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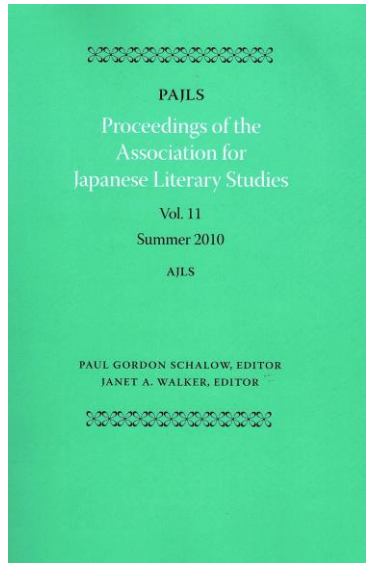

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Imitation and Desire in Sedgwick and Sōseki

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In 1941 former Sōseki disciple Uchida Hyakken reminisced about his mentor in a piece called "Tsukue": "When I was young I worshipped Sōseki-sensei so much that I used to imitate him. And I wasn't the only one. Among Sensei's disciples there were some who tried to walk like him and to laugh like him."[1] Handa Atsuko, who quotes this passage in a footnote to an essay on Sōseki's short story "Bunchō" ["The Java Sparrow"], is careful to say that further research is necessary before it can be established that such a custom of imitating the master actually prevailed among Sōseki's disciples. But the footnote itself is offered as backup to the argument she makes in the essay—that Suzuki Miekichi—another of Sōseki's disciples and the person who gave him the bird after which "Bunchō" is titled—was not only in love with Sōseki (who, by the way, was also in love with him) but also that the love caused him to mimic the symptoms of neurasthenia—and to write fiction about it—in order to feel closer to his neurotic mentor, more like a "true son."

Reading Handa's essay, I was quite struck by these two images of Sōseki's disciples—in the one instance following him around like little ducklings, imitating his walk and his laughter, and in the other suffering sympathetically from Sōseki's famous disease of the nerves. Given Sōseki's own fascination with the dynamics of mimetic desire, it seems fitting that he himself would be the object of such fervid imitation. We know that he was also interested in imitation more generally. In chapter V of *Bungakuron* [The Theory of Literature] he discusses what he calls the "imitative consciousness" as the basic glue that holds society together.[2] And in his novels we often come across scenes of imitation, such as the famous moment in the beginning of *Kokoro* when the young student imitates the pose of Sensei as they float on their backs in the waves. At the same time, however, the imitative consciousness is the lowest rung on Sōseki's ladder of types of consciousness in

[1] Quoted in Handa 2000, p. 109.
[2] See Natsume 2009, pp. 123–27.

Bungakuron, clearly inferior, in its association with the crowd, to that of the man of talent (who is always ahead of the crowd) and the man of genius (who remains forever outside it). Sensei, in *Kokoro*, moreover, resists being made the object of the young student's mimetic attentions. And many critics have argued that if *Kokoro* has a "message," it is about the importance of the student's ability to stop imitating Sensei, to "grow up" and be his own person.

If anything, we tend to think of Sōseki (or at least the late Sōseki) as an author preoccupied with the *dangers* of imitation. In his famous 1914 speech delivered to students at Gakushūin, "My Individualism," he describes his realization during his stay in London that he "had been no better than a rootless, floating weed, drifting aimlessly and wholly centered on others— 'other centered' (*tanin hon'i*) in the sense of an imitator, a man who has someone else drink his liquor for him, who asks the other fellow's opinion of it and makes that opinion his own without question."[3] He then goes on to express his fervent wish that the young men of his day would "become self-centered (*jiko hon'i*)" and reach, as he had after much effort, ". . . the conviction that I was the single most important person in my life, while others were only secondary."[4]

Sōseki's exhortation that Japan's young men find their own way and identify their own desires is something he was working out at the same time, in novelistic form, in his so-called "late trilogy" (of which *Kokoro* was the final volume). All of these novels, as has been repeatedly pointed out, deal with the theme of jealousy and triangular desire. The latter of these, as first René Girard and then Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick have taught us, is activated not by the intrinsic attractiveness of the object but by our imitation of someone else's desire for it. Girard called this other person the "mediator." In novels from *Don Quixote* to Proust, Girard argued, one sought in vain for what he called "spontaneous," or "linear" desire rooted in the autonomy of the self and directly trained on the object. Don Quixote desired what his mediator the fictional knight-errant Amadis de Gaul desired. And Proust's narrator knew his own desire only through the mediation of his favorite authors or of the aristocrats whose society he so snobbishly coveted. Desire in its novelistic form was always routed through an other. Girard called it "desire according to the Other."[5] When one copies another's desire, this often leads to rivalry since both the subject and the mediator are by definition focused on the same object.[6] Because the mimetic relation to the mediator is primary and the desire felt for the object is only its secondary result, moreover, the bond of rivalry can often seem more important than the desire for the object itself. As Sedgwick wrote in a talk

[3]Ibid., p. 250.
[4]Ibid., p. 252.
[5]Girard 1990, p. 5.
[6]Mikkel Borch-Jacobsen provides a clear explanation of the connection between mimesis and rivalry: "Mimesis is thus the matrix of desire and, by the same token, the matrix of rivalry, hatred, and (in the social order) violence: 'I want what my brother, my model, my idol wants—and I want it in his place.' And, consequently, 'I want to kill him, to eliminate him.'" Borch-Jacobsen 1988, p. 27.

delivered in Tokyo just a few years ago, it was her observation of this common structure of desire in works where the subject and the mediator are both men that led her to write her groundbreaking book *Between Men*, first published in 1985. "I had noticed," she wrote, "from personal experience and from my reading of British and American literature that whenever two men were in love with the same woman, the two men seemed to care much more about each other, as rivals, than they actually cared about the woman upon whom their desire was supposedly fixed."[7] Proceeding from this observation, as we all know by now, Sedgwick was able to take Girard's model of triangular desire and fine-tune it into a model for understanding what she called "male homosocial desire" that was both historically specific and attuned to the assymmetries of gender and power under modern patriarchy. To the extent that Sedgwick's model also helps to "draw the homosocial back into the orbit of desire, of the potentially erotic,"[8] her work has also been enabling (for me at least) of a certain queer reading of Sōseki's work.[9]

Not unlike Sedgwick, Sōseki pursued a sophisticated critique of mimetic desire in its triangular form both in his theoretical and his novelistic writing. His works are littered with the ill effects of love triangles. The deaths of Sensei and K in *Kokoro* come to mind as two tragedies that Sōseki attributed to this most vexed structure of modern homosociality. Then there is Daisuke's perverse "yielding" of Michiyo to Hiraoka in *Sore Kara*, Sōsuke and Oyone's debilitating guilt toward Yasui in *Mon*, and many other examples, all of which are well known and much discussed. But readers have also looked to Sōseki's work for ways to get outside these taut triangles. One way to read oneself out of the triangle is simply to short-circuit it with a "gay positive" reading that snips off the female end of the triangle to uncover a homosexual relationship between the two men, suffocating under the need for an alibi. Sometimes this sort of reading goes so far as to suggest that Sōseki himself was gay or "bisexual" and that his triangles were an elaborate means of disguising that identity. The essay by Handa Atsuko that I quoted in the beginning of this talk is, in fact, a good example of this sort of reading. Handa argues that "Sōseki was a bisexual and 'Bunchō' is a representative work that tells the story of his homosexual proclivities."[10] A tempting reading. But it was Sedgwick who taught us (among many other things) to be careful of this sort of easy invocation of transhistorical categories of sexual identity—not just because it was anachronistic—insofar as "bisexuality" and "gayness" are relatively recent inventions—but because it partakes too easily of the epistemology of the homo/hetero divide, when it is this divide itself that needs to be interrogated,

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[7] This talk remains unpublished but the argument is laid out in detail in Sedgwick 1985.
[8] Ibid., p. 1.
[9] See Vincent 2009.
[10] Handa 2000, p. 105. A perhaps less serious but much more entertaining example of the "Sōseki was gay" theory is Ishihara Gōjin's bizarre and hilarious reading of *Botchan* in which he claims, among other things, that the kindly "Kiyo" in that novel was actually an old queen named "Kiyoshi." See Ishihara 2004. Thanks to Kotani Mari for pointing me to this book.

rather than colluded in by spending our time deciding who sits on what side of it. The other problem, of course, with snipping off the female corner of the triangle is that it tends to render invisible the way in which male homosociality is in fact just as consequential for women (if not more so) as it is for men. Sensei's long-suffering wife can tell you all about this. So, to nod to the topic of this conference, snipping off the female end of the triangle might seem to make it possible to liberate a certain bi- or gay sexuality from its triangular closet, but it makes whatever reading results from it fatally blind to the gender dynamics at play.

Luckily for us, despite his seeming obsession with the homosocial triangle, Sōseki, like Sedgwick, was also interested in articulating ways in which imitation can be openly acknowledged and desire need not lead to relations of more or less murderous rivalry. René Girard saw something like this in Don Quixote's openly declared attachment to his mediator, the chivalric hero Amadis de Gaul who, besides being a fictional character, was too exalted and grand a figure for Quixote ever to feel that he was in competition with him. Don Quixote and Amadis were the classic example of what Girard called "external mediation," the subject of which, writes Girard, "proclaims aloud the true nature of his desire. He worships his model openly and declares himself his disciple. We have seen Don Quixote himself explain to Sancho the privileged part Amadis plays in his life."[11] "In Cervantes," Girard writes in an earlier passage, "the mediator is enthroned in an inaccessible heaven and transmits to his faithful follower a little of his serenity."[12]

With the dawn of a homophobic modernity and the rupture of the homosocial continuum, however, as Sedgwick went on to argue and as Sōseki knew, this relation to the mediator (particularly when he is another male) has to be driven underground. Too much admiring talk of a man about another man, in other words, starts to sound gay. When the truth about the mediator goes underground, Girard calls the resulting structure "internal mediation." The desire that results from internal mediation tends to be paranoid and rivalrous—more Dostoyevsky than Don Quixote.[13] This is partly the result of the decreasing distance between the subject and the mediator resulting from the democratizing forces of modernity. "If the *modern* emotions flourish," writes Girard, "it is not because 'envious natures' and 'jealous temperaments' have unfortunately and inexplicably increased in number, but because *internal* mediation triumphs in a universe where the differences between men are gradually erased."[14] We hear in Girard's

[11] Girard 1990, p. 10.
[12] Ibid., p. 8.
[13] Girard argues that Dostoyevsky's work represents the extreme of internal mediation. "Except for a few characters who entirely escape imitated desire, in Dostoyevsky there is no longer any love without envy, any attraction without repulsion. The characters insult each other, spit in each other's faces, and minutes later they fall at the enemy's feet, they abjectly beg mercy. . .The inevitable consequences of desire copied from another desire are 'envy, jealousy, and impotent hatred.' As one moves from Stendhal to Proust, and from Proust to Dostoyevsky, and the closer the mediator comes, the more bitter are the fruits of triangular desire." Girard 1990, pp. 41–42.
[14] Ibid., p. 14.

sentence the title of Sedgwick's own *Between Men*, in which she traces a similar move into modernity, but along the specific axis of the rupturing homosocial continuum: from openly acknowledged external mediation to the deeply repressed and concealed internal mediation of a homophobic modernity. In the literary context this transition has a formal and generic dimension as well, moving from what she refers to as the "sunny" homosociality of open-ended narratives like Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* and Dicken's *Pickwick Papers*, where class differences and unproblematic gender distinctions help to maintain the external mediation of desire,[15] to the distinctly novelistic world of paranoid homosociality. As Mizumura Minae (and I)[16] have argued, we can see something similar to this in the arc of Sōseki's own career: namely a shift from the similarly "sunny" homosociality and episodic narrative of "I am a Cat" (not coincidentally inspired by Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*), where women are simply excluded and desire seems spontaneous and free, to the intensely novelistic *Meian*, in which the homosocial triangle itself now has two female corners and masculinity is in full-blown crisis mode.

Once again taking my cue from Sedgwick, however, I want to resist imposing too strong a historical narrative here and look instead at the ways in which both models of homosociality can co-exist within the same historical moment and the same text rather than how one supersedes the other.[17] As Girard points out, already in *Don Quixote* one finds examples of both external and internal mediation of desire. While external mediation (*Don Quixote's* open admiration for Amadis de Gaul) is perhaps what the novel is best known for, internal mediation comes into play in the interpolated tale of the two friends Anselmo and Lothario, the former of whom tests the loyalty of his wife by asking the latter to attempt to seduce her, with disastrous consequences. The mediation here is "internal" because, unlike Don Quixote and Amadis, the social distance between the two friends is minimal and because their friendship masks powerful currents of rivalry and hatred. Girard argues that this co-existence in Cervantes's work of unabashed imitation and disavowed rivalry shows that Cervantes has grasped "the extreme forms of imitated desire" and paradoxically confirms the unity of the work as well as the unity of "novelistic literature" itself.[18]

Sōseki, for his part, seems to have been fascinated by the story of Anselmo and Lothario and how it fit within Cervantes's work. He underlined its title in his

[15] Sedgwick calls this, "the sunny, Pickwickian innocence of encompassing homosocial love rendered in the absence of homophobia." Sedgwick 1985, p. 165.

[16] See Mizumura. For my take on this, see Vincent 2008.

[17] In "Axiom 5" of her *Epistemology of the Closet*, Sedgwick writes, "issues of modern homo/hetero definition are structured, not by the supersession of one model and the consequent withering away of another, but instead by the relations enabled by the unrationalized coexistence of different models during the times they do coexist." Sedgwick 1990, p. 47.

[18] "The simultaneous presence of external and internal mediation in the same work seems to us to confirm the unity of novelistic literature." Girard 1990, 52. This paradoxical "unity" is also one way of explaining Sōseki's famous ambivalence toward the novel.

copy of Tobias Smollett's English translation of *Don Quixote* (accurately but awkwardly rendered there as "The Novel of the Impertinent Curiosity"[19]) and adapted its plot for *Kôjin*, the second novel in his second trilogy, in which Nagano Ichirō asks his younger brother Jirô to test his wife Nao's fidelity. The outcome of this situation in Sōseki's version, however, is less disastrous. And the paranoid homosociality that attends this twisted tale of internal mediation is somewhat mitigated by another aspect of the novel (and the second trilogy as a whole) that may have owed something to Cervantes: its relatively loose structure as a series of linked short stories.[20]

In what follows I would like very briefly to look at an example of the alternating operation of triangulated rivalry and unmediated imitation in the most loosely structured of Soseki's novels, the first novel in the second trilogy, *Higan sugi made* [To the Spring Equinox and Beyond]. But before I do so, I want to return to the question of imitation by way of another anecdote, this time about Sedgwick and her disciples. I heard a wonderful talk last weekend at a symposium we had at Boston University in memory of Eve. It was given by Jonathan Flatley, who studied with Eve at Duke, and it was on the panel that I moderated that dealt with the role of affect studies in her work. Jonathan was nice enough to agree to let me quote him so I'll tell the story in his words. It's about the first job talk he ever gave, which happened to be at Harvard. The talk was a queer reading of Henry James and, after it was over, someone asked, "How is this different from Eve Sedgwick?" Then Flatley answered:

> I understood the tone of the question to clearly indicate that being similar to Eve was the wrong thing to be, and that explaining my difference was the only way to demonstrate that I was the right kind of original, authentic, independent thinker that Harvard would want to hire. The question was further overdetermined by the fact because the English Department was in fact at this moment considering offering Eve a position. In any event, for my part, because I so much wanted to be more like Eve than I was or ever could be, my non-Eve-ness ever apparent to me, the possibility that someone could see me as somehow being *too* similar to Eve had never even entered my head. Nor, for that matter, had it occurred to me that the desirability of imitating Eve could even be in question. So even though I have since learned that this is not exactly a surprising question to be asked at a job interview, when the delight I took in imitating Eve was brought into question, I was not only flummoxed and flustered, I was ashamed. Like a boy who thought that his dressing in women's clothes was really quite exciting and likely to meet with the enthusiastic approval of his parents, only to find out that approval was far from what they felt, I suddenly felt painfully exposed, as if my very being announced an essential wrongness. It was a

[19] Saavedra et al. 2003, p. 231.

[20] On Sōseki and Cervantes, see Kuramoto 2006.

> classic moment of shame as Silvan Tomkins and Eve discussed it. In a relational moment where I had been anticipating or hoping for the positive affects of interest or even excitement I found doubt, non-understanding, puzzlement, rejection.[21]

For many of us who were not lucky enough to study with Eve Sedgwick, it's astounding to think of a grad school experience in which the struggle to differentiate oneself from everyone else is not primary. One wonders what it would be like to have a mentor whom one admired so much and who was, as Flatley describes Sedgwick, "abundantly and enthusiastically available for identification and imitation."

Of course we do have to differentiate ourselves. And not just for professional reasons. A large part of anyone's intellectual development and the fuel that drives it has to do with the identification and critique of differences. But Sedgwick's work is extraordinary, I think, for its ability to make us want to be like her—and above all to *read* like her. I know that in my own reading of her work I almost never feel moved to argue with her. I just want to read along with her—and quote her. In fact, I think I will quote her. I feel a little about Sedgwick the way she says she feels about Proust. She writes:

> I wonder if other novel-critics who set out to write about Proust feel that if the task is more irresistible than others it is also, not more difficult in degree, but almost prohibitively distinctive in kind: the problem being, not that *Remembrance of Things Past* is so hard and so good, but that 'it's all true.' I can only report on my own reading life, but with Proust and my word processor in front of me what I most feel are Talmudic desires, to reproduce or unfold the text and to giggle. Who hasn't dreamt that *À la recherche* remained untranslated, simply so that one could (at least if one knew French) by undertaking the job justify spending one's own productive life afloat within that blissful and hilarious atmosphere of truth-telling?[22]

There is so much to say about this—about reading as a means to pleasure, affirmation and communion rather than a search for hidden meanings. About how much our culture is obsessed with difference and finds sameness shameful, especially when it threatens the hetero/homo and gender divides.

But back to Sōseki. We have already seen that he, unlike Sedgwick, could be withering about imitation. Going by what he says in "My Individualism," were he alive and at Harvard when Jonathan gave his talk, he might even have asked him the same question: "How is this different from Eve Sedgwick?" But today I want to suggest that there is another Sōseki who is not only less paranoid about establishing differences but who recognizes that wanting to be like someone else does not have to lead to jealous rivalry.

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[21] Flatley's remarks will be published in their entirety in a forthcoming issue of *Criticism: A Quarterly for Literature and the Arts.*

[22] Sedgwick 1990, p. 240.

In *Higan-sugi made*, the first volume of the late trilogy, the protagonist Sunaga Ichirō suspects (correctly, as it turns out) that he is not his mother's son. He is the son of a maid whom his father impregnated and who was subsequently shipped to the countryside to hide the scandal. His father's wife has raised him and treated him as her own son for his entire life. The two are, as is repeatedly pointed out by others in the novel, closer than any mere blood tie could ever make a mother and son. But still, Sunaga and his mother, he in ignorance and she in knowledge of their lack of a blood connection, worry about the effect of its revelation. As his uncle Matsumoto explains late in the novel, "They were both in terror, she with the secret held in her hand, he with the expectation that he would be made to take hold of it."[23] At one point, Ichirō tells of a seemingly trivial scene involving a favorite fish being served for dinner at a relative's home:

> She [his mother] kept praising the small saurel, broiled and lightly salted, that they were serving that night.
>
> "If you ask a fisherman for them," my uncle said to her, "he'll bring them seasoned, as many as you like. If you want, take some with you when you go back. I'd thought of giving you some earlier, since I know you like them, but I didn't get a chance."

The conversation about the fish continues for a few lines, after which Sunaga remarks:

> "I remember such trivial talk because I took particular notice of the contented look on my mother's face at the time and also partly because I liked the salted saurel as much as she did. . . . This is something I've never told anyone else before, but actually for a number of years I've made a meticulous study, unnoticed by anyone and merely for my own personal knowledge, of where and how I'm different from my mother and where and how we're similar. . . . When I found a trait I shared with her, even if it was a defect, it made me quite happy. And if I had a trait that she didn't, even if it was a strong point, that displeased me very much. What concerned me most of all was that I looked only like my father, that my features had nothing in common with my mother. Even now when I look at myself in the mirror, I imagine that if I had inherited more of my mother's facial features, even if they made me look more homely, it would have made me feel much better about myself, much more like I was my mother's child."[24]

Again, there is a great deal to say about this extraordinary passage and my time is limited today. But to be brief—we should note how effortlessly it moves from *liking something* to *being like someone.* Imitation (or identification) and desire are

[23] Natsume 1985, p. 293.
[24] Ibid., pp. 237–38.

here not only not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing. The son mirrors the mother's desire and they grow closer as a result. Since the object of liking here is a certain kind of fish that is available in abundance, there is no need for rivalry or competition: there is plenty of room for mother and son to like and desire the same thing. In fact, the son is actively looking for ways in which he can like the same things as his mother, and thereby be more like her. Of course we know that Sōseki himself felt something like Sunaga, having been farmed out to another family at a young age, only to be brought back a few years later to find out that the woman he thought was his grandmother was actually his mother. But even without knowing this fact from his biography, it is clear to any reader of his novels that they are deeply concerned both with the reality of the parent-child bond and the possibility of affiliation outside the family.

Of course one could certainly object that while Sunaga's story might be refreshingly anti-Oedipal in its cultivation of a continued attachment to the mother and an active dis-identification from the father, Sunaga's ability actively to mirror his mother's likes is possible precisely because she is his mother—or at least a woman, and not another man, with whom he would no doubt feel rivalrous. Something similar might be said for Jonathan Flatley's relation to Eve (like that of a lot of other admiring gay men, including myself). Fair enough. A man, his mother, and a fish dish hardly add up to a paranoid homosocial triangle.

But while Sōseki would indeed go on to give us more fraught, paranoid homosocial triangles involving two men and a woman (culminating in the fatally disastrous one in *Kokoro*), here, in the first novel of the last trilogy, that ending is not inevitable. Sunaga, in fact, is a little like Melville's Bartleby when it comes to the homosocial triangle. He knows how it works and he knows that people expect him to throw himself into it. But he would prefer not to. The triangle in *Higan sugi made*, such as it is, is among Sunaga, a girl named Chiyoko whom his mother wants him to marry, and an attractive fellow named Takagi. Sunaga doesn't really know if he's in love with Chiyoko or not, but in typically Sedgwickian (or Girardian?) fashion, he gets jealous when he sees her with Takagi. But Sunaga, unlike other Sōseki characters, understands this jealousy and desire as being inherently novelistic:

> "The moment I discovered my sentiments were turning into a kind of novel, I became astonished and returned to Tokyo. While I was on the train, I imagined various sequences to the novel I had started writing and had torn to shreds. The sea, the moon, and the beach were there. And the shadow of a young man and that of a young woman. At first the man raged and the woman wept. And then the woman raged and the man pacified her. At last the two held hands and walked along the silent sands. Or there was a framed picture and straw mats and a cool breeze. There two young men engaged in a meaningless dispute. The words brought blood to their cheeks, and in the end both were driven to using language affecting their integrity. And finally

> they stood and fought with their fists. Or . . . As in a play, scene after scene was depicted before my eyes. I was all the more happy for having lost the opportunity of trying to experience any one of these scenes."[25]

Rivalrous triangular desire is here shown for what it so often is (and what Girard theorized it as): an artifact of the novel. And, even more interestingly, as Sunaga converts these novelistic scenes (weirdly, proleptically reminiscent of *Kokoro*) into scenes from the theater, he is able to free himself of their tyranny over him. In what might be interpreted as an instance of what Sedgwick called "queer performativity," all this drama is here put in quotes and the result is partially to liberate Sunaga from its trouble and torsions.[26] At other moments in the novel, when Takagi is out of the picture, Sunaga is able to see Chiyoko more on her own terms, outside of the triangle. In a scene towards the end of Sunaga's narrative he sits with his mother and several other female relatives watching as Chiyoko has her hair done up just for fun in the *shimada* style, which is typically reserved for married women. Everyone agrees she looks beautiful in it. And Sunaga's jealousy is not stirred by the thought that this is how she will look when she is married. While before he had started to grow suspicious that she might be somehow manipulating him in the triangle with Takagi, that suspicion suddenly evaporates, if only for a moment:

> I found her before me without my consciously realizing it the pretty, unsophisticated, and innocent Chiyoko I had known earlier. It's hard to say definitely whether my mood somehow happened to be softened or whether she was seeing me *from a different angle.* As far as I remember, there seemed to be nothing on either side that could account for this feeling. If this easy state between us had lasted an hour or two longer, the odd suspicion I had had about her might have been blotted out as a mere misunderstanding by drawing a straight black line through it [emphasis mine].[27]

As it turns out, Sunaga can't help asking about Takagi in the scene that follows, and this easy mood between them evaporates as the jealousy and rivalry return. But the novel has by this time made very clear that there is nothing inevitable about homosocial rivalry. It has shown us many moments when the zero-sum game of triangulated desire gives way to moments in which there is more than enough (fish? pretty hairdos?) to go around. It has suggested, in fact, that our anxiety that there would ever not be enough has a lot to do with reading too many novels of a certain sort. As a novelist who wrote so many different kinds of novels, Sōseki himself knew this very well.

In closing, I would just say that I find in Sōseki, sometimes, texts that lend themselves to what Sedgwick called "reparative reading," and distinguished from

[25] Ibid., p. 234.
[26] On Sedgwick's understanding of queer performativity and theatricality, see Sedgwick 2003a.
[27] Natsume 1985, p. 276.

"paranoid reading."[28] I don't have time to go into much detail about how these are different, but I will leave you with a quote from Sedgwick that lists some of what she gets out of the work of affect theorist Sylvan Tomkins, whose work is perhaps most representative of what she meant by "reparative." Tomkin's distance from Freudian psycho-analysis makes his work "more programmatically resistant to some of the damaging assumptions that have shaped psychoanalysis in (what I think of as) its Oedipal mode."

These include,

> the defining centrality of dualistic gender difference; the primacy of genital morphology and desire; the determinative nature of childhood experience and the linear teleology toward a sharply distinct state of maturity; and especially the logic of zero-sum games and the excluded middle term, where passive is the opposite of active and desire is the opposite of identification, and where one person's getting more love means a priori that another is getting less.[29]

Sunaga is certainly passive. Chiyoko calls him a coward in one climactic scene. And there is something infuriating in the way he switches back and forth between seeing her as either "artful" or "innocent." But his way of just saying no to the *Sturm und Drang* of the homosocial triangle is, it seems to me, also something more than "the opposite of active." In the fraught history of Oedipal rivalry and desire in which subjectivity itself is founded on the abjection of the mother and the pursuit of objects that we can never have and of which there are never enough to go around, there is a lot to be said for his list of things that he and his mother both like. Eve Sedgwick, as the "mother" of queer theory, taught us that, and a lot more besides.

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[28] See Sedgwick 2003b.

[29] Sedgwick 2007, p. 631.

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