Beach Boys in Manchuria: An Examination of Sōseki's *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea* , 1909

Angela Yiu

Review of Japanese Culture and Society, Volume 29, 2017, pp. 109-125
(Article)

Published by University of Hawai'i Press
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/roj.2017.0007

Beach Boys in Manchuria: An Examination of Sōseki's *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea*, 1909

Angela Yiu

> When I asked with a straight face what on earth does the South Manchurian Railway do, the President of Mantetsu looked bemused and said, "What an idiot you are."
>
> —Natsume Sōseki, *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea* (Mankan tokorodokoro, 1909)[1]

In 1909, Natsume Sōseki accepted an invitation from his old school friend and president of Mantetsu,[2] Nakamura Yoshikoto (a.k.a. Zekō, 1867-1927), to visit Manchuria and Korea. Between September 1 and October 17, Sōseki visited cities along the railway (Dalian, Lüshun, Shenyang, Fushun, Changchun, Harbin); from Changchun he took the Anhō Line and crossed the Yalu River to visit Pyongyang and Keijō (now Seoul). The resulting work was a travel journal titled *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea* (hereafter abbreviated as *Here and There*), serialized in the Tokyo and Osaka *Asahi shimbun* upon his return at the end of the year.[3] While Sōseki took brief notes of the entire trip in his diary, *Here and There* only includes his travels up to the coalmine in Fushun, because he claimed that he did not wish the serialization to cross over into the New Year. As a result, *Here and There* only contains Manchuria and no Korea.

The abrupt termination of the serialization is not the only standing mystery of *Here and There*. In form, language, and content, the work remains highly ambiguous. Is it a travelogue, a reportage, a memoir, or a novel? Is the mode of writing lyrical, satirical, comical, critical, philosophical, aesthetic, or a mixture of the above? Is it about what Sōseki saw in the present or what he remembered in the past? Is he writing as a professional writer at the *Asahi* or a private individual? Does the work contribute to or undermine the myth of Mantetsu that subsequent writers, such as Matsuoka Yōsuke and Kikuchi Kan, perpetuated as part of Japan's expansionist propaganda?[4] How does the alternating loquaciousness and reticence in the work betray Sōseki's reading of Japan

in relationship to the West and Asia in the age of imperialism? These are some of the questions that I would like to ask in this essay.

To address these questions, it is crucial to contextualize *Here and There* in Sōseki's time and his works. To that end, I will begin with a brief summary of its historical background and publication. I will examine essays, letters, and diaries that reveal a lifelong, intimate friendship with Zekō and comradeship with the "old boys" who became the elite of Mantetsu in order to understand the role of affect in Sōseki's assessment of Japan's involvement in Manchuria and Korea. Another clue to thinking about these questions is embedded in a recently discovered lecture, titled "The Relations Between Things and Three Types of People" (Mono no kankei to san'yō no ningen, 1909) (translated in full in this issue of *RJCS*), which Sōseki delivered in Dalian. I focus on the phantasmagoric and ambiguous space in-between texts, things, and people that allows Sōseki to deliver a work that hovers between fiction and journalism, trace a memory that is at once private and public, and maintain a political and moral stance that both challenges and acquiesces to the realities of his time. Finally, *Here and There* has to be contextualized in Sōseki's fiction and non-fiction for us to gain a full picture of the lingering effects of his travels and his views of Japan in relation to the West and Asia. I attempt to locate where Sōseki—the man, the boy, and the writer—stands as he gazes into the past, present, and future in Manchuria, in a text full of humor and stomachaches, sunlight and darkness.

Background to the Serialization of *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea*

Sōseki's visit to Manchuria came only four years after the Treaty of Portsmouth (1905) and two years after the formal operation of Mantetsu began. The Treaty of Portsmouth formally ended the Russo-Japanese War and awarded the right to Japan to lease the Liaodong Peninsula and control the Russian railway system in southern Manchuria, from Changchun to Lüshun. That was the beginning of Mantetsu, a semi-private, semi-government corporation that was more than just a railway company. On behalf of the Japanese government, it played a significant role in the construction of cities and ports in the railway-affiliated land. Kodama Gentarō, governor of colonized Taiwan, and Gotō Shinpei, who was to become the first president of Mantetsu, wrote in the "Outline for the Management of Manchuria": "The singular crucial point for managing Manchuria in post Russo-Japanese War Japan is for Mantetsu to wear the mask of a railway company on the surface and to build all kinds of facilities below. [. . .] The railway management organization must pretend that it has nothing to do with politics and the military."[5] In line with this policy, Mantetsu became involved in a great diversity of businesses and operations, private and governmental. These included coal mining in Fushun, shipping between Dalian and Shanghai, the expansion of an international railway system that linked Shanghai with Mantetsu and the Siberian railway, the construction of hospitals, libraries, schools, housing, hotels, newspapers, etc. Furthermore, it also set up the first

Research Department for market research and investigation of local Manchurian customs, which was to develop into the Mantetsu Investigation Department, allowing Japan to pry deep into aspects of Manchurian politics, economics, and society. Eventually, Mantetsu was to set up the East Asia Economic Investigation Bureau in its Tokyo branch office to conduct research not only on Manchuria but the entirety of Asia,[6] no doubt providing intelligence for subsequent Japanese military strategies in China and the rest of Asia.

Nakamura Zekō became the second president of Mantetsu on December 19, 1908. In less than three months, on March 9, Sōseki, who had not seen Zekō for seven years, published an essay titled "Changes" (Henka) in the Osaka *Asahi*, featuring his room-sharing days with Zekō when they were both nineteen. It ended with lines that appear to prefigure the opening line of *Here and There*. "Nakamura from the past has become the president of Mantetsu, and I have become a novelist. I have no idea what a Mantetsu president does, and Nakamura probably has not read a single page of my novels."[7] From then on, the renewal of an old friendship picked up speed, beginning with Zekō appearing in Sōseki's dream in early July and in person at the end of the month. Even though Sōseki turned down Zekō's request to help him start a newspaper in Manchuria, he did not turn down imported tobacco and exotic souvenirs, or the dining and hot bath that Zekō offered. The felicitous reunion culminated in an invitation on August 18 for Sōseki to visit Manchuria, to which Sōseki agreed with enthusiasm and "called in the tailor to make a suit for traveling to Manchuria."[8]

It is not entirely clear how the trip was financed, but one gathers that Zekō made arrangements for all modes of transportation and provided Sōseki with five or six hundred yen.[9] *Here and There* was serialized promptly upon Sōseki's return, a move in line with the international image that the *Asahi* appeared eager to cultivate. *Asahi* had sponsored a number of overseas projects, including the Rosetta Cruise (1906) to Manchuria and Korea to view battle remains of the Sino-Japanese War (1895) and Russo-Japanese War (1905), the Around-the-World Tours (1908, 1910, 1912), group tour to the United States, the dispatch of the writer Shibukawa Genji to Europe and the United States (March 20-July 8, 1909) and the serialization of his travelogue *Sightseeing Around the World* (Sekai kenbutsu, 1909) under the pen name of Yabuno Kyōjū.[10] Apart from such eye-catching but superficial overseas projects, what truly distinguished *Asahi* was the highly respected editor-in-chief Ikebe Sanzan, whose acumen and foresight about the changing world brought multilingual and independent-minded writers like Futabatei Shimei and Sōseki to the *Asahi*.[11] In brief, since Ikebe agreed to let Sōseki work at his own pace and anywhere he liked,[12] and since the *Asahi* did not sponsor Sōseki's trip, it is fair to assume that *Here and There* does not speak for the newspaper and shares the underlying principle of artistic autonomy in all of Sōseki's literary works, "art begins and ends with self-expression."[13]

An intriguing historical coincidence made the serialization stand out more than it perhaps normally would. Itō Hirobumi, the former prime minister and elder statesman

who was the first Resident-General of annexed Korea, traveled to Manchuria on October 16 (one day before Sōseki's return to Japan) and was assassinated by An Jung-geun, a Korean independence activist, on a platform at Harbin station on October 26 (five days after the beginning of the serialization of *Here and There*). In a letter to his former student, the physicist and essayist Terada Torahiko in Berlin, dated November 28, Sōseki wrote,

> Itō took the same ship as I did to Dalian, walked in the same places, and was assassinated in Harbin, on the same platform where I also set foot. If I were attacked, too, I wouldn't be moaning in bed of gastric ailment as I do now and may even be able to make a splash.[14]

Already in early November, Sōseki was dissatisfied with the interruption of the serialization and wanted to pull out. He had reasons to complain. Since the start of serialization on October 21, *Here and There* was cut five times in October (22, 26, 28, 29, 31), and vanished from the page for nearly a week from November 2 to 7. In the same letter to Terada, Sōseki did not attempt to hide his annoyance. "I was asked by the newspaper to write *Here and There*, but news stories would crowd up the page and postpone the serialization. I was irritated and wanted to quit, but they asked me to keep writing."[15]

Instead of agreeing to let Sōseki terminate *Here and There*, *Asahi* resumed regular serialization after November 8 and published sixteen uninterrupted entries until November 23. No doubt *Asahi* would find the work—at least the title—a good fit for page three. Commonly termed *sanmen* in newspaper lingo, page three usually consisted of reports on society and miscellany, but the Tokyo *Asahi* had the tendency to fill it with articles with an international and modern flair to highlight a modernizing Japan. In November, page three of the Asahi was filled with news, photos, and illustrations of, for instance, Itō's life and assassination, Halley's comet, the Paris exhibit of flying machines, reports of the group tour to the United States, news of Mantetsu and other national and international railroad development, reports on Korean issues, and ads for the Around-the-World Tour.

After a week's break from November 24-29 and one last appearance on November 30 on page three, the serialization was moved to the culture column that Sōseki started on page six.[16] Starting December 1, with installment 25, *Here and There* was placed above articles with a popular and cultural appeal. These include articles on hypnotism, court cases, strategies for the Japanese *go* board game, new books, children and cinema, profiles of noble ladies, local events, followed by at least half a page of ads. These include ads on clinics and popular medicine (to treat coughs, dry eye, hair loss, urinary ailments, STDs, gynecological problems), supplements (for the brain, digestive system), cosmetics (facial lotion, perfume, soap), food and beverages (sweets, soy sauce, sake, beer, wine), culture (phonograph, art books), apparel (neckties, used clothing), and so on. Page six

appeared to target a readership that consisted largely of domestic-minded married women and men in an average income household with a few children, who were more concerned about daily life than affairs of the state and more preoccupied with personal rather than national or international issues.

Thus a move from page three (international, modern, state, society) to page six (domestic, traditional, family, individual) indicates a change in the editorial perception of *Here and There*. The move freed the work from any obligation to publicize Japan's overseas strategy and allowed Sōseki to indulge in delivering a literary work in search of the self and the past. With the move to the culture column on page six, *Here and There* became self-contained and complete as a literary work in which Sōseki looks steadily at the modern self in the context of an expansionist modern nation state and asks where the individual stands in the midst of a dark and unmapped place.

Beach Boys in Manchuria

Central to *Here and There* was neither Manchuria nor Korea but memories of old friends with whom Sōseki spent his youth. Many Japanese he encountered on the trip were the "old boys" (OBs) from his preparatory school or college years, and many others were connected to him personally as former students or acquaintances. The OBs were men with whom he studied, played, cooked, ate, joked, took and often failed exams, traveled, bathed, shared rooms and bedding in dormitories, and camped out on the beach in his youth, so to write about Manchuria was to write about the boys of his youth.

Among those who attended the preparatory school Seiritsu Gakusha in Kanda Surugadai where Sōseki entered in 1883,[17] were Hashimoto Sagorō and Satō Tomokuma. Sōseki used to cook with Sago, as Hashimoto was fondly called, when they were boarding on the second floor of a temple near Gokurakusui in Koishikawa. They would cook beef in a big pot every other day, and ten *sen* worth of beef was enough to feed seven hungry students.[18] Hashimoto was more advanced than Sōseki in English and mathematics, and helped Sōseki with algebra during the entrance exam. In the end Sōseki passed but Hashimoto failed. Hashimoto ended up attending Sapporo Agriculture School and later went abroad to Germany. When they met in Dalian, Hashimoto was there on the invitation of Mantetsu to investigate stockbreeding in Mongolia.[19]

When Sōseki encountered Satō again in Lüshun, the latter was serving as the Superintendent General of the Police, a post that Sōseki wryly called "high-sounding and forbidding."[20] Satō was from the former Satsuma domain, and dressed differently from the Tokyoites. "In those days Satō would wear a tight-sleeved kimono and a pair of *hakama* that exposed his shins, and to someone like me born and raised in Tokyo, I thought he looked rather strange."[21] Once, Satō was engaged in a student riot for better food in the boarding house and sustained an injury on his forehead. "For a while he wore a white bandage around his head that looked like a *hachimaki* (head-band) knotted behind, lending him a valorous air."[22] Here, the juxtaposition of the past and present serves to

deliver the surprising fact that these food-rioting, hungry, rambunctious youth who more often than not failed their exams were now at the frontline of Japan's expansionism.[23]

Among all the men Sōseki saw in Manchuria, closest and dearest to him was Nakamura Zekō. After graduating from the Faculty of Law in 1893, Zekō joined the Ministry of Treasury. At Mantetsu, he served as vice president (1905-8) and then as its second president (1908-13), making him the longest serving and one of the most influential presidents in the history of Mantetsu.[24] Sōseki and Nakamura's friendship dated back to 1884 when they were both in the English department of the Tokyo University Preparatory School, and they called each other by their childhood names of Kinchan and Zekō. In 1885, Sōseki, Zekō, Hashimoto, and a few others boarded in Suetomiya in Sarugakuchō. The following year, having both failed the entrance exam, Sōseki and Zekō worked as part-time teachers in a private tutorial school (Kōtō Gijuku) and shared a dormitory room, pooling together their meager funds to supplement their boarding house fare.[25] Their conversations in *Here and There* are peppered with schoolboy endearment and friendly abuse, beginning with Nakamura calling Sōseki an "idiot" (*baka*) for not knowing what Mantetsu was about and offering to take him there. "Zekō's offer to take me somewhere had been a habit of old. Since twenty-four or five years ago, after he took me to that dubious tempura place in front of Ogawatei in Kanda, he would from time to time offer to take me somewhere."[26] Thus from the start, their conversation sets the overall boyish and bantering tone of the work, closely resembling that of *I Am a Cat* (Wagahai neko de aru, 1905) and *Botchan* (1906).

The past takes precedence over the present in *Here and There*. When Zekō told Sōseki how the American officers in the Dalian Club cheered and tossed him in the air when he addressed them in an awkward mixture of English and Japanese, Sōseki slipped completely into the past and relived an incident in their youth:

> I think it was around the year Meiji 20 (1887).[27] The seven of us idling around in the boarding house decided to make a day trip to Enoshima. Red blankets on our back,[28] lunch boxes dangling on our sides, and twenty *sen* each in our possession, we finally reached the shore facing Enoshima around ten at night, but no one had the mind to cross over to the island. As though by mutual agreement we wrapped ourselves in the red blankets and slept on the beach. In the night we woke up to drops of rain on our faces. To make it worse, a dog carried away Mamizu Hideo's gaiters. By the time things appeared dimly in the early light of dawn, we noticed that every single one of us was covered with sand. Sand came out of our eyes, our ears, and our heads. The seven of us crossed over to Enoshima. The wind at dawn swirled around the island, and we could hear the sound of the trees swaying in the wind. Zekō, standing next to me, looked as though something had struck him and said, "Look at the trees! They're quivering in fear!"
>
> No one but Zekō would describe with a straight face trees swaying in the wind as "quivering in fear," so for a while we nicknamed him "Quiver." He alone probably

> still thought we knew what he meant when he said the trees were "quivering in fear," the way he thought the American officers knew what he was saying when he said, "Gentlemen, let's get roaring drunk! (*ooini nomimashō*!)." They wouldn't have tossed me up in the air if they hadn't understood, he said, having no qualms about being drunk.[29]

Diverting the narrative to the past frees Sōseki from having to comment on Zekō's dealings with the West. As a public figure, Zekō's dealings reflected the position of Mantetsu and Japan in relation to the Western powers. Japan's expansion in Manchuria after the Russo-Japanese War took place with the full support of the United States and Britain. Of the two hundred million yen required as capital to start Mantetsu, the Japanese government shouldered half of it in kind, namely the railway inherited from Russia and its affiliated land and coal mines. The rest came from stocks (20 percent) and corporate bonds (80 percent) raised in Europe and the United States.[30] The presence of the British Vice Consul and American missionaries on the same ship Sōseki boarded to travel to Dalian, the arrival of four American battleships at Dalian that commanded the full attention of Zekō, the drinking and dancing catering primarily to Americans and British officers in the Dalian Club that Zekō headed but rarely visited, and the many American and British visitors in the Yamato Hotel are just a few signs of Japan's "partnership" with the West in Manchuria. Japan may have appeared to be at the helm of Mantetsu, but the company received financial backing and political support from the West. In an essay published in Tokyo *Asahi* on October 18 titled "The Civilization of Manchuria and Korea" (Mankan no bunmei), Sōseki wrote, "The management of Manchuria is one step ahead of Japan's enlightenment and on its way to rival Western enlightenment." He did not fail to add, "Capital was concentrated in the hands of Mantetsu, which made it possible for Mantetsu to rival the West in its pretense of sophistication (*haikara na mane*), but capital for other businesses was rather weak, so they could not rival even ordinary mid-level development in Japan proper."[31] There was no doubt that Sōseki was aware of the fact that Japan's expansion in Manchuria was possible only with the support and tacit approval of the West.

Yet in the space of *Here and There*, Sōseki is not willing to treat Zekō as a public figure—"it made me squirm to call him Zekō when everyone was calling him Mr. President"[32]—because he prioritizes it as a private, literary space for memory and affect, not a journalistic, intellectual space for political criticism. Despite the actual historical and geographical references in *Here and There*, the world in the text exists nearly independent of external reality, much like the world in *Kusamakura* (1906). The ultimate reality is time spent in the company of Zekō and other old friends, as well as memories relived and savored anew. At the heart of *Here and There* is a curious little love song for Zekō, whose melody continues intermittently but steadily in the diaries and essays that Sōseki wrote after their reunion in Manchuria.

Sōseki's friendship with Zekō intensified after the visit to Manchuria and lasted to Sōseki's death. Beginning in June 1910, Sōseki endured repeated hospitalization and experienced a coma in Shūzenji in August. While in Japan, Zekō visited Sōseki seven times between June 21 and July 29. He literally rushed to the hospital on a horse-drawn carriage on November 29 as soon as he disembarked from Shinbashi station. When he was away, Zekō sent Sōseki numerous postcards, letters, and a maple tree bonsai that Sōseki placed at his bedside. They made trips to Kamakura, Shiobara, Chūzenji, Karuizawa, Yugawara, Hakone, often dining in style and sometimes traveling by Zekō's automobile.[33] Despite an intimate friendship, there was no record of a single letter from Sōseki to Zekō. Yet there is no doubt that Zekō occupied a significant place in Sōseki's mind and work as he drifted in and out of the space of illness and death. As Sōseki started to write *Remembrances* (Omoidasukoto nado) on October 21 in the hospital after the near death experience in Shūzenji, Zekō appeared twice in the first entry, first in connection to the bonsai and next in a telegram with a standard phrase, "Best wishes for a safe return to Tokyo."[34] Zekō's tribute to Sōseki after his death was short (only 300 characters), understated, and funny: he was stubborn, kind, and the chief priest in Enkakuji had advised him to become a monk.[35] The economy of written words between the two suggests a self-evident bond that requires no verbal elaboration.

The "Phantom Lecture" in Dalian

Sōseki delivered three lectures during his trip to Manchuria, one of which was thought to be lost until the discovery of a copy of the printed version in the *Manshū nichinichi shimbun* in 2008.[36] Titled "The Relations Between Things and Three Types of People," it provides a clue to understanding the ambiguous time and space in-between things and people that dominate *Here and There*. In the lecture, Sōseki categorized people into "those who illuminate the relations between things" (scientists and philosophers), "those who change the relations between things" (Mantetsu people and the army), and "those who savor the relations between things" (artists and writers).

The three types of people are based closely on the categorization in an earlier lecture, "The Philosophical Foundation of Art" (Bungei no tetsugakuteki kiso, 1907), which provides a more elaborate scheme of correspondence.[37] Type 1 people exercise their intellect and seek truth as the highest ideal. Type 2 people exercise their will power and seek magnificence. Type 3 people exercise their feelings and seek love and justice.[38]

The tripartite tension and dynamics sustained in the balance of intellect, feelings/affect, and will power are apparent in many of his works, most notably in the opening of *Kusamakura*. In the lectures and *Kusamakura*, Sōseki emphasizes the importance of a balance of the tripartite composition, without which the world will be lopsided. Addressing primarily Mantetsu employees in Dalian and speaking in the presence of Zekō, Sōseki points out the abundance of Type 2 people and the shortage of Type 1 and Type 3 in the "newly developed land" of Manchuria. This implies that Japanese in Manchuria may be

able to attain the *tangible* ideal of (material and architectural) magnificence as a result of the exercise of will power of Type 2 people, but not the *intangible* ideals of truth (Type 1) and love and justice (Type 3). He anticipates an evolutionary development that moves from phase one, in which Japan rivals the West in material culture, to phase two, in which people can take time to savor things from different perspectives.[39] He cautions against frantic development that neglects the importance of savoring the relations between things. He compares the material development of Manchuria to his own hectic travels:

> Before I fully understand A, I move on to B, and before I fully understand B, I move on to C. . . . I don't know if any of you suffer from a loss of appetite, but I am sure you find yourself busily moving from one thing to another. In the sense that you have no time to savor anything, I imagine your condition is no different from mine since arriving in Manshū for sightseeing.[40]

The idea of "savoring things" is directly connected with "taste" and "tasting things." In another lecture delivered at the Japanese Club in Yingkou on September 17, Sōseki elaborated on the importance of developing a taste for things that lie outside work, since having the leeway to develop a taste (which he simply defined as "likes and dislikes") for things such as music, literature, and sports suggests a margin for the individual and society to nurture concerns other than livelihood and survival. To Sōseki, it is not victory over Russia but the margin for taste—for savoring things—that bears the mark of an advanced civilization.[41] The Yingkou lecture abandons the light and jesting tone in both *Here and There* and the Dalian lecture, and betrays Sōseki's signature asperity and stringency when it comes to Japan's pretension and discomfort in relation to the West and Asia.

> Some may feel that Japan rivals the West as a first-rate country, but I think Japan has been habitually under Western oppression since the transitional period. I was staying in the Dalian Yamato Hotel and the facilities there entirely catered to Westerners, and remain so today. [. . .] Moreover, I received an invitation to attend a baseball game for the American marine officers, but I couldn't bring myself to wear a frockcoat for the occasion, so I had to miss it. The Chinese working at the station spoke no Japanese and only English, and everything, down to the wielding of cups and spoons, went by Western standard. [. . .] It is necessary for us to break away from that oppression and, as a genuine first-rate country, let them satisfy our taste for things, or, to go all the way to let them savor our taste and convert them to it.[42]

This passage prefigures Sōseki's argument in "The Enlightenment of Modern Japan" (Gendai Nihon no kaika, 1911). "The tide that dominates the modern enlightenment of Japan is a Western current, and, since Japanese who experience that wave are not Westerners, whenever a current washes in, we feel ill at ease as hangers-on in its midst."[43]

For later generations privileged with a global outlook to label Sōseki's rhetoric as merely nationalistic or conservative is to distort past reality with historical hindsight, and to force his Manchuria discourse to fit with the values of our times. Sōseki in Manchuria in 1909 witnessed Japan standing ill at ease between Asia and the West, anxious to expand, to leave Asia behind, and to join the ranks of the victorious West. Though he does not possess the historical hindsight of the post-colonial, postwar reader, Sōseki had the foresight to perceive that the so-called concrete reality of the magnificent stone buildings, the red brick model company housing, the towering chimneys, and the entire utopian blueprint of Manchuria would become ghostly and unreal as time unfolded. He repeatedly emphasized the reality of that which lies in-between—something abstract, nuanced, intangible, and phantasmagoric as a matter of "savoring the relations between things" or "taste." *Here and There* as a literary work is precisely about savoring the gap, absence, or silence in a hectic itinerary, and the result is a bewildering work that delivers Manchuria without Harbin, *Mankan* without Korea, the latest on Japan in Asia without a word about Itō's assassination, a friendship that hovers in the space between the present and the past, and finally, an abrupt termination of serialization.

The Termination of *Here and There*

On December 30, the fifty-first and last installment of *Here and There* in the Tokyo *Asahi* ended unceremoniously with a one-line notice in reduced font, "There is more to write but it is the end of the year so I will call it quits."[44] A few factors contributed to the apparent logic of terminating the work. Straddling the genres of travelogue, essay, memoir, *Here and There* is not a serialized novel that requires an "ending." In his contract with *Asahi*, Sōseki was hired to publish novels and other literary works in the newspaper, and given that *Asahi* did not sponsor his trip and the work fell within the nebulous category of "miscellany," it was not untoward for him to terminate the serialization as he saw fit. Moreover, the newspaper in Meiji consisted of only four to eight pages with tightly packed columns in small fonts, and it was not uncommon for columns to be interrupted, moved from one page to another, or even terminated to make room for news, big events, or writings that appealed more clearly to commercial sponsorship. On occasion, *Asahi* would announce the end of a series and the beginning of a new one, such as the announcement of the end of the "Today's History" series and the beginning of a new "Today's Calligraphy and Art" series on December 28. Some series would end after reaching a rounded number, such as Shibukawa Genji's "Sightseeing Around the World" series ending with a hundred installments. To terminate *Here and There* before an installment on Harbin and any installment at all on Korea is no doubt abrupt, but there are reasons to believe that the decision lies with Sōseki rather than the newspaper.[45]

As early as November 6, Sōseki contemplated terminating the series. In a letter to Ikebe Sanzan, he wrote,

> Even though I have promised to continue with *Here and There*, with Itō's death, General Kitchener's visit, a state funeral, the army large-scale maneuver,[46] it's hard to tell when there'll be open space on page three. The readers are forgetting the piece and I am running out of enthusiasm. A couple of installments are still in Shibukawa's hands, and perhaps you can let me pull out after that.[47]

It was scarcely a coincidence that the letter was dated November 6, one day after the beginning of a new series by Shibukawa Genji in the *Asahi* with an unequivocally xenophobic title, "Horrible Korea" (Osoroshii Chōsen), fanning fear and distrust of Korea in response to Itō's assassination. The series, which ran nearly uninterrupted for twenty-four installments from November 5-30, began with the lines:

> Lord Itō was murdered by a Korean. To put it simply, you can say that Saigō, Ōkubo, Etō, Maebara, the key officers and the tens of thousands of brave soldiers in the Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War were murdered by the Koreans.[48]

The bias and unfair accusations from the second sentence on is obvious, and it is hard to imagine that Sōseki would have wanted to join the chorus of enemy bashing in the tone displayed in "Horrible Korea." Sōseki despised jingoism and group mentality in journalism, even before Itō's assassination provided a ready-made excuse to demonize the Koreans. In a diary entry on April 26, 1909, he critiqued Japan's inferiority complex toward the West and snobbery toward other Asians:

> Cloudy. Over a hundred members of the Korean Visiting Tour came to Japan. Reports in various newspapers sound condescending. We seem to have shelved our own humiliation from the West. [. . .] I would be impressed if the reporters could write about a tour group of over a hundred visitors from the West in the same tone.[49]

Keeping a distance from the collective national rhetoric of public mourning, terror, and xenophobia, Sōseki terminated *Here and There* right before it was scheduled to record his travels to Harbin, where Itō was assassinated. Any installment that mentions Harbin in the winter of 1909 would by necessity have to include comments on Itō's assassination and the political issues of Manchuria and Korea, and Sōseki was not about to change the playful tone of the work to cater to the media. Moreover, his refusal to comment on Itō's assassination in the work has to do with his fundamental skepticism about the existence of any philosophical foundation in historical events in Meiji Japan, as explained in "A Record of Consent" (Tentōroku, 1916):

> I definitely do not think that the Russo-Japanese War occurred under the influence of the thought of some great Japanese philosophers. The same goes for the Sino-Japanese War. I do not believe that the background of any great or small historical

> events in Japan, war or not, was founded upon the thought of any thinkers. Politics in modern Japan is just politics, and thought is thought. The two things may exist in the same society, but they exist entirely in isolation. Thus there is no understanding and communication between the two.[50]

Sōseki's skepticism about the existence of thought or ideals (e.g. freedom, independence, leading Asia) behind political actions made it pointless to seek a deeper meaning of the statesman's murder, and his skepticism prompted him to empty *Here and There* of the place and time of Itō's assassination to spare himself and the reader the pretension of having to identify its philosophical meaning. Thanks to that deliberate erasure, the text was liberated from the obligation of enemy bashing or hero worship. What Sōseki refrained from touching on in *Here and There* was shifted to the space of fiction. In the passing treatment of Itō's assassination in the novel *The Gate* (Mon, 1910), the reclusive and off-beat Sōsuke, in response to his wife's question about why Itō was killed, shrugs it off as destiny, sprinkling his comment with a hint of cynicism and humor, "It'd be pointless for a puny office worker like me to be killed, but it's a fine thing for Itō to be killed in Harbin. [...] Why's that? He'll be remembered historically as a great man. It wouldn't have happened if he had died a normal death."[51]

Since Sōseki terminated the serialization before he reached Harbin, *Here and There* has the appearance of an unfinished work. However, as a literary work, it has a resonating closure. The last installment features Sōseki, Hashimoto Sagorō, and two British inspectors from the consulate visiting a coal mine in Fushun. The Russians used to claim the rights to three out of five coal mines in Fushun, but after their defeat, the Japanese claimed these rights and Mantetsu was in charge of their operations and development since 1907.[52] The fact that Sōseki was in the company of inspectors from the British consulate clearly shows British involvement in Japanese operations in Manchuria. The episode braids together strands of sentiments and concerns throughout the text: exploring an unknown place in the company of an old friend, keeping a silent distance from the victorious West out of pride and discomfort, and despising the imperial manners of the British Consul General for not bothering to acquire the Asian culture and habit of eating with chopsticks despite having lived in China for eighteen years. The last paragraph of the final installment places Sōseki in the dark bowels of the coal mine:

> After lunch, we had a tour of the coal mine. The technician Tajima was our guide. At the entrance they provided five safety lamps and five walking sticks, and we split them among us. We entered a number of caves, each about two-meter square. After walking for about thirty meters, the drift became pitch black. The hand lanterns were not sufficient to even light our feet. But the path was flatter than I expected, and the ceiling was high. We turned right and groped our way down, and Tajima came to a sudden halt in front of me. I stopped too. Since the guide stopped, those who followed all stopped. There was a place to sit. Those who entered the pit usually

> rest for five or six minutes to adjust their eyes to the dark. As the five of us took a break here, we looked at one another's faces in the light of the hand lanterns. We all stood still in silence. No one sat. I could sense the passage of time in full force in the quietude. Before long, the dark place began to look bright. Tajima finally said, I guess we're ready, and turned right to descend deeper and deeper into the earth. I descended after him. The other three followed.[53]

This astonishing last paragraph all of a sudden threatens to plunge an overall detached, humorous, tongue-in-cheek travelogue into a soul-searching piece, where darkness surrounds the individuals from Japan and the British Empire as they "grope [their] way down," "adjust their eyes to the dark," "sense the passage of time in full force in the quietude," and "descend deeper and deeper into the earth," each alone in his pocket of darkness. It is as though the text is about to transform into a different kind of writing, echoing one of the most memorable works on colonialism, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902): "We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness. It was very quiet there."[54]

But Sōseki halts the text right there and then. After all, it is not a text about the encounter of Marlow and Kurtz in the Congo in an overripe stage of imperialism but the reunion of Kinchan and Zekō in virtually colonized territories at an early stage of Japanese expansionism. There are moments when we might wish Sōseki had been more critical or cautionary about Japan's expansionism, but perhaps taking the reader deep into the impenetrable darkness was all he intended to do, since he could not presume to guide the reader beyond what he could see, literally and metaphorically. The descent into darkness in *Here and There* echoes Hirota-sensei's ominous remark in *Sanshirō* (1908) in the lingering mood of national euphoria over the defeat of Russia, "Japan is going to perish."[55]

Conclusion

In the face of a national ideology that emphasizes the collective over the individual in the rise of a modern nation state to rival the West, and in the midst of general public opinions and reactions toward the vanquished, the subjugated, and the enemy in the wake of Itō's assassination, Sōseki turns to memory and illness as an extreme form of individualism and self-expression in *Here and There*. His emphasis of the physical—stomachache, bowel movements—anticipates the focus on the body (*nikutai*) and the self that characterizes postwar literature, as opposed to the emphasis on national polity (*kokutai*) and the nation during wartime. His stance in response to the demands of the nation or the media is one of resistance, as captured in Hirota-sensei's words to Sanshirō, "Even bigger than Japan is the inside of your head. Don't ever surrender yourself—not to Japan, not to anything."[56] The result, as Sōseki puts those words into practice when he was shown the early stage of Japan's expansionism in Manchuria and Korea, is the

chimera of *Here and There*: a travelogue that draws attention to the inner landscape rather than external, a memoir of a friendship that began and ended outside the parameters of a single text, a newspaper serialization that ended before fulfilling what the title promised (no Korea), a work of non-fiction that embodies the art of fiction in its distinct narrative persona, characterization, scene building, unresolved conflicts, dialogues, and the lasting metaphor of descending into darkness.

Sōseki's visit to the *gaichi*—Japan's overseas territories—had a lasting effect in his fiction. In *The Gate*, Yasui and the vagabond brother of Sōsuke's landlord try their luck in Manchuria and Mongolia, and Sōsuke's brother Koroku talks about going to Manchuria if he fails the exam; in *To the Spring Equinox and Beyond* (Higan sugi made, 1912), the unemployed Morimoto talks excitedly about the electric park and other development in Dalian; in the unfinished *Light and Dark* (Meian, 1916), the down-and-out social malcontent Kobayashi is sent off to Korea. In other words, in Sōseki's fiction, the *gaichi* is a place for social malcontents and financial failures and is perhaps a more accurate reflection of the reality that Sōseki perceived in Manchuria and Korea than what he was willing to reveal in his non-fiction. Sōseki refuses to let that reality intrude into the space of *Here and There*, which in the end is sealed off as a space of memory tied to a friendship he values above public duties, political criticism, and historical reality.

The "seed" for the memorable beach scene in *Here and There* was planted twenty years prior to its serialization in the *Asahi*, when Sōseki was twenty-three, in a classical Chinese *kanbun* text titled "A Record of Sawdust" (Bokusetsuroku, 1889), in which Sōseki mentioned the expedition to Enoshima and Zekō the "Quiver."[57] It was followed by Sōseki's essay "Changes" that captures the sharing of room, pocket money, and silly jokes about the opposite sex with Zekō. *Here and There* provides the literary space for the renewal and reinvigoration of that friendship, along with memories of many boyhood friends. The abrupt termination of the serialization had no impact on the long-term engagement between the two friends except to prompt more personal visits, as well as frequent references to Zekō in Sōseki's essays and diary after 1909. Viewed as a literary space for friendship, *Here and There* is precisely "that thing in-between" that Sōseki values most in his "phantom lecture" in Dalian. It occupies an important literary space in a spectrum of texts, from the *kanbun* text to essays and diaries, about the two friends. It straddles the past and the present, the private and the public, youth and adulthood, with an emphasis always on the former in each case, because it is more individual, nuanced, and affective. As for their friendship, it is also an "in-between thing" that demands savoring rather than categorization because it does not belong neatly to the division of human relationships based on sexual preferences, nor does it fit within the literary tradition of texts about men's love (*nanshoku*) in Edo, boy's love in Meiji,[58] or full-fledged same-sex love in Taishō and postwar literature.[59] In the end, Sōseki may not have fulfilled his obligation to complete the serialization, but he fulfills what he set out to do from the start as a writer, which is "to savor the relations between things."

Notes

1.
Natsume Sōseki, *Mankan tokorodokoro* (Here and There in Manchuria and Korea), in *Sōseki zenshū* (The Complete Works of Sōseki), vol. 12 (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1994-95), 227. All quotes from Sōseki are taken from *Sōseki zenshū* (hereafter *SZ*), unless otherwise stated.

2.
Mantetsu is an abbreviation of Minami Manshū Tetsudō Kabushiki Kaisha (The South Manchurian Railway Company, Ltd).

3.
Serialized in the Tokyo *Asahi* from October 21 to December 30, and the Osaka *Asahi* from October 22 to December 29. This essay refers to the serialization dates in the Tokyo *Asahi*.

4.
Matsuoka Yōsuke (1880-1946), politician and president of Mantetsu (1935-39). His publication *Narrating Mantetsu* (Mantetsu o kataru) (Tokyo: Naikaku Tōkeikyoku [Cabinet Statistics Bureau], 1936) represents the view of the ruling party. Kikuchi Kan's (1888-1958) *An Unofficial History of Mantetsu* (Mantetsu gaishi, 1933) (Tokyo: Hara Shobō, 2011) was a dramatized account of the history of Mantetsu commissioned by the *Manshū shimbunsha* (Manshū News).

5.
Kodama and Gotō wrote the "Outline" in 1905 as the Russo-Japanese War was coming to an end. Gotō shared with Kodama the idea of modeling Mantetsu after the East India Company. Quoted in Katō Kiyofumi, *Mantetsu zenshi—kokusaku kaisha no zenbō* (A Complete History of Mantetsu: The Whole Picture of a Company under National Policy) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2006), 29.

6.
Original Japanese for all three departments: Research Department (Chōsabu), Mantetsu Investigation Department (Mantetsu Chōsabu), East Asia Economic Investigation Bureau (Tōa Keizai Chōsakyoku).

7.
Natsume Sōseki, "Henka" (Changes), *SZ*, vol. 12, 208.

8.
SZ, vol. 20, 70.

9.
See Akiyama Yutaka, "Sōseki no Manshū ni okeru kōen ni tsuite—'Mono no kankei to san'yō no ningen' o megutte" (On Sōseki's Lecture in Manshū: Concerning "The Relations Between Things and Three Types of People"), *Ronza* (Forum)(September 2008): 195; and Aoyagi Tatsuo, *Mantetsu sōsai Nakamura Yoshikoto to Sōseki* (Mantetsu President Nakamura Yoshikoto and Sōseki) (Tokyo: Bensei Shuppan, 1996), 128. To go to Korea, Sōseki ended up borrowing a hundred yen from Satō Yasunosuke (penname Rokkotsu, 1871-1944), who once studied poetry under Masaoka Shiki and was an employee in the Mantetsu Fengtian office during Sōseki's visit (see diary entry September 25, 1909, *SZ*, vol. 20, 119).

10.
Aoyagi, *Mantetsu sōsai*, 125.

11.
Sōseki compared Ikebe Sanzan (1864-1912) to Saigō Takamori. See "Ikebe kun no shiron ni tsuite" (About Ikebe's Historical Discourse), *SZ*, vol. 16, 501.

12.
For Sōseki's condition of employment at the *Asahi*, see his March 11, 1907 letter to his contact at the *Asahi*, Shirani Saburō, whose older brother, Shirani Takeshi, was Sōseki's former student. *SZ*, vol. 23, 30-31.

13.
See "Bunten to geijutsu" (Monbushō Art Exhibition and Art, 1907), *SZ*, vol. 16, 507.

14.
SZ, vol. 23, 303-4.

15.
SZ, vol. 23, 304.

16.
Sōseki started the column on November 25. See letter to Terada Torahiko, *SZ*, vol. 23, 304.

17.
See "Ikkan shitaru fubenkyō—watakushi no keika shita gakusei jidai" (Constantly Lazy in My Studies: My Student's Days), *SZ,* vol. 25, 317-25.

18.
Sōseki mentioned "the seven of us" more than once. See chapter 12 in *Here and There in Manchuria and Korea*. The seven friends included Sōseki, Hashimoto Sagorō, Satō Tomokuma, Ōta Tatsuto, Koshiro Hitoshi, Nakamura Zekō, Nakagawa Kojurō, with some variation. Ōta Tatsuto mentioned a Jūninkai (Ten-Person Club) among the Seiritsu Gakusha preparatory school boys, which included the above seven. See *Yobimon jidai no Sōseki* (Sōseki in Preparatory School Days), *SZ*, supplement, 15-26.

19.
Quotes from *Mankan tokorodokoro* are from *SZ*, vol. 12, 227-351.

20.
Ibid., chapter 13.

21.
Ibid., chapter 21.

22.
Ibid.

23.
Others acquaintances from youth include Tachibana Masaki (chapter 10), who Sōseki fondly called "Masaki-kō"; Matano Yoshio (chapter 11), Sōseki's houseboy in his Kumamoto days; and Shirani Takeshi (chapter 21), Director General of the Civil Government.

24.
Katō, *Mantetsu zenshi*, 244.

25.
See Sōseki, "Henka."

26.
Sōseki, *Mankan tokorodokoro*, chapter 1.
27.
According to Sōseki's friend, Ōta Tatsuto, the Enoshima excursion took place in 1884 (Meiji 17), around May or June, so Sōseki's temporal recollection was a little muddled. See Ōta Tatsuto, *Yobimon jidai no Sōseki,* in *SZ*, supplement, 15-26, esp. 16-20.
28.
The red blanket (*akagetto*) in Meiji refers to country folks who went sightseeing in the city with a red blanket on their back instead of an overcoat. By extension, it refers to country bumpkins in the city (*onoborisan*) or those who went abroad to the West but were unfamiliar with Western ways.
29.
Sōseki, *Mankan tokorodokoro*, chapter 12.
30.
Japan did not receive war indemnity to cover the approximate two billion yen war expenditure (four times its annual budget) and was in a straitened state despite the victory over Russia. See Nishizawa Yasuhiko, *Zusetsu Mantetsu-Manshū no kyojin* (Explanatory Illustrations of Mantetsu: The Giant in Manshū) (Tokyo: Kawade Shobō Shinsha, [2000], 2008), 20-21.
31.
Sōseki, "Mankan no bunmei," in *SZ,* vol. 25, 369.
32.
Sōseki, *Mankan tokorodokoro*, chapter 2.
33.
For visits and trips, see diary entries and fragments, June 1910-February 1916 (*SZ*, vol. 20, 141-562). In 2014, Sōseki's and Zekō's signatures (Z. Nakamura and K. Natsume, both in Sōseki's hand) were discovered in a guest book in the Fujiya Hotel in Hakone, dated November 16, 1915. See *Asahi Digital* (http://digital.asahi.com/articles/ASG5R5WR5G5RUCLV014.html?_requ...RUCLV014.htmlamp;iref=comkiji_txt_end_s_kjid_ASG5R5WR5G5RUCLV014, accessed May 27, 2014).
34.
Sōseki, *Omoidasukoto nado* (Remembrances), in *SZ*, vol. 12, 357-59.
35.
Ibid.
36.
The *Asahi* journalist Makimura Ken'ichirō made the discovery. See *Sōseki maboroshi no kōen* (Sōseki's Phantom Lecture), in *Asahi shimbun* (evening edition, May 24, 2008).
37.
For a discussion of the lecture, see Angela Yiu, *Chaos and Order in the Works of Natsume Sōseki* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998), 85-89.
38.
In addition to the three categories, Sōseki added the category of affect (*jōsho*) in "The Philosophical Foundation of Art," whose corresponding ideal is beauty (*bi*). To avoid confusion, I will stay with the tripartite categorization in the Dalian lecture.
39.
Quotes from the lecture are taken from *Ronza* (September 2008), 184-92.
40.
For a discussion of the inability to savor dishes at one's leisure in Sōseki's "The Enlightenment of Modern Japan" (Gendai Nihon no kaika), see Yiu, *Chaos and Order*, 113.
41.
This explains the transition from the battle scene to the discourse on taste in "Shumi no iden" (The Inheritance of Taste, 1906), Sōseki's post Russo-Japanese War short story.
42.
Sōseki, "Shumi ni tsuite" (About Taste), in *SZ*, vol. 25, 29-30.
43.
Sōseki, "Gendai Nihon no kaika" (The Enlightenment of Modern Japan), in *SZ*, vol. 16, 415.
44.
When *Here and There* was collected in the monograph *Four Pieces* (Shihen, 1910), published by Shun'yōdō, it carried a slightly longer but equally vague notice about its abrupt termination. "It will already be the end of the year by the time this appears in the newspaper. It is awkward crossing over into another year, so I will end here for the time being." *Natsume Sōseki zenshū* (The Complete Works of Natsume Sōseki), vol. 7 (Tokyo: Chikuma Bunko, 1988), 561.This quote appears only in the Chikuma Natsume Sōseki zenshū (*NSZ*) and not in the Iwanami Sōseki zenshū (*SZ*).
45.
See also Tanaka Toshihiko, "Naze Natsume Sōseki wa *Mankan tokorodokoro* o chūdan shita noka?" (Why Did Natsume Sōseki Terminate *Mankan tokorodokoro*), *Nihongo bungaku* (Japanese Literature), vol. 34 (2006): 291-312.
46.
General Horatio Herbert Kitchener (1850-1916) was a British army officer who visited Japan to view the army large-scale maneuver in Utsunomiya in 1909.
47.
SZ, vol. 23, 298.
48.
Asahi shimbun, November 5, 1909.
49.
SZ, vol. 20, 30.
50.
Sōseki, "Tentōroku" (A Record of Consent), in *SZ*, vol. 16, 640-41.
51.
Sōseki, *Mon* (The Gate), in *SZ*, vol. 6, 369.
52.
See note on Fushun in *Mankan tokorodokoro*, *SZ*, vol. 12, 703-4.
53.
Sōseki, *Mankan tokorodokoro*, 351.
54.
Conrad, "Heart of Darkness" in *The Portable Conrad*, ed. Morton Dauwen Zabel (New York: Penguin Books,

1979), 539. Sōseki is familiar with Conrad's "Typhoon" and "The Nigger of the 'Narcissus.'" See "Konraddo no egakitaru shizen ni tsuite" (About Nature in Conrad's Depiction), in *SZ*, vol. 16, 257-59.

55.
Sōseki, *Sanshirō*, in *SZ*, vol. 5, 292.

56.
SZ, vol. 5, 292.

57.
The overall text is about an outing to the Bosō peninsula, and Sōseki sent the work to Masaoka Shiki (*SZ*, vol. 18, 77-85, esp. 82).

58.
Hirano Keiichirō suggests that "boy's love" in Meiji literature typically features homosexual attraction as a passing phase in preparation for heterosexual love. This fits with the conversation between Sensei and I in *Kokoro*. See Hirano Keiichirō, "*Kamen no kokuhaku* ron" (About *Confessions of a Mask*), *Shinchō* (New Current) 102, 2 (February 2015): 203-33, esp. 218-19.

59.
The representative Taishō work on same-sex love is Murayama Kaita's "The Bust of the Beautiful Young Salaino" (Bishōnen Saraino no kubi, 1913-14), and the representative postwar work is Mishima Yukio's *Confessions of a Mask* (Kamen no kokuhaku, 1949).