

Natsume Sôseki (tr. Jay Rubin). *Sanshiro* (1908). Ann Arbor: U. Mich. Center for Japanese Studies. 2002. [Published two years after *Botchan*, the following is from the opening chapter:]

He drifted off, and when he opened his eyes, the woman was still there. Now she was talking to an old man -- the farmer from two stations back. Sanshiro remembered him. With a wild shout, the old fellow had come bounding onto the train at the last second. Then he had stripped to the waist, revealing a back covered with cautery scars. Sanshiro had watched him wipe the sweat from his body, straighten his kimono, and sit down beside the woman.

The woman had caught Sanshiro's eye when she boarded in Kyoto. She was very dark, almost black. The ferry had brought him from Kyushu, and as the train drew closer to Hiroshima, then Osaka and Kyoto, he had watched the complexions of the local women turning lighter and lighter, and before he knew it he was homesick. Then she had entered the car, and he felt he had gained an ally of the opposite sex. She was a Kyushu-color woman.

She was the color of Miwata Omitsu. At home, he had always found Omitsu an annoying girl, and he had been glad to get away from her. But now he saw that Omitsu's type could be very nice after all... [p3]

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The train had been under way again for what might have been two minutes when the woman rose from her seat and glided past Sanshiro to the door of the car. The color of her obi caught his eye now for the first time. He watched her go out, the head of a boiled sweetfish in his mouth. He sunk his teeth into it over and over and thought, she's gone to the toilet.

Before long, she was back. Now he could see her from the front. He was working on the last of his dinner. Looking down, he dug away at it with his chopsticks. He took two, three bulging mouthfuls of rice, and still it seemed she had not gone back to her seat. Could she be standing in the aisle? He glanced up and there she was, directly in front of him. But the moment he raised his eyes, the woman started to move. Instead of passing by Sanshiro and returning to her seat, however, she turned into a place just ahead of his and poked her head out the window. She was having a long, quiet look. He saw how the side locks of her hair fluttered in the rush of wind. Then, with all his strength, Sanshiro hurled the empty wooden lunch box from his window. A narrow pane of glass was all that separated Sanshiro's window from the woman's. As soon as he released the box into the wind, the lid shot back against the train in a flash of white, and he realized what a stupid thing he had done. He looked at the woman, but he could not be sure. Her face was still outside the window. Then she calmly drew her head in and dabbed at her forehead with a print handkerchief. The safest thing would be to apologize. [p5]

Paper Assignment: Due February 17: 7 pages (please print it out, normal type-size, normal double-spacing, normal margins, spell-checked and stapled with no special coverlets or cover pages, etc.)

a. Start with a specific scene and quote drawn from either *Noli* or *Botchan*. The more unremarkable-seeming, the better. Work with it. Be creative. Trust your intelligence to be creative. When you write your paper, start with this explicit quote.

b. How does the quote map (and co-map) geography, gender, class, race, human bodily characteristics, human development, clothing, things, the boundedness (or shape, or unboundedness) of societies, nature, day-night, dark-light, mood, civilization, time (cultural past, present, future, etc.), language, logic, the position of the reader, nationality, foreignness, social power, etc.

c. For any of these, does the author produce a 'straw man' sort of generalization that is then opposed or otherwise messed with, or else perhaps affirmed or even reinforced?

d. Relate your observations to something in *each* of the other novels (*Tarzan*, *Noli*, *Botchan*), and to *at least two* of the quotes from the various handouts.