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Chic Clichés: the Reinvention of Myths and Stereotypes in Kazuo Ishiguro's Novels

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson observes that a community is conceived through reading common materials such as newspapers or serialised novels.¹ Anderson's observation captures the milieu of the nineteenth century and most of the twentieth century, but for the era of global communication, the formation of common knowledge has since assumed a different pattern. Language and images in the mass media have quickly been substituted for traditional reading materials because their relatively easy accessibility and wider circulation enable a far greater community to establish a common ground. A noticeable number of contemporary authors writing in English, conscious of this change, are adopting the mass media as an effective apparatus to reach readers beyond the restraint of a geographical border. They hold that low-contextual visual or verbal texts of the mass media demand of the reader minimal background knowledge, and that frees them from the difficulty of

cultural barriers.

Kazuo Ishiguro, a Japanese-British novelist of the TV-consuming generation, is among those who embrace the mass media as an indispensable component of his literary creation. He discerns in popular imagination and visual images an inexhaustible source of topical possibilities: “the stereotypes and the common images that are held in people from advertising, movies and other media... can be a kind of shorthand for atmosphere and mood and for deeper things as well.”² The novelist cites *The Remains of the Day* (1989) and *When We Were Orphans* (2000) as examples: while the former capitalises on “an international myth about the English butler and English country life,” the latter constructs Shanghai through “old Shanghai” stereotypes.³ To captivate an international readership, Ishiguro obviously puts into good use widely circulated images and perceptions.

This essay examines how Ishiguro converts the transience of media representations into the permanence of literary texts. It explores how the novelist translates quotidian experience into exotic novelty and unfolds what cultural critique his literary texts suggest in such a conversion. The texts addressed are Ishiguro’s four novels: *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986), *The Remains of the Day* (1989), and *When We Were Orphans* (2000).⁴ The argument is that in these four novels, macroscopic and microscopic methods operate complementarily

to prove how inadequate are the preconceptions a society holds of itself and others.

Keenly aware that myths, stereotypes and clichés are conceived, circulated, and eventually constricted in established contexts, Ishiguro situates them in genres of divergent natures or altered social circumstances, disassociates them from their original frames of reference. Narrative strategies he systematically deploys to reinvigorate myths and stereotypes primarily fall into three categories: “National Myths in Contention,” “Snapshot Images in Question,” and “Stock Characters in Transformation.” The contour of a given culture is often construed and perpetuated through cycles of imagination, distortion, and replication. As subject to misrepresentation as the contour, the content of the culture suffers inevitable simplification; it is frequently reduced to a set of easily identifiable codes and signs. The myth of a nation henceforth finds physicality in typecasts and snapshot images. Tourist sights and representational characters, in return, contribute to the perpetuation of the national myth, reaffirming the fabricated and the misconceived.

National Myths in Contention

Myths derive as much from one’s misconstruction of an alien community as from one’s delusion of indigenous society. In his novels, Ishiguro stages the rivalry of myths, intending their contention to expose each other’s fallacy. He deliberately

reiterates in his texts generalisations that deny differences among individuals, and inserts within narratives cultural myths that meta-fictionally question their validity. The treacherousness of representing a nation is hence illustrated in the estrangement of its culture: that is, restaging de-contextualised cultural particularities in narratives about this entity. This perhaps explains why the authenticity in Ishiguro's novels paradoxically exudes a tinge of artificiality: the Japaneseness of *Pale* and *Artist* parallels the Englishness of *Remains* and *Orphans* in their dramatisation of cultural signifiers.

Ishiguro situates fables in the interstices where cultures come into contact and clash. His narrators either travel/reside overseas or encounter foreigners/foreign influences on the home front. The meeting ground of native traditions and alien influences in Ishiguro's novels may at first resemble Mary Louise Pratt's "contact zone," but it actually differs from the "colonial frontiers" where, as Pratt defines them, the metropolitan and indigenous cultures interact.⁵ Ishiguro's site of cultural rivalry stands primarily as the locale where independent political entities compete and gradually come to see themselves anew in the contender's reflection.⁶

Though Japanese by ancestry, Ishiguro eschews relating the conflict he personally endures between the adoptive and original societies. Instead, he opts for illustrating his cross-cultural experience in metaphorical pastiches. Ishiguro's first

novel *Pale* discloses how Etsuko, a Japanese widow residing in England, responds to Britain's construct of Japan. As Etsuko mourns for the recent death of her older daughter Keiko, a child from her previous marriage to a Japanese man, she notices that the mass media is quick to link Keiko's suicide with her Japanese origin. To the gaze of ignorant curiosity, Etsuko returns her stare: "[t]he English are fond of their idea that our race has an instinct for suicide, as if further explanations are unnecessary; for that was all they reported, that [Keiko] was Japanese and that she had hung herself in her room."⁷ In her reciprocal gaze, Etsuko also undermines the reader's presumption that suicide stands as the paramount trope of Japanese culture and that to perform the ritual of death is to assert one's Japanese identity.

In addition to the ethnic propensity for suicide, Japan is associated with submissive women and self-sacrificing mothers. Misconstructions of Japanese women prevail in the talk of Niki, Etsuko's younger daughter, a child from her second marriage to Sheringham, an Englishman. Assuming that Etsuko left Japan to flee an unbearable marriage, Niki praises her mother's determination to pursue happiness and freedom: "It couldn't have been easy, what you did, Mother. You ought to be proud of what you did with your life...."⁸ Niki reassures Etsuko that she has made the right decision in leaving Japan: "You did exactly the right thing. You can't just watch your life wasting away...."⁹ In her admiration of Etsuko's courage in starting anew in

England, Niki, like her father, conceives Etsuko as a victim of an “oafish” husband and readily exalts her as an extraordinary figure worthy of poetic dedication.

Deep-rooted in Niki’s assumption (as well as her father’s) is the fabled dichotomy of a constricting Japan that denies women their needs and a liberating Britain that empowers them to pursue happiness.

The image Niki holds of Etsuko corresponds to that in Western fantasy: the Oriental woman, vulnerable and helpless, awaits the white knight in shining armour to rescue her. The ostensible parallel Ishiguro cultivates between *Pale* and Puccini’s *Madame Butterfly*¹⁰ veils the actual inversion of the observing Western male and the observed Oriental female. In *Pale*, the Western males, merely heard of but never seen, function solely as the props of two interracial relationships Etsuko narrates. Etsuko’s friend, Sachiko, may at first sight resemble Madame Butterfly in carrying on a long-term relationship with an American soldier stationed in Nagasaki. Sachiko, however, is neither passionate nor devoted, and much less is the relationship predicated upon her naivety. The myth of the self-sacrificing Japanese woman is further challenged as one explores the motive of Etsuko’s second marriage. In her reminiscence, Etsuko does not explain how she first met Sheringham and then later settled with him in England, though she mentions briefly that he once worked in Japan as a journalist. Sheringham serves more likely as an opportunity for Etsuko and

her daughter Keiko to start anew in the West. The assertiveness and quiet ambition that prompt Etsuko to leave Japan by no means accords with Madame Butterfly's feminine acquiescence that so captivates the Western imagination.

If *Pale* demystifies the submissiveness of Japanese womanhood, *Artist* questions the fable of Japanese heroism. Set in war-ravaged Hiroshima, *Artist* captures Japan at the conjunction of losing its traditional values and accommodating pervasive American influences. The myth of a notoriously bellicose and yet tightly hierarchical Japan manifests itself in the legends of samurais, which prize communal unity and fearless combat. Ono's conversations with his grandson Ichiro betray the contention of two national myths. While the artist reveres Japanese warriors Lord Yoshitsune or Miyamoto Musashi,¹¹ his grandson admires American cultural icons Popeye the Sailor and the Lone Ranger.¹² To Ono's great lament, a defeated nation inevitably emulates its conqueror. The collective solidarity the Japanese traditionally valorise gives way to the individualistic gallantry Americans glorify. Concurrent with Ono's narration is the era of Allied Occupation (1945-1952), during which the individualistic heroism that Popeye and the Lone Ranger epitomise supersedes the social harmony that Japanese samurais symbolise.

The talk of samurai spirit naturally leads to its twin issue, ritualistic suicide, *hara-kiri*, for traditional Japanese heroism fuses death with honour and courage. The

ritualistic suicide of a defeated samurai, as a gesture of dignified apology, is anticipated and revered. Two instances of *hara-kiri* are purportedly mentioned in the course of Ono's retrospect. Jiro Miyake, former fiancée of Ono's younger daughter, mentions that the president of his company attempts *hara-kiri* first and eventually gasses himself to express an apology to "the families of those killed in the war."¹³ Suicide is again spoken of in Ono's respective conversations with Taro Saito and daughter Setsuko: Yukio Naguchi, a renowned composer whose songs advocated military aggression, commits suicide. While readers anticipate that Ono will take a similarly drastic action, the narrative progresses with a humorous twist. The ceremonial death is deprived of its heroic connotation because Ono can never muster enough courage to terminate his life. Instead, he acknowledges his guilt. The pathos that Ono has intended in his confession is deflated, for neither his own family nor the Saito family ever considers him an artist of notable influence, much less one capable of advocating militarism. The verbal disembowelment that Ono performs ironically turns an otherwise tragic ritual into a comic parody. As Rebecca L. Walkowitz aptly states, suicide in Ishiguro's writing functions at once as "the preeminent signifier of Japanese culture" and derision at the reader's "metonymic presumption" that the Japanese tend to resolve despair or disgrace with suicide.¹⁴

Comparable to *Pale* and *Artist* that tease the Western misconceptions of Japan,

Remains derides Britain's self-delusive superiority by juxtaposing its drastic decline to America's postwar ascendance. As the butler-narrator Stevens's motorcar meanders along the bendy country road, his mind drifts from the "greatness" of Britain to the "greatness"¹⁵ of the butler¹⁶. The myth of Great Britain, according to Stevens's logic, is metonymically explained through the fable of the great butler, and the uncouthness of America further accentuates Britain's sophistication. Stevens envisages the prominence of his nation in terms of mundane trivialities, for he firmly believes that by acting and speaking in a certain manner he will inhabit the role of the quintessential English butler. Such a conviction is best illustrated in the oratorical differences he discerns between his "witticism" and Mr. Farraday's "bantering." The butler considers the joking manners only an "American gentleman" like Farraday would favour.¹⁷ "American" as an adjective recurs in Stevens's narration: other than a describer of national identity, the word connotes the prejudices he holds against the intruding culture.

Contrary to Stevens who defines Englishness in strict codes of manner and rhetoric, the Americans equate possessing authentic English artifacts with experiencing genuine English ways of life. The episode in which Farraday's friends, the Wakefields, visit Darlington Hall illustrates this ideological divergence. Touring the Hall, the American couple makes "various American exclamations of delight" and

reveals “a deep enthusiasm for English ways.”¹⁸ They share with Farraday the enthusiasm for acquiring “a genuine old English house” and “a genuine old-fashioned English butler.” The Americans’ eagerness to emulate the British through buying up the nation’s historical artifacts ironically reassures Stevens of the myth of Britain’s supremacy to which he blindly subscribes.

If Ishiguro snipes at America’s postwar economic prosperity through Farraday’s and the Wakefields’ greedy purchase of British cultural heritage, he punctures Britain’s pomposity through Stevens’s and Lord Darlington’s gullibility. At a conference, Lewis, an American senator, and Darlington debate ardently the differences between American “professionalism” and British “amateurism.” Lewis, while recognising the “noble instinct” in “gentleman amateurs” like Darlington, cautions that the aristocrat’s uninformed interferences in international affairs will lead to great catastrophe.¹⁹ Darlington, on the other hand, defends his aristocratic “amateurism” as an honorable antidote to the American “professionalism,” which he characterises as a work ethic highly motivated by “greed and advantage rather than those of goodness and the desire to see justice prevail in the world.”²⁰ The ideological polarity of Darlington’s idealism and Lewis’s pragmatism parallels the political antithesis of British monarchy and American democracy. The mythical divergence of Britain and America may very well be superficial. The plebeian professionalism

Stevens emphasises does not really accord with the patrician amateurism Lord Darlington upholds. Instead, Stevens's definition of an adept butler is more akin to Lewis's description of a competent politician, for both subscribe to the value of proficiency and commitment. The myth of Britain's self-proclaimed "greatness" paradoxically finds its mirror reflection in that of America's much maligned aggressiveness.

The myth of Great Britain assumes a different form in *Orphans*. During his childhood in Shanghai, Banks construes through the Conan Doyle mysteries a motherland permeated with "the air of the English lanes and meadows" and London crisscrossed by "foggy streets."²¹ These detective stories also instil in Banks the illusion that scientific precision will eventually triumph over menacing barbarity. The mythical Englishness, as Banks firmly believes, manifests itself in the aura and mission of Sherlock Holmes. To fulfill his childhood wish for being sufficiently English, Banks chooses the profession of detective. Emulating Holmes, the quintessential English sleuth, he considers himself acquiring the quality of authentic Englishness.

If popular novels inform the young Banks of a motherland he has yet to visit, hearsay and tall-tales instil in him a phantasmagoric China. He pictures the world beyond the International Settlement through childish fantasies, mostly gruesome

details acquired secondhand through a Japanese boy, Akira, in his neighbourhood.

Banks recalls Akira portrayed the Chinese districts as a chaotic world where “dead bodies piled up everywhere, flies buzzing all over them,” and where a commanding warlord “transported on a sedan chair, accompanied by a giant carrying a sword” would have some passers-by beheaded.²² Envisioning China as the source of rampant crimes, Banks internalises the myth of the sinister Oriental world and, worse yet, allows that misconception to dictate his professional judgments.

Two national myths conflate in Banks’s unsophisticated vision of the world. As the barbarous and insidious China is disseminating vice worldwide, the civilised and moralistic England should come ashore to eradicate the evil and restore global harmony. In Banks’s naive fantasies, China is an infant in need of the West’s protection, but it turns out that he is the child prematurely deprived of parental guidance, bewildered and dispossessed in the Oriental world. His confidence that he will bring peace and order to China proves even more infantile than the country he vows to rescue from moral collapse. Exposing Banks’s immaturity and Philip’s hypocrisy, *Orphans* undermines the myth of the White man’s burden, that the enlightened British Self is morally responsible for civilising the barbaric Chinese Other. The chivalric oratory Banks uses echoes the rhetoric of salvation the British anti-opium campaigners such as his mother and Uncle Philip adopt: both commence

in pompous philanthropy and yet conclude in mortifying self-disillusion. The pompous rhetoric of benevolent paternalism is later deflated. Colonel Hasegawa, an older Japanese man, cautions Banks that the Japanese soldier whom he mistakes for Akira is in fact a deserter. For the detective, an even more mortifying fact is that Wang Ku the Chinese warlord has been his benefactor, paying for his education and living expenses in England, and that “the heart of serpent” does not originate from China but emerges from the West (for Philip is “the Yellow Snake” he has been hunting). The irony is palpable: Banks the white knight is in fact an orphan bewildered in the Oriental world, and he himself a burden of his Chinese other.

National myths reincarnate themselves in popular culture and literary creation. The more relentlessly a myth is staged, the more surreally authentic it grows. It is hence understandable why Michael Wood characterises the theatricality of Japan in Ishiguro’s *Pale* as a “delicately orientalized Orient.”²³ Wood holds that Ishiguro’s memories of his native land are intertwined and thereby adulterated with Western ideas of Japan. Wood’s statement remains valid for *Artist* and, slightly rephrased, proves equally fitting for *Remains* and *Orphans*: England presented in the latter two texts evinces a delicately Anglicised England. This Anglicised England, to borrow Homi Bhabha’s frequently quoted phrase, is “emphatically not to be English.”²⁴ When extrapolated to the Japan showcased in *Pale* and *Artist*, Bhabha’s theorisation, revised

with Wood's wording, remains just as incisive: to be orientalised is emphatically not to be Oriental. The aforementioned four novels challenge the existence of authenticity, for they suggest that national characteristics can be invented, performed, and eventually, through excessive reproduction and dramatisation, mistaken for intrinsic attributes.

By juxtaposing the superficial resemblance and actual discrepancy between the factual and the fictional, Ishiguro exposes the falsity of stories one nation tells about itself and about others. Placed in contention, national fables betray the inadequacy of reducing a given society to an array of highly identifiable markers, scenery snapshots and ethnic stereotypes. The macroscopic approach Ishiguro takes in deriding national myths hence necessitates a microscopic analysis of how symbolic sights and characters collaboratively give intelligible physicality to an amorphous entity called "nation."

Snapshot Images in Question

Japan, Britain and China in the aforementioned texts are depicted in a fashion analogous to Roland Barthes's portrayal of Japan. In *Empire of Signs*, Barthes glimpses Japan through a succession of quotidian items, gestures and activities, such as chopsticks, bowing and pachinko.²⁵ Ishiguro, when constructing a specific society,

does likewise. He assembles in a textual collage cultural icons and landscape markers to call forth collective memory of a specific locality. Theatrically metonymic, each assembly reminds the reader of a high-profile scene simultaneously estranged from and evocative of its original culture.

In *Pale*, broad brush-strokes render an impressionistic picture of a postwar Nagasaki. The narrator Etsuko recalls that during those years in Japan, from the window of a small suburban area outside Nagasaki, she could see “a pale outline of hills visible against the clouds.”²⁶ She also remembers that she and her father-in-law Ogata-San once visited the Peace Park where they saw “a massive white statue in memory of those killed by the atomic bomb,” resembling “some muscular Greek god, seated with both arms outstretched,” and when viewed from afar “the figure looked almost comic, resembling a police conducting traffic.”²⁷ Etsuko’s delineation, uncannily postcard-like, corresponds to the frontal image of the Peace Memorial Statue on the tourist website of Nagasaki.²⁸

The narrative is loaded not only with allusions to landmarks but also with a literal display of sightseeing imagery. Near the conclusion, Niki asks Etsuko for “a photo” or “an old postcard” of Nagasaki with which her poet friend can “see what everything was like” and compose poems about Etsuko’s life in Japan.²⁹ At Niki’s request, Etsuko brings forth an old calendar. The photograph of Nagasaki on the calendar

resembles Etsuko's reminiscence of the city: both image and text call to mind popular tourist sights that remain so hastily glimpsed, hazily comprehended, and yet so promptly recognisable.

Set in Hiroshima, *Artist* shares with *Pale* the novelist's preference for metaphorical landscaping and the strategic deployment of snapshot images. Places in the city are either associated with their owners or referred to by their nicknames: throughout the narrative, the little bridge near Ono's house is named "The Bridge of Hesitation" while the bar owned by Mrs. Kawakami is "Mrs. Kawakami's." Ono relates his memory to the narratee "you," who are presumably unfamiliar with the things and events in Hiroshima. The opening paragraph depicts a panorama the narratee would enjoy from "the Bridge of Hesitation." The narratee is soon led to Migi-Hidari, the pleasure district of the city, and subsequently to where Mrs. Kawakami's bar is located.

The pleasure district, inseparable from geishas, is both a site of Ono's nostalgia and a sight of the familiarly exotic. The landscape of Hiroshima, as Ishiguro intends, unfurls itself through a progression of tourist attractions. Under Ono's eager guidance, the narratee could sometimes see from a high vantage point on "the Bridge of Hesitation" down to the pleasure district, and sometimes overlook from a pavilion in Takami Gardens on the hill "the area where the peace memorial stands."³⁰ These

glimpses evoke in the collective imagination recurrent sights of Japan from tourist snapshots and postcard illustrations.

In a metafictional moment, Ishiguro has Ono tease the theatricality of “Japonaiserie”³¹ in his artistic production and, more trenchantly, the eagerness of foreign consumers who prize contrived exoticness. Ono recalls that during the tutelage of Master Takeda, he was commissioned to paint “geisha, cherry trees, swimming carps” because they looked “Japanese” to foreign buyers.³² Ono’s decoding of the strategy to produce “Japanese” art implies Ishiguro’s self-mockery: in his literary construct of Japan, he similarly manipulates the reader’s faulty equation of appearance and substance.

Ishiguro’s representation of England continues to exploit such conflation. In *Remains*, landscape markers strategically construct an England resembling the idyllic world the tourist-reader expects to gaze upon. When visiting various attractions by car, Stevens follows religiously the instructions that Mrs. Jane Symons offers in *The Wonder of England*. In Salisbury, Stevens visits the renowned Cathedral, a majestic building with “its looming spire being visible wherever one goes in Salisbury,” and there he admires “a view of the sun setting behind that great spire.”³³ Travelling to Somerset, he entertains the possibility of taking a detour to visit the village of Mursden, where the firm of Giffen and C. was once located. In Weymouth, Stevens,

once again heeding Mrs. Symons's advice, strolls in the seaside town as the sun goes down, savouring the beauty of colourful lights on the pier.

From Darlington Hall, via Salisbury, Dorset, Somerset and Devon, to Cornwall, Stevens's motorcar traverses numerous tourist attractions: lush pastures, splendid cathedrals, old country houses, hospitable villagers and enchanting seaside towns. The sights, sounds and people Stevens encounters on his journey bring to mind a picturesque England, eternally placid and delightful. The comparable ease in translating the textual scenery to a cinematic landscape, one may safely argue, is largely attributable to the fact that the novel's setting is constructed around notable spectacles of England. The Merchant-Ivory production of Darlington Hall renders this fictional site a visual reality, integrating scenes from Dyrham Park, Corsham Court, Powderham Castle, and Badminton, which in the film respectively serve as the Hall's exteriors, picture galleries, staterooms, and kitchen.³⁴

On several occasions, Ishiguro characterises *Remains* as a novel "more English than the English," a subversive attempt to "rework a particular myth about a certain kind of England."³⁵ The novelist takes a similar approach to his portrayal of interwar Shanghai, a city more Chinese than the Chinese. He depicts the Shanghai in *Orphans* as a metaphorical site conforming to the myth of "Old Shanghai," comparing the literary city to Chinatowns of the United States and Canada in their theatrical display

of a Chinese aura.³⁶ Ishiguro captures this “Old Shanghai” ambience through the proverbial images that postcards or tourist photos deliver, for it is the location’s symbolic association rather than its geographical particularities that prevails in the novel. The novelist candidly admits that he knows Shanghai at secondhand through his father and grandfather, who lived there before the Second World War. The photographs in his father’s album and a large collection of guidebooks about pre-communist Shanghai hence shape the city he delineates.³⁷

Banks, likewise, conceives of Shanghai through myths and hearsay. As a boy, he lived with his parents in the tightly guarded world of International Settlements, rarely venturing beyond the enclave. When he did accidentally pass through the Chinese quarters, he saw “the huddled low rooftops across the canal” and held his breath for fear “the pestilence would come airborne across the narrow strip of water.”³⁸ In this chaotic and virulent society Banks remembers (or perhaps imagines) he glimpsed men who wore odd-looking robes and had weird hairstyles.

Wang Ku the warlord, indistinguishable from these folk, is depicted as a plump man with a pigtail, donning a cap and attired in a dark Chinese gown. He resembles the Chinese men portrayed in Hollywood movies of the early 1930s: they, with dramatically slanting eyes, keep Manchurian pigtails and odd-looking moustaches. The appearance of Wang Ku evinces an imagery composite of menacing characters

such as Dr. Fu Man Chu (played by Boris Karloff) of *The Mask of Fu Manchu* (1932) and General Yen (played by Nils Asther) of *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* (1933).

Such a resemblance purports to excite the sexual fantasies the West holds of the Oriental harem where countless concubines rest in a seductive manner, awaiting the arrival of their master. To Banks, Philip discloses that Wang Ku regularly whips his mother (Diana Banks) in front of the dinner guests because the warlord considers such an act “[t]aming the white woman.”³⁹ In the subplot of Diana Banks’s captivity, Ishiguro may very well be borrowing the cinematic clichés of abducted Caucasian woman and menacing Asian man that Hollywood movies recurrently feature. The novelist, however, reworks these formulas to serve his thematic needs. To unveil Wang Ku’s sadism is indirectly to expose Philip’s masochistic voyeurism: it is after all the white man’s sexual perversion that invents and savours the obscene images of the Oriental harem.

In *Orphans*, prescribed cinematic scenes such as domestic poverty, widespread opium addiction and rampant crime are employed to construct China as a chaotic society. What Ishiguro intends to evoke is the myth of China that the mass media perpetuates. Gina Marchetti characterises the Hollywood movie *Chinatown* as an imaginary site that “conjures up an image, an imaginary construct of past representations from other mass-mediated sources.”⁴⁰ Marchetti’s description remains

pertinent to the Chinese world seen from Banks's (and Akira's) childish eyes: it, too, possesses a fictive quality and stands as a spectacle of menacing otherness.

Ishiguro models the character of Banks after Sherlock Holmes in a similar fashion that he appropriates earlier depictions of China to his backdrop. He deliberately draws attention to the detective's paraphernalia. Among the objects immediately associated with Holmes, a magnifying glass is regularly deployed as a symbol of meticulous crime investigation. And it is a magnifying glass that Banks's boarding-school classmates gave him as a birthday gift to ridicule his ambition. Banks's conscientious emulation of Holmes illustrates the paradox of simulacrum: repetitive simulation bestows upon the imagined the semblance of the real. Through cycles of theatrical fabrication and relentless emulation, the mass media fuses fictional characters with historical figures and ultimately develops them into cultural icons. The fact that Banks strives to acquire Englishness through emulating Holmes evinces such a fallacy. He has mistaken appearance for essence, manner for ethnicity, and, worst of all, the fictional for the factual. To ridicule Banks's confusion, Ishiguro may very well mock the faulty equation one often makes between visual fragments and ethnic nature.

Ishiguro's approach to intertextuality proves doubly subversive. Reversing textual-cinematic adaptation, he translates cinematic images back to literary

representation. Borrowing casually from the mass media, he deploys geographic pointers and cultural particulars to simulate a society in perceived theatricality. Hence, pleasure districts, geishas, and ritualistic suicide constitute an exquisite yet unfathomable Japan; cathedrals, green hills, butlers, imposing mansions, and Sherlock Holmes compose a pictorially tranquil England; International Settlements, concubines, warlords, servants and the opium trade comprise a phantasmagorical China. Purportedly replicated in Ishiguro's texts, these metonymies perform national attributes that the outsider-reader eagerly anticipates.

Equivalent to the tourist that Dean MacCannell depicts, Ishiguro's narrators, with the curiosity of strangers, gaze at their native lands, whose spectacles are reminiscent of "touristic representations" and "markers" they have glimpsed elsewhere.⁴¹ The book-cover illustrations of Ishiguro's novels similarly invite the reader to savour these familiar images. Two Faber editions of *Pale* noticeably parade its Japanese setting: one depicts a segment of an Oriental female face whose right eye gazes upward at a flame-like object, and the other, in woodblock print, portrays a scene of visitors looking from the harbour over a hill (an immediately discernable Mount Fuji) beyond. The first Vintage International edition of *Pale* features an Asian mother and her daughter under a cherry-tree branch. Two Faber versions of *Artist* similarly evoke the Japanese backdrop: one showcases a photograph of a white lantern with Japanese

floral painting, and the other features a woodblock illustration of a pleasure quarter with Mount Fuji visible from afar. The First Vintage International edition of *Artist* adorns the black cover with a partial image of an Asian woman bordering the upper right-hand corner and a quasi-Chinese Zodiac symbol occupying the centre. While the Faber edition of *Orphans* features Caucasian couples dancing surrealistically on a street bustling with Chinese signboards, on-lookers, streetcars, and Western-style buildings, the Vintage International edition of *Orphans* illustrates the back of a man in a felt hat and an overcoat, a stereotypical detective look.

A double strategy noticeably operates in the aforementioned texts and paratexts. Depicting their local scenery as pastiches of tourist sights, Ishiguro's narrators paradoxically domesticate the landscapes that might otherwise remain exotic to the reader. As *Pale*, *Artist*, *Remains* and *Orphans* display snapshot images of Japan, Britain and China, they, too, unfurl the vacuity of these ocular pastiches, for each of them exhibits nothing but contained alterity, a recognisable sight mistaken for the emblem of an exotic site.

Stock Characters in Transformation

If the landscape of a society can be captured in a succession of metonymic scenes, its spirit is equally susceptible to simplification. This perhaps explains why a nation is

frequently depicted as an individual whose behaviour and belief summarises alleged collective characteristics. To inhabit such a rigidly defined role, an emblematic figure is inevitably a flat character that, in E. M. Forster's words, develops around "a single idea and quality" and remains "unalterable" even when moving through varied circumstances.⁴² At a glance, each of Ishiguro's narrators may resemble such an identifiable type, but as the narrative progresses, s/he gradually emerges as a figure of distinctive temperament. Defiant of literary conventions, the novelist invokes the readers' prior reading experiences and then upsets their anticipation with generic mutations and character reinvention. He installs stock characters in genres antithetical to their original settings or disassociates them from the professions they conventionally hold. In most cases, he adopts both tactics.

Pale, through the surface placidity of Etsuko's narration, calls forth the stereotype of the submissive and virtuous Japanese housewife who unconditionally sacrifices herself for her family. Etsuko's calm voice may indeed give the illusion of placidity, but recollection of those years in Nagasaki discloses a past horribly entangled with child negligence, marital discord and postwar trauma. The demure Japanese housewife Etsuko portrays herself to be is actually a disturbed bomb-survivor guilty of child neglect.

In contrast to the dutiful wife that Etsuko resembles is the irresponsible mother

Sachiko exemplifies. Antithetical as Etsuko and Sachiko may appear, they are in fact two facets of one person.⁴³ Weaving Sachiko's past into her own, Etsuko implies that to pursue a better future for her daughter Keiko, she, too, has defied traditional womanhood and suffered the dire consequences of her decision. In Etsuko's incongruous recollection, Sachiko's impropriety may very well mirror her own defiance, divorcing Jiro and uprooting Keiko from their homeland. The presence of Sachiko adds depth to the characterisation of Etsuko. Sachiko may very well be a foil for Etsuko to highlight her docility or, more probably, a double role Etsuko plays in a recollection of dubious nature. Etsuko's remembrance conceals with partial revelation a sophisticated woman: her acquiescence proves merely illusory and her serenity deceptive.

Equally deceptive characterisation is noticeable in Ono of *Artist*. At first glance, Ono may give the impression of a Japanese patriarch because early on he presents himself as an artist of "good character and achievement" whose social status has incurred extensive reverence in Hiroshima. Ono's self-portrait resembles the authoritative father figure that one frequently glimpses on TV or in the cinema. But the domineering figure Ono depicts himself to be merely constitutes one facet of his intricate personality. In early stages of his life, Ono rebelled against his superiors: first his father, then Master Takeda (his first teacher-employer), and much later Master

Mori-san (his second teacher-employer). Though once a defiant youth, the retired artist is not receptive to the juniors' challenges: he tolerates neither the aesthetic deviation of his former student Kuroda nor the political divergence of his son-in-law Suichi.

Under the pretence of quiet retirement, Ono's remorse for his militarist past rattles. Wandering in the bomb-damaged house, he is nostalgic for the prewar years during which he exerted considerable influence in his circle. Ono, according to his younger daughter Noriko's observation, is no longer "a tyrant" ordering people around but a "gentle and domesticated" figure frequently "moping."⁴⁴ The illusion Ono holds of himself collapses as discussions of former militarists' *hara-kiri* stir up his guilt. With its pathos of heroic self-annihilation, *hara-kiri* is purposefully deployed to encourage the anticipation of Ono's suicide. The artist, however, is not a gallant warrior. Contrary to a samurai who commits suicide to convey a heartfelt apology for earlier misdeeds, Ono opts for an action of a less drastic nature. He makes a semi-public confession. The gesture, comically timorous, animates an otherwise monotonous character; it, too, resituates the Japanese patriarch in a quotidian existence and renders him the folly and anguish of an ordinary man.

The fact that *Pale* and *Artist* centre on the lives of ordinary Japanese people encourages critical discussions on Ishiguro's source(s) of influence and inspiration.

Gregory Mason holds that *shomin-geki*, the Japanese cinematic genre about the everyday life of humble civilians, offers Ishiguro “an alternative tradition to the discredited clichés of militarism and suicide” because his novels correspondingly explore the mundane yet rather sad existence of ordinary people.⁴⁵ Mason considers Yasujiro Ozu and Akira Kurosawa exerting a perceptible impact on Ishiguro’s style and theme, citing *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs* (1960), *The Heart* (1955), *Ugetsu* (1953), *Tokyo Story* (1953), and *Late Autumn* (1960) as major sources of influence that help shape Ishiguro’s portrayal of Japanese characters.⁴⁶ He holds that while scenes of noodle-shop, bar, and drunken men in *Pale* and *Artist* are reminiscent of those in Ozu’s films, Ishiguro’s recurrent theme of nostalgia and regret echoes Kurosawa’s concern over the collapse of traditional values in postwar Japan.

Japanese cinema, indeed as Mason convincingly argues, instils in Ishiguro’s memory images of his native society, but it merely constitutes one of the numerable forces that determine his vision of the world. Whether in genres, storylines, or characterisation, the novelist also borrows noticeably from Hollywood movies and British TV programmes. Stereotypes from these cinematic and television productions, ranging from the chivalric Caucasian, the Japanese war bride, the Oriental patriarch, to the Chinese villain, abound in Ishiguro’s texts, and the novelist’s ingenuity successfully converts each cardboard figure into an intriguing being.

In *Remains*, Stevens the butler calls to mind a long procession of literary predecessors. But it is with Jeeves that Stevens is often compared. A comic butler character, Jeeves first appears in a series of novels by P. G. Wodehouse⁴⁷ and later stars in the popular British TV comedy *Jeeves and Wooster*. At first glance, Stevens does strike us as a comic figure of preposterous manners, and his pretentious talks on the great butler further entrench this faulty impression that he is a flat character, dedicated to a particular concept or value. The aged manservant is, however, by no means typecast. Contrary to Jeeves who adroitly corrects and rescues his less clever master Bertie Wooster, Stevens blindly submits himself to the indiscretion of Lord Darlington and, at the end, witnesses his downfall. Into this role, conventionally of a slapstick comedian, Ishiguro infuses a sense of unutterable loss and regret. The manservant stereotype is taken out of its original milieu of wealth and joviality and restated in the gloomy setting of a household in decline. Though *Remains* never amounts to nor intends the pathos of a tragedy, a tinge of sorrow lingers. Such generic modulation undoubtedly adds to a pretentious butler a touch of refreshing genuineness.

Ishiguro's tactical treatment of stereotypes also wins him favorable reviews. Salman Rushdie considers *Remains* "a brilliant subversion of the fictional modes from which it at first seems to descend."⁴⁸ On the ingenious characterisation of Stevens,

Joyce Carol Oates remarks: “In the hands of a less gifted writer, Stevens would have been a stock figure of pathos or biting satire; Ishiguro presents him as fully human in his blind devotion to a fading authority, both deluded and noble.”⁴⁹ Indeed, Ishiguro prevents Stevens from being a cardboard figure by advancing his sightless devotion onto eventual self-disillusionment. Through the discrepancy between Stevens’s pompous talk of professionalism and his ineffable regret for the life wasted, the novelist unfolds a remorseful being whose illusion and disillusion invite both ridicule and sympathy.

A related tactic of generic deviation is applied in *Orphans*. In the depiction of Christopher Banks, Ishiguro intentionally invokes Sherlock Holmes to produce the deceptive parallel. The similitude is purely transitory. As the narrative progresses, Banks departs further and further from the composed detective for whom he is at first mistaken. In stark contrast with the perpetually judicious Holmes, Banks is prone to childlike irrationality. Though vowing to eradicate evil at “the heart of the serpent” and solve the mystery of his parents’ disappearance, he fails to accomplish either mission. A twentieth-century caricature of Holmes, Banks is incapable of extricating himself from the entanglement of desire, anguish, crime, corruption and bureaucracy. In contrast to the conventional mystery that centres on the investigation of a crime, *Orphans* revolves around the detective’s personal life.

To a certain extent, the storyline of *Orphans* resembles that of the British crime fiction popular in the 1920s and 1930s:⁵⁰ a murder happens in a placid community, an outsider is soon brought in to resolve the case, and the community restores its peace at the triumphant closure of the case. This predictable pattern is what Ishiguro intends *Orphans* to parody. He exhibits generic components of crime fiction to encourage the reader's anticipation that Banks will act accordingly, but later thwarts that expectation with surprising twists. Ishiguro experiments with how Banks would fare "carrying the tools that would be adequate in that fictional world... toward the second cataclysm."⁵¹

The inadequacy of Banks's paraphernalia mirrors the limitation of the detective and the intangibility of the crime. As James Procter notes, "Ishiguro parodies the speech pattern of classic detective fiction only to suggest that act of detection is more elusive than it first appears."⁵²

Other variations further demonstrate that the storyline and characterisation of *Orphans* disregard the conventions of crime fiction. Contradictory to the typified detective who comprehends and explains the nature of the crime, Banks lives in delusion and bewilderment. He naively conceives of evil as tangible, identifiable and hence eradicable. Though such assurance is expected of his profession, Banks takes actions noticeably atypical of his detective mission. Once in Shanghai, Banks regresses to juvenile illogicality. The mystery he vows to resolve entangles him to the

extent that he depends on Philip to unveil the truth.

Philip, an avuncular figure Banks used to revere, turns out to be a turncoat profiting from the rivalry of the anti-opium campaign and opium-trading warlords, and later “the Yellow Snake” masterminding various high-profile crimes in China. The treacherous and sinister Chinese Other (his parents’ abductor and possibly the heart of the serpent) that Banks has all along imagined Wang Ku to embody is merely a minor villain. In fact, it is Philip, the devious and cowardly British Self (his compatriot and his mother’s former fellow campaigner), Banks fails to detect.

The mystery, as it is disclosed, contains neither violence nor murder. To the great dismay of Banks and the reader, the truth of his childhood mystery consists of his father’s extramarital affair, Wang Ku’s abduction of his mother, and Philip’s hypocrisy. Just as banal and mundane as its cause, the mystery ends with excessively prolonged and perhaps unduly deferred denouement. The generic principle of the detective story would prescribe the finale of *Orphans* to be Philip’s confession, that is, the last chapter of Part Six. The novel, however, develops one chapter further, to Part Seven. Chapter Twenty-three appends the Banks-Philip confrontation, dissolving the earlier dramatic suspense. Instead of triumphantly declaring a case closed, *Orphans* concludes with Banks’s lamentation. Thwarting the reader’s anticipation, these divergences liberate Banks from the restraints of the Holmes clone for which he was

initially mistaken. He emerges as a fallible being, susceptible to desire, fear, prejudice and ignorance.

Structural irregularities in *Orphans* prompt vigorous discussion. Brian Finney praises *Orphans* for blending “the excitement of a detective novel with the psychological interest of the first-person confessional that characterizes his earlier work.”⁵³ Wai-chew Sim attends to the conspicuous absence of orthodox detective actions: “Despite his gumshoe appellation, Banks never gets to exhibit ratiocinative brilliance or to engage in intricate spadework....”⁵⁴ Finney and Sim are astute in noting Ishiguro’s subversive intent. Conventionally a constant in the crime fiction, the detective becomes a variable, for the characterisation of Banks does not acquiesce to the progress of the story. The generic mutation of *Orphans* illustrates Vincent B. Leitch’s theory that genres are “unstable heterogeneous formations capable of following out multiple lines of development.”⁵⁵ It, too, parallels the ambiguity of the crime Banks investigates, the convolution of human malevolence and benevolence, and, most noteworthy of all, the unpredictability of Banks the character.

Altering the principal components of various genres, Ishiguro exhibits stock characters in a new light. In the portrayals of Etsuko the bereaved mother, Ono the guilty artist, Stevens the regretful butler and Banks the disoriented detective, Ishiguro

has succeeded in directing attention to stereotypes whose personality is conventionally subordinated to the development of a storyline. Resituating these characters at centre-stage of the narrative, he invites the reader to explore the human complexity beneath the façade of banality. As Rebecca L. Walkowitz notes, Ishiguro employs “cultural stereotypes” to construe his novels as “national allegories,” conflates the features of his texts with the attributes of the cultures they appear to delineate, and eventually subverts these myths by disclosing “the fictionalization of cultural truth.”⁵⁶ The indeterminacy of racial stereotypes and the heterogeneity of literary genres, as Ishiguro illustrates in his novels, not only deride the reader’s insularity but also disparage the hollowness of national myths that reduce cultures to various sets of predictable conduct.

Conclusion

As an ethnic Japanese residing in England, Ishiguro perceives racial stereotypes with unusual insights, quickly discerning in the derogatory depictions of others the native’s arrogance and anguish. He models Etsuko and Ono after the stereotypes of ordinary Japanese men and women and then gradually unfolds their individuality. The constructions of Stevens and Banks, likewise, capitalise on the popular belief that the English disposition is best illustrated in the butler’s self-effacement and the

detective's emotional restraint. It is from an insider-outsider's double vision that Ishiguro detects the fictionalisation of national/racial myths, challenges the validity of metonymic presumptions, and exposes the emptiness of cultural signifiers. He prompts the reader to ponder how one's limited imagination dictates the monotony one detects in the other. As Michael Pickering observes, stereotyping and the construction of the other both "address the same cultural and psychological processes involved in self/other relations" and "operate as strategies of symbolic containment and risk."⁵⁷ The reduction and vilification one gives to the other (too often racial others) may very well mirror the insecurity or ignorance one suffers. In Ishiguro's novels, stereotypes do just that.

Abundant in *Pale*, *Artist*, *Remains* and *Orphans* are everyday scenes from *shomin-geki* and hackneyed sights from Western films and TV series. The genealogy of these clichéd images is traceable. *The Teahouse of the August Moon* (1956) and *Sayonara* (1957), among innumerable others, display geishas and pleasure districts to simulate a Japanese society that conforms to the one in the Western imagination. The self-portrait the West holds remains as conspicuously flawed as the image it constructs for the East. In addition to Jeeves the manservant, *Remains* calls forth the ambience of England's highbrow society and images of its imposing country estates, familiar from Merchant-Ivory productions such as *A Room with a View* (1986) and

Maurice (1987). The dual locations of *Orphans* are created around cinematic clichés in two antithetical clusters. Imminently noticeable are the sinister images of the Asian male in *The Mask of Fu Manchu* (1932) and those of a backward China in *The Good Earth* (1937), and *The Bitter Tea of General Yen*⁵⁸ (1933). Equally conspicuous is the emotionally restrained England of Sherlock Holmes that innumerable TV series and cinematic productions endeavour to replicate.

Widely proliferated images from the mass media, as illustrated in *Pale, Artist, Remains* and *Orphans*, prove a rich source of literary imagination. The compatibility of literature and the mass media in these texts demonstrate that generic boundaries remain porous: each narrative, inherently heterogeneous, retains divergent potentials for plot and character development. The polygeneric nature of each text mirrors the indeterminacy of a nation that defies easy reduction. Writing against generic conventions, societal practices, and gender expectations, the Japanese-British novelist turns myths into cultural mockery, clichés into chic ideas, and stereotypes into captivating personalities. Most noticeably, he weaves the transitory of mass culture into the enduring of literary texts, unfolding the advent of a genre that embraces both the profane and the sacred.

1. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).
2. Nermeen Shaikh, "Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro," (*AsiaSource*, 2002, screen 1; http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/ishiguro.cfm).
3. Ibid.
4. Kazuo Ishiguro, *A Pale View of Hills* (London: Faber and Faber, [1982] 1991); *An Artist of the Floating World* (New York: Vintage, [1986] 1989); *The Remains of the Day* (New York: Vintage, [1988] 1993); *When We Were Orphans* (London: Faber and Faber, 2000). Hereafter, these works will be indicated by abbreviated titles. *The Unconsoled* (1995) and *Never Let Me Go* (2005) do not fit into the discussion of this essay, for neither text addresses the issue of cultural contention. *The Unconsoled*, set in a surrealistic world, tells how traumas consume individuals and incarcerate them in the haunting past. *Never Let Me Go*, set in the placidity of rural England, relates the disturbing story about human clones whose existence, ignorant of their origins and deprived of future, is solely to serve as spare parts in medical procedures.
5. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel, Writing, and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 6.
6. Ishiguro does not have memories of a homeland ravaged and exploited by the British Empire. Rather than revolving around the consequences of decolonization, Ishiguro's narratives foreground the psychological turmoil of civilians whose lives the Second World War has drastically altered and the socio-cultural transmutation the war has inevitably occasioned. *Pale*, *Artist*, *Remains*, and *Orphans* collectively present a disquieting picture of the war from haunting memories of ordinary people from Japan and Britain.
7. *Pale*, 10.
8. Ibid., 90.
9. Ibid., 176.
10. *Madame Butterfly*, Giacomo Puccini's world-renown opera set in Nagasaki in 1904, depicts the tragic romance of a Japanese geisha, Cio-Cio-San (or Butterfly), and her American lover, Captain Pinkerton. Upon the news of Pinkerton's marriage in the States, Butterfly, overcome with despair, commits suicide. Tapping into the shared locale of Nagasaki in *Pale* and *Butterfly*, Ishiguro may very well model Frank after Pinkerton and Sachiko after the subservient geisha. See "Madame Butterfly-Giacomo Puccini" (<http://www.culturevulture.net/Opera/Butterfly.htm>).
11. Lord Yoshitsune (1159-1189), full name Minamoto Yoshitsune, is a legendary samurai whose achievement in the Gempei War determined the course of Japanese history. See "Minamoto Yoshitsune," *Samurai Archives* (<http://www.samurai-archives.com/yoshitsune.html>). Like Yoshitsune, Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645) is a famous swordsman. His popularity in the twentieth century largely derives from the wide circulation of Yoshikawa's novel *Musashi*, whose intriguing details capture the imagination of western readers. See "Miyamoto Musashi," *Samurai*

- Archives* (<http://www.samurai-archives.com/musashi.html>).
12. First created as a comic-strip character in 1929 and later presented as a cartoon figure between the 1930 and 1970s, Popeye the Sailor Man remains one of the most recognizable American icons worldwide. See "Popeye the Sailor Man, Comic's First Super Hero," *Once Upon A Dime* (<http://www.onceuponadime.com/reviews/popeye.htm>). Originally created as a figure in a radio show in 1933 and later in a very successful ABC television program between 1949 and 1957, the Lone Ranger has become a legendary figure synonymous of American heroism. See B. R. Smith, "The Lone Ranger," *The Museum of Broadcast Communications* (<http://www.museum.tv/archives/etv/L/htmlL/loneranger/loneragner.htm>).
 13. *Artist*, 55.
 14. Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "Ishiguro's Floating Worlds" (*English Literary History* 68, 2001), 1061-62.
 15. On the parallel Stevens conceives between his nation and profession, Dominic Head remarks: "the 'Great' in Great Britain, [is] exemplified for Stevens in the undemonstrative rural English landscape... but this restrained 'greatness' is actually code for repression or concealment." Dominic Head, *The Cambridge Introduction to Modern British Fiction, 1950-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 157.
 16. *Remains*, 28-29.
 17. *Ibid.*, 14.
 18. *Ibid.*, 17.
 19. *Ibid.*, 102.
 20. *Ibid.*, 103.
 21. *Orphans*, 62.
 22. *Ibid.*, 65.
 23. Michael Wood, *Children of Silence: On Contemporary Fiction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 181.
 24. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 87.
 25. Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, [1970] 1982).
 26. *Pale*, 99.
 27. *Ibid.*, 137-38.
 28. "Peace Park Nagasaki, Japan," *Yahoo! Travel*; available from (http://www.travel.yahoo.com/p-travelguide-2886625-peace_park_nagasaki-i).
 29. *Pale*, 177.
 30. *Artist*, 99, 175.
 31. Malcolm Bradbury characterises *Artist* as "a work of odd mannerism, a stylized piece of Japonaiserie," but he does not elaborate on the term. See Malcolm Bradbury, *No, Not Bloomsbury* (London: André Deutsch, 1987), 365. It is Barry Lewis who differentiates *Japonaiserie* from *Japaneseness*, defining the latter as "essence and core" and the former as "contingence and surface." See Barry Lewis, *Kazuo Ishiguro* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 52.

- In *Orphans*, a similar tactic of Japonaiserie remains noticeable.
32. *Artist*, 69.
 33. *Remains*, 27-28.
 34. Bob Spitz, "A Merchant Ivory Treatment" (*House Beautiful* 135.6, 1993), 50.
 35. Shaikh, screen 1; Kenzaburo Oe, "The Novelist in Today's World: A Conversation" (*Boundary 2* 18.3, 1991), 139; Allan Vorda and Kim Herzinger, *Face to Face: Interviews with Contemporary Novelists* (Houston, TX: Rice University Press, 1993), 14-15.
 36. Shaikh, screen 1.
 37. Lewis Burke Frumkes, "Kazuo Ishiguro: The International Novelist Examines Chaotic World through the Prism of Memory" (*Writer* 1114.5, 2001), 1-4.
 38. *Orphans*, 65.
 39. *Ibid.*, 345.
 40. Gina Marchetti, *Romance and the "Yellow Perils:" Race, Sex, and Discursive Strategies in Hollywood Fiction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 202.
 41. Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken, 1976), 110.
 42. E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1927), 67, 69.
 43. That Keiko and Mariko merge into one at the concluding paragraphs of *Pale* suggests the inconsistency of Etsuko's disclosure: Sachiko may very well be an imaginary figure through which Etsuko circuitously discloses her ineffable past. See Wood 181; Brian W. Shaffer, *Understanding Kazuo Ishiguro* (Columbia, SC: University of South Columbia Press, 1998), 24; Mike Petry, *Narratives of Memory and Identity: The Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1999), 55-57; Lewis, *Kazuo Ishiguro*, 34-36; Cynthia F. Wong, *Kazuo Ishiguro* (Devon: Northcote, 2000), 28-32.
 44. *Artist*, 13.
 45. Gregory Mason, "Inspiring Images: The Influence of the Japanese Cinema on the Writings of Kazuo Ishiguro" (*East-West Film Journal* 3.2, 1989), 40.
 46. *Ibid.*, 41-43.
 47. P. G. Wodehouse has published a series of Jeeves novels, revolving around the various adventures the quick-witted butler takes with his less intelligent master Bertie Wooster. They include *The Inimitable Jeeves*, *Carry On*, *Jeeves*, *Very Good Jeeves*, and so forth.
 48. Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (London: Penguin, 1992), 244.
 49. Joyce Carol Oates, "The Serpent's Heart" (*Times Literary Supplement*, London, 31 March 2000), 21-22.
 50. W. H. Auden holds that the concept of Christianity operates in the mechanism of chaos and exorcism in crime fiction and characterises the generic formula as "the miraculous intervention of a genius from outside who removes guilt by giving knowledge of the guilty." Quoted Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction 1800-2000: Detection, Death, Diversity* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 107.

51. Alden Mudge, "Ishiguro takes a literary approach to the detective novel," *First Person Book Page*, 2000, screen 1; (http://www.bookpage.com/0009bp/kazuo_ishiguro.htm).
52. James Procter, "Kazuo Ishiguro" (*British Council*: screen 4; <http://www.contemporarywriters.com/authors/?p=auth52&state=index%3Di>).
53. Brian Finney, "Figuring the Real: Ishiguro's *When We Were Orphans*" (*Jouvert* 7.1, 2002, par. 12, <http://social.chass.ncsu.edu/jouvert/v7is1/ishigu.htm>).
54. Wai-chew Sim, "Kazuo Ishiguro" (*Review of Contemporary Fiction* 25.1, 2005), 108.
55. Vincent B. Leitch, *Cultural Criticism, Literary Theory, Poststructuralism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 81.
56. Walkowitz, 1052.
57. Michael Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), xi.
58. Set during China's civil contentions, *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* tells the story of a missionary, Megan Davis, who travels from New England to Shanghai. In Shanghai she is captured by General Yen, a Chinese warlord she later falls in love with. The backdrop and storyline of *Orphans* bear a noticeable resemblance: Banks's mother, a moralistic Caucasian advocating the anti-opium cause, likewise falls into the warlord Wang Ku's hands and becomes one of his concubines.