

論文の英文要旨

論文題目 Criticism of Western Civilization in Soseki's and Dostoevsky's Literary Works

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine the parallel themes and character types developed in the literary works of Natsume Soseki (1867–1916) and Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821–1881) from the perspective of the similar historical context in which they were created, rather than attributing it to Dostoevsky's mere one-way influence of Dostoevsky on Soseki, which was the prevailing attitude in previous research on this topic. The aim of this thesis is threefold: to determine the precise timeframe of Soseki's acquaintance with Dostoevsky's work and thus eliminate the possibility of his influence in Soseki's works preceding that period; to examine the various similarities between Soseki's and Dostoevsky's works, taking into account the historical backdrop; and finally, to consider the possibility of actual influence in Soseki's *Meian (Light and Dark)* that was written after reading Dostoevsky.

In Chapter 1, the peculiarity of modernization, which in its essence was a process of westernization, in Russia and Japan and the way it informed the theoretical and literary tendencies of the time are examined.

Chapter 2 reconstructs the timeline of Soseki's interaction with Dostoevsky's work based on his diary entries, his disciple Morita Sohei's accounts of the issue, and the actual literary works in which Dostoevsky or his works are mentioned. First, Soseki's 1910 essay collection *Omoidasu koto nado (Recollections and Other Matters)*, following his near-death experience due to massive gastric hemorrhage, is examined. In Chapters 20 and 21, where Dostoevsky is mentioned for the first time in Soseki's oeuvre, Soseki makes a connection between his out-of-body type of experiences during his recovery and Dostoevsky's psychological state preceding his epileptic seizures. He also describes, in great detail, Dostoevsky's mock trial and laments his inability to imagine Dostoevsky's face during his terrible ordeal. However, these first mentions only attest to his knowledge of certain biographical details, which were most likely gained by reading Merezhkovsky's *Tolstoy and Dostoevsky* a year prior. According to Morita's recollections and Soseki's diary entries, Morita lent Constance Garnett's translation of Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* to Soseki in November, 1915, followed by "3-4 more of Dostoevsky's works" that he had in his possession. Based on this correspondence, it appears that Soseki continued to read Dostoevsky up until March 1916. In his last novel, *Meian (Light and Dark)*, serialized later in the same year and left unfinished due to his untimely death, Dostoevsky appears once again, this time in relation to "Russian novelists". It is fairly safe to assume that Soseki started

reading Dostoevsky in late 1915 and all his prior works were not influenced by Dostoevsky. Rather, the numerous parallelisms between the two authors' literary expressions, which have been highlighted in previous research, are based on their similar views on modern life and the way in which Western civilization shaped Russian and Japanese societies respectively. A chronological table illustrating Soseki's engagement with Dostoevsky is also provided in the appendix.

Chapter 3 focuses on two coming-of-age novels, Dostoevsky's *The Adolescent* (1875) and Soseki's *Sanshiro* (1908), and discusses the allegorical meaning behind Arkady and Sanshiro's initiation into adulthood in St. Petersburg and Tokyo, respectively, as well as the imagery used for both cities. Common themes evident in both works are also considered, such as alienation, suicide, and the fragmented or non-existent relationship of the protagonists with their biological fathers. It becomes apparent that the father figures represent not only the older generation but also the past itself and reflects the authors' multifaceted perspective on the modernization process in Russia and Japan, respectively; its influence on society; and the dangers of erasing history in exchange for progress. Soseki's short novel *Nowaki* (1907) and Dostoevsky's *Notes from Underground* (1864) are also discussed in relation to the theme of adolescence and the Underground Man's psyche.

Chapter 4 examines Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* (1869) and Soseki's *Kokoro* (1914), two novels revolving around the entangled love relationships between the main characters. In both cases, the theme of love showcases the somber dimensions of jealousy, egoism, and the desire to possess, often coupled with the power of money. Additionally, the parallel roles of Myshkin and K as the antitheses of modern society, marred by materialism and self-indulgence, are analysed. The main difference in the relationship dynamics depicted in the two works is the somewhat ambiguous and unassertive presence of Ojosan, the object of desire in *Kokoro*, in stark contrast to the daring nature of Nastasya and Aglaya in *The Idiot*. As such, the problem of Sensei's self-centered desire, which deprives Ojosan of her personality and agency, is further emphasized, together with, on an allegorical level, the ruinous path of imperialism that Japan has set on. Soseki's overall anti-colonial attitude throughout his career was also one of the main factors that differentiated him from his Russian counterpart.

Chapter 5 comprises two parts. Part 1 considers Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866), Soseki's *Sorekara* (1909), and the motifs of young intellectuals who are consumed by a destructive ideas. Raskolnikov and Daisuke have diverse social backgrounds and belong to different social classes. However, both pride themselves on their intellectual superiority, which alienates them from society and ultimately leads them on a dark path. Raskolnikov commits ideological murder while Daisuke, at that time believing that it is the "honorary" thing to do, gives up the woman he loves for the sake of his friend who marries her instead, thus rendering both her and himself miserable and detached from reality. Three years later, Daisuke sacrifices his social status and financial stability by reconnecting with Michiyo, who has committed the crime of adultery under common law. Paradoxically, it is through murder and adultery that both Raskolnikov and Daisuke break free from their respective

mental prisons and enter the real world, just as Sonya's and Michiyo's roles in the process are also strikingly similar.

By holistically reading through Dostoevsky's and Soseki's oeuvres while taking into account the historical and cultural background of the time, it is apparent that numerous parallels in terms of the recurring themes, character types, internal and external dynamics, and sheer scope of both authors' insights into the human psyche, point not to cases of influence. Rather, they emphasize the synergy of thought shaped by the distinctive challenges their respective societies faced in their bid to join the modern world in the late 19th and the early 20th centuries.

Part 2 explores the possibility of Dostoevsky's influence on Soseki's last work, *Meian (Light and Dark)*, focusing mainly on the role of Kobayashi, who, with his resemblance to Marmeladov or Lebedev, is the most Dostoevskian character in Soseki's oeuvre and, similar to his counterparts, carries out the most vehement commentary on the ills of modern society. Moreover, his role in weaving through the various strata of society, thus connecting different characters throughout the novel and influencing their perspective, is not seen in Soseki's previous work and highly suggests some degree of connection with his Russian predecessors. However, a further examination of *Meian* is required as to determine with greater certainty whether Soseki was indeed influenced by Dostoevsky during the last year of his life, which will be the next stage of this study.