

**UNIVERSIDAD INTERNACIONAL DE LAS AMÉRICAS  
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**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**LITERARY ANALYSIS OF THE DEPICTION OF THE  
TRADITIONAL AND THE MODERN JAPANESE SOCIETY IN  
THE BOOK KOKORO BY NATSUME SŌSEKI FROM A NEW  
HISTORICIST PERSPECTIVE**

**Thesis Submitted to Obtain the Bachelor's Degree in English**

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## **Dedication**

I dedicate this project to my family for providing the support I needed during the investigation and the process.

## Abstract

The purpose of this descriptive research was to answer the research question how to analyze the depiction of the traditional and modern Japanese society in the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki from a new historicist perspective? Therefore, in order to answer it, three literary charts were made and based on the specific objectives, using new historicism as the primary perspective to fill said charts. The first literary analysis chart was created to identify the different elements of the book that depicted traditional and modern aspects of Japanese society. The second literary analysis chart was created to analyze different aspects of the book under a literary and historical framework. The third literary analysis chart was created to evaluate the traditional and modern society molds of Japanese society through story fragments of the book. In the case of the first chart, it was found that the book contained several elements that depicted traditional and modern elements to support the story framework. For the second chart, the data allowed to see the weight of the historical background used to tell the story presented through literary elements. For the last chart, the results showed that both of the society molds, traditional and modern, were present throughout the whole book and merged most of the time. Thus, the investigation demonstrated that the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki can be analyzed through the new historicism approach to explore the depiction of traditional and modern Japanese society.

## Resumen

El propósito de esta investigación descriptiva fue responder al problema de ¿cómo analizar la representación de la sociedad japonesa tradicional y moderna en el libro *Kokoro* de Natsume Sōseki a partir del nuevo historicismo? Para dar respuesta a este problema, se realizaron tres tablas de análisis literario, que se basaron en los objetivos específicos, utilizando como perspectiva principal el nuevo historicismo para llenar dichas tablas. La primera tabla de análisis literario se creó para identificar los diferentes elementos del libro que representaban los aspectos tradicionales y modernos de la sociedad japonesa. La segunda tabla de análisis literario fue creada para analizar diferentes aspectos del libro bajo un marco literario e histórico. La tercera tabla de análisis literario se creó para evaluar los moldes de la sociedad tradicional y moderna de la sociedad japonesa a través de fragmentos de la historia del libro. En el caso del primer cuadro, se encontró que el libro contenía varios elementos que representaban aspectos tradicionales y modernos para respaldar el marco literario de la historia. Para la segunda tabla, los datos permitieron ver el peso del trasfondo histórico utilizado para contar la historia presentada a través de elementos literarios. Para el último cuadro, los resultados mostraron que ambos moldes de la sociedad, tradicional y moderno, estuvieron presentes a lo largo de todo el libro, los cuales coexistían la mayor parte del tiempo. Por lo tanto, la investigación demostró que el libro *Kokoro* de Natsume Sōseki puede analizarse a través del enfoque del nuevo historicismo para explorar la representación de la sociedad japonesa tradicional y moderna.

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## Chapter I

### Introductory Framework

This investigation will analyze the book *Kokoro*, written in 1914 by the Japanese author Natsume Sōseki. The analysis will be based on the depiction of the traditional and modern Japanese society represented through various elements of the book with the use of the new historicism approach as the main tool for analysis. For this first chapter, the main objectives of the investigation will be given, which state the main goals and the aim of the investigation. In addition, the main problem regarding the topic will be discussed as the antecedents. Both of these elements presented in this chapter will help deal with the investigation's main problem. Moreover, the relevance of the investigation will be stated as a subject of analysis and as a tool to further understand Japanese culture and history through the eyes of one of its greatest writers. Finally, the scope of the investigation, which deals with the expected research results, will be presented.

#### 1.1 Problem Statement

Japan is known as one of the most modern and advanced countries globally. It shines with its rapid technological advancement and particular, yet modern, society, which is constituted and behaves as a whole. However, Japan is a particularly new "modern" country if compared to other first-world countries such as the United States and England. Japan started its modern ways in 1868, at the beginning of the Meiji era or Meiji Restoration. Nowadays, most of its citizens are accustomed to their modern lifestyle, but this was an arduous and harsh process for the Japanese when the first stone was set on the path to modernity. Japanese people had lived under the traditional way for millennia, and a sudden change, forced change, took a huge toll on them.

Their identity and way of living were not completely erased, but it was not what the government wanted for its citizens. They wanted a modern, occidental-like country. As new generations were born, molding into this new system became easy, but it needed to be better welcomed by the already living and old generations. Many problems arose: gaps between the countryside and the city, wealth gaps, and even knowledge gaps afflicted the country and its people.

This situation, which characterized the Meiji Era, was depicted by many scholars and writers in their articles and book. In the book, *Kokoro* Natsume Sōseki exemplifies this "spirit of Meiji," the Japanese people's identity, or the lack thereof, at the end of this period. Sōseki's ideas of modernity were not limited to his books but also his scholarly essays and philosophical takes. History is written in the pages of his books, and it can be analyzed as such. This opens a space in the analysis of the book through the use of an approach that takes advantage of the historical link that this book has, new historicism, to understand Japanese culture during the end of the Meiji period during those times. As a result, it will be possible to understand the struggle, the lack of identity, and the forced process of modernization that Japanese people endured through the views of Sōseki, who lived during that period, and historical evidence. Therefore, this investigation will analyze under the research question "How to analyze the depiction of the traditional and the modern Japanese society in the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki from a new historicist perspective?" the duality of the society of Meiji Japan, to further the understanding of the Japanese history and, as a result, modern-day Japan.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Investigation**

### ***1.1.1 General Objective***

To analyze the depiction of the traditional and modern Japanese society in the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki from a new historicist perspective.

### ***1.1.2 Specific Objectives***

To identify the different elements presented in the book that can be linked to the traditional or modern Japanese society characteristics.

To create a historical and literary framework under the new historicism approach to explore the relevant aspects of the book.

To evaluate the weight of the two society molds presented in the book for the Japanese culture.

## **1.3 Justification of the Study**

Japan is a very rich country in terms of culture and tradition. Some traditions and elements of its culture date back to very ancient times in its history. Their people are very proud and are very affectionate towards their tradition. However, Japan is also known for its technological advancements and modernity, despite being a relatively new "modern" country. This modernization process started in 1868, almost 155 years ago, when the son of Emperor Komei, Mutsuhito, was declared emperor after his father's death. Not soon after, the Meiji Restoration started to change Japan from the inside. The country had to become as modern as any other country so their country, now out of isolation, could thrive. Surprisingly, Japan caught up with modernity and western culture. However, this took a huge toll on their citizens, who had to live differently from what they already knew. The Meiji Restoration gave birth to a new

struggle between the traditional ways and the modern society which Japan would eventually become.

This essence of the Japanese culture, the duality of their society and, yet, the remarkable modern model of it, which is also present in various pieces of literature such as *Kokoro* from the famous and acclaimed writer Natsume Sōseki, is what this investigation will try to analyze thoroughly. The reason behind this analysis is the lack of investigations, papers, thesis, and books that deal with the book (and its different types of analysis and points of view) from a new historicist perspective and topic of the “modern and the traditional.” It is very important to remark that new historicism would help this analysis to make the investigation go outside of the literature point of view. It would rather lead to an analysis that goes beyond literature. Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary (n.d.) defines it as a form of parallel literary and historical analysis of a given book in which social, political, and ideological elements of the time the book was written are taken into account to explain the literary elements. Although there are a great number of investigations that examine the life of Natsume Sōseki and, thus, its influence reflected in his various literary and philosophical works, there is not enough research related to Sōseki's book, *Kokoro*, from a new historicist perspective while also analyzing the dynamic relationship of the traditional and the modern as depicted in the book through different elements and instances.

This investigation will try, in addition, to let future students at the International University of the Americas (UIA) appreciate the important role of the clash of two different ways of living and the struggle that Japanese society had to endure to become what they are now. This, in addition, would also give them a broader perspective of the Japanese Meiji identity and what led to this sense of identity of the modern Japanese citizen (modern being the end of the Meiji Era to the present), given the fact that the Japanese culture is often misunderstood and,

even, seen as "completely different world" from a socio-cultural perspective. In addition, through the new historicism approach, a more comprehensive look at the culture at the moment the book, *Kokoro*, was written (1914). This means that the readers of this investigation will be capable of seeing the "traditional and the modern" from an author and socio-historical perspective, in which both elements will be juxtaposed to have a clear delimitation of the characteristics of both. In addition, the investigation will set the foundation for future investigations that deal with the Japanese history and culture of the Meiji period and the differences and similarities between traditional and modern Japan. Moreover, it will set a precedent for investigations that deal with Japan's culture and history as a whole, so future students will have an investigation and references that will help them understand this topic further or strengthen it. In order to create awareness of this rich traditional yet modern culture in the Asian continent

#### **1.4 Antecedents**

In Japan's history, every era represented and meant a great change in their people, society, culture, and traditions. The Meiji Era (or Meiji Restoration) was no different. It followed this premise. However, changes were more abrupt and noticeable throughout the whole 44 years of it. They meant a change that had no precedents in the history of Japan, especially since the era of the Shoguns ended with this period. A new Japan was set to arise from the ashes of an isolated and broken country. Being Japanese meant something for its citizens, yet it was not a real identity but a sense of belonging. The real creation of the Japanese identity started here. It took much work. It took them time to accomplish this. However, in terms of western modernization, what Japan did was something without precedents—never seen before. These changes set the foundation for modern Japan and its process of westernization.

For some important scholars and writers of the land of the rising sun, this process was undesirable; however, it was also inevitable. For Natsume Soseki, this change into modernity posed an unescapable change to the traditional Japanese ways. Sōseki talks about this change into modernity in his essay titled "The civilization of modern-day japan (gendai nihon no kaika)," published in 1911. Here he deals with the term civilization but, most importantly, Japanese civilization. He defines it as a dynamic of activities that save or waste energy. He emphasized that the Meiji Era brought more activities that saved energy (more technological advances and social advances that simplified the life of the citizens). In addition, he explains that this modernization is an external stimulus from the western countries, forcing their "ways" into the traditional ones. Japan has had to "evolve" from an isolated nation to a modern (western) nation in less time than the western nations did. This process brought, according to Sōseki, a feeling of estrangement from Japanese society to their own culture and country, but they had no other way but to mold themselves into this new world. He ends the essay with the premise that Japanese people can be reborn from this modernity and create their own from internal stimuli. Nevertheless, the future seems uncertain for Japanese society.

To analyze this "unwanted" progression from traditional to modern, it is important to consider both literary and historical aspects as a whole to have a more comprehensive perspective of the topic. Joe Montenegro Bonilla talks about new historicism as an approach to analyzing literary text from a historical point of view in the article "The American Past and Present: A New Historicist Approach to The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," which was published in 2018 "Letras" (a Costa Rican magazine). In his article, Bonilla talks about Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer from a New Historicist perspective. By doing so, he links the socio-historical context of the novel to the literary elements, thus revealing the perspective of American culture in the 19<sup>th</sup>

century and comparing it with the present. Bonilla, regarding new historicism, uses it as a gap-closer tool between literature and history. In addition, he also talks about the role this approach had in its origins, which rejects the fixed and static nature of old historical types of analysis that saw history as an objective force that defines concepts under the same scope. New historicism is more a subjective analysis in which the history of the readers, author, and book is taken into account as a reflection of the literary elements of a book or piece of literature.

Sōseki's dilemma between the traditional and the modern, which was present in various essays that he wrote before writing his acclaimed book *Kokoro* in 1914, has been studied from different perspectives by different authors. One of them is Richard Ahadi Christina, in his undergraduate thesis, "Binary Opposition as the Manifestation of the Spirit of Meiji in Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*," published in 2019, talks about the identity of Meiji Japan as a binary opposition. He explains that the Spirit of Meiji, the identity expressed in this era, was one of the contradictions. The clash of two different ways of doing, behaving, and culture. This same contradiction, explains Ahadi, is presented throughout the book in different instances and elements. He concludes that the book presents five main binary oppositions that mainly deal with the duality of the Japanese culture in the Meiji Restoration. However, he points out that these oppositions stem from one main binary opposition: the fight between traditionalism and the modern. A struggle engrained into the minds of the Japanese citizens that lived in those times.

This fight or struggle between the traditional and the modern that is dealt with in the words of the book *Kokoro* also implied changes in how Japanese people saw and interpreted some words of their language. Nikulina Nae, in her article, "*Kokoro* and the Agony of the Individual," published in 2002 in the NUCB (Nagoya University of Commerce Business) journal of language, culture, and communication, talks about the terms brought by the Meiji

intelligentsia: individual (個人, Kojin) and society (社会, Shakai). These terms were not entirely new, but they were old concepts that were slightly changed to fit the sentiments and values that the new Japanese government wanted to bring to their people. Traditionally, as mentioned by Nae, Japanese people focused on the group and their duty as individuals to serve the country and the land, which was also portrayed in old Japanese literature (Showa and Tokugawa periods). However, with the influence of the west, a new sense of individualism and materialism was imposed and grew in Japanese society. This created a cultural shock in most parts of the country. It spread slowly and was highly misunderstood by the countryside, creating a gap in language and culture within the same country. This process, Nae argues, started the abandonment of the old values and a crisis of individual identity among Japanese citizens.

Although this struggle between the traditional and the modern brought pessimism and lack of identity to some important figures such as Natsume Sōseki, the sense of nationality, although a modern term in Japan, modernity had to use elements of the past to reconstruct or even build this new Japanese identity. Nicole Belinda Go talks about the role of the emperor and Sōseki's visuals in his works in her Master's degree thesis, "A Visual Theory of Natsume Sōseki: the Emperor and the Modern Meiji Man," published in 2010. Go mentions that the Japanese people did not have a strong sense of identity prior to the Meiji Restoration, nor did they see the emperor as the main figure of the country. Meiji government used the image of the emperor as a symbol of progress, tradition, and unity. Go mentions that this effect can be seen in various works of Sōseki. One example of them is *Kokoro* and even his death. Sōseki embodied the meaning and role of the emperor of Meiji. As a result, Go concludes that while Sōseki had struggled with Modernity his whole life, he represented it vividly throughout his work and life.

The pessimism of the new Japan and its effect on their people, the modern lifestyles that were forced and, ultimately, internalized by the Japanese society.

### 1.5 Scope

This investigation will focus on these specific elements as the main scope of the investigation. In addition, it will also represent the results expected for the investigation once it is finished:

- Japanese society (identity and its people) at the end of the Meiji era, which is the one who is depicted in the book “Kokoro” by Natsume Sōseki, and it is also where Sōseki based the majority of his essays and lived.
- The duality and the struggle between a modern and a traditional "mold" on which society can base were the ones that Japanese people experienced during and after the Meiji period.
- However, t
- he last years of the Meiji Restorations will be explained in the time frames in which that happened. The events that unfolded before and after this period will also play a major role in the investigation.
- Japan's countryside and the city (main cities, but especially the newly formed Tokio) social structures are the main locations in which the topic of the investigation will dwell.
- As a result, an understanding of the Japanese Meiji Restoration will be expected, which also means an understanding of the country's modernization or "westernization" and its roots of its current self. In addition, it will set a good and solid foundation for future investigations dealing with Japanese culture, which especially frames its last 100 years to the present.

## Chapter II

### Theoretical Framework

This investigation contains various concepts and elements that must be explained first to understand the analysis and the conclusion. First, the section in which literary theories and approaches are introduced. Here concepts such as literature, literary theory, and a thorough explanation of the new historicism approach will be presented. Second, a section dedicated to explaining crucial details of the book will be showcased. This section will explain the terminology regarding the content of the book in study, *Kokoro*, by Natsume Sōseki, and Japanese culture. This has to be explained since Japanese culture is frequently not widely known in the west, and some clarification and background details should be presented. Third, themes, symbols, and motifs as elements of the literary analysis will be discussed and mainly explained, so the readers of the investigation can appreciate their importance in the analysis of the book. Last, the biography of the famous Japanese writer, Natsume Sōseki, will be shown, in which his most important life events and accomplishments will be given. In addition, the plot of the book *Kokoro* will be mentioned and briefly analyzed.

#### 2.1 Literary Theories and Approaches

In order to understand the analysis of the book and all the vocabulary that will be used, it is necessary to explain some core concepts. These core concepts are related to literature, analysis, new historicism, and some important elements of the book in study, *Kokoro*.

### ***2.1.1 Literature***

This concept encapsulates a great variety of book and their types. From comics to novels as famous as *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki, both of these elements, and anything that falls in between, is literature. According to Kjældgaard & Simonsen (2017), literature can be defined as any written work in the modern world. Its definition has changed over the years. At some point, literature was knowledge rather than the written word. However, it has become more inclusive, broad, and simple. Literature, in addition, can be divided into genres, styles, types, and more based on the book (written work) characteristics. However, for this investigation, the importance of this concept relapses on classifying the book to be analyzed as a piece of literature written by someone, so it will not be confused with any other type of book that does fall under the literature spectrum.

### ***2.1.2 Literary Theory***

Literary theory is the various theoretical elements used to analyze or classify a literary work. According to Upstone (2017), literary theories are usually questions on how a text functions, the elements inside it, how to analyze it, and its effects on the book's content. Each literary theory is different, and it can explain the different aspects of the book differently, such as the way it is written, the aesthetics, and the topics that the book is about. In addition, Kusch (2016) says that literary theories are used within literary criticism, which should not be confused with literary theory. As a literary theory, it will be used in this investigation to analyze the book *Kokoro*. It is important to make this distinction because the literary theory or approach that will be used is "New historicism." Moreover, this theory, new historicism, is going to be used to do a critical literary analysis, in which all of the theories and aspects that can be found outside of the main text are going to be put under the same scope to reach a conclusion related to the research

question. To further understand new historicism, it is important to explain what it is and how it works

### ***2.1.3 New Historicism***

Literary theories or approaches are used to analyze literary works under a certain scope with specific premises. In this investigation, the literary theory created in the 1980s by the American literary historian, Stephen Greenblatt, will be used, which is new historicism. Thomsen (2017), which studied the works of Greenblatt, suggests that Greenblatt used this approach to analyze a piece of literary work, be that one or various pieces of literature, from the cultural and historical standpoint of the individual that lived during the same time the text was written. The author of the literary piece is a good example of this. Moreover, this cultural and historical background should be used and put under discussion and debate to bring a new perspective and, maybe, make a small change of ideas or any given topic or paradigm. Therefore, rather than looking at the author as someone that expresses, to some extent, the idea that may or not be related to their time, new historicism focuses on the struggle and conflict that the author may have experienced during their era, with the use of historical and cultural texts that also describe the circumstances that happened in the past.

New historicism does not have a particular definition or a way to be applied. As mentioned, literature and history are deeply intertwined in a new historicist analysis; therefore, the analysis involves these two elements as its main tool. According to Bennet and Royle (2016), new historicism analyses the particular social structures of the past, or the context of a given literary piece, to reveal the "hidden" dimensions and aspects of a text with the support of historical references. Therefore, new historicism is based on the idea that history and literature coexist in the same "domain," and the relationship between them will help to understand the

author's interpretation of a particular topic. In addition, while history is subject to interpretation, an author will interpret their current situation as such. New historicism seeks to unveil the reasons behind this specific interpretation, which Bennet and Royle (2016) describe as a negotiation process with the book and history.

## **2.2 History behind the Book**

In order to understand the analysis of the book and the author's (Natsume Soseki) view on Japanese society during the time he wrote the book, it is important to do a brief background explanation of some important historical and cultural elements of Soseki's Japan. By doing this, it will be easier to understand the analysis from a historical and cultural Japanese standpoint.

### ***2.2.1 The Meiji Era***

Starting in 1868, when the young Mutsuhito was declared the new emperor of Japan, the country experimented with changes that had no precedents in its history. Japan in the Meiji Era (or Meiji Restoration, which means the Restoration of the emperor's power) experienced many changes. From the political and economic to cultural and identity of the Japanese, the Meiji Restoration was the beginning of a new modern Japan that used to be feudal and far from being called an entire nation. Japan, for various centuries, was governed by a Shogun and Daimyos. They were war generals in charge of big parts of Japan that acted independently from the emperor's discretion. The emperor was a figure of respect and divinity but had little power over the people. For years, Japan lived in a piece, yet fractured without a unified government. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Matthew C. Perry arrived on the Japanese shore representing the United States. According to Szpilman and Saaler (2018), given the advanced technologies (both ships and military), Perry made the Shogun accept a series of unfair commerce treaties involving no taxes and almost no benefits for Japan. After this, more countries saw this as an

opportunity to do the same and try to “colonize” Japan. This was the first glimpse of the "west" that Japan had. Not long after this, the angry samurai and the emperor pushed and "dethrone" the Shogun in the Boshin war, proclaiming Japan as a nation under the Meiji emperor. This was the first step of the Meiji Restoration and Japan’s path to modernization.

After this, both the emperor and the soon-to-be former Samurai knew the need for a nation, a unified modern nation that could pair up with the global powers of Europe and America. According to Hane and Perez (2016), Japan's first step was to abolish the rank system used in the past and use a "lower and higher" class status. This was done to abolish the dangerous and obsolete samurai. Eventually, this led to a samurai uprising called the Satsuma rebellion, which ended up in the termination of the samurai as a class and the true beginning of modernization and imperialism.

Meiji Japan sought to fit the global western forms of modernization and the idea of a unified nation. However, Japan also sought a unique Japanese modern identity, different from the other modern countries. Ravina (2017) thought that every nation based on a sense of unity and modernization should have its own "flavor" to these aspects. This is exactly what Japan was trying to do during the Meiji Restoration. Even though nationalism implies past historical events that reinforce this idea, for Japan, the events unfolded differently, given that they built nationalism from "scratch" using modified versions of feudal Japan (such as the Bushido code) that worked for their idea of identity and nation that Japanese people should have. This was the foundation of the Meiji Restoration and what led the rising sun empire to modernity.

### ***2.2.2 Japanese Identity***

During the Meiji Restoration, Japan experienced rapid development in technology, politics, economy, and social structures; however, its people felt that this new way of life was "anti-natural" regarding the Japanese way of living. Some accepted this reality and, eventually, embraced modernity in their lives, but others felt trapped in a country that was theirs, but they did not know if they belonged there. It was a crisis of identity for some of these citizens. The country was full of the "modern spirit" that came with the Meiji Restoration. However, it took several years, even after the Meiji Era, for its people to embrace, fully the Meiji modern spirit and live a "modern" life under the newly, yet ancient, Japan.

Meiji Japan (mainly the emperor, advisors, and intellectuals) sought to create a new identity for Japan. A nation-based identity that, while it would have elements of the west, had to be unique and feel like traditional Japan. According to Calichman (2021), Meiji Japan, in the beginning, would create a "synthetic" hybrid identity that was composed of elements that were brought thanks to the influence of the west and a sense of nationalism (tradition). Kalichman mentions that this can be viewed from a dialectical standpoint, where the thesis of the creation of this synthetic identity is the assimilation of western standards into Japanese society as a means to achieve a civilized and modern society in all of Japan. On the other side, there is the antithesis of the creation of this identity, where modernization had to be achieved under the Japanese standards, which entails opposition to the western's. Therefore, Japan had to reach a point where neither of these elements reigned over the other without being mutually exclusive. This was a long process and, thus, created a small crisis of identity amongst some members of Japanese society.

This clash between the adoption of western practices and the traditional way of Japan led to an inevitable crisis of identity; however, it also brought a sense of nationalism among some groups of intellectuals that were against the adoption of western practices. According to Hanes and Perez (2016), the westernization of Japan during the Meiji Restoration brought a “movement” (or a way of thinking) called "enlightened nationalism" some intellectuals were against this modernization, claiming that Japan was no longer for true Japanese people and that most Japanese were not true citizens of the country. This reactionary event brought a sense of nationalism, though it was not the one that prevailed at the end of the Meiji era. This was part of the identity crisis, the search for an identity, which the Japanese people struggled with during the modernization of the Japanese empire.

### ***2.2.3 Junshi (Following the Lord in Death)***

Japanese code of honor in Meiji, inspired by the code of honor of the Samurai, Bushido, was very strong amongst the new "warrior class," the militia. This code of honor had much power in the Japanese militia men that followed it, just like it did with the Samurai for many centuries. They were loyal to the emperor Meiji and the country's necessities in the modernization process. Their loyalty was so strong that when the emperor Meiji died of age, important generals such as Nogi Maresuke, a hero in the Russo-Japanese war and very close to the emperor, committed Junshi. Junshi is a practice where the warrior class dies or follows its lord (be that a warlord such as a Daimyo, Shogun, or Emperor) in death, as they cannot handle being alive without serving their true master and becoming a Ronin (a samurai or warrior without a master). This was the effect the code of honor had over the militia carrying centuries of Japanese tradition.

Junshi is more than an act of suicide in Japanese culture. It comes from a ritualistic and traditional way of dying with dignity that the Samurai performed, which also implies slicing one's guts with a smaller blade (tanto). This act of self-inflicted and long violent death is called seppuku (also known as hara-kiri). According to Vaporis (2020), seppuku first needed to cut one's stomach because it was a Japanese belief that the spirit was there, and that was a way to let it free and pure before rotting the corpse. Later on, during the Tokugawa Shogunate, this ritual sacrifice had two main uses, as a punishment for a crime that had to be paid with death or as a way to die honorably when the shame (not serving, proving innocence, or love) was not bearable. However, there was a time when seppuku was used not to reveal information or to avoid getting killed by the enemy, such as in the Mongol invasion in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Many Samurai committed this ritualistic sacrifice, so the Mongols would not acquire any useful information about other villages or the whereabouts of another samurai. They also did it to avoid a shameful death by the enemy's blade.

Seppuku, formalized and realized with a crowd watching, became a spiritual practice. Samurais were bathed in cold water (to purify and avoid excessive bleeding), used white ornament and robes, drank sake (a white alcoholic drink), and wrote a small poem before their death to be remembered. After they stabbed and sliced their stomach with the ceremonial tanto, they were beheaded by another Samurai (kaishakunin) that was both skillful with the katana (to cut the head with enough skill so the head would fall and not roll away) and important to the one committing seppuku. Later on, during the Meiji period, seppuku was abolished as a judicial crime punishment. However, voluntary seppuku did not die out as many had committed voluntary seppuku the years prior, such as general Nogi, the "last samurai" Saigo Takamori

during the final hours of the Satsuma Rebellion, and several other generals during the world wars.

#### *2.2.4 Sōseki's views on Modernity and the Meiji identity*

Natsume Sōseki was a very influential and intellectual writer during the Meiji Restoration. For some, he even embodied the "Spirit of the modern Meiji Japanese men." He was very versed and knowledgeable about western concepts, traditions, culture, politics, and more. He excelled in the field of literature. He is known, as a matter of fact, as the father of modern Japanese literature. Many intellectuals have studied his literary works and essays, marking a "before and after" in traditional and modern Japanese literature. This modern literature, despite being Japanese, was heavily western influenced. However, despite Sōseki being so popular amongst this new generation of modern men, he faced a cultural shock in modern accommodation. He was viewed with much pessimism in the future of modern Japanese society.

Sōseki viewed with great pessimism his whole life and the future of Japan. In the last twenty years of his life, his works started to turn "dark" or pessimist. They represented a crude and harsh reality than Japanese people were struggling with from the inside, thanks to influences on the outside (the western). According to Nathan (2018), since he wrote one of his most influential books, *I am Cat*, in 1904, pessimism could be seen in Sōseki's literary print and writing. Other literary works, and even more influential, such as *Kokoro* (1914), had this same shadow that represented, now Sōseki. Some years before publishing *Kokoro*, Sōseki wrote essays about modernity and individualism. In one of them, he specifically and openly talks about his negative views on modernization. He talks about an inevitable process that has brought shock and confusion amongst the Japanese people, brought by an outer force. Japanese modernity was

not proper of the country but a process of adaptation for "the greater good." While most Japanese molded themselves into this new Japan, they felt lost, even without a country representing them. These pessimistic views are seen implicitly in his works and represent the last years of this important famous, and influential Japanese writer and intellectual.

### **2.3 Themes, Symbols and Motifs in Kokoro**

To analyze the book, it is also important to analyze the elements, literately elements, which are intrinsically contained in the book. Amongst these elements are symbols, motifs, and themes. These elements will function as a tool to push and give a better insight into the book's inside and purpose. However, first, the clarification of these terms and how to analyze them should be explained.

#### ***2.3.1 Symbols***

Symbols can take many forms and shapes. From persons to everyday-life objects, almost anything can be a symbol. According to Kirzner and Mandell (2016), symbols can be universal, representing parts or elements of the human experience that, most of the time, people will have the same interpretation. In addition, symbols can be conventional. While they also mean that they represent or can be interpreted under the same framework by most people, these symbols represent cultural and societal aspects, such as red roses as a symbol of love and a skull as a symbol of death. However, given that they are attached to culture, meaning could vary between cultural groups.

In addition, symbols can transmit and evoke powerful emotions. Just like seeing a sign on the road that says "Caution" can provoke a reaction in the driver to be more cautious in the next kilometer or more, the same happens in literary works. This lets the authors represent certain emotions and feeling through the use of symbolic pieces carefully inserted in the words of the

text, which can be used to guide the reader into certain moments of the plot or evoke certain emotions, so there is a more immersive experience. Thus, suicide can be seen as the rebirth of an element that will rise from the ashes of another, a coiled and flame-embowed sword, the last spark of life of a family of knights, and a resurrection as a commentary of second chances in life. Symbols can also set a specific frame of reference, such as an era in which the event unfolds, a historic event, a specific atmosphere, a fictitious world, or a connection to something real.

When looking for symbols in a book or several books, it is important to remember that only some symbols are the same, even if they are the same object/person/idea. Symbols are written under a specific framework of ideas. Therefore they should look as such. The symbols are deeply intertwined with different literary devices of a book, such as themes and style, which makes them unique under this criteria. This makes looking for them more rewarding and enriching for the reader and analysis.

When analyzing or recognizing a symbol, it sometimes can bring some problems, given that symbols can take many shapes or forms. When a specific element in a book is a symbol, and when it is an element that is just there with no other connotation but its literal meaning? Kirzner and Mandell (2016) give examples and ideas to identify them and analyze their meaning. They mention that if in a story (a novel) a simple action happens, such as when a character checks the time in their phone just because they have waited for some time, this will not have a particular significance in the book. However, if the hour in the phone keeps constantly appearing in the story as a recurrent mannerism of the character at a key moment of the story, if the narrator uses a lot of details and pages to describe this specific action, if it is always in the right pocket of the character and never somewhere else, if the character has a special bond or gives a special meaning to the phone if the phone gets lost as a major point of the plot, if the phone cracks or

creates new apps based on events that happen to the character as a way to track their progress throughout the history, if the history is called "the digital time" or something that resembles the phone and time; then the phone and checking it for time is, most likely, a symbol in the story.

In other words, one has to consider how a particular element in a book is used, the frequency in which this specific element(s) are referenced, and what exactly is happening when the element is referenced at a specific moment. All these aspects, and more, will help to see if an element in a book can be considered a symbol. Therefore, symbols are a literary device used by the book's author. It guides the readers to examine the ideas and elements surrounding the book's story. It also helps the readers to make their interpretations of the book's plot, themes, atmosphere, style, purpose, and more, given that symbols might serve as a foundation for them. Symbols are an important part of the analysis of a book, given that most of the literary devices and elements contained in a book are intertwined and, therefore, should not be analyzed as separate elements. Moreover, they serve as a means of invitation for new questions and different points of view of the book. The answers that the readers may find while using symbols as the main tool to look for them will help to understand further the totality of the book and the critical analysis that the reader may put the book on

### ***2.3.2 Themes***

A literary piece's theme is found throughout the whole text or a big portion of it. The theme, however, should not be confused with the plot or a summary of the plot or a summary of it. This distinction is even more obvious when a literary work can contain more than one theme within the same parts of a text. According to Kirzner and Mandell (2016), a theme(s) do not simply tell what will happen in the story or sum up the events that unfold in the text. A theme is an idea represented by a word or a phrase that goes even further from the story's event. It is the

book's essence, something that can be recognized outside of the fiction world built within the pages and letters. A theme could be as simple as saying "love," or it could be more complex and insightful such as "the awakening of one's true potential." Most of the themes are abstract ideas, such as the ones mentioned before, that express bigger concepts when linked in the book or specific parts, creating a rich literary device.

Themes, as mentioned before, are represented through abstract ideas; however, they can mean and be identified as things outside of this category. According to Hébert (2022), themes could reflect abstract existential ideas such as revenge, the afterlife, awakening, desire, misery, and more. Themes are part of a big group of semantic elements in a literary piece of work, which repeats itself throughout the whole text, in a different chapter, or one chapter in specific. However, this semantic element can also be represented in a more conceptual and concrete idea. These could entail principles such as entropy or gravity; it can also comprise the constant use of plurals (grammar) or a specific verb tense; another element would be the love or a feeling towards a living thing or object such as dogs; moreover, could represent the essence of a living thing such as a bear or a horse; they can also be as trivial as sleeping being the main theme of the story; it could also represent the fact of changing instead of remaining the same during a particular event (state of being); lastly, could also be related to a specific action or characteristic of an object such as the green color of the trees or gardening the flowers. Themes are a broad spectrum of topics that can fall into many categories. The author's intention is strongly reflected in this theme and, thus, should be considered when analyzing a text.

According to Kirzner and Mandell (2016), analyzing and identifying themes is a creation of both parts. When analyzing these themes, they cannot be analyzed as just a creation of the writer but as an analysis done by the reader and the author. While the author's experiences,

knowledge, beliefs, and other works play a major role, themes could mean something different to some readers. They could even find different themes that others could not find or see. However, they will always be linked to the story's main plot, given that the themes come from the same source. However, they bring different perspectives that make the analysis more complex and comprehensive, which ultimately helps future analyses be more precise.

### ***2.3.2 Motif***

Motifs are found as repetitive elements of literary pieces of work. They can take many literary shapes. They also help reinforce the text's main idea, the theme. According to Morgan (2015), the word "motif" originates in Latin and French. The word "motif" comes from the Latin word "motivus," which means something that causes or produces movement. The word, later on, assumed different meanings and was used in the French language. It went from a word used in music and painting to explaining the motivation for someone to do these specific activities to be used in literature. Critical contemporary literature was used as the repetition of elements (important elements of the book) in a single literary work and not in various pieces of literature.

Motifs are specific to a literary work because they are deeply intertwined with the book's main theme. According to Morgan (2015), they function as clues scattered throughout the whole text, which would eventually lead the reader to identify the theme or themes. In addition, motifs can be abstract or concrete concepts (things you can touch). They can take the shape of phrases, sentences, or any other type of grammatical structure in the text. They can even take the shape of some literary devices from a particular group whose main role is to have a symbol that would help the reader understand the "bigger picture" of the book. How these different motif types are present in a book can vary. It could be from constant repetition or some pattern (be that subtle or more explicit) that is there to be spotted by the reader.

To identify a motif, various factors must be taken into consideration. They must match the motifs' main characteristics and appear repetitively in the text. This would make the specific symbolic element that is, or would, function as a motive stand out amongst other literary elements in the text. Motifs, however, have a subjective aspect to them. Motifs depend on the reader's ability to detect the symbolic elements that play as motifs in the stories. This can happen because the reader is skillful or because, by chance, they find these patterns or repetitions that lead them to the motifs and, eventually, the theme. Some of these motifs are easier to spot and play a more central role in the analysis of the text. Other motifs, on the other hand, play a lower role in the hierarchy of importance of the text. However, regardless of the level of importance of the motif, some of this would be spotted in the first readings of the book, and the others would take a more thorough reading or reading to spot them and understand the meaning behind them. Motifs, just like the themes, enrich the analysis of the book with new perspectives from different readers, making it a more detailed process with every analysis.

## **2.4 Author's Biography**

Natsume Sōseki was a very influential writer in Meiji Japan. He was born a year before the Meiji Restoration, and he died with it, marking the end of the era for Japan and Literature. According to Bourdaghs (2016), Sōseki, thanks to his travels throughout the modern world during his adulthood and while he was in college, appropriated literary techniques that were considered more traditional than modern and molded his style through these, creating a fresh and distinct way of writing that would immortalize him in the field of literature. His literary works dealt with philosophical dilemmas and problems that his characters went through that represented many realities of the modern world, which, most of the time, had an open-ended

finale as a peculiar characteristic of Sōseki's work. Therefore, it is easy to recognize his work amongst other modern literati, as he pioneered modern Japanese literature.

Natsume Sōseki, his book pseudonym (his real name was Natsume Kinnosuke), was born in a well-accommodated family with five older brothers. His family had a Samurai lineage and was very fond of the Edo way of life. Kinnosuke was put into adoption when he was two years old, in which he lived with the Shiobara family until he was nine, thus adopting the name. After this, he returned to his original home. This would change his image of family and bonds, which would later be seen in his literary works.

Kinnosuke was put under the new educational system of Meiji Japan, which was very similar to the European model. Bourdaghs (2016) mentions that he struggled to decide on his professional academic path for some time. Eventually, he entered the Imperial University of Tokyo in 1890, in the English department, where he would engage in mostly poetry and translation, showing his dexterity with the English language. However, he was reluctant to write in English or to care about the language. At the university, he would meet Masaoka Shiki, a young poet. Under his influence, he would engage more in Chinese poetry and other forms of contemporary literature, where he would start using his pseudonym, Natsume Sōseki.

After graduating from college in 1893 and teaching in some high schools and universities in the literature department, he was selected by the Ministry of education of Japan to go to England and further his literature studies. The years Sōseki spent in London were nothing but suffering to him. He suffered from breakdowns, a cultural shock, and isolation. He discovered that he did not know what literature was. This, however, was a breakthrough that would impact his career, for the better, in Japan.

Sōseki's new view on literature made him strive for new theories about literature as a whole. He used many elements from sociology and psychology to develop these theories, essentially to break the dominant ideas about literature that were mainly based on morality and aesthetics. Bourdaghs (2016) explains that Sōseki believed that literature was bound to cultural and historical elements in the reader's minds, which ultimately affected how readers viewed the text. This means that literature and the readers will change over time. Sōseki, thanks to this set of ideas, thought that literature does not develop linearly (it does not follow the current state of things in any given time and place). Therefore non-western countries, such as Japan, were not obligated to follow the same literary path as their western counterparts.

This led to the creation of several works about literary theories such as “Gendai Nihon no kaika” (The Civilization of Present-Day Japan, 1912), “Watakushi no kojishugi” (My Individualism, 1914), which set the ground for his future in fictional writing in which he would spend the rest of his life. In the latter years, Sōseki published several books that were well received amongst several few given their particular style. In 1914, he published his most acclaimed novel, *Kokoro*, in which he gained fame even years after his death (1916). One of his last literary works was “Meian” (Light and Darkness), considered a masterpiece amongst Japanese intellectuals, though unfinished, given its sudden death that year. Sōseki, after this, was considered and remembered by many as the first-ever literary critic of Japanese modernity.

## **2.5 Book's Plot**

The book “*Kokoro*” by Natsume Sōseki is divided into three parts. The first one deals with and introduces the two main characters of the story, the nameless narrator and Sensei. It tells how the narrator connects with this old Japanese man. The second part deals with the

countryside life of the narrator after he graduates from college. His father is very sick, and he feels that if he dies and is not there, he might feel great remorse in his soul, thus staying in the house for some months after his ill father. The third part is about Sensei's letter, in which Sensei reveals the truth about his past to the narrator in a very long letter to tell him, at the end of the letter, that he has taken his life.

### ***2.5.1 Sensei and I***

In the book's first section, the narrator meets Sensei, by chance, on Kamakura beach. For reasons he cannot explain, he feels very interested in this old man. He visits the beach constantly, so he can see Sensei and, eventually, approach him. After a couple of encounters on the beach, they start talking to each other; however, Sensei is more silent and shyer than the narrator, so he does not say much to the narrator. The narrator eventually gathers the courage to go to Sensei's house, but he finds him in a cemetery that seems more serious than usual and refuses to say why he is there. This does not stop them from developing a bond with each other that, if anything, is very close to friendship. The narrator gets to know Sensei's wife, Shizu (mostly referred to as Ojisan by young Sensei later in the book) while visiting Sensei's house. While going to the university and visiting Sensei, the narrator receives a letter from his mother that his father is very ill, so he returns to the countryside. Because his father seems to be feeling well and has approval from the city doctor, the narrator returns to Tokyo. He spends some months working on his thesis to get his degree. He eventually finishes it and graduates. He has a small dinner party with Sensei and his wife to celebrate graduation.

### ***2.5.2 My parents and I***

In the second part of the book, the narrator, who just graduated from college, decides to return to the countryside, his hometown. His parents are very proud of his diploma; however, they start to ask (demand in some ways) the narrator to look for a high-paying job, just like his brother, who lives in another prefecture. The narrator does the opposite of looking for a job and spends his days mindlessly looking and reading books. He eventually writes some letters to Sensei, but they are never answered. His father's condition at the beginning seemed good, has started to feel worse. This feeling gets worse when he reads that the Meiji Emperor dies. After this, he experiences fainting and a worsened health condition. The narrator telegrams his brother and sister, asking them to come home if their father dies abruptly after their arrival (his sister is pregnant, so his husband comes instead of her). The narrator, after some time, he receives a telegram from Sensei, who asks the narrator to visit him. However, the narrator telegrams him back, saying that his father is too ill to leave his home, and he replies from Sensei that he does not have to come anymore. His father, whose condition has gotten worse, has entered in a comma. He barely speaks or talks. However, while everyone at the house is caring for the ill father, a thick letter from Sensei arrives. The narrator does not read it entirely but finds out that Sensei has committed suicide. He decides to leave his father and rush to as soon as possible to Tokyo.

### ***2.5.3. Sensei's Testament***

In the third part, the narrator reads the letter Sensei sent him. The letter tells the past of Sensei and why he committed suicide. At the beginning of the letter, Sensei says that he wants to elaborate on the reasons for his peculiar and reserved behavior. However, he also wants to talk

about his past, given that he promised that this would be revealed to the narrator someday. Sensei describes some aspects of his childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. His parents died when he was nineteen and his uncle, whom he looked upon and respected, stole Sensei's inheritance money, leaving him with a small portion of land, which he sold to have money to live by. This experience made Sensei grow to hate and create trust issues towards anything he loved and anyone in the world. With the money he had, he found a room with a widow (whom he called Okusan) and her daughter Shinzo (whom he called at this time Ojosan). He grew happy in this little home and eventually fell in love with Okusan's daughter. However, he was unsure if Okusan would respect or accept his feelings, so he grew distrustful of people.

Sensei also mentions his old childhood friend, whom he referred to as K. He and K went to the same university, though K had isolation and self-restraint. Sensei was worried about his friend's well-being, so he convinced Okusan to let K stay with them. However, over time, Sensei noticed that Ojosan was fond of K's attention and spent much time with him. Eventually, K talks about his feelings about Ojosan to Sensei, so now Sensei sees K as a rival. Sensei planned a way to crush K's hopes of being with Ojosan. He talked with him and convinced K that he was not true to himself. Sensei took this opportunity to ask for Ojosan's hand with Okusan, and she agreed. Sensei did not tell K immediately, and he procrastinated for some time because of guilt. The same night Sensei decided to tell K about his commitment to Ojosan, and K committed suicide. Sensei blamed himself and knew this was his fault. However, he never told anyone, not even his wife, which concluded the letter with Sensei asking the narrator never to reveal this to anyone, especially his wife.

## Chapter III

### Methodological Framework

The methodological framework is part of an investigation process. The theoretical methods used to analyze the information compiled by a set of instruments, which will also be explained in this chapter, are specific to the investigation. In addition, and alongside the instruments, the practical methods of the investigation to deal with the objectives posed for the research will also be explained. Moreover, the procedures for the data analysis, which will help reach appropriate conclusions based on the objectives and scope of the investigation, will also be considered in this chapter.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

The research approach comprises the methodology and analytical tools the investigation will use for the theory and data collected. For this investigation, given the interpretative nature of the topic of study and the data that will be collected, a qualitative method will be preferred and used. In order to understand the research approach of this research, this method must be explained in light of the objectives that are specific to this particular investigation.

##### *3.1.1 Qualitative research*

Research, in order to be successful, need guidance to obtain the results and goals that one to achieve (based on a series of objectives that were set alongside an investigation question and topic). There are several types of research and approaches; however, one, in particular, has an inductive nature. It is perfect to handle investigations that are not going to deal with or rely on heavy numerical results and data, which is qualitative research. According to Strauss & Corbin (2008), in qualitative research, the role of the researcher is to explore concepts, ideas, and the

bigger picture (sometimes abstract subjects) in a given problem. In addition, it also refers to a set of techniques of data analyses that are usually open-ended in meaning and structure, opening the possibility for the author of the investigation to put their thoughts and insights into the results and conclusions.

Moreover, this method or research approach relies on interpretation to analyze the data of an investigation. Because of this, the qualitative approach is very popular in social sciences investigations. The fact that a lot of these investigations work with non-numerical data (be that text, voice, actions, and more), which need to be interpreted to give them real meaning (under a specific study framework), is what makes this type of research a part of the social sciences because it studies real life, which can be obtained from different sources. According to Mahajan (2018), in some instances, a qualitative study is also the interpretation and observation of people's perceptions about a certain topic, often produced in a natural setting. Thus, given its descriptive nature, less structured while describing theory and ideas because its job is to create and build new theories or concepts within a social science framework.

Qualitative research focuses more on what is said than on numeric data. It is an “exploratory” science, which means to answer questions such as “how” and “why” of a particular topic of “natural” nature. It helps to understand how the real-world functions at a social scale. According to Brink (1993), qualitative research is focused on people and their experiences with life from a non-empirical and non-statically point of view. It is about understanding these beliefs wherever they are coming from. Therefore, the purpose of a qualitative investigation should be to try to describe, interpret, and analyze a phenomenon from a "real people's thoughts" point of view or population targeted for the study and generate conclusions and analysis from that.

A qualitative approach is the most optimal for this investigation, given its interpretative nature. The book "Kokoro" by Natsume Sōseki will be put into the analysis; however, it will be mainly an interpretative work because several quotes from the book will be chosen to represent a certain aspect of modernity, traditional society, or a Japanese cultural aspect. These quotes will be analyzed with the aid of sources; however, the interpretation of the sources and the book will be written in the analysis. For these reasons, the qualitative approach is the best option to get relevant results based on the main objective of the investigation, which is "To analyze the depiction of the traditional and the modern Japanese society in the book "Kokoro" by Natsume Sōseki from a new historicist perspective" and the scope of the study.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design consists of a researcher's strategy to answer the research question with data relevant to the study. To create or choose the appropriate research design, the researcher must consider the research's goal, what instruments will be used to collect the data and what type of data it will be, and the type of analysis used in the investigation. When this is taken into consideration, choosing the research design is easier. For this investigation, a descriptive research design will be used and explained below.

#### ***3.2.1 Descriptive Research***

A descriptive research design or method describes an event or problem of study under a certain theoretical line of thought. Therefore, getting a different description of the event than the original. According to Siedlecki (2020), the main goal of descriptive research is to describe a problem in words in that the target population can easily understand the results. In addition, descriptive research does not manipulate the variables to achieve a particular result. It describes

them. Although it can explore multiple variables, it is the only type of design to explore a single variable in the study and dissect it to describe it.

This study's descriptive variables adjust to a specific hypothesis or research question. Some variables are relevant to the research question that will be described under a certain framework, meaning there is no distinction between them. In descriptive research, according to Siedlecki (2020), there is no hypothesis testing, which means there are no intended variables or dependent variables in the study.

Qualitative research benefits from a descriptive design because of its theoretical aspect. It describes the phenomena that are the main focus of the study without testing them under a numerical method or technique. Therefore, this design is very useful for this investigation given that regarding specific events in history that are reflected in the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki, important aspects will be described to give a comprehensive description that aligns with the main objectives of the investigation.

### **3.3 Information Sources**

Sources of information comprehend any document or spoken word that will function as a tool to analyze, describe, evaluate, or fulfill the investigation's main objectives. For this investigation, several sources were gathered from different types of documents. They are articles, books, a thesis, dictionaries, and more. Thanks to these sources, the investigation will have a comprehensive look at the topic and problems of the research.

### ***3.3.1 Primary Sources***

Primary sources usually have the most updated information about the topic of investigation. However, they can also be the foundation on which research studies base their analysis. According to Kapoor (2013), primary sources only present or share information, which is usually novel, about a relevant topic. This information is not interpreted or analyzed by others. It is just presented without bias. Usually, they come in the form of the spoken word of people who experienced the event in question or the original form of the information in a document such as a novel or a report. For this investigation, the main primary source will be the book written by Natsume Sōseki, *Kokoro*, and some of his essays criticizing the new path of Japanese modernity.

### ***3.3.2 Secondary Sources***

Secondary sources are based on the information contained within the primary sources. Secondary sources arrange the information within the primary sources and analyze them through several methods and techniques. According to Kapoor (2013), the information from secondary sources is not original, given that it comes from primary sources. However, they are used as a guide to comprehend different aspects of the primary sources. They organize the information on the primary sources for easier comprehension. Most secondary sources are articles, theses, dissertations, and other research that use primary sources of information as a foundation. This investigation will rely on secondary sources to aid the analysis of the book *Kokoro* and explore the research objectives.

### ***3.3.3 Tertiary Sources***

Tertiary sources analyze the information contained in the secondary and primary sources. They contain information from both of these sources. According to Kapoor (2013), tertiary sources are mainly used to locate the secondary sources used during an investigation. They help

the researcher gather all the sources they will need for their research more systematically, making this task simpler and easier. Usually, any source based on secondary sources is tertiary because it guides the researcher to the important information they are looking for. It also provides them with extra information that could be used and leads them to more primary or secondary sources related to the topic of investigation.

### **3.4 Analysis Categories**

In an investigation, some concepts need to be understood by the readers so the reading becomes more comprehensive and intuitive. In addition, these concepts are the foundation of the analysis of the topic of investigation. Therefore, some of these concepts will be explained to understand better the analysis that will be conducted in future chapters of this investigation.

#### ***3.4.1 New Historicism***

New Historicism combines history with literature to create a new form of literary criticism and analysis that use both elements as concepts that are deeply intertwined rather than not being homologous. According to Lyu (2021), history is flexible over time. It changes, which can be seen in texts. Texts are shaped by the contextual setting of the era, which is why they cannot be separated from each other. New historicists focus on the connections between the literary text and history to trace this connection to a real-life event. In this investigation, this approach will function as a tool to represent various aspects of Japanese reality that were expressed, in a fictional way, in the book “Kokoro.”.

#### ***3.4.2 Modern Japan***

Modernity can be seen as technological and social advancement in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However, for Japan, modernity has a slightly different connotation. Japan experienced modernity

during the Meiji Restoration, which began in 1868 and lasted more than 40 years. According to Jansen (2000), one of the first things that the emperor Meiji did during this period was to abolish the feudal practices of Japan. Japan sought a western-like style of society for its people, and for that to happen, some "feudal remnants" had to disappear. Amongst these feudal elements was the social hierarchy imposed by the Shogun in the early Tokugawa years. With this came the abolishment of the samurai to create a new militia. Japan, in addition, wanted to create a modern society. Build edifications and structured cities just like the western. It took Japan 40 years to accomplish what the west did in more than 100. At the end of Meiji, the rising sun empire was truly modern society.

### ***3.4.3 Traditional Japan***

Japan has experienced three major societal changes that differentiate how the country and its people behave. Early Japan, Medieval or Feudal Japan, and Modern Japan. For this investigation, traditional Japan comprises the last era of Medieval Japan, the Tokugawa bakufu. (shogunate or era). According to Deal (2006), the Tokugawa period had a specific way of social hierarchy. It was called the shi-no-ko-sho structure. Where warriors, farmers, artisans, and farmers were part of it. This form of social hierarchy brought peace and harmony and peace to Japanese society for many years. Despite these being very peaceful times, there was no sense of identity. The country was divided and decentralized. Daimyos controlled certain parts of the country under the orders of the Shogun. Japanese people did feel Japanese, but they were not a nation. This explains the many wars before this era to control certain parts of the country. Japanese people lived in villages without contact with the outer world. There was little to no technological or social progress for many years. This changed when the Meiji Restoration came,

and the isolation ended. Japan sought to be a modern country, and feudalism was not the structure in which this modernity would be built.

#### ***3.4.4 Literature***

Literature is the main object of study of this investigation. Given its role, it is important to define its meaning. According to Cuddon (2013), literature usually denotes any written word that can be put into any of the major genres of literature, such as epic, drama, lyric, short story, novel, and more. Sometimes literature is defined as something that carries heavy intrinsic meaning with a qualitative connotation. Literature was considered superior to other forms of the written word in the past, given its complexity and style. For this investigation, literature is the main object of study and analysis. Therefore, literary theories and other theories related to the intrinsic meaning of the book in the study will be used.

### **3.5 Data collection Instruments**

The data collection instruments will analyze the historical and literary elements needed to reach a conclusion based on the investigation's objectives. Given this, the data collection instruments will be linked to a specific objective, so gathering and filtering related information can be easier. These instruments are part of the analytical process of the investigation and will be explained in the next section.

#### ***3.5.1 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and modern elements from the Japanese society presented in the book.***

This literary chart will be filled with quotes and interpretations written by the researcher. These quotes and interpretations will revolve around the modern and the traditional aspects of Japanese society that can be found throughout the whole story of the book. These charts contain

three columns: traditional/modern elements, quotes, and the researcher's interpretation. The criteria to fill these columns will be several elements of the book that depict traditional or modern elements of Japanese society, such as hara-kiri, the telegram and the letter, the countryside, university, Tokyo, romantic relationships, family relationships, and more. The second column, quotes, will be filled with a short quote that matches the element of the first column. Lastly, the third column will explain the impact of the modern/traditional element in Japanese society and its role in the book's story. This literary chart aims to identify these traditional and modern elements depicted in the book so that the relationship and how these elements coexisted in Japanese society can be more easily seen and further analyzed.

### ***3.5.2 Literary analysis chart of the historical elements presented in the book***

This literary chart will be filled with quotes and interpretations written by the researcher. These quotes and interpretations will revolve around historical elements used as literary aspects in the book. Through the use of New Historicism, an analysis of these historical events will be done. This chart will contain three columns: Historical events, quotes, and researcher's interpretation. The criteria to fill these columns will be several historical elements that depict cultural and social aspects of the Japanese society at the time the book was written, such as The death of the emperor Meiji, the hara-kiri of his general, the hara-kiri as a practice, the invention and use of the telegram, the adoption of western-like education, and more. The second column, quotes, will be filled with a short quote that matches the element of the first column. Lastly, the third column will analyze the historical elements in which the relationship with reality and its historical impact will be explained. The purpose of this literary chart is to create a historical and literary framework of key historical elements presented in the book. By doing this, the cultural

and social implications of these elements in Japanese history will be exposed, revealing their impact on Japanese society.

### ***3.5.3 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and the modern way of life based on different parts of the book story.***

This literary chart will be filled with quotes and interpretations written by the researcher. These quotes and interpretations will revolve around the society mold of Japanese society and their role in Japanese individuals. Using different parts of the book's story, the role of these molds will be analyzed. These charts contain three columns: Story fragment quote, modern mold, and traditional mold. The criteria to fill these columns will be several fragments of the book's story. These fragments will follow a linear timeline, which means the fragments will be written in chronological order in the first column. The second column, modern, will be filled with an interpretation and implication of the modern practices in that specific fragment. The same will be done in the third column but with the traditional practices of Japanese society. The purpose of this literary chart is to analyze the weight of this different way of living through the prism of the everyday life of the Japanese that is presented in the book. This will create a contrast between the two molds, revealing their similitudes and differences throughout the book's story.

### ***3.5.4 Literary analysis chart: Symbols, Motifs, and Themes***

This literary chart will be filled with quotes and interpretations written by the researcher. These quotes and interpretations will revolve around the different themes, symbols, and motifs found in the book and hold relevance to the investigation topic. These charts will contain three columns: Symbols/motifs, themes, quotes, and researcher's interpretation. The criteria to fill these columns will be the book's several symbols, themes, and motifs. Amongst these are: Trauma, the passage of time, hara-kiri, individualism, rejection of modernity, the telegram, the

letter, and more. The second column, quotes, will be filled with a short quote that matches the element of the first column. Lastly, the third column will analyze the elements of the first column and their relevance to the research topic. The purpose of this literary chart is to analyze the different elements presented in the book. These elements are a very important part of the book's story. They hold value and tell much more than what the story, alone, can tell. Their analysis will help to reach a more complete and insightful conclusion in the investigation.

### **3.6 Collection Data Process and Data Analysis**

In this investigation, the book *Kokoro* Natsume Sōseki will be analyzed. However, to analyze this book, a data collection process must be done so that the analysis will consider all the information needed. First, the researcher must read the book that the investigation focuses on. The reading should be both intensive and extensive. This will ensure that all the book's details can be gathered correctly and with the proper and detailed care. The book should be read more than once throughout the elaboration of the investigation, given that new insight can arise when academic information needed for the investigation is collected and read. When this is done, the researcher can elaborate on the instruments that will allow for processing and analyzing the information gathered.

These charts will focus on different objectives and will have a specific purpose within these objectives. After the chart has been created, the researcher can proceed with the analysis of the data. It should be taken into account that this chart will be filled with information from the book and pieces of analysis and interpretation given by the researcher. This means that the charts are still an active process of gathering information that combines with analyzing the information being gathered. Once this is done and the data analysis has been properly revised and checked, the researcher can move to the next part of the investigation process, the concluding remarks.

## Chapter IV

### Data analysis

In this section of the investigation, all the data that has been gathered will be put into a thorough process of interpretation and analysis. For that process, three important elements are going to be used: the research approach as the main tool of analysis, other authors' ideas and concepts to interpret and analyze the contents of the book related to specific questions that are linked to the objectives of the investigation, and the own researcher's interpretation and insight. These three elements are essential for this section, given its analytical nature.

This section is divided into three main parts. The first one corresponds to "The Approaches of Investigation Section," which will briefly explain the approach used to analyze the gathered data of the investigation. The second is "Theories vs. Literary Works," which will comprise the analysis and interpretation of the data related to the main and specific objectives of the investigation. The last part is the "Themes, Symbols, and Motifs" segment, in which these elements, which reveal important information relevant to the investigation's goal, will be analyzed.

#### 4.1 Approaches to the Investigation

The book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki is the object of investigation of this research and new historicism, the approach in which its contents will be analyzed. According to Lyu (2021), New historicism is a form of literary criticism in which a literary text is analyzed, considering its historical aspects. New historicism states that history and literature cannot be separated, and studying one of these elements without the other results in a one-sided and incomplete analysis. If one wants to analyze the story of a book, the story behind it must also be analyzed. The main

goal of this investigation is to analyze a socio-historical element within the book's story. However, historical elements of Japan must also be considered for this analysis to be completely accurate. This is where the approach of the investigation can be appreciated more clearly. The book tells a story that is both literary and historically relevant. Therefore, in this investigation, history and literature will be analyzed as if they were a single piece of text, enriching the analysis and the interpretation of the data.

## **4.2 Theories vs Literary Work**

In this section, the book's literary elements will be analyzed with the help of the approach and literary/historical theory. There are going to be three tables that are related to the specific objective of this investigation. These tables will deal with Japan's traditional and modern way of life from both a single-element perspective and a story perspective and historical events presented in the book.

### ***4.2.1 Traditional and modern elements from the Japanese society presented in the book***

The first literary table deals with the first specific objective of the investigation. Specific elements related to traditional and modern Japanese society will be accompanied by quotes and the researcher's analysis of both.

Table 1

Literary analysis chart of the traditional and modern elements of Japanese society presented in the book.

<b>Modern/Traditional Element</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher's interpretation</b>

<p>Telegram as a mean of rapid and long-distanced communication in contrast with the letter as a means of traditional communication.</p>	<p>“I wrote a long letter to my brother in Kyushu. I had my mother write to my sister. I thought that this would probably be the last time we would be writing them about my father's health. For this reason, I saw to it that they were warned that the next time they received any communication from us, it would be in the form of a telegram asking them to come home.” (Sōseki, p. 112)</p>	<p>The telegraphic communication was a big step in Japanese technological history, and a great example of the influence of the western modern world. Letters had had been used for many years for long distance communication. With the past of the year, this process became faster, yet, it also started to become obsolete. The telegraph lines started working almost since the beginning of the Meiji Era, with the help of the British, establishing a new way of rapid and long-distance communication that later on would become telephone lines. Japanese people, by that time, still used the letter as a means of long-distance</p>
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		<p>communication, just as the quote shows. However, the telegram was already used as a faster alternative. It was already part of the Japanese people's lives. This can be seen in the urgency of the main character for a message to reach his brother and sister.</p>
<p>The countryside</p>	<p>“The open fields that had been visible to us before were now almost completely hidden by rows of houses. Even then, there were sights that reminded us of the quiet countryside, such as peas growing around bamboo stakes in private gardens, and hens being kept in enclosures of wire netting.” (Sōseki, p. 65)</p>	<p>The countryside is seen now as something distant. It is distant from the city both in distance and closeness to modernity. There are, however, remnants of it even in the city. The countryside was not compatible with the new modern ways of living and was (and perhaps will always be for the Japanese country and culture) part of them. That is why even in a place that was slowly</p>

		<p>becoming more western (modern), the countryside, yet distant, still stood close to the modern Japanese way of life. This represents the conflict that the author of the book, Natsume Sōseki, wanted to exemplify in his writing, including this book. The main character is slowly detaching from the traditional way of living despite being born and growing in the countryside. Like he sees elements that remind him of the countryside, he still returns to the city, where he thinks he belongs.</p>
The city (Tokyo)	<p>“I tried, of course, to hide whatever changes Tokyo might have wrought in me. But Tokyo had become a part of me, and my parents</p>	<p>Tokyo, which had become the capital in the Meiji Era, is a great example of modernization. Most of the technological and modern</p>

	<p>could not but notice that I had changed. I ceased to enjoy being at home. I wanted to hurry back to Tokyo.” (Sōseki, p. 50)</p> <p>“As a matter of fact, country people tend to be worse than city people.” (Sōseki, p. 61)</p> <p>“I went back to the house. I sat at my desk and, as I read the newspaper, I thought of far-off Tokyo. I imagined this city, the greatest in all Japan” (Sōseki, p. 92)</p>	<p>advancements happened here first. It was greatly influenced by the western and the capital blossom into a modern city throughout the Meiji Era. The city was seen as the greatest city of Japan, for its progress and modernity. The modern way of life was born there and expanded throughout the country. The ones who lived in the city, were considered to live a modern civilized life. As shown in the quote of page 61, they even believed to be better than country people (from the countryside). The urge to fit in this way of life that the city brought with it can be seen in the main character, whose heart is now modern and rejects his traditional roots.</p>
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		<p>This means that he likes the traditional. With modernity comes new standards and freedom. All of this was not for everyone before (traditional times). Modernity promises a better life, focused on the individual, far from what the Japanese had been taught for years.</p>
<p>University as normative in the modern world, and an accomplishment in the traditional world</p>	<p>“I had come to regard a university education as commonplace, and I was touched by my father's unexpected pleasure at my graduation "I am glad that you were able to graduate," he said repeatedly. (...) my father, who seemed to me to value them more than they were worth. I began at last to dislike my father's naive</p>	<p>Education, before the Meiji Era, was given only to some groups in Japan. Commoners and workers had little to no access to education. The Meiji emperor and the government realized that they needed education for all if they wanted to modernize the country, which is why education became open to anyone in the first years of the Meiji Era. Education</p>

	provincialism” (Sōseki, p. 81)	became the normative and a necessity to get a job and be a productive member of society. The book, whose events happen in the last years of the Meiji Era, shows an education already ingrained in the mind of the "modern people". The main character's father sees his son achievement as something to be proud of. He, as a representation of those countryside individuals who did not receive education, knows the value of it (in the modern world). Education, in the Meiji Era wanted to unify the people through education, but to what extent it created a bigger gap between them?
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*Table 1 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and modern elements from the Japanese society presented in the book. Source: Researcher's creation.*

### 4.2.2 Historical elements that appear in the book

The second literary table deals with the second specific objective of the investigation in which historical elements that appear in the book will be analyzed. They will be accompanied by direct quotes from the book and the researcher's analysis of both.

Table 2

Literary analysis table of the historical elements presented in the book

Historical Element	Quote of the book	Researcher's analysis
The death of the emperor Meiji	“Then, at the height of the summer, Emperor Meiji passed away. I felt as though the spirit of the Meiji Era had begun with the Emperor and had ended with him. I was overcome with the feeling that I and the others, who had been brought up in that Era, were now left behind to live as anachronisms.” (Sōseki, p. 245)	The emperor Meiji was a precursor of modernity in Japan. He was given the posthumous name of "Meiji" when he died because of his contributions to the country during his lifetime. This incredible jump to "modernity" made during his life as emperor has no precedents in Japanese history. He is remembered as this symbol of modernity and prosperity for many Japanese of the Era. The emperor, with

		<p>his death, meant the end of this Era of modernity.</p> <p>However, the death of the emperor cannot be seen as the death of modernity nor the traditional way of life, but rather as the birth of a new era of establishment where the traditional and the modern will coalesce to create the way of life of Japanese people to come.</p>
<p>The <i>junshi</i> of the emperor's general, Nogi</p>	<p>“For a long time, the image of General Nogi in his uniform, and that of his wife dressed like a court lady, stayed with me. The tragic news touched us like the bitter wind which awakens the trees and the grass sleeping in the remotest corners of the countryside.” (Soseki, p. 109)</p>	<p>General Nogi was one of the emperor's most important pieces of the militia. He led the imperial army during the Russo-Japanese war.</p> <p>However, he also lost a battle banner during the famous Satsuma Rebellion. Not always felt that he fail the emperor and the country.</p> <p>However, he waited thirty-</p>

	<p>“Perhaps you will not understand clearly why I am about to die, no more than I can fully understand why General Nogi killed himself. You and I belong to different eras, and so we think differently. There is nothing we can do to bridge the gap between us.” (Sōseki, p. 246)</p>	<p>five years after this incident, until when he could not serve the emperor anymore to commit <i>junshi</i> (ritual suicide practice) to take his life and die with honor. Honor was very important in Japanese culture, even more for the ones who still lived by the traditions, which is why Sensei does not expect the nameless narrator to understand why he is doing that, taking his life. However, even for the more modern Japanese, honor stills mean a lot.</p>
<p><i>Junshi</i> as a practice</p>	<p>“I had almost forgotten that there was such a word as "junshi" It is not a word that one uses normally, and I suppose it had been banished to some remote corner of my</p>	<p><i>Junshi</i> (also be reffered as hara-kiri) is a way of saying “to follow one’s lord or master to the grave”. This was a practice that was done by the warrior class, the</p>

	<p>memory. I turned to my wife, who had reminded me of its existence, and said: "I will commit junshi if you like; but in my case, it will be through loyalty to the spirit of the Meiji era." "(Soseki, p. 245)</p>	<p>samurai, for many centuries. General Nogi was one of the last Japanese to perform this kind of rituals (seppuku was another ritual suicide practice performed by the samurai). While Sensei does not have a "lord". He uses this to follow the spirit of Meiji and what he once was to the grave. He uses Junshi to liberate his soul and die a proper death that can also be linked to an honorable death.</p>
<p>The telegraphic liens</p>	<p>"In a place where dogs barked at the sight of a Western-style suit, the arrival of a telegram was a great event." (Sōseki, p. 109)</p>	<p>The telegraphic lines were brought in the country by the British and the Danish. It made communications between the farthest parts of the county easier. By 1880, most of the main cities of Japan were connected by telegraphic lines. In the quote</p>

		<p>we can see an individual with "western-like" clothing handing a telegram to the main character. It references the clear modern role and meaning that telegram had over the country. Telegrams, alongside other big modern advancements such as the rail road system, symbolized modernity. They were a big part of the modernization and the centralization of Japan,</p>
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*Table 2 Literary analysis chart of the historical elements presented in the book . Source: Researcher's creation.*

#### ***4.2.3 Traditional and modern molds of Japanese society***

The third literary table deals with the third specific objective of the investigation in which story pieces of the book will be analyzed in light of the traditional and the modern molds of Japanese society. The story pieces will be direct quotes extracted from the book.

#### **Table 3**

Literary analysis chart of the traditional and the modern way of life based on different parts of the book story

Story quote	Traditional element	Modern element
<p>“It was at Kamakura, during the summer holidays, that I first met Sensei. I was then a very young student I went there at the insistence of a friend of mine, who had gone to Kamakura to swim. We were not together for long. It had taken me a few days to get together enough money to cover the necessary expenses, and it was only three days after my arrival that my friend received a telegram from home demanding his return. His mother, the telegram explained, was ill. My friend, however, did not believe this. For some time his parents had been trying to persuade him, much against his will, to marry a certain</p>	<p>In the quote, there needs to be a clear traditional elements that can be analyzed. However, the lack of them and the fact that the book started with this modern setting hint that the book will revolve around the modern Japanese life.</p>	<p>Many modern elements gather in this story fragment. Japanese people, students, and more have summer holidays in which they enjoy themselves. This was taken from the western culture and practices. Japanese people were introduced to this type of life that was full of freedom and individualism. In addition, the use of the telegraphic line to expedite long-distance communication between parties. A technological element that boosted communication throughout all Japan. Moreover, marrying at a young age (arranged marriages) did not fit this new modern outlook. Marriage</p>

<p>girl. According to our modern outlook, he was really too young to marry.” (Sōseki, p. 1)</p>		<p>culture started to change in Japan during the Meiji Era.</p>
<p>“From then on, my thesis hung over me like a curse, and with bloodshot eyes, I worked like a madman. I rushed to friends who had graduated the year before for advice on all matters. One of them told me that only by catching a rickshaw to the university offices did he succeed in handing in his thesis before the deadline. Another told me that he handed in his thesis fifteen minutes late, and it would not have been accepted but for the intervention of his principal professor. Such stories made me uneasy, but</p>	<p>Japanese culture can be linked to hard work. Even an old militia class such as the samurai will dedicate their lives to perfect their practices to incredible and remarkable extents. This was embedded in the Japanese culture. Even though the western ways were introduced to the Japanese, traditions such as the perfection of one’s work, were still endorsed by the government and the Japanese in general.</p>	<p>Modern (western) education was a very important addition for Japanese culture during the Meiji Era. Before this time, education was reserved for certain groups of people with some economic power and social class. The fact that most Japanese could access the educational system in the first years of the Meiji Era, created more professionals and educated individuals that could help to expand and achieve the country’s goals even faster, which was the reason behind this historic moment.</p>

<p>at the same time they gave me confidence. Every day, I worked as hard and as long as I could. If I was not at my desk, I was in the gloomy library, hurriedly scanning the titles on the high shelves, as though I were some kind of curio-hunter.” (Sōseki, p. 55)</p>		
<p>“My mother was surprisingly optimistic and unconcerned. As is commonly the case with women who live among wood and fields far from cities, my mother was quite ignorant about such matters. I remembered, uneasily, how surprised and frightened she had been when my father had fainted. "But the doctor warned us then that father's illness was serious." "That is</p>	<p>Both the main character and his mother faced and grew up in different environments. The nameless narrator was more a modern young man, unlike his mother, that was raised and still lived in the countryside. Sickness and health have different meaning and were treated differently. Traditional ways were more “natural” and spiritual. This</p>	<p>In the modern Era, most sickness are treated with medicine. Medicine that comes from the study of the body in a scientific process. What the doctor says is believed to be true because it is backed up by modern medicine. The traditional ways of treating the ill may still be alive, even nowadays, but modern medicine has become the norm. Many</p>

<p>why I think there is nothing stranger than the human body. Look at him now—so healthy, despite the doctor's anxiety." (Sōseki, p. 83)</p>	<p>explains the mother's behavior towards sickness</p>	<p>Japanese scholars were sent overseas to study medicine and bring this specialized knowledge to the country during the Meiji Era.</p>
<p>"Of course, I want the allowance only until I find a job." Secretly, there was little chance of my finding a decent position. Nevertheless, my father, who was somewhat removed from the realities of the world outside, firmly believed otherwise. "All right," he said. "Since it will only be for a short time, I'll see to it that you get your allowance. But only for a short time, mind. You must become independent as soon as you find employment. It isn't right that one should, immediately after graduating,</p>	<p>Even in traditional times, independence was still important. However, children will reach independence to support and care for their parents to pay for all of the time they spend doing the same thing. For countryside people, a diploma was not needed to get a job, nor a formal education. Children, when they reached certain age, could keep going with the family activities (means of income). The father of the nameless narrator was raised within this framework, so his</p>	<p>Independence was also relevant in the modern setting. However, it now had a different meaning, and the means to achieve it were different. A formal education was needed. Even with formal education, a decent job position still needed to be secured. These "modern problems" resemble what many young people experience nowadays. By that time, it was a clear example of western culture being adopted by the Japanese culture.</p>

<p>live on others. It would seem that the younger generation today knows only how to spend money. It does not seem to occur to them that money has to be made too." (Sōseki, p. 98)</p>	<p>understanding of the modern world was little.</p>	
<p>"In the country, as you are probably well aware, it is a very serious thing to tear down or sell a house with a long tradition when there is an heir. Such things do not worry me now, but I was young then, and I was torn between the desire to go to Tokyo and the fear of shirking the responsibility of my inheritance." (Sōseki, p. 134)</p>	<p>In the country, despite the heavy influence of the western culture brought by the emperor and the government, many traditions were still ingrained in the people's minds. The government did not want to destroy the traditional culture and its practices, but rather introduce a new modern life that to coexist with the traditional morals. However, modernity brings comfort and freedom, something that traditions do not always have,</p>	<p>Modernity brought freedom of the individual. It was a slow process, but it affected the way people behave towards certain traditions. Money has more value in the modern world. Sometimes it outweighs the value of traditions, just like the quote in the left column.</p>

	which explains Sensei's detachment of the tradition.	
<p>"In those days, such phrases as "the age of awakening" and "the new life" had not yet come into fashion. But you must not think that K's inability to discard his old ways and begin his life anew was due to his lack of modern concepts. You must understand that to K, his own past seemed too sacred a thing to be thrown away like an old suit of clothes. One might say that his past was his life, and to deny it would have meant that his life thus far had been without purpose." (Sōseki, p. 218)</p>	<p>At the beginning of the Meiji Era, the changes were rapid. In fifty years, Japan had to achieve what the west did in almost two hundred years. Japan would not look the same from that moment on. Japan had been rooted in its traditions for many years, which is why the modern life was not fully adopted, to some extent, until the last years of the Era. This cause moral and internal disturb amongst the more traditional Japanese.</p>	<p>A lot of Japanese were aware of these modern changes in their lives (amongst them, the author of the book, Natsume Soseki). The traditional ways did not die, but they suffered big changes. They were bent and changed to fit the modern days. Modernity brought progress to the country, but it also disturb in the Japanese culture and the mind of its people.</p>

*Table 3 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and the modern way of life based on different parts of the book story. Source: Researcher's creation.*

### 4.3 Themes, Motifs, and Symbols

Themes, Motifs, and Symbols carry meaning and allow a book to be interpreted from different perspectives and points of view. These elements enrich the book's analysis and give the reader the possibility to have a better and more detailed insight into the book's content. These elements will be analyzed with the aid of quotes extracted from the book and the researcher's interpretation in the next table.

#### 4.3.1 Symbols, Motifs, and Themes

Table 4

Literary analysis table: Symbols, Motifs, and Themes

Symbol	Quote	Researcher interpretation
Ojosan's (Shizu) Beauty	"I was afraid that a beautiful person such as she could not behold anything ugly and frightful without somehow losing her beauty. (...) I thought that to help destroy such beauty would be no less cruel and meaningless than to beat down a pretty, innocent flower." (Soseki, p. 234)	Shizu's beauty is related to traditional beauty. The Japanese were nostalgic about the Taisho Era (before Meiji Era). For Sensei and the reader, Shizu's beauty is the traditional beauty, which is what the Japanese were used to in the Taisho Era and times before that. Shizu is fragile and should not be stained

		with the ugliness that comes with new times, new traditions, and change in general, which explains Sensei's distance to his wife.
The death of the emperor Meiji	<p>“Then, at the height of the summer, Emperor Meiji passed away. I felt as though the spirit of the Meiji era had begun with the Emperor and had ended with him.”</p> <p>(Sōseki, p. 245)</p>	<p>The death of the Emperor, for Japanese, means a lot. The emperor was believed to have a divine connection with the Gods. What happen in the Era was related to him. His death meant as if the spirit of the Era passed away with him. For Japanese who still were getting used to this new Era, the emperor's death had a spiritual impact on them.</p>
The Junshi of General Nogi	<p>“For a long time, the image of General Nogi in his uniform, and that of his wife dressed like a court lady, stayed with me. The tragic news touched</p>	<p>The death of General Nogi meant is almost as if one part of the traditional way of life was still thriving, but it die with him, General Nogi</p>

	<p>us like the bitter wind which awakens the trees and the grass sleeping in the remotest corners of the countryside.”</p> <p>(Soseki, p. 109)</p>	<p>committed Junshi, ritual suicide, since he could not serve his lord no longer.</p> <p>Junshi was a tradition done by many Samurai in the past to follow one’s lord to the grave. It was a way to die with honor.</p>
Sensei vs Narrator	<p>“There is nothing we can do to bridge the gap between us. Of course, it may be more correct to say that we are different simply because we are two separate human beings. At any rate, I have done my best in the above narrative to make you understand this strange person that is myself.”</p> <p>(Sōseki, p. 246)</p>	<p>Sensei and the Narrator represent a dichotomy presented in the book. The struggle with the modern and the born of modernity. Sensei is aware of this difference. He represents the generation who lived the abrupt changes that were brought in the Meiji Era that left conflicts with identity. On the other hand, the narrator is part of the generation born within modernity; thus, the changes were not mentally tolling as</p>

		for those like Sensei and the author himself.
<b>Motifs</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher interpretation</b>
The letter	<p>“There is nothing left for me to do. By the time this letter reaches you, I shall probably have left this world—I shall in all likelihood be dead.”</p> <p>(Sōseki, p. 247)</p>	<p>The letter is an element that can be found throughout the whole story. While being a slow communication, the letter plays a linking role in the story by being a more intimate means of communication. It also reflects Sensei's use of traditional elements, despite the existence of the telegram. The telegram can only express a few words and cannot transmit what a letter can. This can be seen in the posthumous letter of Sensei to the narrator.</p>
The telegram	<p>“The truth is, the only things I would have thought worth</p>	<p>Telegram is also another element that appears</p>

	<p>saying at the time are those things which I shall say here, and it was then too soon for me to write such a letter. That is why I sent you that simple telegram, telling you that there was no need to come.”(Sōseki, p. 127)</p>	<p>throughout the whole story. The telegraphic line boosted communication throughout whole Japan at that time. It eases communication between the main cities of Japan and other more remote places. The telegram is an example of the modernization of Japan. It was brought by the British and Danish and necessary for the "westernization" of the country. The telegrams were short but effective communication; however, it did not replace the letter, which was its predecessor.</p>
The City	<p>“You will really be amazed to see how much Tokyo has changed since your last visit. For example, the tram lines have become numerous, and</p>	<p>The city is the new home of the narrator. It represents the heart of modernity. It resembles of what modern Japan is today. The narrator</p>

	<p>you know how they affect the appearance of streets. There's been a rearrangement of the boroughs too. Why, one can say that in Tokyo today, there's not a moment of quiet, day or night" (Sōseki, p. 104)</p>	<p>grows to almost despise the countryside and the people who live in it. Tokyo represents the "age of awakening" and the heart of Meiji. Full with education, buildings, and "civilized" individuals</p>
<p>The countryside</p>	<p>"I bought a suitcase also. Of course, it was a cheap one, made in Japan. But it had metal fittings that shone brilliantly, and it was impressive enough to stun country people. My mother had asked me in one of her letters to buy such a bag for myself if I graduated, so that I could come home with all the presents packed in it I laughed when I read the request I understood my mother's motives, and I was</p>	<p>The countryside, being the home of the narrator and the setting of the second chapter of the book, is presented, most of the times, pejoratively by the narrator. The narrator, representing the new Era, has grown detached from this place where he was born and raised. He thinks badly of the countryside people. The countryside also represents the traditional. Even a modern young man such as the narrator was born</p>

	not being unkind when I found it comical” (Sōseki, p. 79)	here. Modernity grew from the traditional, but it did not replace it.
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher interpretation</b>
Cultural struggle	<p>“The cause of Sensei's pessimism, then, could not reasonably be traced to their relationship with each other. It seemed that Sensei's misanthropic views which he had expressed to me applied to the modern world in general, but not to his wife.” (Sōseki, p. 32)</p>	<p>With Japan emerging as a new modern nation during the Meiji Era, the introduction to western practices and culture to the traditionalist Japanese created a cultural conflict. Japanese were submerged to western culture and to adopt it. Japanese people were almost forced to do adopt it. Individualism, which was brought by the western aligned partially with Japanese culture. Cultural identity was revamped, but it took several years for the people to get used to this.</p>

Loneliness	<p>“(…) I bear with my loneliness now, in order to avoid greater loneliness in the years ahead. You see, loneliness is the price we have to pay for being born in this modern age, so full of freedom, independence, and our own egotistical selves.” I could not think of anything to say.” (Sōseki, p.30)</p>	<p>Loneliness is presented, specially, in the main characters of the book. Sensei and the Narrator feel loneliness in their own way. However, this loneliness is caused by modernization. Individualism brought crisis a crisis of identity. Sensei says that he is from a different era, yet he is also part of this new modern one, which causes conflict. The narrator’s loneliness, comes from his family not understanding him (modern ways) and his search for understanding (Sensei).</p>
The passage of time (eras)	<p>“You and I belong to different eras, and so we think differently. There is nothing we can do to bridge</p>	<p>The changes of eras in Japan has happened for hundreds of years. However, the change of to the Meiji Era had no precedents. Modernization and centralization change</p>

	<p>the gap between us.” (Sōseki, p.246)</p>	<p>Japan forever. With this abrupt change, generations collide and feel different towards the changes. Some stay attached to the past and others live in the middle of it. With the end of an Era, some generations are left behind new generation. Which is part of the meaning of Sensei's suicide.</p>
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*Table 4 Literary analysis table including Symbols, Motifs, and Themes. Source: Researcher's creation.*

## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Purpose of the Conclusion

Research investigations such as this need a chapter that compiles the data results. That chapter, which is the data compilation, is called the conclusions. However, this compilation's purpose is to analyze all of the data as a whole to reach certain goal or goals. In this chapter, all of the data collected and analyzed will be compared with the objective of the investigation to see if they been accomplished or not, and to what extent. The concluding chapter is the last remark of the investigation and is purely based on the researchers' insight, aided by all of the previously collected and analyzed data.

#### 5.2 Conclusions

This investigation aimed to analyze the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki with new historicism as the research approach and analysis tool. The research has three specific objectives to guide the investigation process and analysis. Among those three specific objectives were the identification of the different elements presented in the book that can be linked to the traditional or modern Japanese society characteristics, the creation of a historical and literary framework under the new historicism approach to explore the relevant aspects of the book, and the evaluation of the weight of the two society molds presented in the book for the Japanese culture. To accomplish these specific objectives, previous literary research was done. In addition, an analysis of some of the book elements through literary analysis charts was done. The concluding remarks, per specific objective, will be explained in the next sections.

***5.2.1 To identify the different elements presented in the book that can be linked to the traditional or modern Japanese society characteristics.***

The first objective of the investigation deals with the traditional and modern elements of Japanese society that could be found in the book. In this objective, the element to analyze was accompanied by a quote and the researcher's insight. The elements analyzed were the telegram and the letter as means of communication, the countryside, the city, and the university. These elements helped to fulfill the purpose of the specific objective. These elements carried meaning with them, which means that they represented characteristics of Japanese society, whether modern or traditional. The telegram and the letter were great steps for modern Japanese communication, showcasing the velocity with which Japan was modernizing the life of its citizens. They were present throughout the Meiji era and helped expedite communication between long-distance places that had never been seen before. The letter was still used as a means of communication, though its use was now (in the Meiji era) more personal. It still represented a good way to communicate with people more extensively (the message to deliver).

The countryside and the city both represent the traditional and the modern (in that respective order). However, they also represent separating these elements while coalescing in one physical space. The countryside and the city are the main settings of the book. Japan was more of a rural country for hundreds of years. With modernization, important cities, such as Tokyo, began to expand and look more like western cities of the time, modern cities. Even more, the countryside was distant, far from modernization. This also meant that the countryside was not experiencing the "new Japan" changes. People there were left behind. They were forced into concepts such as individualization. They were more distant from everyone, just as if they were stuck in the past, with the dying eras.

The University, a western-like education, was another modern feature of the Meiji Era. Japan needed a more "civilized" population. They needed them to learn the modern ways to be equal to those in western countries. Education was one way to fulfill that goal. Education brought more advancement to Japan in many areas and changed Japan's culture for the years to come. Education was now part of the average Japanese life and not reserved for a special group.

These elements were a part of modern Japanese society and traditional society. They were also elements that appeared in the book that the author, Natsume Sōseki, used to tell a deeper story that highlighted these elements. Therefore, these elements helped accomplish the specific objective of the investigation in which traditional and modern features of Japanese society had to be identified in the book.

***5.2.2 To create a historical and literary framework under the new historicism approach to explore the relevant aspects of the book.***

The second objective of the investigation deals with an analysis from the new historicism perspective of the book. Historical and literary elements were analyzed. The analyzed elements were the death of the emperor Meiji, The *junshi* of the emperor's general, Nogi, the *junshi* as a practice, and the telegraphic lines. These elements helped to fulfill the purpose of the specific objective.

In this objective, the element to analyze have been accompanied by a quote and the researcher's insight.

Despite appearing in a fictional book, they carry historical meaning relevant to Japanese history and culture—the death of Emperor Meiji. The Meiji era was an era of modernization. Many changes went through these times. Most of them thank the emperor and his political team. Like many emperors before him, the emperor Meiji is remembered for the events during their

time in power. For Japan, however, it also entails a spiritual meaning. This feeling is as if everything would change abruptly just because another emperor rose into power. This had already happened with the Meiji era and its emperor. Once the Meiji emperor died, Japanese people awaited new times to come with the uncertainty of their future.

The *Junshi* of the emperor's general, Nogi, was a great example of the dying era. He was a very important general that led the imperial army to victory during the first Russo-Japanese war. He was a symbol of the undying honor that represented the old militia of the country, the samurai, which was still alive for the new imperial army. Honor meant a lot for the warrior class, and they lived to serve their lord, which is why he waited thirty-five years to commit suicide (ritualistic practice) to follow his lord to the grave and die with honor. *Junshi*, which was what Sensei, one of the book's main characters, can also be referred to as hara-kiri. This ritualistic practice had been used for years for the warrior class. Sensei and Nogi end their lives here because they belong to the new era. They wanted and must be remembered for their time lived in the modern Meiji Japan. Traditional elements of the Japanese culture were, sometimes, as strong as honor was in the modern Meiji era. This is an example of this principle.

The telegraphic lines were part of the modernization of the country. They represented progress, and the build-up of a new Japan. In addition, they appear in the book representing the Japan that is now. They were a means of rapid communication that connected the country like never before. The government and the Emperor wanted to unify the country like never before. The telegraphic lines were part of that process and built its foundation.

These elements were part of the book analyzed for this investigation, *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki. They represented historic elements of the author's culture, which he used to create a more compelling and complex story that represented the heart of Japan. Therefore, these elements

helped to accomplish the specific objective of the investigation in which a historical and literary framework was going to be created to be analyzed under the perspective of new historicism.

### *5.2.3 To evaluate the weight of the two society molds presented in the book for the Japanese*

The third objective of the investigation deals with an analysis of the traditional and modern society molds presented in events that happened during the book story, which also reflects what it meant for the Japanese. In this objective, the elements to analyze were direct quotes of the book and the researcher's insight based on the traditional and the modern cultural mold. The analyzed quotes represented different situations, in which each contained a different perspective of both molds extracted and explained by the researcher. These elements helped to fulfill the purpose of the specific objective.

The traditional mold and the modern mold coalesced during the Meiji period. Both of the archetypical characteristics of the mold were present during the era. It would be wrong to think they were two different things without relation to each other. Modernity, in the case of Japan, came with the rise of the Emperor Meiji and the need for "competition" with the western countries. This brought many changes in the Japanese way of living. Some traditional practices were changed and adapted for these new modern times. Main cities looked every year more alike to those in the western countries. Technology, politics, socioeconomics, and many more fields were revamped to expedite this process. With this, the traditional elements changed radically, but only partially disappeared. This dichotomy brought confusion and conflict for the Japanese and their identity. However, as generations began to be born within this new era, the modern mold grew stronger, so the Meiji era was known as a period of change and modernization.

These elements were part of the book analyzed for this investigation, *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki. They represented pieces of the Japanese culture during this period of transition to modernization and conflict with the traditional. Therefore, these elements helped to accomplish the specific objective of the investigation in which the traditional and the modern mold of the Japanese culture and society were used to evaluate fragments of the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki.

### **5.3 Restatement of the Research Question**

Remains unchanged. All of the objectives proposed for the investigation were achieved. As a result, the research question is: How to analyze the depiction of the traditional and modern Japanese society in the book *Kokoro* by Natsume Sōseki from a new historicist perspective?

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The purpose of this section is to give some advice and recommendations to future researchers on how to do a literary investigation to further their studies. These recommendation will be related to what has been learned during the elaboration of this investigation and all of its processes. Literary analyses usually work around a book or a set of literary pieces. For this investigation, only one book, *Kokoro*, was the focus. It is important to keep the project's scope in mind, so one can decide whether to use one or more books to investigate the research. It is important to consider that when choosing the book (or books, but for this investigation, it will be assumed that just one book was chosen), it has to be one that one likes or enjoys. The book's content has to spark interest and motivate the investigator to research, making the investigation process more enjoyable.

Once the book has been chosen under this criteria, it is important to familiarize oneself as much as possible. This can be done by, first, reading the book several times. Reading the book

once will give one the general idea of the book, reading it more than once can give a better understanding of the history, characters, setting, symbols, and more elements. Once one is familiarized with the main idea, it is easier to spot and understand these elements. Alongside these readings, the researcher can take notes of important details of the book. Details that help further into the investigation will also help to keep track of them for future reference.

Secondly, the researcher must to get familiarized with the book, read about the book in articles and books, and secondary and tertiary sources. These sources will help the researcher to see the book from other's points of view. The researcher could encounter views that help to further the understanding of the book, or what views are completely different, but helpful for the researcher. Lastly, it is important to get familiarized with the book's vocabulary. This could be done by doing a glossary with the words that the researcher needs to learn the meaning of. This can be done whether the book chosen is written in the mother tongue of the researcher or in a foreign language. All of these recommendations will help to get familiarized with the book, so the researcher can choose the topic of the investigation that relates to has been found about the book.

Another part to take into account is the perspective on which the investigation will focus. This will determine the type of analysis of the data collected of the investigation. For this investigation, new historicism was used as the main analysis perspective given the number of historical elements the book contains. However, depending on the book, the researcher could choose another one that suits the need of the investigation (goals and objectives). This will depend on what the researcher wants to analyze and the elements to analyze. One example of this will be the Hero's Journey theory to analyze the main character or any other character in the book.

The investigation of a literary book is a long and tedious process. One must choose the book and the topic of the investigation correctly so the investigation feels more relaxed than it already is. In addition, if one chooses these elements that match what the researcher likes, the outcome of the investigation will be better than if these elements were something the researcher dislikes. Therefore, it is important to familiarize yourself with the book before deciding on an investigation as important as this one.

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## Appendixes

### Appendix 1

Table 1

Literary analysis chart of the traditional and modern elements from the Japanese society presented in the book.

Modern/Traditional Element	Quote	Researcher's interpretation
Telegram as a mean of rapid and long-distanced communication in contrast with the letter as a means of traditional communication.		
The countryside		
The city (Tokyo)		
University as normative in the modern world, and an accomplishment in the traditional world		

*Table 1 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and modern elements from the Japanese society presented in the book. Source: Researcher's creation.*

## Appendix 2

Table 2

Literary analysis table of the historical elements presented in the book

<b>Historical Element</b>	<b>Quote of the book</b>	<b>Researcher's analysis</b>
The death of the emperor Meiji		.
The <i>junshi</i> of the emperor's general, Nogi		
<i>Junshi</i> as a practice		
The telegraphic liens		

*Table 2 Literary analysis chart of the historical elements presented in the book  
. Source: Researcher's creation.*

## Appendix 3

Table 3

Literary analysis chart of the traditional and the modern way of life based on different parts of the book story.

<b>Story quote</b>	<b>Traditional element</b>	<b>Modern element</b>


*Table 3 Literary analysis chart of the traditional and the modern way of life based on different parts of the book story. Source: Researcher's creation.*

#### **Appendix 4**

Table 4

Literary analysis table: Symbols, Motifs, and Themes

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher interpretation</b>
Ojosan's (Shizu) Beauty		
The death of the emperor Meiji		
The Junshi of General Nogi		
Sensei vs Narrator		
<b>Motifs</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher interpretation</b>
The letter		

The telegram		
The city		
The countryside		
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Quote</b>	<b>Researcher interpretation</b>
Cultural struggle		
Loneliness		
The passage of time (eras)		

*Table 4 Literary analysis table including Symbols, Motifs, and Themes. Source: Researcher's creation.*