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Japan Forum

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713704207

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Thomas Lamarre

Online Publication Date: 01 March 2008
To cite this Article: Lamarre, Thomas (2008) 'Expanded empiricism: Natsume Sōseki with William James', Japan Forum, 20:1, 47 - 77
To link to this article: DOI: 10.1080/09555800701796859
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09555800701796859

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Expanded empiricism: Natsume Sōseki with William James

THOMAS LAMARRE

Abstract: To understand how Natsume Sōseki's *Bungakuron* departs from classical empiricism, this paper reads it alongside the psychology and philosophy of William James. Not only did James's 'principles of psychology' and the New Psychology movement have a major impact on Sōseki's 'principles of literature', but also James's shift from psychology to radical empiricism affords insight into Sōseki's efforts to develop a theory of relations on the basis of F+f (focal impressions + feelings). Like James, Sōseki abandons the procedures of axiomatic sciences that treat sensory data in terms of discrete impressions, favoring an analysis of continuous variation in the manner of problematic sciences. Sōseki thus expands the field of empirical analysis to include the emotional accompaniments to perception as well as the event that generated them. This paper considers how Sōseki's expanded empiricism in *Bungakuron* sets it apart from other studies of literature written in Japan at the time and implies a very different set of ethical questions and demands.

Keywords: William James, Natsume Sōseki, psychology, expanded empiricism, axiomatic, problematic

On the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the May 1907 publication of Natsume Sōseki's *Bungakuron* (Principles of literature), in view of the general reluctance of commentators over the years to treat it as a study of literature in its own right rather than as a phase in the formation of a writer who went on to become one of the most important and beloved of modern Japanese novelists, I feel obligated to begin with a simple question: in its day, was Sōseki's study of literature unreadable or untimely? If, from the time of its publication, commentators have had so much difficulty addressing *Bungakuron* as a coherent whole, is it because *Bungakuron* presented a manner of thinking about literature that proved incompatible or incommensurable with the thought of its day? Or was *Bungakuron* simply incoherent as a project, and does it remain so even today? If we turn to it again, is it because *Bungakuron* has something to offer us with respect to thinking about literature, something that could not be fully articulated until now?

Japan Forum 20(1) 2008: 47–77 ISSN: 0955–5803 print/1469–932X online
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DOI: 10.1080/09555800701796859

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For me, such questions hinge on the status of 'The New Psychology' in Sōseki's study of literature. In America, in 1884, John Dewey wrote an essay entitled 'The new psychology' that did a great deal to popularize a broad range of experimentation and theorization in psychology. Especially important was the introduction of the work of Wilhelm Wundt into England and America, through E. W. Scripture's 1897 text *The New Psychology*. Wundt, in his combination of philosophical inquiry and laboratory experimentation (largely measurements of response to stimuli), subscribed to 'psychophysical parallelism', wherein he drew on the ideas of Leibniz, Spinoza, Kant and Hegel to move beyond materialism and idealism and to avoid positing a simple cause and effect relation between body and mind. Such ideas became central in the establishment of the new science of psychology, especially through Wundt's 1871 text *Principles of Physiological Psychology*. C. Lloyd Morgan, for instance, in his *Introduction to Comparative Psychology* (1894), reinterpreted the relation between action, mind and physiology, stressing the importance of physiology over mental faculties in interpreting action. In America, William James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890) contributed significantly to the spread of the so-called New Psychology.

What is striking about Sōseki's *Bungakuron* is not only that it draws heavily on these works and a number of other texts associated with the New Psychology, but also that it works seriously with many of the underlying conceptual frameworks, such as the monism and monadism implicit in psychophysical parallelism, reworking them to produce 'principles of literature' analogous to the 'principles of psychology'. It is for this reason that I have glossed *Bungakuron* as 'Principles of literature' where others might translate it 'A theory of literature', 'A study of literature', 'A treatise on literature' or simply 'On literature'.

The use of the New Psychology is part of what makes *Bungakuron* so difficult to read and sets it apart from other studies of literature emerging in Japan in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The philosophical complexity of Sōseki's sources means that, if we wish to read *Bungakuron* today, we have to look closely at the conceptual framework of the New Psychology and how Sōseki works with it. This is what I will attempt here: to read the conceptual project of *Bungakuron* in relation to the New Psychology, and, more specifically, the work of William James, on which Sōseki continued to draw on throughout his career. Sōseki also emphasized the importance of sociology in *Bungakuron* but, partly because there must be limits to any inquiry, and partly because I feel that his psychology provides the key to his sociology (which remains rather attenuated), I will deal primarily with psychology.

At the same time, because so many of my (and maybe our) habits of thought derive from a Heideggerian tradition in poststructuralism and deconstruction of the critique of techno-scientific modernity (as rationality or instrumentality), I wish first to speak to some of the stakes in Sōseki's turn

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to the new sciences of psychology and sociology to develop principles of literature.

The loss of ground

Sōseki's *Bungakuron* seeks the empirical principles of literature via an analysis of the 'stream of consciousness' or 'continuity of consciousness'. Sōseki thus situates literature exactly where William James situates psychology. In his introduction, for instance, Sōseki writes that his 'principal concern was to explicate the basic dynamics of literature (*bungaku no katsudōryoku*), primarily from the direction of psychology and sociology' (Natsume 1907a: 12). It is not surprising then that Sōseki also draws on Herbert Spenser, citing his *Principles of Psychology* (1855), which famously treats the mind as a biological counterpart to the body. Significantly, however, even in his discussions of sociology and history, Sōseki does not follow Spenser's emphasis on materialist causes, stressing empirical principles and the stream of consciousness, which in turn encourages him to stress the importance of genius and innovation in historical transformation. In this respect, his work evokes James and the New Psychology more than Spenser.

Still, despite the affinity between James and Sōseki, rather than trace the influence of James on Sōseki (references to *Principles of Psychology* and to James's later essays in the collection *Radical Empiricism* appear throughout Sōseki's writings), I prefer to think in terms of a dialogue between Sōseki and James, lest Sōseki's empiricism appear as nothing more than a failed imitation of James's pragmatism or radical empiricism, without any integrity of its own. In sum, I feel that *Bungakuron* becomes readable *alongside* James's psychology and empiricism. This raises the question of why *Bungakuron* was not addressed in such terms in its day and, more generally, why the text proved largely unreadable.

First, it should be pointed out that the text of *Bungakuron* is based on Sōseki's lectures given at Tokyo University from September 1903 to June 1905 as recorded and compiled by a friend, Nakagawa Yoshitarō, whom Sōseki thanks warmly in the introduction. Sōseki reviewed these notes and rewrote approximately the last third of the manuscript, the last three chapters of Part IV and all of Part V, but he remained dubious about the results. What is more, *Bungakuron* follows a series of lectures delivered the previous year at Tokyo University, between April and June 1903, subsequently published as 'Eibungaku keishikiron' (On the form of English literature), which was also compiled from students' notes. *Bungakuron* is thus a continuation of the lectures on literary 'form' or 'style' (*keishiki*) that addresses literary 'substance' or 'matter' or 'content' (*naiyō*). Here I am in agreement with Joseph Murphy's suggestion of 'substance' as the best translation. Significantly, however, *Bungakuron* was not titled 'Eibungaku naiyō ron' (On the substance of English literature), although it might well have been.

In sum, not only in terms of its length and scope but also in terms of its presentation, *Bungakuron* appears as something more than, or other than, a study focused

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on the substance of English literature and as something more or other than a continuation of the lectures on literary form. Nonetheless, because it relates to these other lectures, and because of its manner of composition, *Bungakuron* often reads as a series of detailed notes rather than an argument carefully worked out in writing. It does not have the flow of Sōseki's other essays on literature nor is it as focused as his lecture entitled 'Bungei no tetsugaku teki kiso' (The philosophical foundations of literature), delivered in 1907, which reprises many of the main points of *Bungakuron*. Needless to say, this does not mean that *Bungakuron* is incoherent as a project. But it does mean that *Bungakuron* makes demands on readers and the burden of making connections often falls on them.

Second, most of Sōseki's examples come from English literature, especially of the eighteenth century, and he cites them in the original English. The combination of eighteenth-century English literature with an intellectual framework inspired by unfamiliar Western philosophers and psychologists, written in highly abstract Japanese, makes for steep going in both languages. Third, rather than sustained discussions of individual works, Sōseki draws on excerpts from literary texts primarily to support his argument. It is thus difficult to say whether *Bungakuron* is a study of literature or a study of psychology that uses literary examples. In his introduction, Sōseki mentions that he had some concern in preparing his lectures because he had distanced himself too much from 'pure literature' (*jun bungaku*) and had to rework his discussion by drawing more from pure literature (Natsume 1907a: 12). In fact, Sōseki stresses that, while in London, he gave up reading literature as a means to explain literature. Because he lacked all sense of a ground for understanding literature, he turned instead to the study of psychology, sociology, philosophy and the sciences in an attempt to find a ground for literary study, whence one of the most frequently cited passages from the introduction to *Bungakuron*:

> 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 its waning.
>
> (Natsume 1907a: 10)

Sōseki's experience of a lack of ground for the study of literature recalls Foucault's remarks about how modernity brings about the breakdown of the classical grid that grounded the possibility of universal knowledge in classification and taxonomies: 'the visible order, with its permanent grid of distinctions, is now only a superficial glitter above an abyss' (Foucault 1973: 251). What Sōseki experienced in London was precisely this abyss of modernity in which reading literature does not result in a reliable schema of classification. Sōseki, of course, experienced this abyss not only on the level of the inability of scholars in England to establish a ground for the study of literature, but also on the level of a gap between what

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was called literature in English (*eigo ni iwayuru bungaku*) and what he had thought literature to be from his earlier education in Chinese classics (*kangaku ni iwayuru bungaku*) (Natsume 1907a: 10). Sōseki's unhappy experiences with studying literature entailed a dizzying sense of the groundlessness of knowledge itself, as if to confirm Foucault's remark that '[t]he space of Western knowledge is now about to topple' (Foucault 1973: 251).

With the collapse of universal knowledge, historically limited man replaces the transcendent viewpoint of God; this is where Foucault situates the emergence of disciplines and disciplinization, which compensate for the loss of universality. Unable to produce tables and taxonomies that do not fall apart at the seams or fade to black at the edges, the moderns must disciplinize their bodies in a vain attempt to ground knowledge in the human condition, situating themselves at once inside and outside historical processes. This is what Sōseki does in London: sequester himself with books in a tiny room and confront the abyss of knowledge until it opens within himself, surrendering himself to the madness that follows the toppling of classical knowledge and universal certainties. In this respect, Sōseki's turn to psychology and sociology is not a bid to restore universal knowledge. It is an attempt to ground knowledge in experience, and this can happen only through an oscillation between disciplinization and madness, through fields of rationality that summon specters, in a state of perpetual unrest.

As Atsuko Ueda points out in her contribution to this volume, despite the apparent strangeness and unpopularity of *Bungakuron*, Sōseki's recourse to the logic of evolutionary history in order to ground literary study, evident in the above passage in such terms as 'birth', 'development' and 'decline', nonetheless places him squarely within the formation of literature as a discipline, as emerging in the 1890s and 1900s. Still, I would argue, Sōseki's project is somewhat different in its emphasis on psychology, which encourages Sōseki to avoid or undermine certain teleological and causal conceits implicit in histories of literature, especially in their dominant form, as histories of a people, nation or race. Even as *Bungakuron* strives to disciplinize the study of literature, it remains stretched over an abyss that opens between 'Chinese studies' (*kangaku*) and 'literature in English' (*eigo bungaku*), and between English literature and 'Japanese' New Psychology.

By Japanese, I mean not only that Sōseki translates the New Psychology into Japanese within *Bungakuron* but also that he will begin to link the grounding/ungrounding experience at the heart of psychology with reinvented religious traditions, Zen in particular and the tenets of *Shin-bukkyō* or New Buddhism in general, as well as with reinvented aesthetic traditions (as in the novella *Kusamukura*). 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. At this level, rather than unreadable, *Bungakuron* becomes all too readable. And so it will take care and some risk to explore how

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Sōseki's empiricism in *Bungakuron* might present other not-entirely-translatable possibilities.

In light of the potential overlap between Sōseki's empiricism and modern disciplinization, even though I feel it important not to foreclose the possibilities of *Bungakuron* in advance, I think it equally important to consider what might be at stake in it, not just in the context of Meiji Japan but also for us today. It is here that questions about the status of science in *Bungakuron*, of psychology and sociology as sciences, become crucial.

The status of science

In an age in which cognitive approaches to literature and cinema authorize their interpretative power on the basis of measurable cognitive phenomena, often in opposition to psychoanalytic approaches which argue, on the contrary, that an insistence on measurement will bring us no closer to understanding how texts work, Sōseki's and James's manner of thought appears very odd. (Indeed, some commentators on James claim that, even though *Principles of Psychology* is one of the most cited texts of psychology, it is truly without successors in field of psychology; in this respect, *Principles of Psychology*, like *Bungakuron*, appears somehow untimely or unreadable.) Their psychology does not lean toward an analysis of the unconscious and formations of desire that today we associate with an analysis of the subject, subject formation or subjectivity. What is more, for all its emphasis on empiricism and by extension on the results of experimentation, their analysis proceeds as much philosophically as scientifically. It is as much thought experiment as science experiment, and as such it is not always clear what the status of measurement, of scientific data or clinical observation is for them. The empiricism implicit in Sōseki's and James's psychology thus differs from both cognitive approaches and psychoanalytic approaches. Therein lies its promise. It may offer a very different way of thinking about literature.

Yet, precisely because it proceeds philosophically *and* scientifically, questions persist about the relation of empiricism to science. In the wake of accounts of the emergence of psychology by Foucault and others in terms of a modern 'field of rationality' and the formation of subjects adequate to the institutionalization of modern disciplinary society, it is impossible to avoid asking whether Sōseki's empiricism entails recourse to norms that contribute to the operations of new regulatory forms of power. In other words, we return to the problem of how the disciplinization of bodies strives to ground knowledge under conditions of modernity, and to the question of whether anti-disciplinary or non-disciplinary empiricism is thinkable.

One of the participants in the round of workshops on *Bungakuron*, Thomas Looser, posed the problem succinctly: does Sōseki's study of literature not merely collapse empiricism into positivism? In other words, Sōseki does not so much produce an empirical *theory* of literature as reproduce a scientist *ideology* wherein

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scientific knowledge poses as the only authentic knowledge, because scientific results are supposedly independent of the socio-historical position of the investigator. Simply put, Sōseki's empiricism becomes indistinguishable from positivism; his recourse to psychology and sociology to understand literature becomes scientism, a means of avoiding or masking his own positioning (authority) in the presentation of neutrally empirical knowledge about literature. Of course, as scholars working in a field in which claims for conducting empirical research are frequently made on the basis on constructing lexical correspondences across texts (rather than even a properly philological study), we should rightly be suspicious of empiricism: in our field, what passes for empiricism is largely linguistic positivism. Still, I would insist, rather than postulate a simple and maybe inevitable *collapse* of empiricism into positivism (or of science into scientism), the important task is to attend to the *translation* that inevitably occurs between empiricism and positivism.

As indicated above, one way of thinking about such translation is via disciplinization, that is, individualizing procedures that strive to compensate for the impossibility of universal or transcendent knowledge by displacing knowledge production onto human experiences and affective states, effectively disciplining the individual to assume a subjective truth of the self that will in turn, in an almost tautological manner, ground the truth of such disciplines as history and sociology. I should point out that something analogous happens in most discussions of Sōseki's theoretical or philosophical writings: it is presumed that Sōseki's life experiences – adoption and re-adoption by different families as a child, his unhappiness in London or his general sense of anxiety and nervous disorders – suffice to explain his ideas about the self in modern society of Meiji Japan. In biography and studies of cultural context, the body of the author serves as a guarantee of a ground for literary critical knowledge, which also serves to limit literature to the expression of cultural or national particularism. Using the author's body as critical limit is handy because there is then no need to think about the relation between authors, texts and nations, or about the literary critical disciplinization of bodies. One need only transmit or translate Sōseki authoritatively. But it is hard to imagine anything less like Sōseki.

What is striking about Sōseki's writings on literature with respect to disciplinization is that, with a mixture of glee and disdain, they defy certain structures of authority and authorization, ones that imply specific kinds of knowledge production. His public lecture 'Bungei no tetsugaku teki kiso' (The philosophical foundations of literature), for instance, runs on for some pages with an account of how he does not know how to give lectures, how obscure his thought truly is, as well as a discussion of the context for the lecture and so forth. What is more, notoriously, Sōseki interrupts his discussion of *Henry V* to discuss his feelings about it instead. Subsequently, in the course of revising such lectures for publication, Sōseki retained the references to the site of performance that might appear to some readers extraneous to the content of his discussion. In other words, form (*keishiki*) – as performance – is not separable from matter, substance or content

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(*naiyō*). Of course, we can trace this emphasis on performance to a general tendency in Sōseki's thought that began well before his work on *Bungakuron* with his essay 'On Tristam Shandy' (1887) and speak of the preference in his literary writing for digressing, deviating, meandering. In addition, James Fujii (1993) has aptly and insightfully linked Sōseki's style of narration in early novels such as *Wagahai wa neko de aru* and *Botchan* to comedic performance, that is, *rakugo*, as well as dialogic structures of parody. Sōseki haughtily and happily challenges hierarchical structures of authority with a strategy of his own – performative deviation – which might well be discussed in terms of Bakhtin's notions of dialogism (as Fujii does) or in terms of what Foucault called 'fearless speech' (2001).

But what does this have to do with the status of empiricism, of science? The initial impulse might be to conclude that, insofar as his public lecture 'Philosophical foundations of literature' makes a sham of linear or logically progressive thinking, Sōseki has undermined his own philosophical statements. This is no way to get to a truth about anything. Or maybe he has, in effect, disavowed his truth claims and thus disavowed his own position of authority. Recall that 1907 was also the year in which Sōseki resigned from his prestigious position at Tokyo Imperial University to accept a lowly job with a newspaper writing novels in serialization. In establishing himself in a lowly position, does Sōseki's work present resistance to structures of authority or a disavowal of them? Again, we arrive at a strategy of deviation from established routes, a familiar tactic and theme in Sōseki's writing. But can this strategy be read as a mode of empirical or scientific thinking? Which is also to ask, how does fearless speech ground itself?

Sōseki's exploration of empiricism in *Bungakuron* invites us to think about performative deviation and fearless speech in terms of the status of science. Conversely, Sōseki's association of empiricism with something like fearless speech might encourage us to look at science in a less dogmatic way. There is a tendency in the humanities to assume that any recourse to the sciences, any effort to take sciences seriously, is fated to return us to positivism or scientism and thus to excesses of rationalization and disciplinization.

To get a better sense of the relation of science to Sōseki's strategies of resistance, we first need think about the relation between empiricism and positivism in slightly different and somewhat more specific terms. Insofar as one of the major concerns of positivism is *axiomatization*, that is, a demonstration of the logical structure and coherence of linguistic and numerical sets of statements, it is useful to think of the difference between empiricism and positivism in terms of sciences that work through axiomatics and sciences that work through problematics. The axiomatic/problematic distinction comes primarily from mathematics, and, as Daniel Smith points out in a discussion of mathematics in Alain Badiou and Gilles Deleuze, 'mathematics is marked by a tension between extensive multiplicities or sets (the axiomatic pole) and virtual or differential multiplicities (the problematic pole), and the incessant translation of the latter into the former' (Smith 2004: 78).

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Looking at the empiricism of Sōseki (and James) in terms of the problematic pole of sciences ensures, in the first instance, that we do not lump all sciences together in order to avoid thinking empiricism in *Bungakuron* in its own terms. Considering the axiomatic/problematic tension within sciences may help us to avoid a dogmatic image of science that would dismiss any thinking that has recourse to the sciences by collapsing it into positivism or the axiomatic pole. Second, rather than posit a collapse, we have to deal with an inherent tension in scientific thought and practice, which takes the form of a translation of the problematic into the axiomatic. Disciplinization might be seen as one mode of translation, but, even if we conclude that Sōseki's efforts lend themselves wholly to disciplinization of the subject, we will still need to think through Sōseki's empiricism (and the problematic pole of sciences) if we are to discuss that disciplinization with any specificity. Reading Sōseki's *Bungakuron* in terms of problematic science will not allow an easy rescue or recuperation of empiricism or scientific thinking. But it does encourage us to take the empirical manner of thinking seriously.

In this context, 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. In relation to mathematics, for instance, Smith writes that, 'in its early formulations, the calculus was shot through with dynamic notions such as infinitesimals, fluxions and fluents, thresholds, passages to the limit, continuous variation – all of which presumed a *geometrical* conception of the continuum, in other words, the idea of a process' (Smith 2004: 81). 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. In his contribution to the workshop, Komori Yōichi aptly called attention to the importance of the notion of threshold in *Bungakuron*. This is one indication of Sōseki's attempt to think differential multiplicities.

For Sōseki, as suggested in the previous example from his public lecture on the philosophical foundations of literature (his strategy of digressing from the 'object' under scrutiny to an account of his perceptions of it), the principle of continuity also encourages an effort to *perceive perceiving*, to understand thought in process. Perception of perception thus becomes a crucial matter in reading Sōseki's conceptualization of literature, and it is here that the empiricism associated with Sōseki's psychology becomes an expanded empiricism, reminiscent of the shift in James's work from principles of psychology to radical empiricism, from a science of consciousness to a problematic of pure experience.

Naturally, in reading *Bungakuron* in terms of its scientific conceptualization of perception as continuous variation, I run the risk of introducing greater continuity and great clarity into Sōseki's account than it may seem to merit. Yet this is

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precisely where Sōseki poses the stakes of his 'principles of literature', in a process wherein reading, like perceiving, strives to ground itself.

Monads

Sōseki places questions about perception at the start of *Bungakuron*, calling attention to the problematic of focalization. He uses the example of viewing St Paul's Cathedral. As you gaze on the cathedral, and your eyes rove over its details, you focus now on the pillars, now on the balustrade, now on the cupola. Sōseki submits that 'while you are gazing on the pillars, the only part that you perceive distinctly (*hanzento*) is the pillars, and the rest only enters your domain of vision (*shikai*) indistinctly (*bonzento*)' (Natsume 1907a: 30). As your eyes move from place to place, some aspects are seen clearly and distinctly, while others are perceived but hazily or obscurely. Sōseki suggests that the same thing happens while reading a poem or listening to music.

Sōseki's model of perception is of a differential multiplicity, which is made explicit in his use of a parabola to portray the act of focalization. Sōseki places focalization at the peak of the parabola (note that this is not where geometry locates the focus of a parabola), implying that there is a continuous variation in clarity/obscurity as one moves away from this point. Simply put, for Sōseki, perception is not a matter of focusing on one thing to the exclusion of all others. Rather perception differentially includes everything in the field of vision. Such an account of perception places Sōseki in the tradition of thought that begins with Leibniz and, in effect, what Sōseki offers is a monadic theory of perception.

Recall that, for Leibniz, each monad reflects the universe but it perceives some parts distinctly and some parts indistinctly. In other words, each monad has its point of view, characterized by the relative confusion of its perceptions. No two monads have the same perceptions, and yet, in a way, the perceptions of each monad are the same as any other monad, because the perception of each monad is simply a reflection of the whole universe, that is, of all of the monads. In his account of Leibniz, on which I draw here, Garrett Thomson uses an example consonant with Sōseki: 'for example, at this time, I have clear perceptions of a computer screen, and only very indistinct perceptions of the other side of the room' (2001: 54).

A problem arises, however, that will at once trouble and define Sōseki's *Bungakuron*: what is the relation *between* monads, between moments of focal attention? Which is to say, Sōseki claims that, as your eyes move from the pillars to the cupola of the cathedral, you have two different focal impressions, each of which, monad-like, is a domain or 'world of perception' (*shikai*); each sees some aspects of the cathedral distinctly and some indistinctly. But what happens between monads, between *shikai*? What makes for continuity between discrete moments of focalized perception? Sōseki posits each moment of focal attention as a kind of differential

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multiplicity, as continuous variation, but then we do not know if the relation *between* different focal impressions is also one of continuous variation or differential multiplicity.

At this point in his account, Sōseki seems to assume continuity between focal impressions rather than to explore it, argue for it or think it. Here, as elsewhere, he simply says that we experience the world as continuous not as discrete. Yet something odd is happening, because it seems that Sōseki has presumed the integrity of objects (say, the cathedral) and of the perceiving subject (self). In this respect, he appears to be headed in a direction very different from monadology.

In Leibniz's monadology, monads are not like atoms; they are not indivisible units of matter. Leibniz rejects atomism, for he feels that it cannot explain how atoms cohere to constitute a single body. In atomism, Leibniz submits, the occurrence of continuity, consistency or coherence becomes a mystery, explainable only in terms of something that is not matter that organizes a body from without. In contrast, Leibniz's basic units, monads, are infinitely divisible, and there is no fundamental dualism of matter and energy, body and mind or space and time.

Initially at least, Sōseki's examples seem to assume entities with some degree of integrity: a cathedral, a poem and a piece of music. Are these entities divisible or indivisible? Are they monads (divisible into aggregates of monads) or unitary objects? Sōseki's treatment of St Paul's Cathedral suggests that he is thinking in terms of aggregate wholes: our experience of the cathedral is an ensemble of focal impressions. What then holds this cathedral together?

Interestingly enough, Sōseki does not think it important to insist on the integrity of entities such as cathedrals or poems. His account of how we see the cathedral suggests that we never see it all distinctly or clearly. This means that focal impressions of the cathedral might well combine with focal impressions of other entities or aggregate wholes. Yet it might seem that, if Sōseki has placed integrity in the world of objects, he has assumed the integrity of the human perceiver. Insofar as Sōseki's emphasis falls on the stream of consciousness, however, the perceiver does not feel quite so solid, stable or indivisible. Nonetheless, the question lingers: how does a series of discrete focal impressions coalesce into a stream of consciousness, a continuous experience?

As he begins his analysis in *Bungakuron*, Sōseki demonstrates an awareness of the problem of continuity. In fact, he opens with the famous formula (F+f), declaring it essential for the analysis of the 'form of literary substance' (*bungaku teki naiyō no keishiki*). The formula F+f is calculated to address the matter of continuity by presenting a theory of relations. Sōseki refers to monad-like moments of perceptual focus as F, which stands for 'focal impressions or ideas' (*shūten teki inshō oyobi gainen*). Clearly, however, if a discussion of literary substance were limited to F, it would lapse into an atomistic view of literary substance; the basic units of analysis would be discrete focal impressions, without any sense of how they aggregate or hold together. In order to avoid an atomistic science of the discrete, Sōseki introduces f, that is, 'attendant emotions' (*fuchaku suru jōcho*). While it

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might seem at first that it is f that imparts continuity to the stream of different focal impressions, continuity in fact lies in the *relation* between focal impressions and attendant emotions (F+f). It is this relation above all that remains difficult to grasp because, to use the analogy with perception, while you are perceiving, you cannot easily perceive your perceiving. You are carried along by the stream of consciousness, part of the continuous field of variation, part of the event, as it were. It is not surprising then that Sōseki would try to grasp the acts of perceiving, feeling and thinking performatively, as in his public lecture 'Bungei no tetsugaku teki kiso' (Natsume 1907b).

In analytic terms, because Sōseki has established a theory of relations (F+f), one would expect him to locate the possibility of thinking within continuous variation in the slippage between F and f, in moments of transformation in their relation or in strange or surprising combinations of F and f. Many of his stories do just that. What is peculiar about *Bungakuron* is that, after insisting on the problem of continuity and on a theory of relations, Sōseki devotes his attention primarily to defining and discussing F. He puts off a discussion of f, and defers an exploration of the relations between F and f. When he finally deals with f, his remarks are rather cursory and schematic, as I will discuss below.

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. Simply put, Sōseki's theory of literature is really about a relation of supplementation not a relation of conjunction.

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. In this respect, a deconstructive reading of Sōseki's difficulties with f serves as a reminder that *Bungakuron* does not, and probably cannot, definitively part company with the positivistic configurations of sciences (that is, the atomistic science of the discrete). 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. Similarly, at another level, insofar as Sōseki's emphasis on F allows him to remain within 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.

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In this deconstructive vein, *Bungakuron* might be read as a panic formation, a response to the positivistic sciences that frets over and hopes for the failure of positivism, filling the gaps and silences of the axiomatic sciences with hysterical digressions, weird apparitions and psycho-scientific babble. Sōseki's interest in the supernatural and his ruminations on his madness then appear coincident with a more generalized panic in response to the leveling effects of techno-scientific modernity. In effect, a deconstructive reading, such as I have rendered it at least, looks at the inevitable translation of the problematic pole into the axiomatic pole, but from a different angle than disciplinization. Rather than stress how disciplinization translates the 'new psychology' into disciplinary formations that 'axiomatize' human conduct via a post-phenomenological reading of institutions and discourses, a deconstructive reading exposes the metaphysical bias inherent in positing the sciences of continuous variation as essentially outside axiomatization or in assuming empiricism to be in essence outside positivism.

Still, a deconstructive reading would not end there (if it would ever end at all). After showing that Sōseki, despite his efforts at inverting hierarchies, relies on a familiar metaphysical hierarchization of F over f, of vision over emotion, of indifferent atoms over differential monads, of fixed categories over continuous variation and so forth, I imagine that a deconstructive reading would produce a third term to complicate this oppositional hierarchy, to transform it beyond recognition. In the case of *Bungakuron*, that third term is the + between F and f, and thus we return to the relation of conjunction as something other than supplementation. After all, the conjunctions of F and f are at once continuous and discrete, and, in this respect, it seems that the differential multiplicity of the monad is not simply a term in opposition to axiomatization. It is close to a deconstructive third term; it is at once open and closed, at once one and multiple, somehow discrete and continuous. If Sōseki appears to lose sight of this aspect of the monad as he launches into taxonomies of F, the monad is nonetheless the key to his theory of relations. What happens *within* F is indicative of what will happen *between* Fs and between F and f. And the perceptual monad will be the basis for his ideas about the self and the individual.

Monism

In his discussion of F or 'focal impression', Sōseki evokes William James's notion of the 'stream of consciousness' (*ishiki no nagare*) but through the definition of consciousness given in C. Lloyd Morgan's *Introduction to Comparative Psychology*: 'in any moment of consciousness (*ishiki no isshunji*) psychical states (*shin teki jōtai*) are constantly coming into being and passing away, are continually changing as they pass' (Natsume 1907a: 30; Morgan 1903: 12). Where Morgan uses the example of reading poetry, however, Sōseki's example is that of looking over St Paul's Cathedral. This is where Sōseki presents his monadic theory of perception, with each focal point taking in some features distinctly and others indistinctly, and he

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provides a graph to explain this 'waveform consciousness'. Joseph Murphy gives a fine translation of the passage in which Sōseki paraphrases Morgan:

> The moment by moment activity of consciousness takes the form of a waveform, and if represented by a graph would look like below. As you can see, the summit of the waveform, that is to say, the focal point, is the clearest portion of consciousness, and before and after this point one finds the so-called peripheries of consciousness. However, what we call our conscious experience typically takes the form of a continuous series of these psychological waveforms.
>
> (Murphy 2004: 39–40; Natsume 1907a: 30)

Now, Morgan's model and thus Sōseki's is explicitly monist: which is to say, the point of departure for analysis is not a dualistic separation of knower and known, or consciousness and content. This does not mean, however, that there never arises any separation between knower and known, consciousness and content. In his later thinking about such questions, in which James turns from consciousness (psychology) to experience (radical empiricism), he writes: '*Experience, I believe, has no such inner duplicity; and the separation of it into consciousness and content comes, not by way of subtraction, but by way of addition* – the addition, to a given concrete piece of it, of other sets of experiences' (2003: 6, emphasis in the original).

For Morgan, Sōseki and others who built upon James's 'stream of consciousness' psychology, this was the essential point: no inner duplicity in consciousness, that is, monism not dualism as a point of departure. The waveform is the perfect image of this – there are peaks and troughs but their relation is continuous not duplicitous. The question then is, how does duplicity or dualism arise, and what is its status? I will return to this question and to that of addition, or more precisely conjunction (the 'withness' of +). First I wish to signal a potential problem with this model, at least as Sōseki, following Morgan, conceives it.

One common criticism of monism is that it ultimately treats everything holistically: conflicts and struggles may arise but appear illusory in the face of the underlying monism; monism implies underlying unity and harmony, for such duplicity as arises is always secondary (and one might even say, supplemental). While the goal is to move from monism (or the one) to *complexity* (or multiplicity), everything risks turning into *complicity*. Thus Morgan insists on the inherent unity and identity of our conscious experience when he discusses waveform consciousness: 'The focal element, the dawning elements, the waning elements, the subconscious accompaniment, all fuse into one state of consciousness, from which no element could be omitted without altering its identity and making it other than it was' (1903: 20).

Simply put, in light of the prior discussion of monads, the problem is that Morgan does not place the emphasis on the differential multiplicity inherent in waveform consciousness. Rather he stresses continuity as unity and identity. This is also a risk in Sōseki's stream of consciousness: it might easily

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turn into a reification of the individual (individualism). This risk arises precisely when it becomes difficult to sustain a sense of difference within experience. Where a dualist model might insist on a split within the subject at the outset (constitutive lack, an inherent tension between mind and body or some other split), the monist model often becomes complacent about unities and identities. But what happens between focal points? What happens to the troughs? Do troughs not threaten to knock holes in the continuity of experience?

Morgan does not think one can explain the continuity of conscious experience in terms of our interest, our states of amusement or our excitement or reverie. He posits two sets of elements that contribute to the permanent and abiding nature of the 'subconscious body of the wave of consciousness'. On the one hand, he speaks of 'habit', which he explains in terms of subconscious elements arising out of the organic condition of the tissues of the body. On the other hand, he points to subconscious elements arising out of our moral and intellectual existence, 'our settled purpose in life, the ideal to which we would attain, our fixed beliefs, and healthy fundamental prejudices' (Morgan 1903: 22).

Similarly, Sōseki turns to habit in *Bungakuron*, and in his 'Bungei no tetsugaku teki kiso', he discusses 'ideals' (*risō*) at length. Such ideals should not, however, be considered in terms of a Platonic model of a dualist divide between matter and Ideas or body and soul. Sōseki's ideals – or souls, if you will – are inseparable from life experiences and thus from the body. They are, in a sense, mental habits or 'action-minds'.

In *Bungakuron*, in reference to the continuity of F over time in the life of an individual, Sōseki writes that, in the course of an individual's life, there appear different Fs. From an interest in toys as a child, one passes to martial arts and adventures as a boy, to love as a youth and so forth. In other words, Sōseki entertains the possibility of continuity at the level of interest or amusement, but then, as if echoing Morgan, he turns to questions about habit. Sōseki uses an example that has powerful resonances in a study of literature: he uses the example of someone who loved to read Chinese poetry (*kanshi*) over a period of years but who then abandoned it. When years later that person picks up a book of Chinese poetry, his sense of it will at first lack clarity. Should he practice reading it for a while, however, he will gradually become accustomed to it, and the hobby will no longer demand conscious attention. In other words, Sōseki suggests that prior stages of F do not cease to exist but linger in the subconscious. Different focuses of attention coexist in the individual with greater or lesser clarity at different moments in time.

This confrontation with a prior habit, or precisely a prior 'disposition' (*shumi*) takes a more dramatic form in Sōseki's literature, as in the novella *Shumi no iden* (which is often translated as 'The heredity of taste' but might equally well be styled 'The transmission of a disposition'). The encounter with the past 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.

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What merits attention here is how Sōseki, like Morgan, displaces the problem of continuity onto the consciousness of the individual. Yet Sōseki does not remain with the unity and identity of the individual consciousness. Rather, when he speaks of how a focal impression can endure over days or years, he offers three levels of continuity, none of which is the individual as such:

1. F of consciousness in the instant;
2. F of a stage (*ichijiki*) in the individual's life;
3. F of a stage in social evolution.

(Natsume 1907a: 32)

Sōseki thus implies that the individual consciousness is a wavelike succession of instants, the individual's life a wavelike succession of 'stages' (*jiki*), and then, without any explanation, society enters the mix, as a wavelike evolutionary succession of stages (which Sōseki later glosses as the consciousness of a generation). In sum, there are three wavelike dynamic sites of continuity: the individual's consciousness, the individual's life and society. Evidently, Sōseki has some kind of evolutionary model in mind, but the consequences of thinking about social evolution in terms of wavelike continuity are not really clear.

What is interesting is that Sōseki does not settle for a simple monism of the individual, in which the individual is the site of unity and identity; he retains something of the monad in his conceptualization of the individual: the individual is as much a site of difference as of identity, as much of multiplicity as of unity. Significantly, the individual is not in opposition to society nor is he or she subsumed. We might extrapolate to the level of society and say that a society is likewise a monad, a differential multiplicity, composed not so much of individuals as of something like 'ideals' (*risō*). The turn to 'ideals' still poses a question about the relation between individual and society: social complicity or differential complexity? The problem is that Sōseki is so cursory in his remarks that it is hard to say whether he has merely abbreviated his ideas and failed to deliver a fuller discussion or whether he has not thought through the basic questions that his account provokes.

When Sōseki addresses the continuity of F within stages of social evolution, he glosses it first as *Zeitgeist* and then as *sei* (or, in Chinese, *shi*). This latter term is a particularly difficult one in the context of Chinese and Japanese historiography. It refers at once to apparently static dispositions or arrangements and to dynamic fields of force. In a recent, rather romanticized account of *shi*, François Jullien translates it as the 'propensity of things' (Jullien 1995). In Sōseki, *sei* seems to repeat the dynamics of *shumi* or 'disposition'. Unfortunately, the brevity of Sōseki's presentation makes it difficult to know what to make of this thought-provoking gloss. The point for Sōseki appears to be to establish that the continuity of F occurs at various levels. He concludes: 'Clearly, the explanation of waveform consciousness and the idea of F extend beyond the fine unit of consciousness to apply to the

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aggregate consciousness (*shūgō ishiki*) permeating an entire generation' (1907a: 33).

Rather than provide an explanation, Sōseki summarizes with a diagram, in the form of an inverted cone presenting the smallest temporal focus at the point of the cone, presumably an infinitesimally small unit of time (see Figure 2 in Natsume Sōseki, this issue). The cone widens as it marks longer periods of time, minutes, hours, days, months, years, decades and centuries. Sōseki insists that this is not a chart of the transformation of F^1 (a minute) into F^2 (an hour) and F^2 into F^3 (a day) and so on. Rather, each row of F presents a vaster sweep of continuity. Unfortunately, however, the first chapter of *Bungakuron*, 'The form of literary substance' ends there, with the chart and Sōseki's brief remarks on *Zeitgeist* and *sei*. The next chapter, 'The basic elements of literary substance', turns to the basic sensory elements of literature and internal psychological operations. What then can we make of this diagrammatic presentation of temporal continuity in relation to Sōseki's account of monadic perception?

One way of reading this relation is to consider that the parabola is a conic section: which is to say, the parabolic form that Sōseki attributes to a focal impression can be construed as a section through the cone of time depicted above (see Figures 1 and 2 in Natsume Sōseki, this issue). Thus, each instant of perception cuts through the cone of time in such a way as to comprise all of time in the instant of perception, but some temporalities will be more distinct than others. In other words, we can imagine a monadic experience of time, in which all of the past is in the present as a differential multiplicity of clarity and obscurity. Consequently, while the cone diagram may appear as an axiomatization of time, when read in conjunction with the parabola of F, it presents a 'problematic' understanding of time. This may be why Sōseki specifies that this diagram is not a chart of transformations. When we look at this diagram from the angle of continuous experience, individual consciousness, individual life and the life of a society are all on a continuum of differential multiplicity.

To summarize, the monad is the key to the form of literary substance, but, when trying to think literature monadically, Sōseki runs the risk of proclaiming a simple monism, in which it would be impossible to account for loss, innovation, transformation, conflicts or alliances – for difference. There is a risk of summoning in advance what Leibniz called 'pre-established harmony'. Sōseki's emphasis on an analysis of F at the expense of f and of F+f signals a reluctance to leave the comfortable unifying confines of monism and to push the differential multiplicity implicit in the monad toward a pluralism. Or, to avoid some of the atomistic connotations of the term pluralism, one might say that Sōseki seems reluctant to push the notion of a universe toward what James calls a 'pluriverse'. Needless to say, to stress the monism of the monad tends to constrain scientific thinking to the production of axioms rather than problems, and here at the outset *Bungakuron* risks lapsing into normative and disciplinary schemas. It is crucial then to look at how Sōseki strives to introduce f and articulate a theory of relations.

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Relations

Although the first chapter of *Bungakuron* deals almost exclusively with F, Sōseki actually begins his study of literature by defining literature in terms of F+f, which he glosses as focal impression or idea + emotion (or feeling). This formulation echoes James's discussion of the stream of consciousness in his *Principles of Psychology*. In the chapter entitled 'The stream of consciousness', James first stresses the importance of our feeling that our consciousness is unbroken (that is, a stream) and then turns to the problem of analyzing thought and feeling. James thus makes clear that ideas never exist in isolation: what colors thoughts and gives continuity to the pulsating stream is the thought's feeling-tone (Tyler 1998: 2); any legitimate scientific psychology must account for both the stream of thought *and* feeling. For James, part of the problem is a divide between intellectualist philosophies of mind and sensationalist philosophies. Intellectualist philosophies look only at the cognitive function of qualities of state yet deny them anything by way of feeling, while sensationalist philosophies fail to find them at all (James 1902 [1890], I: 242).

In his later lectures on exceptional states of mind, James deals specifically with the question of how emotional states affect perception, in a manner that speaks directly to Sōseki's formulation of literature as F+f. James notes that, even though the object at the center of attention may remain the same, the very ground of perception may become radically altered through fatigue, traumatic shock or intrapsychic conflict, in ways that the standard scientific explanations of perceptions had not explained (Tyler 1998: 2). In such radically altered emotional states, it is clear that emotions or 'feeling-tone' are somehow responsible for creating a new perceptual ground for the same focal impression. This is precisely the basis for the relations that Sōseki explores in *Bungakuron*: what happens when F changes but f does not? What happens when f changes but F does not? What happens when both are changing?

Sōseki establishes principles of literature on terms similar to James's principles of psychology, not only by using the conceptualization of a stream of consciousness, but also by situating literature between an intellectualist mode of thinking and a sensationalist one. Sōseki begins by discussing different combinations of F+f, which I will paraphrase:

1. There is the instance of F without f, that is, an intellectual factor without an emotional factor, as with the idea of a triangle
2. There are thoughts of flowers and stars and such that generate an f that accompanies F
3. There are instances of only f, as in the 'fear of everything and fear of nothing', which do not find any F suitable to f (Natsume 1907a: 27–8).

Sōseki situates literature squarely in the second category. Although he uses a poem by Shelley as a possible example of f without F, he adds that appreciation of the poem tends to introduce F nonetheless, because (a) the reader can imagine

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an F for the poem, which reinstates F+f (the cause of grief + grief), (b) the reader can evoke an idea of grief to be shared (grief + the idea of grief) or (c) the reader arrives at some combination of these two possibilities, which also restores F+f.

Like James, Sōseki wishes to avoid intellectualist explanations as well as sensationalist accounts that lack focus altogether. Also like James, he not only says that this is how literature (consciousness) might best be analyzed but also implies that this is what literature (consciousness) actually *is* – a set of relations under continuous variance. But 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 a fixed object, as an ensemble of data. We are always within it, already in the set of relations, part of the event, so to speak. His example of Shelley's poem confirms this: the reader is within the set of literary relations. This raises questions, of course, about how Sōseki will talk about different sets of relations between reader and literary texts, different kinds of 'relationality'. Sōseki does not really address this issue (or directly discuss what f is) until Part 2 chapter 3 of *Bungakuron*, provocatively entitled 'Illusions accompanying f' (*f ni tomonau genwaku*).

As I have already stressed, because Sōseki defers his discussion of f, one gets the impression that literature (and consciousness) might indeed be treated as a bundle of data or can at least be parsed into various categories. Thus, in the wake of his first chapter, almost exclusively centered on F, in the next chapter Sōseki discusses 'simple sensory elements' (*kantan naru kankaku teki yōso*) such as touch, temperature, taste, scent, hearing, sight, luminosity, color, shape and movement. He follows these with 'internal psychological operations in humankind' (*jinrui no naibu shinri sayō*), among others, fear, anger, empathy, courage, forbearance, sexual instinct, jealousy and the supernatural. While Sōseki's choices and his use of sources in constructing this list of elements are interesting in themselves (his account of the psychological effects of color, for instance, with its evocation of Chinese poetry, foreshadows his use of color and traditional aesthetics in his fiction), what demands attention in this context is how difficult it is to determine what is at stake for Sōseki. The goal of the chapter is to establish what elements can serve as literary matter or substance, but we do not know much about the status of these elements. Do these sensory elements and psychological operations constitute a discussion of f that is simply not identified as such? Are we in a realm of elements prior to focal impressions and feeling-tones? How then do these relate to F and f? Are we already in the realm of F+f, given that his examples derive from literary texts?

I will return to his discussion of sexual instinct in this chapter, because it gives a better sense of what is at stake. But first let me note that, because Sōseki defers a discussion of f, lingers over F and produces lists and taxonomies, he gives the impression that F is amenable to inquiry in a way that f is not. What is more, F

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appears amenable to inquiry based on the production of discrete categories and thus axiomatization rather than a science of the continuous dealing with the stream of consciousness. As a result, Sōseki makes it seem as if f is the site of continuity, while F can be treated as data. With F he can hammer monads into discrete bits of data, while f becomes a sort of supplement that promises continuity, even as continuity is excluded from the project through deferral.

For instance, in Part 1 chapter 3, 'Value-based classes and the analysis of literary substance', Sōseki hopes that insofar as the elements presented in the previous chapter constituted literary substance, readers will agree that combinations thereof also constitute literary substance. Yet what truly constitutes literature as such is the addition of f, of feeling or emotion, to F. Consequently, Sōseki feels that any elements can make for literature, and proceeds to develop another classification that follows from the kind of elements addressed in the literature in question. Significantly, however, this value-based classification is broached in terms of F, and Sōseki offers four kinds of F:

1. Sensory F – based in the natural world;
2. Humanized F – based in human drama that provides a mirror for good and evil, joy and anger, sorrow and delight;
3. Supernatural F – based in religious F;
4. Intellectual F – based in ideas related to the problem of human existence.

(Natsume 1907a: 104)

Here we are in the register of F, in terms of how it constitutes a value-based or evaluative center of attention – in relation to nature, human nature, spirituality or philosophy. Yet, via James and Sōseki, we also know that the 'attendant emotion' or 'feeling-tone' can radically alter the ground of perception. And that is what makes for literature (Sōseki) and the stream of consciousness (James), as a set of relations in a process of continuous variance. Oddly, however, Sōseki does not take up the matter of f. Rather he proceeds to argue for superiority of concreteness in presentation of sensations insofar as this makes for a higher degree of emotional intensity (*jōcho no doai*). Moreover, he submits that a focus on human nature or drama makes for better literature than abstract, intellectual reflection. As for the supernatural F, it hovers between human drama and intellectualization, offering some opportunity for fine literature. In other words, at this point in his study, while he defines literature as F+f, it is in fact the addition of f to F that makes for literature. Rather than explore variance in the relation between F and f, Sōseki remains content to argue that some kinds of F lend themselves better to literature insofar as they allow for greater intensity of f, *jōcho* or feelings; nonetheless, he does not want to rule out any Fs as a basis for literature. Consequently, he gives the impression that feelings are something added to ideas or focal impressions, in the manner of a supplement, to produce literature.

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In a later essay, 'A world of pure experience', as James argues for the importance of holding to continuous transition, he suggests what might be at stake in Sōseki's reluctance to deal with f. He writes:

> continuous transition is one sort of a conjunctive relation; and to be a radical empiricist means to hold fast to this conjunctive relation of all others, for this is the strategic point, the position through which, if a hole be made, all the corruptions of dialectics and all the metaphysical fictions pour into philosophy. (James 2003: 25–6)

While I am not entirely convinced about the 'corruptions of dialectics' (after all, dialectics can be reconceived on the basis of radical empiricism rather than simply abandoned), James does indicate the danger of holding apart F and f, to the point where they begin to appear as different realities rather than modes of the same reality. Part of the problem is that Sōseki tends to equate literature with the stream of consciousness, with thought itself, and the implication is that everything could be (and might well be) seen as literature. Literature would not be a model for thought but thought itself. Yet, insofar as Sōseki wishes to define literature, he unwittingly introduces a metaphysical dimension into his analysis, which encourages him to avoid treating f as much other than a thing added to F.

Sōseki is well aware of this problem at some level, and in Part 2 of *Bungakuron*, on 'Quantitative transformations in literary substance', Sōseki begins to consider f less as something added to F and more in terms of continuous transition. As a preamble, he writes, 'if F is something equipped with a fluctuating nature (*zōgensei*), then, as I will discuss next, the f that accompanies the fluctuating F must be thought somehow to change (*utsuriyuku*) as well' (Natsume 1907a: 133). I do not think it deforms Sōseki's thinking to suggest that, if F is a waveform, so is f. In other words, we might think F+f in terms of the continuous co-variation of two waveforms. In this respect, the earlier impression given by Sōseki that F tends toward the discrete while f allows for continuity is mistaken. Continuity or continuous transition is a matter of the relation (or co-variance) of F and f. Continuity happens between F and f.

Nonetheless, it is also true that Sōseki has great difficulties holding to continuous transition; he is constantly constructing categories around F rather than thinking of F+f as a set of relations in continuous transition. Rather than introduce the so-called corruptions of dialectics, Sōseki tends to introduce a relation of supplementation, in which two terms are caught in a relation of reciprocal determination, but, because one term is socially devalued (feelings, literature), the tendency is to compensate with an increased emphasis on the devalued term. Yet the value of the devalued term (feelings, literature) continues in thrall to the dominant term (ideas, sciences). The supplemental term must thus remain mysterious, indefinable and ineffable.

Where Derrida might say that one cannot really get out of this relation of supplementation, apparently for structural reasons, James and Sōseki, perhaps

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naively, think that one can move beyond it. I imagine that Derrida would strive to unravel the movement of supplementation, tracing it back to a sort of originary impurity – say, something that is neither science nor literature but both; neither discrete nor continuous but both; neither clarity nor obscurity but both. Thus he might arrive at a singularity that is also an originary impurity, which opens an ethical demand. In this case, one might say that the monad is such a 'creature'. Sōseki and James, of course, are not striving so much to unravel supplementation as to move forward toward a theory of relations. Both Sōseki after his *Principles of Literature* and James after his *Principles of Psychology* expressed an interest in 'pure experience' (*junsui keiken*). Sōseki's approach to pure experience appears largely in relation to Zen and frequently seems to entail a naïve and suspect claim not only to be beyond the constitutive impurity of experience but also to experience purity successfully. Still, pure experience is not the same as purity (and significantly Sōseki's protagonists fail in their attempts to achieve Zen enlightenment). Similarly, however fraught with difficulties, Sōseki's pursuit of F+f is an attempt to think singularity and to challenge the process of metaphysical supplementation. His approach will have ethical implications different from deconstruction, however. So let us try to move forward with Sōseki's F+f.

In Part 2 chapter 1, 'Transformations in F', Sōseki informs us that F tends to grow or augment over time. Just as one's discrimination grows as one matures, so F brings more into its embrace (*F wa toki to tomo ni zōka suru mono naru koto utagai naki ga gotoshi*) (Natsume 1907a: 134). 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 are not merely standing or persisting patterns, but augmenting patterns. Monads somehow grow. In this respect, Sōseki sticks with the dynamics (*katsudōryoku*) announced in his preface. 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) and, not surprisingly perhaps, Sōseki's emphasis on continuity ultimately seems to mesh with a sense that it is life that is at stake.

In Part 2 chapter 2, 'Transformations in f', Sōseki, assuming that f has to augment just as F does, presents three principles for the augmentation of f:

1. The law of displacement (*tenchi*) of feeling
2. The law of expansion of feeling
3. The law of persistence of feeling.

Of the three laws or principles, expansion and persistence do not demand explanation, but displacement (or transposition) bears a closer look. Sōseki writes that this displacement 'indicates a phenomenon whereby an f attached to the F of entity A comes to attach to the F of entity B for some reason or another. In other words, it is a sort of continuity (*rensō*) arising between F and f' (Natsume 1907a: 136).

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His example is that of a chick that flees when it spies a caterpillar. The first time that the chick sees the caterpillar, it pecks at it, and finding it distasteful, scurries off. Subsequently, it has only to see the caterpillar to run away. Sōseki calls attention to how the chick's flight is now linked to seeing the caterpillar rather than to tasting it. Sōseki expands his account to include the example of how the upper class in England displaces or transposes its distaste for the lower classes onto their speech, Cockney. He also gives the example of people who come to find satisfaction in possessing money rather than spending it to satisfy their desires.

Brief as these examples are, I wish to linger over them, for a crucial question emerges about the status of this 'science', or, at the very least, this style of observation. Does this approach serve primarily to naturalize social phenomena, by placing class stratification and the love of money within the same framework as the pecking phenomenon? Is this a sort of sociobiology, or more precisely behaviorism, in which human behavior is extrapolated from that of behavior observed in animals?

While we risk making too much of Sōseki's examples by placing so much analytical weight on them despite their brevity, the question of whether Sōseki naturalizes human behavior raises the question of whether phenomena such as class conflict can be opened to criticism within Sōseki's model. If the distaste of the rich for the poor is like that of the chick for the caterpillar, is there any reason to challenge it? We might conclude from his first two examples that the upper class, like the chick, is acting in the interests of its survival. Of hoarding money, it is difficult to speak, unless we begin to consider how capital produces capital. Ultimately, because Sōseki has not left room for ideological analysis (by distinguishing what is really in our interest from what we think is in our interest), his discussion does not allow for any contrast with which to evaluate displacements or transpositions of feeling. He makes it difficult to determine whether there are displacements that are not in the interest of the organism.

In effect, I am posing of Sōseki a literary kind of question that Sōseki himself raised at the opening of his study when he shows how we read an F into Shelley's undifferentiated wash of feeling: what is Sōseki doing here, and what is our take on what he is doing here? Is there an implicit criticism in his discussion, or do we project one of our own, on the basis of our F+f? Is it possible to misread? If we transform everything into literature (F+f) as we read it, how do we distinguish good and bad literature? Sōseki's examples verge on automatism, and, at some level, his account as a whole tends toward automatism or, more precisely, intransitivity. The basic question is, where does critical thought or action emerge if one is somehow already in the event, in the continuous variation?

To approach such questions, let me return to the section on sexual instinct when Sōseki first cites James's *Principles of Psychology*.

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Expanded empiricism

When he takes up sexual instinct, Sōseki first admits that he has come up with a rather idiosyncratic compound to discuss sexual instinct (*ryōsei teki honnō)* and then, as if anticipating objections, outrage or confusion *vis-à-vis* his emphasis on sexual instinct rather than love, he takes care to establish for his students the scientific credentials for looking at sexual instinct (via Bain and Delboeuf). In other words, whether correctly or not, Sōseki puts his audience in the position of pre-scientific knowledge, and presupposes resistance to physiological explanations of feelings.

Not surprisingly, he argues against the notion of Platonic love (that is, in the popular sense of a love between minds or a love that transcends the body). This is when he turns to William James, writing, 'Because James assumes that emotions accompany physiological changes rather than being the causes of bodily changes, he arrives at the conclusion that we do not weep because we are sad, we are sad because we weep' (Natsume 1907a: 75). Sōseki then translates a fairly lengthy passage from the second volume of James's *Principles of Psychology*.

> Our natural way of thinking (*jizen no keiro*) about these coarser emotions is that the mental perception (*chikaku*) of some fact (*jijitsu*) excites the mental affection (*shin teki kanjō*) called the emotion, and that this latter state of mind gives rise to the bodily expression (*nikutai teki hyōhaku*). My theory, on the contrary, is that *the bodily changes follow directly the perception of the exciting fact* (*kōfun teki jijitsu*)*, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur* IS *the emotion*.
>
> (James 1902 [1890], II: 1065, emphasis in original)

Sōseki then notes how exceedingly inconvenient it would be to apply this theory directly to ordinary love (*koi*): which is to say, people would find it unpleasant to think that their feelings of love accompany bodily changes that follow from the exciting fact. People would surely prefer to believe that love comes first and rises above bodily matters.

And yet, Sōseki continues, readers of fiction feel dissatisfaction when the frolicking of the upright man and the upright woman does not end in marriage. By this, he means that readers expect bodily consummation of love in sexual intercourse to accompany love as a feeling. (Sōseki prudently assumes that couples have sex only once married.) In other words, novel readers themselves do not separate love from bodily activities. Thus, rather than leave his students stranded in their pre-scientific ignorance, Sōseki has introduced a pragmatic twist: this 'psychophysical parallelism' is available through simple observation or introspection.

In his discussion of sexual instinct, even though the chapter is about 'inner psychological operations' (*naibu shinri sayō*), Sōseki avoids positing a divide between consciousness and content or knower and known. He does not posit a mind that makes connections among discrete phenomena internally. On the contrary, he sees us already physically caught up in a situation as we become conscious of it.

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Thus, like James, Sōseki says we are sad because we weep, we are in love because we experience a bodily change. This is the basis for James's challenge to classical empiricism.

Brian Massumi provides insight into what is at stake here:

> According to 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. 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.
>
> (Massumi 2002: 231)

For James, our awareness is always of an already ongoing participation in an unfolding relation. This is where Sōseki situates love (and f or feelings in general): to feel love is to be aware of participation in an unfolding relation. In this sense, James expands on Wundt's psychophysical parallelism, treating body and mind not merely as parallel operations but as ongoing participation in a set of relations. This is precisely what Sōseki strives for in his definition of literature: reading literature would entail an awareness of an ongoing participation in an unfolding relation (F+f). His insistence that f accompanies F pushes us to think the continuity of consciousness (its relationality) not in terms of cognitive operations that happen subsequent to relations in the world (or acts on them from a remove), but as happening with them, already participating in them. This is surely why, in his chapter on 'Reciprocal relations in literary content', Sōseki argues against classifications of literature based on the 'association of ideas' (1907a: 256).

But something unusual happens with literature that makes it difficult to know how to situate F and f. Should we speak of the f of the reader in relation to the F of the text? To a certain extent, this is again a question about the relation between materiality and consciousness, or matter and mind, posed in a different register.

What is difficult in James and Sōseki is the emphasis on the *priority* of the activity of the body in the world. The temptation is to read this priority as causality, even though the New Psychology, from the time of Wundt, avoided placing body and mind in a cause and effect relation. The emphasis fell on parallelism. Nonetheless, it is easy to see the emphasis on the priority of the activity of the body turning into a causal schema in which physiology is seen as determining thought and feeling, in a deterministic manner. This is, in my opinion, one of the fundamental problems with Spencer, which led to his confusion about the implications of evolution, and made his work so amenable to social Darwinism. It was not only a question of 'might makes right' or 'survival of the fittest', but also a matter of Spencer's tendency to explain innovation in terms of the environment, as a product of a social configuration.

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In his defense of genius (which Sōseki (1907a: 115) echoes in his turn to Lombroso as well as James's *Lives of Saints*), James argues against Spencer's social Darwinism, saying selective variation means that societies may embrace and maintain a 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.

Spencer's inability to consider evolution as anything but deterministic social engineering derives in part from his tendency to conceive the priority of bodily activity in terms of a deterministic causality. Spencer embraces a theory of evolution in which material conditions completely determine outcomes. In effect, his is a dualism in which consciousness becomes largely redundant, serving only to fulfill the dictates of the naturalized social world. Consequently, there is no sense that thought can act and produce unexpected effects in the world. Put another way, this is where evolution, as applied to the psychosocial field, becomes axiomatic and the problematic pole of the New Psychology is translated flatly into disciplinary sciences.

And so, it should give us pause when Sōseki, after using James, turns immediately to Spencer, translating a very long passage on love from Spencer's *Principles of Psychology*. Here is the last part of the citation in which Spencer sums up his point:

> Thus, around the physical feeling forming the nucleus of the whole, are gathered the feelings produced by personal beauty, that constituting simple attachment, those of reverence, of love of approbation, of self-esteem, of property, of love of freedom, of sympathy. These, all greatly exalted, and severally tending to reflect their excitements on one another, unite to form the mental state we call love. And as each of them is itself comprehensive of multitudinous states of consciousness, we may say that this passion fuses into one immense aggregate most of the elementary excitations of which we are capable; and that hence results its irresistible power.
>
> (Spencer 1896, I: 487–88)

Significantly, Sōseki does not use Spencer to argue for the causal priority of bodily activity. Rather he cites a passage that lingers over the complex 'multitudinous states of consciousness' that may attend love. Of all the emotions, love may be the most complex in its participation in an ongoing relation. Where Spencer might nonetheless return to the body as aetiology, Sōseki remains closer to James here, stressing the ways in which our feelings are always already caught up in an event, participating in it.

Nonetheless, the question persists of what critical thought might arise within the event. Sōseki's and James's emphasis on genius suggests that, for them, transformation is primarily a matter of innovation and creation (genius), or of participation in creation and innovation. This will surely not sit well with those who see a profound divide between philosophies of negativity (especially as evidenced

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in Lacanian psychoanalysis and Derridean deconstruction) and philosophies of 'positivity', of production or affirmation (in particular Nietzsche, Foucault and Deleuze). But, given that any of these philosophies can lend themselves to methodological axiomatization, I wonder if this is not so much an opposition or a divide as a matter of approaching the problem of singularity from very different directions, due to a very different sense of where and how the problematic is translated into the axiomatic.

In the case of Sōseki's *Bungakuron*, a great deal depends on what it means to construe reading literature in terms of participation in an unfolding relation. It is only in Part 2 chapter 3 that Sōseki turns in earnest to f. For the first time, his emphasis falls on literary questions. He writes:

> Thus far I have only spoken of f in a rather hazy manner, only speaking of f largely as an indispensable element that cannot be eliminated from literature, but I have yet to refer to the nature of f itself in a detailed way. What first demands attention is that, when speaking about literary f, one must distinguish three kinds of f: (1) the f evoked by the reader vis-à-vis the writer; (2) the f generated by the writer of his materials, and (3) the f generated by the writer in his treatment of his materials, or the f generated as he perfects these. (3) includes the f of humans and beasts (*kinchō*) as materials of the writer (with the supposition that this is not something in inanimate things).
>
> (Natsume 1907a: 144–5)

Sōseki poses three layers of feelings in the literary text, those related to the reader, to the writer and to the characters. Each of these fs, however, is a relation, and we might say that (a) the reader's emotion is part of an already-happening interaction with the writer at a bodily level, (b) the writer is already caught up in his or her materials before he or she is aware of the accompanying emotions and (c) the writer is already participating in the feelings of the characters before any awareness of that participation. In other words, there is a participatory, bodily level of production of the text that is always already in conjunction with feelings about it.

Because Sōseki attends to the role of readers as well as writers, both Joseph Murphy and Sakuko Matsui have suggested that his work bears comparison to reader response theory. Unlike reader response theory, however, which tends to build on a hermeneutic relation between reader and text, Sōseki's approach evokes something like a material event of production (reading/writing) wherein readers and writers are participating in a literary set of relations before they become conscious of it in any way. The reader is already in the text and the text in the world. There is an unfolding relation, continuous variation.

In this light, Sōseki's emphasis on the collapse of distance between reader and author in chapter 8 of Part 4 ('Kangekiron' or 'Principles of spacing') makes sense. (*Kangeki* can also be translated 'interval' or 'distance'.) Here he announces a preference for literary moments in which one eliminates the shadow of the

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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' (Natsume 1907a: 385, as cited and translated in Matsui 1975: 140). 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. This is where the reader experiences the event, that is, the non-relation or singularity that makes continuous transition happen.

In sum, with his theory of F+f, Sōseki opens up the possibility of an expanded empiricism in literature. While he initially seems to treat perception via sense data in the manner of classical empiricism (say, focal impression of a certain color or sound, as in Part 1 chapter 2), Sōseki adds the problem of f, of feeling-tone. This means that the continuous transition of consciousness, its stream, is not a mere connecting of discrete impressions in the mind. On the contrary, the problem of f directs analysis toward a relationality that is already 'out there' rather than simply in us. The perceiver (or reader) is already participating in this relation, and, as the relation unfolds, consciousness is part of that unfolding relation. This means that, in effect, we never just perceive, say, the color red. As Whitehead remarks, 'The real question is, When red is found in nature, what else is found there? Namely we are asking for an analysis of the accompaniments in nature of the discovery of red in nature' (1927: 41). This is what Sōseki asks us to do with F in literature – we must look at all its accompaniments. Rather than simply rely on an 'association of ideas', he calls on us to look at f, to ask what else is found there when we have a focal impression of something in the text.

While Sōseki hesitates in his theorizing of f, not surprisingly given its inherent difficulties, he nonetheless makes clear that empiricism must now deal with an expanded field, one that consists not simply of sensory datum followed by psychological operations. Rather the expanded field includes the formation of emotional accompaniments to perception as well as the event that generated it. Crucial to analysis are the moments of breakdown of intentionality (or authorial presence), because such moments are akin to what the later James called 'pure experience'. In other words, the priority of bodily activity leads not from idealism to materialism; rather this is an *ontological priority*, an experience of being as such. But this experience of Being is not contrasted with that of material existence (as being). Rather it is 'being-with' (the + is conjunction, 'withness'). Being-with happens in an experience of the non-relation between two monads in continuous co-variation, the conjunctive relation between F and f. It is also the moment or site of innovation or spontaneous variation, associated with creative genius.

But what does this experience of 'being-with' open us to?

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Coda

What is especially troubling and challenging about Sōseki's expanded empiricism is that it promises to open the world of experience to something like an ethical relation, an experience of being-with. Sōseki does not wish to offer morals or morality, a series of codes for good behavior; indeed he studiously avoids this gesture. Yet his insistence on the ontological priority of bodily activity and of participation in the event seems to imply that thinking about continuous transition (the conjunctive relation of F and f) will lead us to some kind of enlightenment, not scientific but ethical, in the sense of an openness to the world that comes prior to intellectualist disciplines or to sensationalist and hedonist pursuits. It is a sort of ethico-aesthetic openness that promises to forestall or complicate the immediate translatability of the problematic pole of sciences into the axiomatic disciplinization.

Not surprisingly in view of the vagueness of Sōseki's ethical stance, commentary on *Bungakuron* has focused largely on the preface and on Sōseki's experience of racial discrimination and inferiority in London, the proverbial 'shaggy dog among wolves': which is to say, commentary has tended to inscribe Sōseki's thought into a relation of reciprocal determination schematized as a problem of racial alterity (Japaneseness). At one extreme Sōseki emerges as the nationalized or racialized victim of Western modernity. In this context, while such readings are not inappropriate and certainly crucial to articulating questions about power formations related to the emergence of the Japanese nation under conditions of modernization as Westernization, the fact that Sōseki's thought does not open into an ethics or politics of alterity (say, of radical openness to the Other) should give us pause. However haltingly or mawkishly, in its emphasis on life and the self, *Bungakuron* implies an ethics of radical openness to being in terms of being-with. Thus *Bungakuron* might serve to remind us of power formations other than those addressed in the ethics of alterity. The use of New Psychology, for instance, raises questions about the translation of problematic into axiomatic sciences, through processes of disciplinization and supplementation, which are related to the biopolitical. In other words, the ethics of being-with locates the singularity that underlies both axiomatics and problematics, an openness of the life world. While it would be overly optimistic to conclude that Sōseki's thought frees itself from processes of disciplinization, it does offer two responses.

On the one hand, there is the performative deviation or fearless speech evoked in many of his novels and also in his public lectures. In his lecture on the philosophical foundations of literature, Sōseki is explicit about his attempt to perform or enact the stream of consciousness rather than speak about it. In effect, he is trying to open the event of speaking authoritatively to its bodily activity and to induce a breakdown of that authority as intentionality. This is a staging of the non-relation of being-with.

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On the other hand, if read from the angle of *Bungakuron*, the distinction between the modalities of *naihatsu* (spontaneous, or internally generated) and *gaihatsu* (extraneous, or externally generated) in his later lectures on individualism and dynamics of civilization can be read in terms of a tension between 'individuation' (*naihatsu*) and 'individualization' (*gaihatsu*), which are analogs at the level of the self to the problematic and axiomatic poles of science, respectively (Natsume 1915a, 1915b). In these lectures, the breakdown of intentionality and the emergence of intransitivity, whose potential in *Bungakuron* lies in reading literature, Sōseki now attributes to Western modernity; much of the lecture disavows his prior commitment to Western thought. At the same time, Sōseki's pursuit of 'pure experience', now associated with Zen, suggests that there are elsewhere in the world, outside the West, ethical possibilities for what Foucault calls the 'care of the self'. They emerge, however, not in the success of Zen as an embodiment of pure experience but in the inevitable failure of practices of self-cultivation, which opens the possibility of thinking modernity in Japan (individuation) rather than striving to embody Japanese modernity (individualization). If literature remains important for Sōseki, if he continually pushes us not to read but to *read reading*, it is because reading, as an event, makes ethical demands on us. It forces us to ask which events are worth prolonging, and which prolongations allow for individuation, for a remaking of individuals with worlds and worlds with individuals.

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Thomas Lamarre teaches in East Asian Studies and Art History & Communications Studies at McGill University. His books include *Shadows on the Screen: Tanizaki Jun'ichirō on Cinema and Oriental Aesthetics* (2005), *Uncovering Heian Japan: An Archaeology of Sensation and Inscription* (2000) and *Difference in Motion: How Anime Thinks Technology* (forthcoming). He may be contacted at thomas.lamarre@mcgill.ca