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Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers, Vol. 14 (3)

<https://jett.labosfor.com/>

Date of reception: 20 Feb 2023

Date of revision: 10 Mar 2023

Date of acceptance: 02 Apr 2023

Sripriya M R, Dr T. Ramakrishnan (2023). Traumatic Experiences: Doldrums and Anguish in the Select Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro. *Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers*, Vol. 14(3). 206-209.

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ABSTRACT

The paper mainly aims to explore the traumatic experiences including pains, pangs of suffering, loss, and anguish of the protagonists' past lives in Kazuo Ishiguro's novels *The Remains of the Day*, *Never Let Me Go*, and *The Unconsoled*. Though they recollect their memories, they do not narrate them directly in the novels. The objective of the paper is to bring out how each protagonist uncovers their own traumatic experiences slowly through other characters in the novel is explained. The paper also examines the representations of emotions in the notions of nostalgia, narrative, and trauma as how the protagonists of each novel suppressed their emotions for so long in their life and why did they do that is mentioned. Ishiguro's characters in the novels have projected different aspects of human life. Mainly the existence of suffering is examined from the existentialist point of view with the purpose to accept whatever happened in the character's life as it is without complaining about them.

Keywords: memory, pain, loss, trauma, suppression of emotions

INTRODUCTION

"There are wounds that never show on the body that are deeper and more hurtful than anything that bleeds."-
Laurell K. Hamilton.

Kazuo Ishiguro has written eight novels in different genres. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2017. His novels of great emotional force have uncovered the abyss beneath our illusory sense of connection with the world. His novels are far from monothematic. Mostly, Ishiguro's narrators are preoccupied with the memory of their past life and they have the potential to digress, distort, forget, be unreliable narrators and above all they haunt the readers in almost all his novels. Usually, the first-person narrator and the protagonist of all the novels are the same. They revisit their past life to forget their traumas. The protagonists try to overcome their loss, guilt, regret, etc by making sense of their past by revisiting their memory and shaping their life by identifying themselves to move on. The deepest emotions of pain divide their past and present life. Ishiguro says about his interest in the predominant theme of memory he applied almost in all his novels,

I've always been interested in memory because it's the filter through which we read our past. It's always tinted – with self-deception, guilt, pride, nostalgia, whatever. I find memory endlessly fascinating, not so much from a neurological or philosophical viewpoint, but as this tool by which people tell themselves things about the lives they've led and about whom they've become. ("Conversation about WWWO"1)

In 1990s, Trauma studies were first developed and depended on Freudian Theory later it further progressed. It indicates extreme pain, suffering, and loss of unrepresentable in one's life. Freud explains theories on traumatic experience and memory as the psychological concepts that represent and guides the field. The term trauma itself is a literary tool that could be used as a fragmented narrative voice, the idea of haunting, repetition and as allusion. Here, Kazuo Ishiguro used a fragmented narrative voice as the concept of haunting the readers from the characters' experiences. Usually, it is from the remembrance of our past of repressed emotions and experiences. Such aspects are present in Ishiguro's novels. He presents the characters' traumatic emotions and painful experiences in all his novels.

The Remains of the Day

James Stevens is the protagonist of the novel, *The Remains of the Day* when he recalls the life that he has lost so far, he could find those losses are irrevocable. He dedicated his whole life for the sake of his previous employer, Lord Darlington at Lord Darlington Hall. Stevens's father, Mr William Stevens too dedicated his life for the sake of his profession till he dies. Even when his father dead Stevens was not able to find time to express his emotions towards his dead father due to an important conference taking place in 1923 at Darlington Hall with participants from all over Europe and the United States. When staff members came to update him about his father's death he reacted like a machine without any expression. He felt he must be true to his role as a perfect

butler even while his father died, he concentrated on the French gentleman, Dupont in the smoking room who was suffering from sore feet. The footman felt relieved after Steven's care whereas for him it is suppressed grief in such a moment. He attempted to conceal his rush of emotions which is hard still he preferred his profession. Stevens lost his possible love with Miss Kenton, who is a former head housekeeper at Darlington Hall. It is she who identified that his father cannot do his major duties due to his age and health condition. Though Stevens offended her, she was the one who was always there and even when his father lies dying as his substitute and as a family member. She is the only person who can provide him with this much love. She had even given him the last chance to stop her marriage with Mr Benn. She shows her frustrations while she talks to him, 'You probably have no idea, Mr. Stevens,' she said eventually, 'how seriously I really thought of leaving this house. (...) I did tell myself, of course, I would soon find myself some new situation. But I was so frightened, Mr. Stevens. Whenever I thought of leaving, I just saw myself going out there and finding nobody who knew or cared about me. There, that's all my high principles amount to. I feel so ashamed of myself. But I just couldn't leave. Stevens, I just couldn't bring myself to leave.' (Ishiguro 161)

He did not utilise even that one last opportunity well to express his feelings towards her. They both left and moved on with their own life as it is. After twenty-year by knowing she is not happy with her husband, he felt to confess his love for her. He planned to meet her and bring her back to Darlington Hall. But the spirit has gone out of her. She mentioned she is soon going to be a grandmother to her daughter's child. Miss Kenton realised that though she cannot love her husband, he has always been there for her, making her decision to continue living with her husband for the rest of her life. Finally, Stevens felt it is too late to feel so and he returns to fulfil what remains of the day full of doldrums.

Dignity and loyalty signify Stevens as both a narrator and a character in the novel. He regrets being so loyal by suppressing all his emotions for his professional excellence to Lord Darlington, former employer because he was a Nazi sympathiser. He accepts by understanding his life and letting it happen naturally in life.

Never Let Me Go

It raises the question of humanity in the life of human clones. The novel is considered a speculative memoir or narrative trauma or post-human novel. The novel revolves around the tension of post-humans, especially the clones that are obediently grown and harvested for the sake of transplanting their organs for human beings. The places mentioned in the novel are remote and rural especially artificially constructed that would be seen through the posthuman lens. Clones' emotions could be seen through a humanist lens. Ishiguro carefully crafted the situations, and places and highlighted memory throughout the novel.

These clones were created as they could provide their organs and they can be replaced in human beings. They even are not aware of their origins from where they come from. They know nothing about themselves. Clones are raised in an international boarding school, Hailsham. They must ensure they maintain good health, not smoke cigars, and provide quality organ donations until they complete and express their humanity through art to prove to the world clones have emotions. They have grown under constant surveillance of their guardians who are their teachers as well. The guardians have a panoptic view towards their students until they leave Hailsham school. Kathy says,

I don't know how it was where you were, but at Hailsham, the guardians were really strict about smoking. I'm sure they'd have preferred it if we never found out smoking even existed; but since this wasn't possible, they made sure to give us some sort of lecture each time any reference to cigarettes came along. ... And then there were the actual lessons where they showed us horrible pictures of what smoking did to the insides of your body. ... Miss Lucy said, 'You've been told about it. You're students. You're ... special. So keeping yourselves well, keeping yourselves very healthy inside, that's much more important for each of you than it is for me.'

She stopped again and looked at us in a strange way. (Ishiguro 67,68)

These clones do not have a clear idea about the real outside world. Once clones come out of Hailsham to cottages they are not controlled by panopticon surveillance all of a sudden. Kathy H, the posthuman narrator and her friends, Ruth and Tommy even went to visit Norfolk, they have a myth that they could get what they lost could be found here, they mimic the human characters from a television show, and they are tried to search for their possible. There is the complexity of identity is shown throughout the novel faced by these clones. From Hailsham to they move to cottages and from there to adulthood clones move to the circuit of care facilities as carers or donors.

Kathy reflects on her life with what she remembers. When the clones were students, they were unaware of their destiny and even unaware that they are clones. The narrator provides her memory with an unreliable version of Clone's past incidents. They are fragmented views of post-human society. She just reflects only on what she remembers. She even admits it is incomplete and unreliable. Kathy treasured her childhood friendship, young love, and even broken friendship. Only memories are real possessions and not even their physical bodies.

The Unconsoled

Ryder, a well-known pianist, is the protagonist who achieved fame and popularity around the world in the novel. Throughout the novel, he loses his memory even though he forgets his wife Sophie and son Boris by being a

workaholic. Through his unconscious narration, he gradually remembers his childhood experiences with chaos. He does not have a good bonding with his parents as he recalls. His parents were harsh on him, which led him to hate them. This horror created a great impact on his childhood. Due to these critical circumstances, he forced himself to stay away from his family. He tries to narrate his stories just to escape from those unforgettable pains that dwell deep down in his heart. While narrating bitter experiences of the past he shares about other characters such as Sophie, Boris, Hoffman, and Stephen's traumatic experiences too. Through other stories, he unconsciously uncovers his emotions slowly by trying to escape from those unforgettable pains in the novel. By recollecting his past life, he understands himself clearly about his parents, his childhood, and his young age.

Like Ryder, his son Boris too has a painful childhood. There is constant confusion and pain in Boris' parents' life. He never received care, affection, or proper communication from his father and mother – Ryder and Sophie. It caused hatred in him for his loveless parents. Ryder would be busy with his work. Sophie usually shows her anger towards Boris due to her unhealthy relationship (fights) with her husband. They both shout out loud even at late night. They have never attempted to console their son but disappointed many times. Ryder's regular absence in Boris' life has left him desperate and tortured. Boris has a chance to escape from his cruel parents who behave violently towards him, the only way to get rid of reality is through his imagination and fantasy. As how Boris longs for his parent's love, Sophie longs for her husband's love and care. Sophie in rage says, 'No, it's useless. Leave him be, Boris. Let him go around the world, giving out his expertise and wisdom. Let's just leave him to it now.' ... 'He'll never be one of us. You've got to understand that, Boris. He'll never love you like a real father.' (Ishiguro 532)

Stephen, another important character in the novel, suffered like Boris and Ryder without proper familial care and support. His father is a hotel manager and his mother respects and appreciates arts talents. His parents abused him so Stephen does not show any interest to spend his time with his cruel parents. Though his mother owes arts talents she never appreciated his efforts of becoming a great pianist. She does not even encourage or motivated him to pursue his passion for playing the Piano. His parents doubted and never trusted his artistic talents. That tore him apart mentally. Even the relationship between his parents is not on good terms.

CONCLUSION

Life's biggest challenges are coping with such emotions, as pain, loss, suffering, memory, regret, trauma, guilt, and death. These elements are present in almost all his novels. These elements are parts and parcels of human life and it is inseparable from the human being. But how one handles such a situation matters. Inevitably, the healing process takes time and, in some cases, is irreparable. It is hard to digest and accept such incidents in life. Ishiguro mentions not directly but almost in all his novels about various aspects of how to deal with such hardest emotions through his characters. All these protagonists have undergone an identity crisis as a consequence of the flawed choices of decisions and actions taken in their life. Though they underwent tough times in their life they never complain or get stagnated in their life. Ishiguro's characters look back to forget those painful moments. It helped them to move forward optimistically in their life.

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