Sōseki and the Wallace Collection

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1. Introduction

In Sanshiro (1908), Sōseki Natsume wrote about Mineko, the heroine of the novel, as if she was posing in a picture, continuously, from the first scene to the last. When he described Mineko's eyes, he referred to paintings by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805). We can assume that Sōseki saw his paintings in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House during his stay in England between October 28, 1900 and December 5, 1902. This assumption is partly based on the fact that the museum catalogue, Pictures in the Wallace Collection (Frederick Miller, 1902), is left in the Sōseki Library of the University of Tohoku.

In this paper, I will survey this catalogue and several press articles on the paintings by Greuze exhibited at Hertford House at the time of the museum's opening (its opening was on June 25, 1900) and discuss the probability of Sōseki's visit to see the Wallace Collection and the artistic inspiration of Greuze's paintings into Sōseki's creative mind.

2. Greuze in Sanshiro

In Sanshiro, Sōseki introduces Greuze's portraits:

"Pardon me," she began, bowing. As before, she floated forward from the waist. But her face did not move down. Even while she was bowing, she stared straight at Sanshiro. Her throat seemed to extend toward him, and at the same time her eyes flashed into his.
A few days before, Sanshiro’s aesthetics teacher had shown the class some portraits by Greuze. All women painted by this artist, he explained, wore richly voluptuous expressions. Voluptuous! There was no other way to describe her eyes at that moment. They were trying to tell him something, something voluptuous, something that appealed directly to the senses. But their plea pierced the bone of the senses and reached to the marrow. It went beyond bearable sweetness and became a violent stimulus. Far from sweet, it was excruciating. This was not, to be sure, cheap coquetry. There was a cruelty in the girl’s glance that made the one it fell on wish to play the coquette. Nor did she bear the slightest resemblance to a portrait by Greuze. Her eyes were small, half the size of those in his paintings. (3)

The word “voluptuous”, which Sōseki uses three times in Sanshiro, can be found in the catalogue, Pictures in the Wallace Collection: “The works by which Greuze is best known is that in which he combines, in a way that is all his own, the innocence of girlhood with a sentimental and voluptuous charm….“(4) The Times (June 23, 1900) also refers to Greuze’s paintings, “the heads of young girls, cunningly combining seemingly simplicity with voluptuous grace….“ It should be noted that “voluptuous” was the word to be associated with Greuze’s paintings at that time, which Sōseki must have known after seeing Greuze’s paintings at Hertford House.

In addition, the tendency of double-entendre, “this cunning combination of youthfulness and ripe maturity”(5) was the feature best illustrating his paintings. As Edmond and Jules de Goncourt point out, Greuze personifies “an ingenuousness without strength or remorse, yielding to a surprise, to the senses, to pleasure with the charm and skill of a kind of angelic hypocrisy, a kind of natural duplicity.”(6)

“Angelic hypocrisy” or “natural duplicity” is the phrase which comes very close to what Sōseki called “an unconscious hypocrite”, referring to the heroine of Sanshiro, when he was asked about the novel before starting.(7)
When he expressed this idea, he must have been thinking about the voluptuous eyes of Greuze's girls which evinced the strong impression of angelic hypocrisy.

In his "Shizen wo Utsusu Bunsho" (Sentences Drawing Nature, 1906), Sōseki maintains that whether describing nature or things, it is more interesting to grasp its central theme and make it stand out than to give detailed descriptions. In Sanshiro, Sōseki focuses on the eyes of Greuze's girls and intends to portray effectively the sensuality of the heroine, Mineko.

It should also be noted that another aspect of Greuze's paintings—moral art, which attracted the moralist Diderot—could have drawn Sōseki's attention. The idea of moral instruction pursued Greuze throughout his work and he intended to "induce virtuous conduct by the efforts of his brush." Then Greuze's paintings turned out to be used for moral purpose and Frederick Miller in Pictures in the Wallace Collection criticizes "severe moralists" for their self-delusion, "... while they would burn 'A Bacchante,' they would put 'Filial Piety' in a Sunday school." He quotes the words of Thomas Hood:

"A man may cry Church! church! at every word,
With no more piety than other people;
A daw's not reckoned a religious bird
Because it keeps a-cawing from a steeple."

Beside Hood's quote in the catalogue at the Sōseki Library, we can find a vertical line in the margin, drawn probably by Sōseki himself, who must have agreed with Hood. Sōseki was concerned about the moral aspect of art and in Sōseki Shiryo—Bungakuron Note (Sōseki's Research Materials—A Notebook for A Theory of Literature, 1976), he argues:

Novels could also have been written for some moral purposes but if we write them intentionally for its own sake, we are inclined to twist human
character and distort the reality and there comes out some defects in the parts of the novels which should be artistic. However, we must not insist that art should not be related to moral.\textsuperscript{11}

Sōseki maintains that art should not be for moral's sake nor art's sake although it should have something to do with moral. He continues, "Novelists should stimulate people's minds and cause them illusions by means of the use of moral ideas."\textsuperscript{12}

In the catalogue, there are three illustrated pictures of Greuze's paintings: Espièglerie, Innocence and Study of Grief. Among them, especially the eyes of the girl in Innocence—the depth, the veiled flame in the girl's eyes, the liquid quality of the glance and the quivering of emotion or passion behind the eyelashes—can really be associated with Mineko's eyes. We can safely say it is certain that Sōseki actually visited Hertford House during his stay in London and saw Greuze's paintings in the Wallace Collection, which must have left a lasting impression on Sōseki.

3. Greuze and the Wallace Collection

In addition to the three paintings above, there were eighteen more paintings by Greuze in the Wallace Collection when Sōseki was staying in London and no other gallery was so rich in examples of Greuze as this collection. The Wallace Collection was opened to the public in 1900, the same year when Sōseki was sent to England by the Japanese government. There are some newspaper articles about Greuze's paintings at the time of the museum's opening:

Greuze... was the object of Lord Hertford's and Sir Richard Wallace's eager admiration, and Hertford-house contains no less than 21 examples of him, forming the most important collection in the world. The pictures of Greuze which Diderot admired, the scenes in which he expressed so
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perfectly the sentimentalism of the 18th century, are just those which Lord Hertford did not buy; but of the heads of young girls, .... (The Times, June 23, 1900)

A sickly sentimentalist, with a waxy palette, Greuze has painted one masterpiece, “The Broken Pitcher,” in the Louvre. In the Wallace Collection there are twenty-one pictures, but with the exception of the portrait of Mme. (sic) Sophie Arnould, a famous singer and actress of the French opera, they are all thoroughly typical and uninteresting. They are, for the most part, heads of young girls, almost children.... (The Birmingham Daily Post, June 23, 1900)

The Greuzes in the Wallace Collection are of that mock-innocent, semi-sensuous type which has most attracted the private collector both at home and abroad. (The Daily Telegraph, June 26, 1900)

The Hertford House treasures number amongst them about as many Greuzes as there are Bouchers. One or two of them are pieces of domestic genre, in which, with a morality a thousand times too obvious, Greuze put into his picture the cheaply virtuous sentiment of melodrama. (The Standard, June 29, 1900)

As we can see from these articles, most critics were rather hostile to the selection, especially to the implication of the pseudo-morality of his paintings. However, the following comment by “Iris” seems to be a more typical example of the “popular” opinion.

... the masters of the French School of Paintings of the eighteenth century are gathered together, represented in fact as they are in no public or private gallery in Europe except that of the Louvre, which itself is surpassed by the numerous and complete collection of Greuze in...
Hertford House; and beyond praise are his lovely girlish heads listening, as it were in purity and innocence, to a far-off song of greater emotion. (*The Gentlewoman*, June 30, 1900)

Among the twenty one paintings by Greuze, *Innocence* was especially loved and its postcards were biggest sellers in the early years of the museum’s existence. It was also much reproduced in paintings and even on porcelain. *The Daily News* of October 29, 1900, shows an unusual attendance at the Wallace Collection for the day before (Sunday, October 28).

... Yesterday was the last Sunday on which the Wallace Collection in Manchester-square would be open for some months to come... it was a Sunday record. The total for the three hours from two to five was two thousand five hundred. The stream of visitors was incessant, and the galleries were inconveniently crowded... Over £1,000 has been taken for catalogues since the collection was opened to the public... Foreigners, and particularly the French, are very numerous. Americans—whom, it will be observed, we have not classed as foreigners—are also frequent visitors.

The total number of visitors from the opening of the Wallace Collection to October 28, was 225,209 and this day (October 28, 1900) happened to be the day Sōseki arrived in London from Paris. We can imagine that Sōseki, soon after his arrival, might have heard or read the articles about the collection and would have taken an interest. We can see that the Wallace Collection was one of the most fashionable places of the day in London and attracted people, not only the English, but foreigners as well.

4. Conclusion

In *Sanshiro*, Sōseki portrayed Mineko’s character as complex, made up of
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various characteristics each one of which he related to a painting. By successively revealing aspects of her character, he was able to show her character as evolving yet consistent. When he focussed on one aspect, her sensuality, he made reference to the eyes of Greuze's girls and used the word "voluptuous," which was linked to the strong impression of angelic hypocrisy which the eyes of Greuze's girls evinced. After seeing Greuze's paintings at Hertford House, Sōseki must have known that this was the word generally associated with Greuze's girls in those days. The word and the image associated with the paintings must have stayed long in Sōseki's mind. When Sōseki started to write Sanshiro in 1908, Greuze's girls must have emerged deep from within his mind, and the word "voluptuous" was incorporated into the creation of Mineko's character.

NOTES

(1) The Wallace Collection was bequeathed to the nation in February 1897 by Lady Wallace. She was the widow of Sir Richard Wallace, a notable collector of art and also, as the illegitimate son of the 4th Marquess of Hertford, the inheritor of one of the greatest of all private collections. By the terms of Lady Wallace's bequest the Collection is named The Wallace Collection and it remains together "unmixed with other objects of art". Because nothing may therefore be loaned or added it enshrines an Anglo-French nineteenth-century taste. (The Trustees of the Wallace Collection. The Wallace Collection Guide, 1996)

Twenty one paintings by Greuze, which were bought by the 4th Marquess of Hertford, were: Innocence, Sorrow, Espièglerie, Fidelity, The Listening Girl, Portrait of Mlle. Sophie Arnould, A Bacchante, Portrait of a Lady, Girl with a Gauze Scarf, Boy with a Dog, Ariadne, Girl in a Blue Dress, Girl in a White Dress, A Girl with Doves, Study of Grief, The Votive Offering to Cupid, The Broken Mirror, Filial Piety, Flying Cupid with a Torch, Girl Leaning on her Hand, and The Letter Writer (The last three paintings are now ascribed to Greuze).

(2) This point has been argued before by Toru Haga in Kaiga no Ryobun. Asahi Sensho, 1990.


(4) Miller, Frederick. Pictures in the Wallace Collection. London: C. Arthur Pearson Ltd.,
1902. 71.

(5) Ibid., 72.


(9) cf. Goncourt, *op. cit.*, 222.

(10) cf. Miller, *op. cit.*, 75.


(12) Ibid., 385.
漱石とウォレス・コレクション

高 橋 ひさ子

夏目漱石は、『三四郎』のヒロイン美穂子を最初の登場シーンから最後の「森の女」の油絵まで、一貫して絵画との関連で美穂子を描写することで、その複雑な性格を浮かび上がらせようとしたものと考えられる。美穂子の官能的な一面を描くためには、美穂子の眼を「グラブチュアス」と形容し、18世紀フランス人画家グルーズが描いた絵の女性の眼を鮮やかに連想させるという手法を使っている。グルーズの絵画は1900年6月25日、ロンドン、マンチェスター・スクウェアー（Manchester Sq.）にあるハートフォード・ハウス（Hertford House）で初めて一般公開されたウォレス・コレクションの中に21点あった。漱石は同年10月28日に文部省派遣の留学生としてイギリスの土を踏み、1902年12月5日にイギリスを発っているので、留学中、おそらくこのウォレス・コレクションを訪れグルーズの絵を鑑賞したのではないかと考えられている。東北大学の漱石文庫にこのウォレス・コレクションのカタログ、Pictures in the Wallace Collection（1902）が残されていることも一つの理由である。

本稿では漱石文庫に残されているこのカタログと漱石のイギリス到着年、1900年当時のウォレス・コレクション関連の新聞記事に注目し、以下の点で漱石のウォレス・コレクション訪問の可能性はほぼ確実と考えられると結論づけている。まず第一に、漱石の使った「グラブチュアス」という言葉が、カタログ、新聞共にグルーズの絵画の女性を表現する形容詞として使われており、この言葉が、グルーズの絵を連想させる形容詞として20世紀初頭のロンドンで広く認識されていたということ。また、グルーズの絵の女の持つ特性と見なされていたその二重性—天使の欺瞞—もカタログ、新聞記事に触れられており、その特性が漱石の描こうとした“unconscious hypocrite”の美穂子のイメージにぴったり重なることである。漱石はウォレス・コレクションを実際に訪れグルーズの絵を鑑賞し、その特徴と当時のロンドンでのグルーズの絵の評価を適確に把握していたものと思われる。さらに、このカタログの「グルーズ」の項に漱石のものと推定される傍線が存在し、その傍線部分が、道徳と芸術の関係に関す

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る漱石の論点に照応するため、この傍線が漱石自身の手によるものであると考えられるからである。ウォレス・コレクションで見たグルーズの絵の女の眼は漱石の心の深奥部に留まり、後年『三四郎』のヒロイン像創造に選ばれる強い印象をもつ眼であったのだ。最後に、これらの新聞記事から、このウォレス・コレクションが漱石と同時代の人々をイギリス人は勿論、外国人もも一魅了していたことにも触れている。