear the sincerity of several tens, several hundreds, several thousands and several tens of thousands of people, then and only then can that feeling of sublimity rise to the supreme, the stupendous, level of heaven" (127).

In this scene, Sōseki thus employs chronotopes of realism and romanticism in order to explore "evolution" at the levels of individual and group consciousness. With the wave-like push and pull of these techniques, he seems to explore the potential or limits of a kind of dialectic movement, a temporal stillness or fullness of the everyday that is not "divorced from time," but rather a time of potentiality, out of which dramatic transformation can emerge. This wave-like push and pull also serves to establish a series of relays and displacements in the narrative, which are part of the novel's exploration of unconscious and evolutionary transmissions.

Although this exploration of literary techniques in *Shumi no iden* has been brief, and it seems that this particular play of forms mainly occurs in the first section of the novel, I hope to have begun to show how such forms can function like chronotopes, which form hybrids or otherwise interrelate and encounter one another. Let us turn to a different set of literary forms in *Kusamakura*, which has its narrator seemingly on the sidelines of historical time, seeking escape into a timeless world of art.

Shasei and the novel in *Kusamakura*

Published the same year as *Shumi no iden* (1906), *Kusamakura* stages a conflict between the world of the literary form of *shasei*, which the narrator/protagonist attempts to inhabit, and the form of novelistic prose. The narrator characterizes *shasei* as a transcription of spatial fragments in two dimensions, as a form outside of time. He associates narrative prose with temporal transformation. The work follows the narrator in his flight from the city to the mountains, where he seeks to sketch poems in a spirit reminiscent of the traveling haiku poet Basho. Although he seeks to maintain an impassive attitude and to rise above the temporality and vulgar emotional attachments of the city, which he associates with detectives and detective novels, he finds himself drawn into the affective vortex of Nami, the daughter of the keeper of the inn where he stays.

In the introduction to the English translation of *Kusamakura* entitled *The Three Cornered World* Alan Turney (1964) writes that *Kusamakura* is valuable in that it is possible to equate the narrator's views with those of Sōseki and hence to help us better understand "the nature of the Japanese" (11). It is necessary, however, to emphasize the diversity of genres and forms that Sōseki employs, and the error of equating the author with the narrator. I will explore the work with Mary Layoun's (1990) "Of Noisy Trains and Grass Pillows," which explores the irony of the work and its critical perspective on the rise of the modern Japanese state.[18]

Kusamakura is known as an experiment in form, a kind of hybrid of novelistic form and *shasei* or haiku, thus a "haiku novel." It is not a surprise then that it would largely be concerned with many of the questions discussed earlier associated with these forms—questions of temporal and spatial fragmentation and totality and questions of "how" that Sōseki has associated with novels. Indeed, the narrator attempts to establish a clear line of demarcation between these forms.

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18. On the one hand, it is clear that Sōseki at times invites the reader to draw parallels between the narrator and himself. For instance, the narrator discusses the suicide of one of Sōseki's students, Fujimura, who before jumping off a waterfall, wrote a poem, "The Cliff-Top." The narrator extols the student's "heroic death," an act "for all that is implicit in the one word 'poetry'" (Natsume 1965, 162). However, layers of irony prevent any attempt to simply equate the narrator with Sōseki, as we will see. Layoun has written against such literal readings in an effort to challenge existing criticism of the work that uses it to elevate Japanese "tradition."

On the one hand, there is the form and practice of *shasei*, which the narrator idealizes for its purity

(Natsume 1965, 20). He contrasts *shasei*, which allows one to be "completely detached from

feelings and emotions" to that of other forms:

> I want a poem which abandons the commonplace, and lifts me, at least for a short time,
> above the dust and grime of the workaday world; not one which rouses my passions to an
> even greater pitch than usual. . . . The trade-mark of the majority of play-wrights and
> novelists is their inability to take even one step out of this world. Western poets in particular
> take human nature as their corner stone, and so are oblivious to the existence of the realm of
> pure poetry. . . . They are content to deal merely in such commodities as sympathy, love,
> justice and freedom, all of which may be found in that transient bazaar which we call life.
> (19)

In this passage, we can note that the narrator seeks a transcendent position in *shasei* free from

affective entanglements, as opposed to the affective circulation associated with the novel and other

forms. As Layoun has noted, the narrator's attempt to become an observer of this world is

associated with the hills he climbs during his trip to the countryside, and there is a literal and

psychological distancing as he attempts to turn the world into a "landscape" in response to the

complications of urban life. The narrator also draws a clear demarcation here between Eastern and

Western forms, and expresses an exceptionalist view of Japanese culture and art.

Related to this sense of emotional and spatial distance, Sōseki also characterizes the world

of *shasei* as "two dimensional" or flat. In criticizing the "average novelist," who like a detective

aims to "probe the whys and wherefores of his characters' behavior," the narrator asserts that in

order to achieve a more pure distance from this world, he will attempt to view things objectively:

> Even if the people move it will not trouble me, for I shall just think of them as moving about
> in a picture; and figures in a picture, however much they may move, are confined within two
> dimensions. If of course you allow yourself to think that they are projected into the third
> dimension, complications arise, for you will find them jostling you, and once again you will
> be forced to consider your clash of interests. (Natsume 1965, 23)

Thus Sōseki's narrator aims to inhabit a supposedly pure realm in two dimensions outside of time.

While in *Shumi no iden*, the protagonist initially seeks a pure experience that could

incorporate waves of individual and group consciousness, the narrator of *Kusamakura* seeks to

escape affective entanglement, rather seeking to achieve heights of pure artistic expression. Further,

he celebrates stillness:

> According to artists, the ancient Greek ideal of sculpture was to produce a figure which embodied what may be summed up as "energy in repose." That is to say a figure in which vital energy is on the point of being, but has not quite been motivated. The attraction of such a figure never palls, but becomes greater the more you look at it, for you always wonder what this energy would become were it to be unleashed. (54)

Here we can note a parallel with Sōseki's discussion of the potential for transformation captured within the fragments of realist literature. However, the narrator goes on:

> Every one of these new positions [following movement] would have its own individual potentiality, but once having moved, the figure could never again return to its original state of harmony. Any new situation would be as ugly as that resulting were a beautiful river to subside suddenly, revealing a bed of mud. It is for this reason that I think that wherever you have motion, you must also have vulgarity. (54)

As the narrator of *Kusamakura* seeks an escape from the world of rapid transformation, he prefers gentle waves, to become a "vast ocean flowing across its unfathomable bed from continent to continent" though without the "vital energy" of the ocean with its accompanying threat of exhaustion following a storm (89).

In the narrator's attempt to transcend emotional attachments through the technique of *shasei*, a form that in *Bungakuron* Sōseki suggests lacks techniques of association, it is as if he seeks to avoid undue "suggestion," in the negative sense of influence and contagion. Novelistic form, here thought of in terms of affect and embodiment, chains of association and causation in time, then comes to stand in for the decadent material and cultural influences of the West. Thus, the qualities of these two artistic techniques as imagined by the narrator can be schematically organized as follows:

Poetry and art	Prose and history
Shasei	Novel
Fragments outside time	"Chains" of cause-effect developments in time
2-D	3-D
Transcendent/ objective	Inter-subjective
Emotionally detached	Embodied/affective

Non-associative/ non-structured	Associative
Stream of consciousness without forced suggestion	Manipulation through suggestion

Despite the narrator's efforts toward establishing these dichotomies, it becomes clear over the course of the work that the world of depth and vital transformation bleeds into the narrator's safe position of distance in complex ways. He risks getting drawn into the turbulent emotional world of Nami, a young woman at the inn where he stays, despite his attempts to view her "objectively" as part of a landscape. In a scene in which he takes a bath, Nami enters the bath with him and leaves suddenly in a fit of laughter, disturbing the still water and his attempt to maintain his attitude of distance.

It is ultimately the turbulence of the events of history surrounding the Russo-Japanese war that threaten to disturb the narrator's escape into a timeless two-dimensionality. This war invades the space of the narrator's retreat most obviously in the form of the train in the final scene, which carries Nami's cousin and ex-husband to the war front (Layoun 1990). However, war is felt throughout the work, as in descriptions of the interactions between Nami and the narrator, their struggles to gain the upper hand. During a conversation with Nami, the narrator comments: "At this, I stopped my frontal attack and decided to try a flanking movement" (Natsume 1965, 123). Nami always seems to possess the potential for violence, and in a scene just before her cousin is sent off to war, we are titillated to discover that she carries a dagger and seems on the verge of attacking her ex-husband. It is revealed, however, that this dagger is to be a gift from her father to her cousin, who will carry it with him to the battlefields of Manchuria. Although the narrator proudly states that he does not even know the name of the country town he is visiting, when he sits atop an anonymous hill and spots a sail in the waters far away, it is suggested that his position is far from neutral: "This, I thought, was how ships crossing with tributes from Korea must have looked

in olden times. Apart from that sail, my whole world was sun and sea; the one giving light, and the other receiving it" (165). Thus the transcendence, tranquility, anonymity, and eternity that the narrator seeks is inevitably penetrated by historical entanglements and a geo-political landscape that has become complexly three-dimensional as well as really "flattened," brought to his doorstep. As with this image of a sail reminiscent of a Korean ship carrying tribute, the images that the narrator encounters are far from lending themselves to the creation of a benign or harmonious landscape.

Over the course of the work, Sōseki ironically and humorously deflates the narrator's "pure" art. In the midst of his contemplations, the narrator trips on the mountain path, he is rained upon, and an earthquake rattles his tranquil landscape. His attempts to objectively capture Nami in his art are inevitably charged with his desire for her. But, as Layoun argues, the most striking instance of an ironic perspective on the narrator's attempt to maintain his timeless pure art comes in the final scene, as the train, "that serpent born of civilization," symbolizing the forward march of modernity, provides the stimulus that enables the completion of the narrator's inner picture of Nami. As she gazes after the departing train, her face expresses "compassion" (*aware*) to the narrator.[19] Rather than a mere interruption of the pure art of the narrator's world of sketching, his mental sketch is in some sense completed through this encounter with historical time, calling into question the narrator's earlier statement that "wherever you have motion, you must also have vulgarity." Although the narrator expresses a feeling of triumph in his ability to create this sketch in his mind's eye, I was nonetheless left with a feeling that this encounter was less than a marriage of forms: as he pats the shoulder of Nami, quietly telling her of his victory, he seems to remain somewhat detached from the turbulence around him.[20]

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19. Layoun notes that the term "*aware*" seems to be used self-consciously by Sōseki as it is "loaded with classical literary associations" (119).

20. Layoun has interpreted this sketch as a failure in the sense that it is only in his mind—that the artist during his journey was not able to produce much actual art. While this interpretation is supported by Nami's own criticism of the narrator, he insists that it is an equal achievement simply to live in the spirit of pure art. There perhaps remains some ambiguity as to the author's feeling of victory in this scene, and even more ambiguity as to whether or not the narrator has finally managed to come down to the world of affective experience, or has merely made an object of Nami's look of sympathy.

To reiterate, *Kusamakura* stages a kind of confrontation between two kinds of literary forms. On the one hand, the narrator attempts to create art of a particular brand of Eastern "tradition." This art consists of poetry in the "*shasei*" mode, thought to be spatial rather than temporal, that involves a transcendent and non-emotional authorial attitude. On the other hand, the wandering narrator gets caught up in another world of narrative prose associated with three dimensions, time, history, affect, and the body. It is thus made to seem as if there is a dichotomy between these two forms of art: a pure poetry of space vs. the modern vulgarity of novels or other narratives in time and motion. Given the encounter of these forms in the ending, the question is then what may arise from this encounter. Is Sōseki suggesting a potential conflict or synthesis from these seeming oppositions? What form might that take?

One possibility that presents itself is a turn to the notion of "overcoming modernity." This overcoming could come via the triumph of Japanese tradition, confrontation or war with the West— the victory of *shasei* over prose. However, it seems clear that the ironic deflation of the narrative of a return to "tradition" suggests that Sōseki is not gesturing in this direction. It would rather seem that Sōseki is exploring alternate possibilities within modernity: the ending may suggest the potential for a creative engagement with the world through a diversity of artistic practices, and real connection to others through sympathy. Further, in setting up these forms as unstable polar oppositions, Sōseki reveals that they are historical constructions that can be reimagined. For instance, although the narrator sets up a dichotomy between the spatial and the temporal in a manner reminiscent of Lessing's theory, there are indications that Sōseki is conscious of the limits of such an approach. In a scene in which the narrator is struggling to create a sketch in the form of a painting and he turns to poetry as a means to capture his feeling, he discusses this dichotomy in "Laocoon":

> I seem to remember that Lessing argued that poetry can only be concerned with those events which are relevant to the passage of time, and thus established the fundamental principle that poetry and painting are two entirely different arts. Looked at in this light, it did not seem that poetry was suited to the mood which I had been so anxiously trying to express. Perhaps

time was a contributory factor to the happiness which reached right down to the innermost depths of my soul. There was, however, no element in my present condition which had to follow the course of time and develop successively from one stage to another. . . . [My happiness] was derived from the atmosphere which pervaded my surroundings: an atmosphere of unvarying intensity which had remained with me there in that one place from the very beginning. . . . All that would be necessary surely is that they be arranged spatially as are the components of a picture. (Natsume 1965, 93)

Thus the narrator refutes Lessing, by emphasizing the power of *shasei* poetry to capture a feeling rooted to space in a painterly mode. However, in exposing the limits of Lessing's dichotomy regarding spatial and temporal art, the narrator in effect exposes the limits of his own manner of creating such a dichotomy between spatial *shasei* poetry and temporal prose. We are thus led back to *Bungakuron*, which suggests that, in practice, it is impossible to separate time and space in these forms—that the forms fade into one another.

Morris discusses how the poet Shiki, in a dichotomizing manner similar to Lessing and our narrator in *Kusamakura*, argued that haiku, in its brevity, is a form that is particularly suited to spatial sketches of nature. Despite their opposite conclusions about whether the spatial or the temporal is the prime mode of poetry, both Shiki and Lessing arrive at their understanding

by a similar combination of classical mimetic and empirical modes of thinking. Shiki is concerned with haiku's ability to depict. He does not seem as much concerned with the adequacy of form to perception as with a fairly draconian economy of practical means. His reasoning teeters on the edge of tautology: haiku has available only a short space of language, therefore it best expends itself on the spatial. This inverted, or thwarted, version of Lessing offers as many problems as the parent theory. In a seventeen syllable haiku, can we seriously separate quanta of time from those of space? (Morris 1985, 275)

Although Shiki sought to promote such an view of spatial sketching, he did not exclusively hold to this view, and often praised works that skillfully created micro-narratives (283). Despite his attempt to carve out a niche and a name for *shasei*, Shiki celebrates a diversity of forms. I would argue that Sōseki, in *Bungakuron* and through the irony of *Kusamakura*, is likewise suggesting the potential for such diversity.

Furthermore, although the narrator preaches a certain understanding of *shasei* as a means to a traditional appreciation of nature beyond all traces of modern life, Morris makes it clear that in

fact, *shasei* as Shiki appropriated and conceived it, was in some sense bound to modernity.

> Shiki's notion of impressionism is quite different from that concept of the subjective, relativizing filter of the senses we associate with European Impressionism. He thought chiefly in terms of a fairly mechanical relation between stimulus and reception; it is a way of conceiving of the function of poetic language that may ultimately be derived from Shiki's reading of Herbert Spencer's essay "The Philosophy of Style," perhaps the most Gradgrinderly of nineteenth-century poetics. (276)

His particular mode of "realist" sketching from nature stemmed from his appreciation for the "precision and force" of western oil painting, its "technical superiority" and "quasi-scientific potential" (277). We may find a resonance between this scientific understanding of *shasei* and the narrator's objective transcription of fragments.

Many have discussed Sōseki's engagement with Shiki's ideas, including Karatani, who in a recent article suggests that for Sōseki *Bungakuron* was largely inspired as a way to continue an engagement with the legacy of his friend Shiki (Karatani 2008, 10). Karatani does not here emphasize the sense of spatiality in *shasei*, but rather its lack of plot, and its spirit of carnival: "Sōseki argues that *shaseibun* is derived from haiku. This does not mean simply that it was started by haiku poets such as Masaoka Shiki and himself. *Shaseibun* has its origin not just in early modern haiku, but in the haikai-renga of the fifteenth century. If *shaseibun* retains a carnivalesque sense of the world, this is because it stemmed from haikai-renga" (12). Karatani emphasizes that, despite Sōseki's understanding of *shasei*'s modern aspects and his view that analogues to *shasei* existed in Western works, Sōseki considered *shasei* not as an import, but as linked to this comic-spirited haikai poetry of Japan (11). Just as Morris describes Shiki as a "conservative revolutionary," who along with his modernism remained attached to artistic forms and forms of life of the past (Morris 1985, 291), we can perceive in Sōseki a tension between his interest in a critical engagement with modernity at once philosophical, scientific, and artistic, and a desire to maintain an engagement with forms of the past that take on new potential in a contemporary context. Rather than a split between modern and past/traditional, we can perceive in Sōseki's thinking a sense of dynamism in the process of creative reappropriation of existing forms. The ironic performance of

shasei in *Kusamakura* opens into an awareness of its contradictions and historicity.

Layoun has discussed ethical dimensions of *Kusamakura*, particularly the work's treatment of the relation between the narrator and the nation-state. She argues that the work challenges notions of tradition, and notes that the narrator seeks to escape the confines of any kind of group and by extension a family state (*kazoku kokka*) (Layoun 1990, 115). On the other hand, Layoun indicates the deeply contradictory approach that Sōseki takes:

> If Sosuke in *Mon* or the sensei and his young protégé in *Kokoro* or the rambling artist/narrator of *Kusamakura* never quite manage as characters within Sōseki's texts to assume a consciously critical stance, Sōseki's texts themselves raise a darkly despairing and contradictory objection, not to modernization and the foreign, not to nationalism and the leap from a feudal state to a monopoly capitalist one, but to the stultifying social and cultural effects of the specific direction that modernization, nationalism, foreign "importation," and capitalism took. Some of the contradictory implications of such a position of resistance, of increasingly diminished defiance, are more apparent on a closer analysis of Sōseki's novels. (116-17)

Indeed, such ambiguous positioning can be perceived in the narrator's thoughts in the final scene regarding the train, which he feels symbolizes the constrictions of modern "civilization." He states:

> Civilization's pitiable subjects are forever snapping and snarling at imprisoning bars, for they have been made as fierce as tigers by the gift of liberty, but have been thrown into a cage to preserve universal peace. This, however, is not a true peace. It is the peace of the tiger in a menagerie who lies glowering at those who have come to look at him. If just one bar is ever taken out of the cage, the world will erupt into chaos, and a second French Revolution will ensue. Even now there are constant individual revolts. . . . 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." (Natsume 1965, 181)

This passage seems to express the potential for radical social change, although this potential is described negatively, as a word of warning to the state authorities. We are reminded of Sōseki's theory of suggestion and association as applied to consciousness and history, how he seems somewhat averse to "violent" transformations at these various levels.

Nonetheless, Sōseki continually exposes structures of power in practices and forms of art. Layoun argues that the narrator feels the pressure to fit inside prescribed social roles, that he is in

danger of being "caught" and inserted into the narrative of the state (Layoun 1990, 137). He complains mysteriously of detectives in the city who give him trouble, constantly "counting his farts." However, in his pursuit of "objectivity," the narrator ironically becomes like a detective, seeking to investigate and objectify Nami for his art. For instance, after artistically framing a scene in his mind inspired by a scene unfolding before him between Nami and her ex-husband, he is caught in the act of watching them from behind some plants. Comically, he "meekly obeys" her command to come out from hiding. Further, although he lectures Nami on the pleasures of reading novels in a non-linear manner, reading passages at random, and he celebrates what he sees as the non-associative process of sketching, the "pure" artistic mentality, it is clear that sketching is not without its structures. Layoun writes: "To switch the first and third lines of a haiku is as unacceptable a violation of poetic form as to switch the first and third chapters of a detective story" (138). We are thus reminded that in *Bungakuron*, the pole of realism, which lacks temporality, structural artifice and forces of association is a hypothetical one. Likewise, Sōseki reveals that it is unavoidable that emergent structures, temporal transformations, historical context, and "suggestive influence" will operate even in a "haiku novel." The point is merely driven home with the final image of the train.

Conclusion

As *Kusamakura* works through problems of time, space, and affective experience in modernity, it raises many of the same questions regarding "evolution" in society. The narrator of *Kusamakura*, like the narrator of *Shumi no iden*, turns away from modern "progress" at the level of society or nation, turning to the level of the "individual," but the boundaries prove porous to forces of non-individual affect and suggestive influence. Given that in these works the traumas of

modernization and war can be felt—at the level of discourses in *Koto no sorane*, in the effort of the narrator of *Shumi no iden* to deal with the loss of his friend, and penetrating the space and time of the narrator in *Kusamakura*—the effort to re-imagine the direction of evolution and "progress" at the level of bodies, society, and history takes on tremendous weight. As the creation and experience of literature for Sōseki is deeply interrelated with these domains, literature becomes one means toward ethical social engagement, a medium in which new worlds and relations can be imagined.

We have seen that one manner in which Sōseki has explored this potential is through concepts of "pure experience." Further, he shifts in both his theoretical and literary work among registers of pre-individual affect and "feeling," more personalized "emotions," and perspectives of distance and irony. Thus, although Sōseki often seems to want to go "back," so to speak, to sites of potentiality (in "pure experience" an experiential ground prior to differentiation), he also engages in a forward movement, gesturing toward different possible configurations of diversity and complexity in society—alternate modernities, so to speak. Although Sōseki's theory can often seem distanced from material and socioeconomic realities in his works, he thus gestures toward the ways in which the experience of literature can be a means toward a critical and ethical engagement with questions of potentiality, both positive and negative, at the scales of subject, nation, and world.

Looking back at Sōseki's theory today, there are aspects that appear reductive. Although he frequently posits several possible explanations for phenomenon, as in his account of the direction and determinations of progress or development in literature, he firmly applies principles of biological evolution to the domains of mind, culture, and society. In this sense, he risks conflating dynamics at various scales and domains, mapping principles of nature onto cultural processes with their own specificity, a problem that continues to exist in certain fields of research.

Although Sōseki's theory often works through grand narratives of modernity—the notion of the forward spread of universals of science and culture and theories of progress in the evolution of life as well as historical progress—we can perceive tensions in his theory, a resistance to these

grand narratives of universality. His theory of literary evolution explores sites of potentiality and contingency, emergent variations which can lead to new ways of life. Conceiving such potentiality (and experiencing it through literature) in terms of affect enables Sōseki to remain specific to the contexts of experiences in excess of universalizing forces. When he conceives of transformations in history and unconscious transmissions in terms of dynamics of feeling and mechanisms of suggestion, he expands these questions to address potentiality in society and history. However, Sōseki continually stages failed attempts to actualize "pure experience," and suggests the risks of actualizing such potentiality in negative directions, as with the rise of nationalist sentiment.

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