

論文の内容の要旨

論文題目 Kazuo Ishiguro and His View of Life: Idealism, Nostalgia, Fatalism

(カズオ・イシグロとその人生観——理想主義、ノスタルジー、運命論)

氏 名 森 川 慎 也

This thesis is a study on Kazuo Ishiguro, a contemporary Japanese-born British novelist, and in particular on his view of life. The purpose of the thesis is to describe the shaping of Ishiguro's visions on life by numerous references to his literary works and his interviews. The thesis consists of introduction, three parts (containing eighteen chapters), conclusion, and works cited.

Introduction begins with presenting the rationales for the thesis to focus on the author's visions on life, instead of narrative, cultural or historical dimensions and many other aspects of Ishiguro's works that normally have drawn much critical attention. It also declares the intention of making abundant use of interviews with Ishiguro with which to probe his view of life, focusing particularly on three visions—idealism, nostalgia, and fatalism. The reason for the focus on these visions is the ongoing imbalance of scholarly attention: the attention is most exclusively focused on fatalism while the two other visions, idealism and nostalgia—the former in particular—are largely neglected. To rectify the imbalance by showing that idealism and nostalgia are as essential and fundamental to Ishiguro's general view as fatalism is what this thesis aims to do.

Part I addresses Ishiguro's idealism. In the first chapter, Idealistic generation, Ishiguro's idealistic

tendency is briefly examined in relation to the historical context of Britain of the 1960s and '70s when he passed his youth. Chapter 2, Instinct for contribution, shows that Ishiguro recognises as universal human nature the urge for realising one's ideals. Ishiguro's obsession with idealism, however, comes in part from his fear of overvaluing his own life, a fear deriving from his imagination of what kind of life he might have led in Japan had he been born a generation earlier during the Second World War, which is the topic of Chapter 3, Fear of the Future. On the other hand, this fear is the other side of his strong idealism, part of which can be seen in his early essay, 'Bomb Culture' (1983). In the fourth chapter, Value judgement, we will have a glimpse at a rare example of Ishiguro's criticism of his contemporary writers of mediocrity who jumped at big themes like holocaust to gain popularity in the early 1980s and also witness Ishiguro's emphasis on the importance of value judgement on the reader's part. Ishiguro's stress on the power of judgement is naturally correlated with his professionalism, which is represented in immense pride with which his protagonists boast their disparate professions (Chapter 5, Pride in profession). Ironically, as Chapter 6, Ethics, shows, we will see the same professionalism causes ethical plights into which Ishiguro's characters inevitably fall. In the same chapter we also see not only the strong parallelism between Ishiguro and Stevens the butler in their views of idealism, professionalism, and judgement, but also Ishiguro's contemplation through the internal struggles of Stevens' and other characters' on the fatalistic conditions of idealism. In the last chapter of this part, Chapter 7, Optimism in the denouement, we examine why, despite such a strong sense of fatalism, Ishiguro's novels end with a general tone of optimism, and in the optimism we find Ishiguro's overall stress on idealism as a vision of life.

Part II deals with Ishiguro's nostalgia. We will look into how Ishiguro initially set out on his creative journey into memories in Chapter 8, Embarking for memories. This chapter shows Ishiguro's initial attempt to deal with nostalgia and what motivated him to explore the nature of memory in his early works. In Chapter 9, Nostalgia for childhood bubble, we will see Ishiguro's view of nostalgia in contrast to a scholar's view of the vision. At the same time, we also examine what Ishiguro calls childhood bubbles in relation to his view of nostalgia. Indeed, Ishiguro's conception of childhood bubbles is based on his perception that they break at some point of one's childhood, leading to the infliction of an emotional wound, which is the main theme of Chapter 10,

Wound to caress. In this chapter Ishiguro's idea of wound is analysed in the context of nostalgia. The impact of wound, in Ishiguro's psychological scheme, is so powerful that it returns to one in one's mid-thirties. The examination of the timing of the return of this wound is made in Chapter 11, In their mid-thirties, referring to Elliott Jaques's research on mid-life crisis. Obviously, Ishiguro and Jaques are similar to each other in their view that people's vision of life changes from an idealistic one to a pessimistic one, but their difference comes to be clear when Ishiguro argues that the crisis in one's mid-life involves the flare-up of one's childhood wound. This distinct view of Ishiguro's is surely based on his own personal relation with his own wound. Thus, in Chapter 12, Guilty wound, we will look into Ishiguro's interviews to see what Ishiguro has said about his own wound, and identify its source in his physical severance from his grandparents and his extremely unproportional sense of guilt towards them. This personal relationship with his own wound gives rise to Ishiguro's obsession with his Japan, or his nostalgic memories of Nagasaki, or his own bubble world. The examination of the universal formation and destruction of childhood bubbles through a reading of several of Ishiguro's novels will be provided in Chapter 13, Fantasy. Chapter 14, Staging wounds, shows, on the other hand, how Ishiguro's idea of wound has been explored and developed focusing on two novels, *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Unconsoled*. The last chapter of this part, Chapter 15, Reconciliation, provides an interpretation of *When We Were Orphans* as a work of fiction in which Ishiguro attempts to reconcile himself to his dead grandparents through the reconciliation between Christopher Banks and his long missing mother.

Part III, the last part, is formed of three chapters. Ishiguro's fatalistic vision is represented persistently in the motif of perspective, whose variations appear throughout his fictions. Ishiguro's idea of perspective, or rather a narrow perspective, is quite fatalistic in that he considers that it can never change throughout our lives. His deterministic view that our vision is quite narrow and myopic is shown by the examination in Chapter 16, Perspective, of many symbols of the distortion, limitation, or even absence of perspective. This pathetic view of the impossibility of our gaining a broad perspective of life is strengthened in later works because of Ishiguro's mature realisation that life increasingly gets out of control as one gets older. Chapter 17, Out of control, sees this sense of uncontrollability in particular reference to *Never Let Me Go*. The feeling that one is losing control over

one's life manifests itself in a most bleak way at the end of the novel. Chapter 18, Fate, sees not only how Ishiguro uses the term 'fate' in his interviews as well as in his works, but also how his two visions idealism and nostalgia strengthen and are subsumed into his fatalism.

Conclusion connects the three visions, idealism, nostalgia and fatalism. Nostalgia with the residue of mental wounds to fix hatches idealism in us. That is why Ishiguro's protagonists can neither control their idealistic tendency nor can they help forming idealistic fantasies about their future. The fate of their idealism is supposed to be reminiscent of the fatalistic cycle of the formation and explosion of childhood fantasies. Ishiguro's fatalism, referred to as his decisive world view by many critics and academics, should therefore be understood as a vision tightening the conceptual combination of idealism and nostalgia. For Ishiguro, fatalism is simply a law of life; it is just something we are all somehow required to accept. But Ishiguro's ethical emphasis is placed not on fatalism itself but rather on idealism and nostalgia that drive our motivation to live on the belief that we would be able to make a humble contribution to the world and at the same time fix something that got wrong in our childhood. And it should be underlined, nevertheless, that this ethical stress comes from his understanding of the fatalistic condition of idealism and nostalgia. The fact that we have the universal tendency of being drawn towards idealism and nostalgia, as well as the fact that idealism and nostalgia alike are essentially doomed, is ultimately the human condition that Ishiguro has been picturing in his fiction.