Kazuo Ishiguro in Interviews: The Structures of Idealism and Nostalgia[1]

Shinya Morikawa
(Institute of Arts and Sciences)

Introduction

Literary studies at the present day involve reading more multiple texts than ever — not just literary works but also historical, cultural, political, and other ‘non-literary’ texts, a phenomenon occurring alongside the shift of literary scholars’ practices from mere close reading of literary texts as such to more inclusive analyses of culture, history, and politics working behind literary creation. In the practice of such critical theories as new historicism, postcolonial criticism, and cultural studies, for instance, literary texts tend to be placed amidst their contemporary discourses of politics, culture and history to reveal how the former texts broadly reflect and are largely determined by the latter type of discourses.[2] The centrifugal tendency for literary scholars to examine the social layers of discourses beyond individual writers’ texts has thus been gathering disciplinary momentum. At the same time, however, it seems that this tendency has been fostered at great cost to academic attention that used to be accorded to the singularity of individual writers and especially creative processes by which writers fashion their own ideas for particular themes of their literary works. In order to see the way such a creative process transpires in a writer’s mind we need to attempt a centripetal approach as well: perhaps the most readily available way for that purpose would be to read interviews more closely. Indeed, a study of how interviews inform the shaping of writers’ thematic ideas in today’s literary scenes has yet to be fully done. This paper, therefore, attempts to show how interviews are essential for a proper understanding of processes of a writer’s literary creation by reading interviews with a contemporary British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro. The internal aim of the paper is to show by

---

[1] The shorter version of this paper was presented at International Conference Kazuo Ishiguro: New Perspectives, held at Komaba, the University of Tokyo, on the 15th of November, 2014. Special thanks are due to the conference organisers, Yoshiki Tajiri, Kaz Oishi, and Masaaki Takeda, as well as to the participants in the conference for posing thought-provoking questions there and on later occasions. Needless to say, any logical flaws that might possibly remain here are mine.

[2] For the easiest approach ever to practical examples of these theories Peter Barry’s *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* still deserves strong recommendation.

an abundant use of interviews four new aspects of Ishiguro in interviews: firstly, personal and political sets of idealism and nostalgia cohabiting inside Ishiguro; secondly, textual reverberations between these two sets of the emotions; thirdly, a parallel of the binary structures of idealism and nostalgia; and fourthly, the creative impact of the two sets of idealism and nostalgia upon the transition of thematic emphases from misguided idealism in his early novels to nostalgia for childhood in his later ones.

I. Personal Nostalgia and Idealism

A careful read of interviews with Kazuo Ishiguro reveals frequent references to nostalgia and idealism.[3] They can broadly be categorised into two sets: *personal* nostalgia and idealism and *political* nostalgia and idealism. I would prefer to refer to one set of nostalgia and idealism as a *personal* one because it is primarily based on Ishiguro's personal view. On the other hand, I call the other set of idealism and nostalgia a *political* one since it indicates reference to the 1960s-70s idealism and the 1980s nostalgia, predominant political attitudes in the respective periods in Britain. In this section the discussion is focused on the personal set of nostalgia and idealism.

The fact regarding nostalgia and idealism that should be pointed out before anything else is that they made synchronic appearance in Ishiguro's interviews from the year 2000.[4] Almost every time Ishiguro referred to nostalgia he likened it to idealism and then averred that nostalgia was 'a kind of emotional equivalent to idealism' (interview, 2000, Shaffer 166).[5] Ishiguro pointed to their equivalence over and over again.[6] The following are four occasions where he referred to it:

---

[3] Many of the interviews I refer to in this paper are from *Conversations with Kazuo Ishiguro*, the first book collection of Ishiguro's interviews well selected and edited by two Ishiguro specialists, Brian W. Shaffer and Cynthia F. Wong, and published in 2008 as one of the Literary Conversation Series by the University Press of Mississippi.

[4] The word 'idealism' forms part of the title of an interview conducted in 2000 by Cynthia F. Wong: 'Like Idealism Is to the Intellect: An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro'.

[5] Citation of interviews in this paper follows the rule set here. A year refers to one when a given interview was conducted, not one of publication. For example, Brian W. Shaffer's interview was conducted in 2000 and printed in 2001 originally in *Contemporary Literature*. At the end of this paper the interview is cited as follows: Shaffer, Brian W. 'An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (2001). Shaffer and Wong, 161-73. However, when referred to in the main text it is cited as follows to make explicit the year of interviewing: Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166.

[6] Hiroshi Ikezono recognises uniqueness in Ishiguro's equating the apparently antagonistic ideas: 'nostalgia is associated with the past whereas idealism inclines towards the future' (5; my translation).

> Sometimes I think nostalgia of that sort can be a very positive force, as well as a very destructive force, because like idealism is to the intellect, that kind of nostalgia has the same relationship to the emotions. (Interview, 2000, Wong 184)

> In some ways I think that nostalgia can be quite a positive emotion. It does allow us to picture a better world. It's kind of an emotional sister of idealism. (Interview, 2000, Chapel)

> [. . .] it [nostalgia] is almost like the emotional equivalent to idealism. (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, Veyret 11)

> It's almost like that kind of nostalgia is to the feelings, to the emotions what idealism is to the intellect. (Interview, 2005, Bates 199-200)

It is evident that Ishiguro's positive view of nostalgia induced his frequent comparisons of it to idealism. The reason for Ishiguro's special emphasis on nostalgia's positive side came from the circumstances in which the term nostalgia was historically associated with the heritage industry in Britain in the 1980s which annoyed the political left. The overall negative image of the political nostalgia thus prompted Ishiguro to defend nostalgia as an emotion. In the interview by Shaffer, Ishiguro emphasised: 'I've always tried to defend nostalgia as an emotion, because I think it can be quite a valuable force in our lives' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166).[7] Ishiguro also said that it is valuable because it is 'a way of holding in your memory a picture of a better world than the one we find ourselves in' (Interview, 2005, Bates 199-200). Nostalgia as a pure emotion is 'a picture of a better world' one remembers. To be more precise, personal nostalgia is—

> a remembering of a time in your childhood before you realized that the world was as dark as it was. It's kind of Eden-like memory of a time when you were in that childhood 'bubble', when adults and parents led you to believe that the world was a better, a nicer place. [. . .] We're remembering, yes, more naïve, more innocent days; but perhaps nostalgia is a way of imagining the possibility of a world that is actually

[7] Ikezono notes Ishiguro's privileging of the positive side of nostalgia over its negative side of imperialistic retrospection (4).

> purer, one less flawed than the one we know we must inhabit. This is why I say that nostalgia is the emotional equivalent or intellectual cousin of idealism. It's something anchors us emotionally to a sense that things should and can be repaired. We can feel our way towards a better world because we've had an experience of it; we carry some sort of distant memory of that world somewhere even though it is a flawed memory, a flawed vision. We feel maybe that we *can* return to that world. Of course, the result can be very positive — people pursuing a very positive vocation or some kind of idealism. (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166-67; italics in original)

In Ishiguro's mind nostalgia as a pure emotion is for a particular period in childhood. It is the 'Eden-like memory' of being protected in what Ishiguro calls a 'childhood "bubble"' where children are allowed to believe that the world they inhabit is a better place than it really is, a belief system constructed and maintained by parents' and other adults' manipulation of children's view of the world. It is a world provided only for a 'naïve' and 'innocent' period of childhood. Nonetheless, the bubble world is essential for children, Ishiguro insists, because it provides them with the memory of the better world which further gives them 'a way of imagining the possibility of a world that is actually purer, one less flawed than' the real world. Of course, memory hardly ever escapes appropriation and Ishiguro admits its imperfection: 'it is a flawed memory, a flawed vision'. Nevertheless, personal nostalgia allows them to recall such a perfect world and is conductive to even 'a very positive vocation or some kind of idealism'.

What then is idealism like to Ishiguro? In the context where Ishiguro emphasised nostalgia as 'the actual pure human emotion', he also referred to idealism as the intellect that 'imagines a world that is hopelessly impossible to achieve' (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, Veyret 11). Despite the impossibility of achieving such a world, Ishiguro stressed, 'it is sometimes useful to intellectually have some idealism' (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, Veyret 11). Thus idealism is an urge, like nostalgia, to picture a better world. Ishiguro maintained that we all have this urge:

> For some peculiar, eccentric reason, we want to do something more. We want to tell ourselves that we contributed to something good, that we furthered the cause of humanity and left the world a slightly better place than we found it. We all seem to have a big need to do this. So even if we're doing rather trivial little jobs, as most of us

> are, we're determined to try and find some dimension to it that will allow us to believe that ours, although it's a humble contribution, is nevertheless a contribution to something larger and bigger. (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 28-29)

Ishiguro believes the 'big need' to make the world a better place to be a universal urge — hence he keeps using 'we' as the subjects of these sentences. This urge for idealism is also inseparably tied up with nostalgia. The memory of our childhood bubble world enables us to *idealize* that world and then try and recreate it when we become adults. In the interview conducted by Cynthia F. Wong, Ishiguro argued that nostalgia creates in us 'an urge to reshape the world, heal the world, to make it the way we once thought it was as children' (Interview, 2000, Wong 184). Thus nostalgia for the world of the childhood bubble drives idealism in adulthood.

There is also an emotional wound involved in the mechanism by which nostalgia propels idealism. Ishiguro said that nostalgia binds 'us emotionally to a sense that *things should and can be repaired*' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 167; italics added). What Ishiguro called 'things' here corresponds to what he elsewhere referred to as the 'wound' that many writers address:

> I know many writers who are never published but who disrupt their lives enormously, sitting at home, writing novel after novel that they never get published. It is a very interesting *urge* of human beings: they *want to do this*. I suppose the inescapable conclusion I came to was that all these people — and perhaps I have to include myself in this — are trying to address some sort of *wound*, or at least something that is *broken* in their lives or at least a perception that there is something *broken* in their world. (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, Veyret 6; italics added)

Ishiguro had explained this wound in an earlier interview: 'somewhere very deep and fundamental in their experience with life, maybe somewhere in their *childhood*, something didn't quite match up, and they know there is nothing they can do about it now. And I think they go over this *wound* over and over again in their writing' (Interview, 1990, Swaim 108; italics added). Ishiguro characterised the wound as inflicted by 'emotional bereavement or emotional deprivation' (Interview, 1995, Jaggi 115); that is, the wound is caused by the loss of their childhood bubble. Children with the wound grow into adults obsessed with healing it as

well as with regaining the lost bubble. They believe that by regaining the lost bubble they can heal their wound. And the only way to regain the bubble is to achieve their ideals. Thus their obsession with healing their wound facilitates the idealistic urge to '*heal* the world' (Interview, 2000, Wong 184; italics added). In Ishiguro's life schema, the infliction of the wound upon children that occurs when they lose their protective bubble evokes nostalgia for the bubble world that activates idealism.

While the wound indirectly spurs the wounded into idealism, the wound itself lies hidden in the depths of one's mind until one gets into middle age. Indeed, in the interview by Maya Jaggi in 1995, Ishiguro said that the wound *catches up on* us when we are in our mid-thirties:

> When you're younger you have a certain strength that comes from the very provisionality of life, you think things are going to shape up eventually. But *things* seem to *catch up on* people somewhere after *the age of thirty-five*, from way back in their past. You start to get *a sense of the limit of what you can do*, or of what's going to happen to you in life. I don't necessarily mean any huge trauma, though in some people that is the case. It might have been a chronic thing, or *something as simple as childhood coming to an end*, discovering that *the world is more complicated than the world of childhood*. (Interview, 1995, Jaggi 115; italics added)

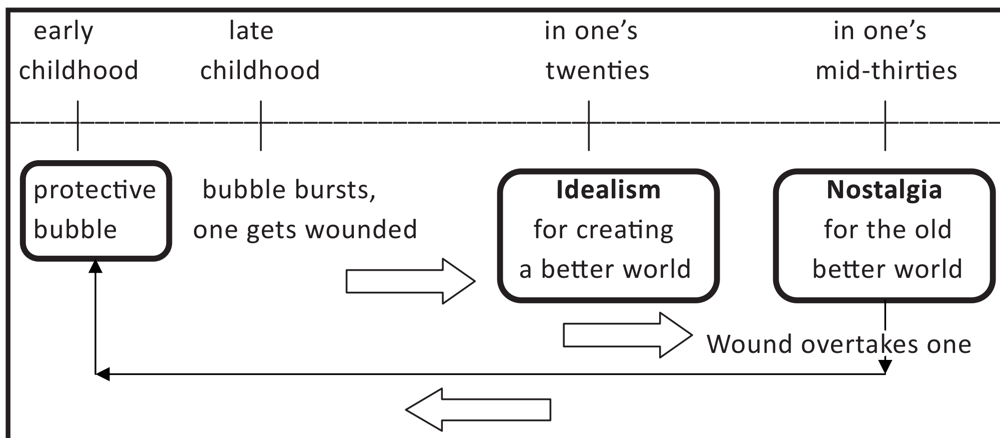
The youth's 'strength' is inherent, Ishiguro argued, in the 'provisionality of life'. Youth is open to the possibility of change. Young people are optimistic and idealistic. However, when they get into their mid-thirties, optimism and idealism begin to dwindle and they tend to be overwhelmed by the sense of 'the limit' of their possibilities. This is when the wound etched in the childhood cuts into their idealism. Ishiguro took up the issue of the return of a childhood wound in another interview:

> *problems* seem to *catch up with* them at that point when they realize their lives aren't going to change that much anymore. Life doesn't present an infinite series of twists and turns now. You've been *dealt a certain hand* and that's it. People's lives fall apart; they get depressed. I've seen quite a lot of this happen to people *in their late thirties* or so. Although until now they've been able to keep going on certain hopes and plans, suddenly *all this baggage* from the past comes in and overwhelms them. (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 169; italics added)

The recognition that there is no more possibility of change open to them conjures up the inevitable sense that they have 'been dealt a certain hand'—when the old feel comes back of the rupture of their childhood bubble. This is because it is their *adulthood* bubble that is about to burst now. The bubble of idealism ruptures as their childhood bubble did. That is why when their idealistic bubble confronts imminent implosion the old wound suddenly 'comes in and overwhelms' them.

From all these statements of Ishiguro's we are now able to diagram the structure of personal idealism and personal nostalgia. In the protective bubble children are sheltered by parents and other adults but at some point in their late childhood the bubble somehow bursts and they get forced out into the harsher world. They then simultaneously get wounded emotionally. Feeling nostalgia for the bubble world they grow into adults who strive for idealism to bring back their better world. But, when they get into their mid-thirties and their adulthood bubble of idealism faces a burst with the sense of limited possibilities, the memory of the rupture of their childhood bubble comes back with the old wound. At this point nostalgia for their protective bubble emerges again. This is a life cycle spanning from childhood to adulthood in Ishiguro's schema that consists of personal idealism and personal nostalgia. The structure of the personal set is drawn in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The structure of personal idealism and nostalgia



II. Political Nostalgia and Idealism

We have seen Ishiguro take both *personal* nostalgia and *personal* idealism to be positive emotions. It seems, however, that the same positive attitude cannot be equally applied to

political nostalgia and *political* idealism. Indeed, in Ishiguro's interviews, political nostalgia and political idealism do not appear as synchronically as their personal counterparts do. For Ishiguro, political idealism and political nostalgia are the spirits of the two separate periods: the 1960s-70s idealism and the 1980s nostalgia, which are politically incompatible — one is leftish idealism and the other rightish nostalgia. Despite this ideological difference, this section will show that the political set of idealism and nostalgia not simply exhibits textual reverberations with the personal set, but the political set also has the same chronological structure as that of the personal one. The last part of this section will display the parallel of the structures of the two sets of idealism and nostalgia.

Ishiguro's first mention in his interviews of the 1960s-70s idealism can be traced back to as early as 1987. In the interview by Christopher Bigsby, Ishiguro said that he had grown up—

> in that affluent era when it seemed that it was not enough simply to earn your living. You had to do something useful with your life, something good for humanity in some way: improve the world, make the world a better, more peaceful place. I suppose I grew up in that climate of 1960s idealism. (Interview, 1987, Bigsby 21)

The important point here is not whether Ishiguro's view of the 1960s idealism is correct or not in a strictly historical sense but the fact that he was influenced by the political idealism. As if to deflect some due complaints from historians, Ishiguro mentioned in passing in another interview that the historical veracity of the idealism was irrelevant to his understanding of the period — 'whether it was phoney idealism I don't know' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 27) — and homed in on the fact that 'I *did* grow up in that period of idealism' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 27; italics added) and that 'I did grow up very much *influenced* by the sixties and the early seventies, the time of radical politics on the university campuses' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 27; italics added).[8]

It is noteworthy that he also stressed the generational tendency of the 1960s-70s idealism:

[8] Ishiguro's idealistic tendency might also be of relevance to the idealistic personality of his own father, Shizuo: 'His father [. . .] is a type of person who has a strong wish to contribute to society. [. . .] He's now retired, making a gadget of the text reader for the blind' (Interview, 1990, Hama 101; my translation). For Ishiguro's reference to Shizuo see also Interview, 1987, Ikeda 139.

> [I had] grown up in an idealistic time in the late '60s and early '70s, when *the younger generation—people of my age*—we grew up thinking that we were going to change the world, that we had a duty to change the world. And we had a lot of idealistic notions. I was often involved in many political active groups and also in voluntary social work fields. (Interview, 1990, Swaim 100; italics added)

In another interview Ishiguro stressed this point again: 'Perhaps it's because I grew up when I did, when *young people* tended to be very idealistic, *we* gave *ourselves* large missions to improve humanity, things like this' (Interview, 1999, Gallix 151-52; italics added). Furthermore, Ishiguro went so far as to say in the interview by Eleanor Wachtel that idealism is 'an instinct that I *still admire*, and I think a lot of people have it, but at the time that was almost a creed of the younger generation' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 27; italics added). Thus the 1960s-70s political idealism referred to here and personal idealism both are in Ishiguro's favour.

From Ishiguro's positive attitudes towards these two types of idealism, it may not be far-fetched to presume that his view of the 1960s-70s idealism largely informed his idea of personal idealism. Unsurprisingly, his description of the political idealism textually reverberates that of personal idealism. Let us take a look at the way Ishiguro describes personal idealism again:

> Most human beings aren't like cats and dogs. For some peculiar, eccentric reason, we want to do something more. We want to tell ourselves that we *contributed* to *something good*, that we furthered the cause of *humanity* and left the world *a* slightly *better place* than we found it. We all seem to have a big need to do this. (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 28; italics added)

The words and phrases, '*contributed* to *something good*', 'furthered the cause of *humanity*', and '*a* slightly *better place*', resonate, as displayed in Table 1 below, with the way Ishiguro described the 1960s-70s idealism in the interview by Bigsby we have seen above: 'do something *useful* in your life', '*something good* for *humanity*', and '*make the world a better*, more peaceful *place*'.

Table 1

Textual Reverberations	
Political Idealism	*Personal* Idealism
'had to do *something useful* with your life' (Interview, 1987, Bigsby 21)	'*contribute* to *something good*' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 28)
'*something good* for *humanity*' (Interview, 1987, Bigsby 21)	'furthered the cause of *humanity*' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 28)
'*make the world a better,* more peaceful *place*' (Interview, 1987, Bigsby 21)	'left the world *a* slightly *better place* than we found it' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 28)

We might thus be able to say not only that there exists the conceptual parallelism between personal idealism and the political idealism in Ishiguro's mind but that chronologically Ishiguro's view of the 1960s-70s political idealism largely determined the shaping of his idea of personal idealism.

This emotional compatibility between the political idealism and personal idealism, however, does not bear on the relation between the political nostalgia and personal nostalgia. As we have already seen, Ishiguro conceives personal nostalgia as a positive emotion. But he did not see the 1980s political nostalgia in the same manner. Ishiguro referred to the 'nostalgia industry' in 1991:

> Now at the moment, particularly in Britain, there is an enormous nostalgia industry going on with coffee table books, television programs, and even some tour agencies who are trying to recapture this kind of old England. The mythical landscape of this sort of England, to a large degree, is harmless nostalgia for a time that didn't exist. The other side of this, however, is that it is used as a political tool — much as the American Western myth is used. It's used as a way of bashing anybody who tries to spoil this "Garden of Eden." This can be brought out by the left or right, but usually it is the political right who say England was this beautiful place before the trade unions tried to make it more egalitarian or before the immigrants started to come or before the promiscuous age of the '60s came and ruined everything. (Interview, 1991, Vorda and Herzinger 74)

Ishiguro described 'old England' as the 'Garden of Eden' which the political right argue immigration eroded. In Ishiguro's view, the 'nostalgia industry' thriving in Britain in the 1980s exploited 'a stereotype' of 'a mythical England' (Interview, 1996, Wachtel 26). Furthermore, the myth of old England is contrasted with 'the promiscuous age of the '60s', that is, the period of the political idealism. Historically, the political idealism ended in the mid-seventies in Britain when an economic recession was brought about which occasioned the rise of the Conservative Party in the late 1970s and the appointment of Margaret Thatcher as a prime minister. In another interview Ishiguro traced in the rightish political form of nostalgia degeneration into evoking the memory of the nation's past glory at the expense of the emotion of the colonised:

> I do understand why people are against nostalgia, particularly in places like Britain and France, because nostalgia is seen here as a bad political force to the extent that it's applied to a nation's memory. It's seen as something that skirts around the darker side of Empire — the glories and comforts and luxuries of Empire — without actually taking into account all of the true costs and true evils of empire. Peddling nostalgia is seen as something that promotes our forgetting and the suffering and exploitation of colonial times. And so nostalgia is often seen as a bit of a dirty word here. And I would go along with that to a large extent; I accept why nostalgia has a bad name in general, at least on the political and historical level. (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166)

In his interviews Ishiguro thus took a critical, even dismissive attitude about the political nostalgia. Ishiguro said that he had written *The Remains of the Day* in order in part to 'undermine this myth' (Interview, 1991, Vorda and Herzinger 74) and to 'play with those stereotypes' (Interview, 1999, Gallix 143) of old beautiful England that the nostalgia industry created in many different forms like heritage films especially in the 1980s. Therefore it seems that Ishiguro's attitudes towards the political nostalgia and personal nostalgia can never find any common emotional ground.

But then again we can pinpoint some features that are accumulated into a reverberating network of texts; in fact, personal nostalgia and the 1980s political nostalgia resound deeply with textual echoes in Ishiguro's interviews. Let us return to the interview by Allan Vorda and Kim Herzinger. Ishiguro was arguing in the interview that the political nostalgia was 'used as a way of bashing anybody who tries to spoil this "*Garden of Eden*,"' (Interview, 1991,

Vorda and Herzinger 74; italics added) — incidentally this 'Garden of Eden' was totally devastated by Anthony Eden when he failed to deal with the Suez Crisis in 1956. Ishiguro's expression '*Garden of Eden*' indeed symptomatises his description of a memory of a childhood bubble as an '*Eden*-like memory' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166; italics added). Also, in another interview where Ishiguro explained personal nostalgia, he warned his interviewer not to mistake it for the political nostalgia for 'some sort of sweet or cozy past when we lived in a *more innocent* preindustrial time or something' (Interview, 2000, Wong 184; italics added). Ishiguro used the adjective *innocent* to describe the 'preindustrial time' the 1980s nostalgia was attached to. The adjective *innocent* actually appears in Ishiguro's description of personal nostalgia for childhood: 'more naïve, *more innocent* days' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166; italics added). There is more evidence of textual reverberations between the political nostalgia and personal nostalgia. We remember that personal nostalgia is for a period 'when adults and parents led you to believe that the world was *a better,* a nicer *place*' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166; italics added). Interestingly, Ishiguro characterised the political nostalgia in similar terms in 2003: 'At worst it is associated with some kind of rather sinister imperial agenda. You can use nostalgia to say: yes, the world was *a better place* before immigrants started to appear or before trade unions became powerful, whatever' (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, and Veyret 11; italics added). The textual comparison shows that Ishiguro's description of the 1980s political nostalgia and his description of personal nostalgia have textual reverberations, as exemplified in Table 2.

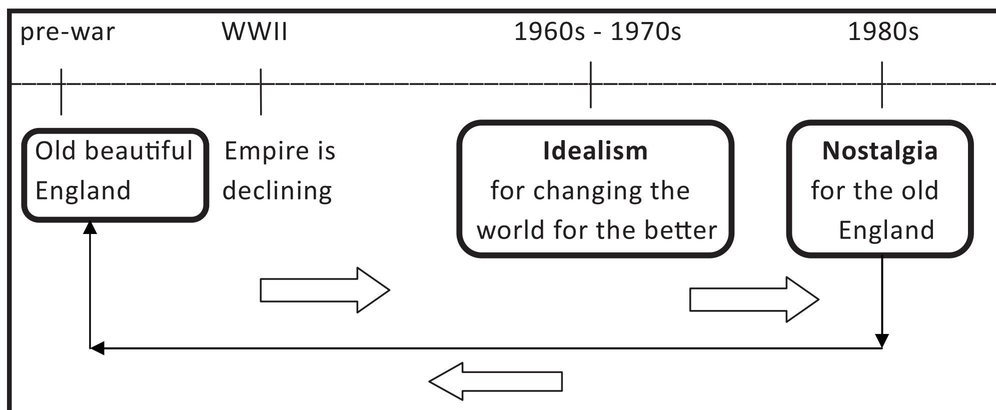
Table 2

Textual Reverberations	
Political Nostalgia	*Personal* Nostalgia
'*Garden of Eden*' (Interview, 1991, Vorda and Herzinger 74)	'*Eden*-like memory' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166)
'a *more innocent* preindustrial time' (Interview, 2000, Wong 184)	'more naïve, *more innocent* days' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166)
'*a better place*' (Interview, 2003, Gallix, Guignery, and Veyret 11)	'*a better*, a nicer *place*' (Interview, 2000, Shaffer 166)

I am not arguing that all these textual reverberations between the political nostalgia and personal nostalgia mean that they are parallel to each other in the same way as the political idealism and personal idealism are. The goal of the political nostalgia and that of personal nostalgia are at variance with each other. The 1980s political nostalgia aimed to recover its ideal world by way of exclusion of immigrants. Personal nostalgia yearns to regain the lost bubble by means of idealism. They could hardly be more different. But nonetheless these textual reverberations suggest that the shaping of Ishiguro's idea of personal nostalgia was to a certain degree predicated on a conceptual borrowing from the 1980s political nostalgia. The political nostalgia and personal nostalgia are, after all, very much alike at least in terms of an attempt to bring back the old by-gone days. If we can say that the 1960s-70s idealism *positively* affected personal idealism, we might then be allowed to say that the 1980s nostalgia *negatively* informed the development of Ishiguro's idea of personal nostalgia. Therefore, for all Ishiguro's apparent contrastive attitudes towards the two forms of nostalgia, almost the same kind of vocabulary materialised in his descriptions of them.

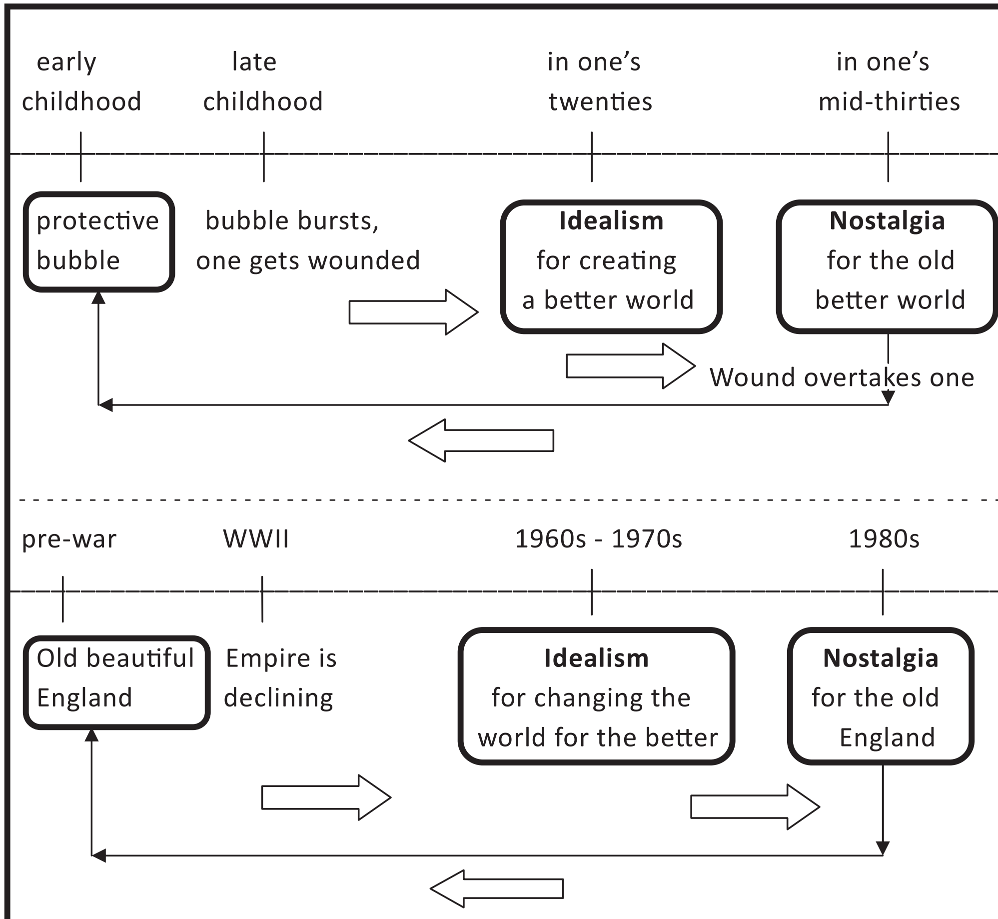
Apart from the textual reverberations, another correlation can be established between these two sets of idealism and nostalgia. As personal nostalgia comes behind personal idealism, chronologically the 1980s political nostalgia followed the 1960s-70s political idealism. Ishiguro's political schema can thus be described incorporating relevant additional historical facts into the schema and re-employing metaphors used in the representation of the binary structure of personal nostalgia and personal idealism. That is to say, in the distant past there used to be old beautiful England in the protective bubble of the Empire with tradition and power but the Second World War and the Suez Crisis led up to the rapid decline of the Empire, followed by the rise of the revolutionary counterculture that constituted the political idealism Ishiguro's generation promoted in the 1960s and 1970s; however, in the mid-seventies the nation got into a long span of economic recession, succeeded by the atavistic political nostalgia for the old Empire that came through in the form of the heritage industry. Figure 2 is the diagram of this schematic description.

Figure 2: The structure of political idealism and nostalgia



The same chronological structure as that of personal idealism and nostalgia is recognisable. Of course, the personal and political sets of idealism and nostalgia are by and large referred to in different contexts and with disparate implications. Nevertheless, these sets of idealism and nostalgia have not merely textual reverberations but a structural correlation as well. The two binary structures of idealism and nostalgia, as exhibited in Figure 3 below, are too parallel to be a chance coincidence. They are *that* parallel because Ishiguro's concepts of personal idealism and personal nostalgia were deeply shaped, *positively* or *negatively*, by his own contemplation over the 1960s-70s idealism and the 1980s nostalgia.

Figure 3: The parallel structures of the personal and political sets of idealism and nostalgia



So far this section and the previous one combine to show (1) the cohabiting of the two sets of idealism and nostalgia inside Ishiguro, (2) the textual reverberations between the two sets, and finally (3) the parallel of the chronological structures of these two sets of idealism and nostalgia. In the last section to come an attempt will be made to show how these two sets of idealism and nostalgia have a creative impact on a thematic transition in Ishiguro's novels.

III. Idealism and Nostalgia in Ishiguro's Novels

This section does not aim to provide any new interpretation on Ishiguro's individual novels, but rather aims to show how the two sets of idealism and nostalgia operating in Ishiguro's mind as we have seen them above have relevance to the shift of thematic emphases from his early works to his later works. It should be pointed out that a certain

kind of shift between Ishiguro's early novels and his later ones has recently been observed by Hiroshi Ikezono and more substantially discussed by Hiromi Nagara. While Ikezono makes a comment on the shift as a prelude to his discussion of the reconstruction of the past in *When We Were Orphans*, Nagara focuses on the shift itself to reveal what it really means. To differentiate Nagara's argument (which overlaps with Ikezono's) and mine later on, let me summarise Nagara's main points:

1. The narrators of Ishiguro's early works, *A Pale View of Hills*, *An Artist of the Floating World*, and *The Remains of the Day*, are all of early old age and recollect their middle-age years, whereas the narrators of his later works, *When We Were Orphans* and *Never Let Me Go* in particular, are still in their middle age and recall their childhood; thus, a shift occurs from the memories of their middle years in Ishiguro's early works to those of their vulnerable childhood in his later works;
2. The shift suggests that, while the old narrators of Ishiguro's early works made deliberate choices in their judgement and now regret some of their choices, the young narrators of Ishiguro's later works were given no room for judgement or choices because they were children then,[9] which implies that the extent of uncontrollability of fate accelerates in Ishiguro's later works and is then pushed to the limit in *Never Let Me Go* through the predetermined fate of the clones;
3. Children not simply represent the general human passivity towards fate[10] but also function as a metaphor for hope and relief for adults in Ishiguro's fictions because children work as a 'twine' that enables one generation to be tightly linked to the next, thereby playing the role of 'emotional support' for adults.

Nagara uses the term 'nostalgia' when she refers to the narrators' attachment to the memories they remember, although she identifies at once 'healing' and 'self-tormenting' functions in Ishiguro's nostalgia (2; my translation).[11] Nagara further analyses the way the

---

[9] The argument up to this point is covered by Ikezono too (2-3).

[10] Ikezono contends along the same lines — that Ishiguro 'sets up childhood as a model for the period in life that is hard to control and attempts to describe how human beings take in and make a progress on the rail of their unmanageable lives' stretched out before them (3; my translation).

[11] For analyses of a broader range of functions of Ishiguro's nostalgia, see Taketomi, Teo, and Drąg. I found the latter two cited in the paper Takahiro Mimura read at International Conference Kazuo Ishiguro: New Perspectives.

mnemonic shift occurs: it is, she argues, from 'the memories concealed and distorted by [the narrators'] "self-censorship" to the memories needed to be accurately reorganised to complement failed recognitions inevitable in children' (7; my translation). The 'failed recognitions' allow, Nagara goes on, the protagonist of *When We Were Orphans*, Christopher Banks, to remain in 'the idealism of his childhood' (9; my translation), that is to say, his wish to rescue his missing parents.[12] Nagara's paper has thus pointedly illustrated the shift of the functions of nostalgia in Ishiguro's novels, showing how the very shift reinforces the fatalistic circumstances to which the protagonists are subject in the narratives. While my argument from now on owes much to this argument of Nagara's — especially where the shift takes place between Ishiguro's early works and his later works — my focus is slightly different: instead of maintaining as Nagara does that the shift of the functions of nostalgia (which includes idealism) strengthens fatalism—the argument is sufficiently convincing to make me agree with her—I would like to show here that another kind of thematic shift also occurs in Ishiguro's works particularly in relation to the two sets of idealism and nostalgia. The shift to be shown is from an emphasis on misguided idealism in his early works to that on childhood nostalgia that drives adulthood idealism in his later works. To this shift the years of the publications of the six novels to be discussed will be relevant:

A Pale View of Hills (written *PVH* hereafter): 1982
An Artist of the Floating World (AFW): 1986
The Remains of the Day (RD): 1989
The Unconsoled (U): 1995
When We Were Orphans (WWWO): 2000
Never Let Me Go (NLMG): 2005

I would like, as Nagara and Ikezono do, to group these novels into two: his early works, *PVH, AFW*, and *RD* and his later works, *U, WWWO*, and *NLMG*. Both idealism and nostalgia run through all Ishiguro's works. Although the function of nostalgia changes from his early works to his later ones, nostalgia nonetheless is there in all the six novels. Besides, as all

---

[12] Nagara describes what Ishiguro calls a childhood bubble as 'idealistic nostalgia' (9; my translation). Ikezono also speculates on Banks's idealistic motivation: 'by rescuing his parents and getting out of his orphanhood he may be able to reset his past to its idealistic condition, thereby changing the present and future to come to his own idealistic form' (5; my translation).

Ishiguro's protagonists are nostalgists in a large sense of the word, all of them are idealists too. Nevertheless, when we see them from the perspective of the political and personal sets of idealism and nostalgia, the different kind of thematic transition from the one Nagara and Ikezono pointed to will emerge.

Idealism functions as the chief driving force of the protagonists' actions in all his works. As we have seen these mentioned in his interviews, 'contribution', 'a better world', and 'humanity', all coming from Ishiguro's descriptions of the political and personal idealism, find their way into Ishiguro's novels. This is what Stevens in *RD* has to say about his generational idealism:

> For we were, as I say, an idealistic generation for whom the question was not simply one of how well one practiced one's skills, but to what end one did so; each of us harboured the desire to make our small *contribution* to the creation of *a better world*, and saw that, as professionals, the surest means of doing so would be to serve the greatest gentlemen of our times in whose hands civilization has been entrusted. (*RD* 122; italics added)

> What I mean is that we were ambitious, in a way that would have been unusual a generation before, to serve a gentleman who were, so to speak, furthering the progress of *humanity*. (*RD* 120; italics added)

The same kind of idealism presents itself in his later works too. For example, in *WWWO*, Sara Hemmings, a woman the protagonist Christopher Banks meets in a social gathering but who turns out to be an *uninvited* guest, gives voice to her idealism without hesitation, embarrassing Banks:

> I won't waste all my love, all my energy, all my intellect—modest as that is—on some useless man who devotes himself to golf or to selling bonds in the City. When I marry, it will be to someone who'll really *contribute*. I mean to *humanity*, to *a better world*. Is that such an awful ambition? (*WWWO* 47; italics added)

Idealism thus compels Ishiguro's protagonists' actions from his early works to his later ones. However, there is a difference as to the idealistic periods referred to between them. Masuji

Ono and Stevens recall their golden ages when they were at the height of their professional careers and the internal struggles they are brought up against now come all from when they *were* idealists. Thus, Ishiguro's early works address the *consequences* of the protagonists' idealistic past actions, hence their self-justifying unreliable narrations (see Nagara 2, 7). On the other hand, in Ishiguro's later works the protagonists *are* still idealists in their middle years and their idealism is being exerted by an obsessively nostalgic bent for childhood.

Indeed, a nostalgic obsession with childhood, so prominent in Ishiguro's later works, is absent in his early ones. It is true that the painter Masuji Ono's idealistic tendency is partly reinforced by one of the episodes from his childhood where his father apparently burned his paintings — the boy Masuji declared to his mother: 'The only thing Father's succeeded in kindling is my ambition' (*AFW* 47). But nonetheless Ono is not so obsessed with his childhood as Ryder and Christopher Banks in Ishiguro's later works are. In *RD* there is no reference to Stevens's childhood at all, notwithstanding his reference to the time he worked with his father in his professional prime. Ono and Stevens have thus no preoccupation with their childhood memories. The protagonists of Ishiguro's later works, Ryder and Christopher Banks, on the other hand, pursue their idealism *now* and are at the same time *obsessed* with their own childhood. To put it in another way, Ishiguro's early novels are about the consequences of the protagonists' misguided idealism that has little to do with their childhood, where his later works are about the protagonists' nostalgia for their childhood that powers their idealistic missions in progress.

Then why is it that the consequences of misguided idealism became the recurrent theme in his early works? Ishiguro himself answered this question in an interview: 'I was interested in the specific question, what happens if you give your energies and your idealism to something which turns out to be rather foul?' (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 19) This interest of Ishiguro's in misguided idealism is of course sublimated into Ono's participation in painting propaganda posters during the war in *AFW* and into Stevens's belief in the possibility of making indirect contribution to humanity by serving his master Lord Darlington in *RD*, who turns to be criticised for a Nazi sympathiser after the war. The source of the thematic emphasis on misplaced idealism reaches back to Ishiguro's reflection on the 1960s-70s political idealism Ishiguro himself was fully committed to:

> I was committed to a lot of that: I worked with the homeless and so on. But after a while the picture starts to complicate, and you realize that it's not at all clear. You

> think you're doing something useful but, when you look at it more closely, you can see all the ways in which you could just as easily be doing harm. Increasingly, people I knew got into this dilemma. [. . .] You go in saying you're doing good, and then you look at it and it starts to fall apart in your hands. (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 27)

The possibility that idealism may lead up to the reverse of an expected result gave rise to a fear on Ishiguro's part about idealism. Hence—

> I suppose I now write out of a kind of *fear*, that I project about my own life, that I will reach a certain age and look back on my life, and perhaps the lives of the people around me, and ask what became of all of us who made such an effort to make something useful of our lives. (Interview, 1987, Bigsby 21; italics added).

Ishiguro had referred to this fear in a different interview:

> I *do write* from a kind of *fear* that my life will be wasted in some way, that I overestimate the value of my life. I have a *fear* that we will all reach a certain age, look back and feel that we've achieved nothing — or even worse, that we stuck our necks out and did something rather awful, made things worse. (Interview, 1986, Tookey 34; italics added)

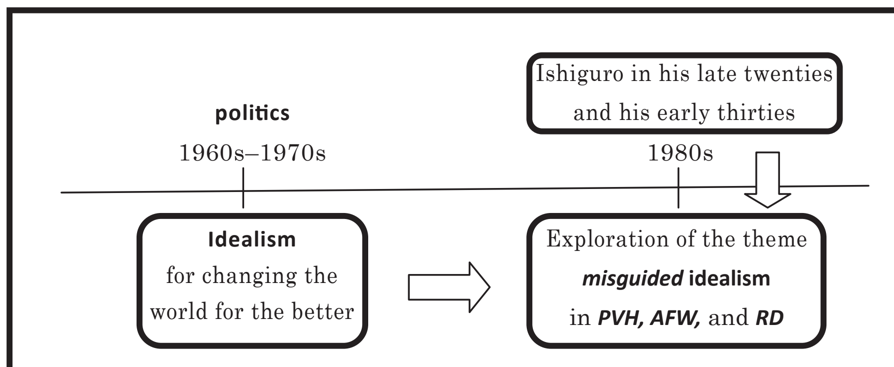
We can thus say that Ishiguro's reflection on the 1960s-70s political idealism, combined with his private self-reflection on idealism, was hardened into the fear of the consequences of misguided idealism. It is no mere coincidence that the narrative present of *AFW* and *RD* is set in the post-war era either in Japan or in Britain. Ono and Stevens face the consequences of their actions motivated by their professional idealism during the war. The setting of the early novels is indeed reflected in Ishiguro's historical awareness revealed in the following interview:

> If you are German or Japanese, you do ask yourself, if you were just a few years older, if you were born just one generation earlier, what would you have been doing? If you come from the West, you still ask yourself, what would I have done had I lived through a period when everybody around me was caught up in this nationalistic or

> fascist fervour? Would I have stood against it or would I have gone with the tide? You ask that in an abstract way. I suppose I ask it in an abstract way too, but it's a little less abstract because you're talking about my parents' generation. And all you have to imagine is being just a few years older. If you were born just a few years before, what would I have done? (Interview, 1995, Wachtel 26-27)

The historical consciousness that he might have got involved in the same kind of political plight that befalls Ono and Stevens had he been born 'one generation earlier', his reflection on the 1960s-70s idealism, and his private self-reflection on idealism all combined to make Ishiguro reconsider implications of idealism in the 1980s (*PVH* published in 1982; *AFW* 1986; *RD* 1989). The 1980s was also when Ishiguro was in his late twenties and early thirties. According to the personal structure of idealism and nostalgia, which is presented in the first section, one tends to be idealistic in one's twenties but when one gets into one's mid-thirties idealism begins to fail one. In the 1980s Ishiguro was in his late twenties and early thirties and, as his numerous comments in his interviews suggest, was still idealistic yet at the same time beginning to probe the implications of idealism. This is the chronological relation between idealism, political and personal, and the thematic emphasis on misguided idealism in his early works, as represented in Figure 4.

Figure 4



Also of interest here is that Ishiguro decided to treat the negative implications of idealism in his early works regardless of his positive view of idealism whether it was political or personal that we have witnessed in his interviews. It may not be so uncommon for a writer to try and see the seamy side of an attitude. In fact, this retrospective attempt of Ishiguro's

to discern the negative side of idealism in his fiction on whose positive side he laid much store in his interviews has a parallel, albeit reversed, relation to his attitudes to nostalgia.

Ishiguro's narrators are characteristically obsessed with their past and in that respect they are all nostalgists. However, as Nagara and Ikezono have already observed, there is a difference in the periods they remember between Ishiguro's early works and his later ones. The narrators of Ishiguro's early novels, *PVH*, *AFW*, and *RD* remember the periods when they were adults: Etsuko in *PVH* recalls the days when she had Keiko in her belly; Masuji Ono the painter in *AFW* and Stevens the butler in *RD* reminisce the periods when they were at the top of their professional career paths. Indeed, although 'nostalgia' appears in Ishiguro's early works, for example in *AFW*—Masuji Ono states in the last paragraph of the novel that he feels 'a certain nostalgia for the past and the district as it used to be' (*AFW* 206)—the past Ono is nostalgic about is when he was in his professional prime as a painter with a lot of his pupils around. On the other hand, the narrators of Ishiguro's later novels, *U*, *WWWO*, and *NLMG*, relatively younger than those of his early novels, recall much earlier periods in their lives when they were still children and young adults. Thus, nostalgia in Ishiguro's later works functions as childhood nostalgia.

One of the most typical examples of the use of nostalgia as childhood nostalgia can be found in *WWWO*. The protagonist Christopher Banks in his middle age comes across an injured Japanese soldier in the midst of a war zone, assuming that the soldier must be his old Japanese childhood friend, Akira. As if responding to Banks's child-like assumption, the injured soldier stresses the importance of 'nostalgia' in broken English thus:

> Important. Very important. Nostalgic. When we nostalgic, we remember. A world better than this world we discover when we grow. We remember and wish good world come back again. So very important. Just now, I had dream. I was boy. Mother, Father, close to me. In our house. (*WWWO* 263)[13]

Indeed, all Ishiguro's later works address the protagonists' strong nostalgia for their childhood memories: Ryder in *U* is preoccupied with his memories of his old cramped

[13] Citing this remark of the soldier's, Ikezono argues that, while the remark comes after Banks's 'One mustn't get too nostalgic about childhood' (*WWWO* 263), the latter remark does not mean that Banks has a negative view of nostalgia but rather 'it can be interpreted as declaring the protagonist's idealistic intention to reconstruct the past in the present' (5; my translation).

sanctuaries where he protected himself from the reality of his parents' unhappy marriage; Banks in *WWWO* is obsessed with his memories of his adventurous days with Akira in Shanghai; and Kathy H in *NLMG* too is under a nostalgic obsession with her memories of her highly protected childhood in Hailsham (and her more independent days at the Cottages). All these memories, in short, are about their bubbles but the inevitable ruptures of the bubbles—the apparent breakup of Ryder's parents, the successive disappearances of Banks's parents, and Kathy's belated recognition that her and her friends' future was absolutely predetermined — gave them wounds. They are then propelled by their obsession with healing the wounds into their commitment to idealism. Their idealistic missions—Ryder as a pianist giving a performance, Banks as a detective extirpating an evil, and Kathy as a carer taking good care of Ruth and Tommy — are all spurred by their conviction that they can bring themselves back into their old bubbles and heal their old wounds. All these examples show that Ishiguro centred his later works upon childhood nostalgia that propels adulthood idealism.

What is it then that caused this thematic transition? Something must have happened between *RD* (1989) and *U* (1995). Here we have to recall the negative impact of the 1980s political nostalgia on the shaping of Ishiguro's idea of personal nostalgia in the 1990s. As the textual reverberations between the political nostalgia and personal nostalgia suggest, Ishiguro's concept of personal nostalgia—namely, nostalgia for the *innocent Edenic* world of childhood that is far *better* than the harsh adult world — was most likely formed borrowing the quintessential image of old beautiful England from the 1980s political nostalgia: an *innocent Edenic* country that is far *better* than the present England.[14] Furthermore, this conceptual loan from the 1980s political nostalgia must have been triggered by Ishiguro's first return to Nagasaki in 1989. His return to Japan presumably provoked a nostalgic feeling for his own childhood in Nagasaki where he passed the first five years of his life. Indeed, one year later—in 1990—when Ishiguro was in his mid-thirties he suddenly started mentioning the wound in several interviews (Interview, 1990, Swaim 108; Interview, 1990, Vorda and Herzinger 85):[15] we have seen the wound involved in the mechanism by which childhood

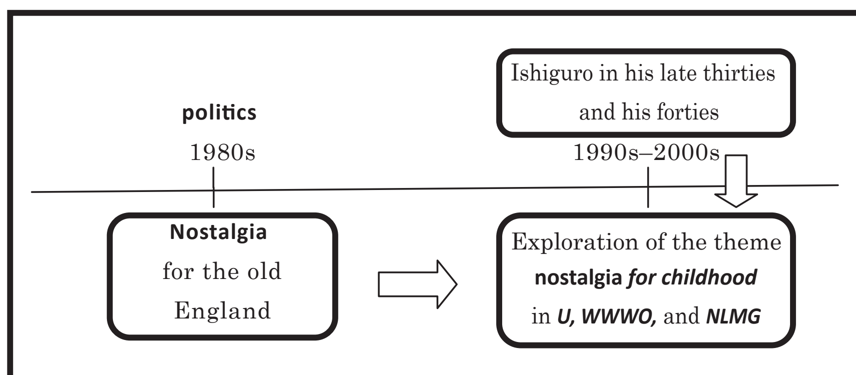
[14] Whether Ishiguro himself was aware or not of this conceptual borrowing is beside the point. The point is that the textual reverberations suggest the borrowing.

[15] Suzie Mackenzie makes a comment after her interview with Ishiguro on the relation between Ishiguro's age and his examination of his own personal wound: 'Ishiguro was in his thirties when he began to feel uneasy. As if something was hanging over him, something he had to fix. [. . .] Ishiguro thought he had finally worked out what he thought was wrong and was fixing it' (12). For the discussions of his exploration of his personal wound, see Shonaka 84-85; Morikawa 118-131.

nostalgia drives adulthood idealism. We can claim, therefore, that, while in the 1980s he saw only the negative side of nostalgia correlating it with the contemporary political heritage industry, in the early 1990s he borrowed the conceptual image for the Edenization of innocent childhood from the 1980s political nostalgia and created his own version of nostalgia as a personal yet universal benign emotion and, as a result, childhood nostalgia loomed large as the theme in his later novels. Thus, with nostalgia Ishiguro did the reverse of what he did with idealism: the change of focus from nostalgia's negative side to its positive side.

The other point I would like to make is that Ishiguro's interest in nostalgia as an emotion corresponded to his life schema: one starts getting nostalgic about one's childhood protective bubble in one's mid-thirties. In the early 1990s when his idea of personal nostalgia was apparently shaped and developed Ishiguro was in late thirties. This correspondence suggests that the formation of his idea of personal nostalgia in the early 1990s was not only influenced negatively by the 1980s political nostalgia but also by his growth into a mature adult (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5



To sum up the argument this section has presented thus far. Idealism and nostalgia run through all Ishiguro's works but, while his early works address the consequences of the protagonists' misguided idealism, his later works concern themselves more with nostalgia for childhood as well as the mechanism by which nostalgia propels idealism. Ishiguro's examination of the negative side of idealism in the 1980s was made possible by his retrospective reflection on the 1960s-70s idealism and his self-reflection on personal idealism. The latter reflection had to do with age too: in the 1980s Ishiguro was in his late twenties and early thirties when idealism was still paramount and yet at the same time beginning to

face self-doubt. Then in the early 1990s when Ishiguro was in his late thirties he got interested in childhood nostalgia as one does in Ishiguro's life schema. His new interest in nostalgia for the innocent Edenic world of childhood involved his conceptual borrowing from the 1980s political nostalgia of the Edenization of old England. The borrowing was apparently induced by his first return to the city of his birth, Nagasaki, in 1989. Thus, in the 1980s Ishiguro negatively considered nostalgia in its relation to the nostalgia industry of 1980s Britain but in the early 1990s he began to descry the positive aspect of nostalgia in the yearning for the better world of the childhood bubble, the theme running from *U* through *WWWO* to *NLMG*. This change of Ishiguro's views of nostalgia is reversely correlated with the alteration from his positive view of idealism to his examination of its negative implications.

Conclusion

This paper has brought into particular focus the four new aspects of Kazuo Ishiguro in interviews. Firstly, there are two sets of emotions cohabiting inside Ishiguro: one is idealism and nostalgia of personal yet universal nature and the other consists of the 1960s-70s idealism and the 1980s nostalgia, both the political conditions in Britain in the second half of the 20th century. Secondly, these two sets of idealism and nostalgia have individually textual reverberations with each other, which implies that Ishiguro's political set of idealism and nostalgia characterised either positively or negatively his personal counterpart. Thirdly, we witness the matrix of emotions emerging in the parallel of the chronological structures of idealism and nostalgia. Fourthly, the structurally parallel development of these two sets had a creative impact upon the transition of the thematic emphases from Ishiguro's early works to his later works. Therefore, the conceptual formation of the two sets of idealism and nostalgia in Ishiguro's literary works as well as in his literary mind does full justice to the singularity of his creative processes.

One question that may arise from this conclusion is this: what comes after idealism and nostalgia?[16] Although this question lies beyond the scope of the present paper, a tentative answer may be in order nonetheless. As Nagara consistently argues in her paper mentioned above, fatalism is another theme running through all Ishiguro's fictions,[17] and the degree of fatalism, as Nagara also shows, escalates in Ishiguro's later works. It can be surmised from

[16] This is among the questions asked in the conference where I read this paper's original version.
[17] See also Morikawa, especially 4-6, 8 and Part III Fatalism 206-61.

this tendency that increasing weight has been given to fatalism as the theme of Ishiguro's recent novels. Then it is possible that idealism and nostalgia might be followed by fatalism in a newly redefined structure at least on a personal level. Indeed, Ishiguro has used such terms as 'fate' and 'lot' repeatedly in many of his recent interviews.[18] But there is still room for more work to be done to corroborate this tentative answer and the corroboration may possibly be well provided when coupled with an analysis of Ishiguro's latest novel, *The Buried Giant* (2015).

In Introduction I stressed the urgent need to take a centripetal approach to literary studies because less academic attention seems to have been given to the singularity of individual writers and their creative processes in particular. I have tried demonstrating the usefulness of interviews as material to lend itself to an attempt to zero in on a writer's creative singularity. Ironically, however, what I have done by the extensive use of interviews seems to confirm one of the new historicist claims: a writer cannot be altogether immune from the contemporary political attitudes prevalent in the world he or she inhabits. After all, this paper shows how a writer's understanding of the political attitudes predominant in the two distinct periods in his lifetime influenced not just the shaping of his ideas of their personal counterparts but also the creation of his own novels.

Works Cited

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. Third ed. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009. Print.

Bates, Karen Grigsby. 'Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (2005). Shaffer and Wong, 199-203. Print.

Bigsby, Christopher. 'In Conversation with Kazuo Ishiguro' (1987). Shaffer and Wong, 15-26. Print.

Chapel, Jessica. 'A Fugitive Past'. *Atlantic Unbound* 5 Oct. 2000. Web. 7 Feb. 2009.

Drąg, Wojciech. *Revisiting Loss: Memory, Trauma and Nostalgia in the Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014. Print.

Gallix, François. 'Kazuo Ishiguro: The Sorbonne Lecture' (1999). Shaffer and Wong, 135-55. Print.

Gallix, François, Vanessa Guignery, and Paul Veyret. 'Kazuo Ishiguro at the Sorbonne, 20th

[18] See Morikawa 245-46, 248.

March 2003'. *Études britanniques contemporaines* 27 (2004): 1-22. Print.

Hama, Miyuki. 'A Long Way Home—Mo hitotsu no oka e [A Long Way Home—To Another Hill]. *Switch* (a Japanese monthly magazine) 8.6 (1991): 64-102. Print.

Hunnewell, Susannah. 'Interview: Kazuo Ishiguro—The Art of Fiction No. 196'. *Paris Review* 184 (2008): 23-54. Print.

Ikeda, Masayuki. 'Nikei igirisujin sakka no uchinaru nihon [The Japan inside a Japanese-British Writer]'. *Igirisu no Nihonkan* [*The British Views of Japan*]. Tokyo: Seibundo, 1993. Print.

Ikezono, Hiroshi. 'Kazuo Ishiguro, *When We Were Orphans* ni okeru kako no saikochiku [The Reconstruction of the Past in Kazuo Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans*]'. *English and English-American Literature* (Yamaguchi University) 48 (2014): 1-15. Print.

Ishiguro, Kazuo. *An Artist of the Floating World*. 1986. London: Faber and Faber, 1987. Print.

---. *The Buried Giant*. London: Faber and Faber, 2015. Print.

---. *Never Let Me Go*. 2005. London: Faber and Faber, 2006. Print.

---. *A Pale View of Hills*. 1982. London: Faber and Faber, 1991. Print.

---. *The Remains of the Day*. 1989. London: Faber and Faber, 1990. Print.

---. *The Unconsoled*. 1995. London: Faber and Faber, 1996. Print.

---. *When We Were Orphans*. 2000. London: Faber and Faber, 2005. Print.

Jaggi, Maya. 'Kazuo Ishiguro with Maya Jaggi' (1995). Shaffer and Wong, 110-119. Print.

Mackenzie, Suzie. 'Into the Real World'. *Guardian* 15 May 1996: 12. Print.

Mimura, Takahiro. 'Work, Artwork, and the Collaborative Refiguration of the Limits of Human Existence in Kazuo Ishiguro's Novels'. International Conference Kazuo Ishiguro: New Perspectives. University of Tokyo. Komaba, Tokyo. 15 Nov. 2014. Reading.

Morikawa, Shinya. 'Kazuo Ishiguro and His View of Life: Idealism, Nostalgia, Fatalism'. Diss. University of Tokyo, 2014. Print.

Nagara, Hiromi. 'Kazuo Ishiguro sakuhin ni okeru kodomo no yakuwari [The Roles Played by Children in Kazuo Ishiguro's Novels]'. *Kobe Studies in English* 27 (2013): 1-18. Print.

Shaffer, Brian W. 'An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (2001). Shaffer and Wong, 161-73. Print.

Shaffer, Brian W., and Cynthia F. Wong, ed. *Conversations with Kazuo Ishiguro*. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 2008. Print.

Shonaka, Takayuki. 'Kazuo Ishiguro no sakuhin ni okeru bukimi de ookina ie [Uncanny Large Houses in the Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro]. *SELL* (*Studies in English Linguistics and Literature*) 31 (2015): 79-92. Print.

Swaim, Don. 'Don Swaim Interviews Kazuo Ishiguro' (1990). Shaffer and Wong, 89-109. Print.

Taketomi, Rie. 'Kazuo Ishiguro sakuhin ni okeru 'Nostalgia' ni tsuite no kosatsu [A Study of 'Nostalgia' in the Works of Kazuo Ishiguro]'. Diss. University of Kyushu, 2013. Print.

Teo, Yugin. *Kazuo Ishiguro and Memory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014. Print.

Tookey, Christopher. 'Sydenham, Mon Amour'. *Books and Bookmen* (Mar. 1986): 33-34. Print.

Vorda, Allan, and Kim Herzinger. 'An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (1990). Shaffer and Wong, 66-88. Print.

Wachtel, Eleanor. 'Kazuo Ishiguro' (June 1995). *More Writers and Company: New Conversations with CBC Radio's*. Toronto: Vintage Canada, 1996. 17-35. Print.

Wong, Cynthia F. 'Like Idealism Is to the Intellect: An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro' (2001). Shaffer and Wong, 174-88. Print.

Kazuo Ishiguro in Interviews: The Structures of Idealism and Nostalgia

Shinya Morikawa

(Institute of Arts and Sciences)

Abstract

This paper aims to show how close reading of interviews with a writer is essential to gain access to the singularity of processes of the writer' literary creation. The writer to be examined in the paper is a contemporary British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro. Making an abundant use of interviews with Ishiguro and reading them more closely than ever before, the paper attempts to illustrate four new aspects of Kazuo Ishiguro in interviews: (1) that there are personal and political sets of idealism and nostalgia cohabiting inside Ishiguro; (2) that textual reverberations can be identified between these two sets of idealism and nostalgia; (3) that there emerges from the analysis of these two sets a parallel of the binary structures of idealism and nostalgia; and (4) that the structurally parallel development of these two sets of idealism and nostalgia has a creative impact upon the transition of thematic emphases from misguided idealism in his early works to nostalgia for childhood in his later works. Conclusively, the paper emphasises that Ishiguro's understanding of the contemporary predominant political attitudes influenced not only the shaping of his ideas of their personal counterparts but also the creation of his own novels.