

Mono No Aware in Kazuo Ishiguro' s A Pale Wew of Hills

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Introduction

Kazuo Ishiguro was born as the first son of the Ishiguro's on November 8, 1954 in Nagasaki, Japan. When Ishiguro was five years old, the family moved to England due to his father's job as an oceanographer. Ishiguro debuted in 1982 with *A Pale View of Hills*. This is a novel based on the protagonist Etsuko's, memories of one summer she spent with her friend[Sachiko] and her daughter[Mariko] in Nagasaki after the war. Etsuko narrates at present in the first-person about stories of Nagasaki, in a country house in England where she lives alone now. Ishiguro won the Winifred Holtby Prize of the Royal Society of Literature with this novel. Because of Ishiguro's name and appearance, many Western critics at first praised him as a "Japanese writer" or cast light on his "Japanese-ness" in his novels. However, he confesses that he is illiterate in Japanese language; he cannot speak, write, or read in Japanese. Ishiguro comments in the interview with Masayuki Ikeda, "I think British tend to think of Japanese culture as mysterious, and the Japanese spirit is difficult to comprehend. British want to think that Japanese think differently than they." (my translation) Ishiguro never hesitates to criticize British critics' ignorance.

As a result, few scholars consider him as Japanese these days. Even though he has been widely admitted as a British writer, there are still many people who see the pathos which lingers beneath Ishiguro's novels relating to his experience of separation with his grandparents and friends, especially with his grandfather's death in his childhood days. A conspicuous example is that many non-native Japanese scholars tend to use *mono no aware* or *yugen* to describe Ishiguro's Japanese aesthetic beauty or sadness, particularly in his first two novels that are set in Japan. However, these terms are very abstract, trite, and stereotypical. It is difficult to grasp the true meaning of those terms even for Japanese; therefore, I would like to focus on the term *mono no aware* and see if it really exists in Ishiguro's novels.

Ishiguro admits that he has read Soseki Natsume, Yasunari Kawabata, Masuji Ibuse, Junichiro Tanizaki, etc. in translation. (Ikeda 136) Among them, Taketomi mentions Ishiguro was influenced by Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain*.¹ Hirakawa states that *The Sound of the Mountain* is the typical and rare Japanese literature piece that displays *mono no aware*. (204) In Chapter One, I would like to clarify how scholars from overseas comprehend *mono no aware* and how they use the

term when they theorize about Ishiguro's works. By analyzing the scenes they use in Ishiguro's novels, I believe I can unveil the true nature of the problem. In addition, I would like to investigate the reason why many scholars tend to use *mono no aware*, *yugen* or *haiku* with Ishiguro's novels. In Chapter Two, I would like to compare *The Sound of the Mountain* (translated by E. Seidensticker) to *A Pale View of Hills* from the *mono no aware* point of view and see if *mono no aware* really exists in Ishiguro's works. If it does, I would like to confirm which part of his work contains it in detail. If not, I would like to unmask the pathos that lingers beneath Ishiguro's works.

1. How scholars from overseas interpret *mono no aware*

It seems that non-Japanese scholars who study Ishiguro's works use the term *mono no aware* to theorize about a Japanese aesthetic sensitivity to something transient. I presume Mason started to use this term in his paper to describe the atmosphere fraught with sadness in Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*, and many scholars followed his example. Mason explains *mono no aware* as follows:

An elegiac mood often prevails in the *shomin-geki*, and certain images recur characteristically. Passing trains conjure a sense of dislocation and longing. This exoticism is offset, in turn, by an equally powerful domestic image on the landscape. Kathe Geist (1983-84, 6) has noted that "laundry hanging out to dry ... occurs in almost every Ozu film." These clothes drying everywhere epitomize the stubbornly prevailing continuity of everyday life. [...] The objects appear almost timeless, and yet are fraught with a transience, a mood summoned by the Japanese term, *mono no aware*. This term, often translated as "the sadness of things" or "sensitivity to things," (47)

It is interesting to see that Mason points out the domestic image; such as, clothes hanging out to dry as a transient quality, a mood of *mono no aware*. I assume that Mason wants to say that these familiar domestic scenes comfort us, it seems to continue forever, and we never doubt that it will be taken away. But the happiness symbolized by these images could be deceptive as well. As in Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*, Etsuko, Keiko, Sachiko, Mariko, and Mrs. Fujiwara's lives changed instantly in the war. Matthew Beedham also sees the image of everyday life as transient:

The characteristics of the domestic genre are certainly present in these first two novels [*A Pale View of Hills* and *An Artist of the Floating World*] in the form of 'the

classic *shomingeki* domestic configuration of conflict between parents and children in an extended family setting with certain comic overtones.’ Specifically, Mason notes the predecessor to the ‘boisterous, sometimes disrespectful’ Mariko in Ozu’s *Good Morning* (1959); the tender relationship between Ogata and Etsuko [...] in Ozu’s *Tokyo Story* (1953); and the visit of Jiro’s drunken colleagues and the scenes set in the noodle shop are similar to scenes in his *Early Spring* (1956). Such scenes generate the mood and images of the *shomin-geki*, an ambience aptly described by the Japanese phrase, *mono no aware* (‘the sadness of things’). It is a mood present in many Japanese films, especially Ozu’s, and Mason finds evidence of it in Ishiguro’s work and his take on the past. (8-9)

We can see that Beedham grasps *mono no aware* as the domestic mood and images in the *shomin geki* movies directed by Yasujiro Ozu. At first, I wondered why Mason and Beedham see the ambience of *shomin geki* as *mono no aware*. What kind of “ambience” or “mood” do they have in mind? All the scenes Beedham mentions above, such as conflict between a child and parents and a husband who comes home with drunken colleagues and his wife gets upset are ordinary scenes and nothing special for Japanese viewers. Ishiguro inserted similar scenes in *A Pale View of Hills* as Beedham mentions. It is interesting to see that Mason and Beedham are actually feeling the “sadness of things” in those domestic images. Cynthia F. Wong states her own view by quoting Mason’s interpretation of *mono no aware*:

The calm tone she[Etsuko] has used throughout begins to show through, and the reader realizes that Etsuko may be suppressing or hiding from the painful facts of that period. Her narrative only appears lucidly constructed, despite her own misgivings about a flawed memory, but it is riddled with evasions of more painful truths about her life and her daughter’s death. Apparitions haunt her memories and suggest an unsettled atmosphere. [...]

Gregory Mason identifies Ishiguro’s portrayal of Etsuko’s emotional state as an expression of what the Japanese call *mono no aware*, a term that roughly translates into ‘the sadness of things’ or ‘sensitivity to things.’ Memory of the dead, for instance, is tied to an awareness of life’s ephemeral or transient qualities. As an attribute of her narrative, *mono no aware* also describes Etsuko’s awareness of what is real in terms of her feelings and what in relation to historical or objective reality. (29)

Wong focuses on Etsuko's emotional state. It seems that Wong is feeling some transient qualities in Etsuko's discursive and alluding recollection of memories which generate an unsettled atmosphere. Barry Lewis makes mention of "The Floating World, or *ukiyo*, a Buddhist term that denotes the transience of all things." (55) and Nicola Glaubitz extends Lewis's quote by adding the idea of the aesthetic ephemeral atmosphere as *mono no aware* and *yugen* as follows:

Moriyama's celebration of the ephemeral beauty and the passing moments of melancholy he finds in the actors' lives and performances read like a continuation of central ideas of Edo aesthetics. [...] Japanese aesthetic terminology describes moods and situations rather than objects and forms, for example *mono no aware*, standing for the transience and 'pathos' of things, or *yugen*, standing for the impression of profundity and mystery (Parkes 2005, Odin 3F. and passim). (177-178)

Yugen is also used frequently when theorizing about Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*; however, as Shigeru Taniyama explains, "*yugen* stems from Kan Language (Chinese expression)." (33; my translation) The term *yugen* was first used in Japan "in the year 822 by Dencho Daishi (better known as Saicho) in 'Isshin Kongo Kai Tai Ketsu' of *Toku Sho-ho Yugen No Sho, Sho Kongo Fue No Kai*." (Taniyama 47; my translation) Taniyama also defines *yugen* as follows:

Yugen was first associated with *waka* in *Collected Japanese Poems of Ancient and Modern Times* ("*Kokin Wakashu*") and Fujiwara no Mototoshi introduced it as a standard taste for poetry. It was passed down to Fujiwara no Toshinari and his son Sadaie, and between the Kamakura Era and Muromachi, *yugen* was linked with amorousness and faithfulness. Let alone in all the artistic fields, it has developed into a direct spiritual meaning for human justice; therefore, *yugen* now indubitably has come to display the Japanese spirit. (2; my translation)

According to Sadami Suzuki and Shigeki Iwai, *yugen* "started to contain gracefulness, elegance, tenderness, voluptuousness, and efflorescence around the medieval period. Also, *yugen* started to expand its meaning from the field of poetry to the mind of Buddhism and is a mix of artistic sensitivity (gracefulness, elegance, tenderness, voluptuousness, and efflorescence)." (33; my translation) From all these statements, it seems that the description of *yugen* does not fit to describe Ishiguro's novels.

It is true that many scholars like Geoff Dyer and Gabriele Annan often used Japanese watercolor or Japanese paintings to express Japanese beauty in Ishiguro's novels. It seems to me that they used those terms because Ishiguro's early novels were exotic, mystical, and filled with regret and nostalgia. However, it is hard to grasp from the scholars' quotes which areas exactly are like watercolor or Japanese paintings and what exactly is *yugen*. I think these terms themselves have exotic factors and produce a Japanese atmosphere and give a Japanese impression, so they were very convenient for foreign critics to use. In addition, *yugen* and *mono no aware* are very ambiguous and abstract, so after considering how to describe this incomprehensible aesthetic beauty for a long time, they might have ended up using these terms which are used to describe Noh plays. Lewis tries to analyze Ishiguro's Japanese-ness from various angles. For example, Lewis says, "*A Pale View of Hills* is full of silences, omissions and apertures. It is as if the text adheres to the prescription for *haiku* poetry, where the shard is greater than the whole. What is left out is as important as what is kept in." (36) The most interesting point is that Lewis picks a scene in *A Pale View of Hills*'s Chapter Seven where Etsuko, Sachiko, and Mariko go to an outside stall to draw a winning ticket for a basket and says it is a "touching scene" as follows:

Mariko has her eye on a basket to house her kittens, but after several attempts only succeeds in winning a wooden box, which she decides will serve the same purpose. It is a touching scene, evocative of a way of life fast disappearing under the post-war onslaught of American colonization. *A Pale View of Hills* reinforces this sense of historical change through several telling details. Mrs Fujiwara—a wealthy woman before the war reduced to being a humble noodle-shop owner after it... [...] Materialism is rampant, and Sachiko is one such young woman who would gladly forsake traditional Japanese customs for a slice of the American pie. Domestic appliances and modish clothes are tokens of a consumerist dream infinitely preferable to the depleted economy of Japan in the 1950s. (22)

Why does Lewis think the scene is "touching"? I assume that the scenes: after the darkness falls and streetlights and lanterns start to light up, people near the harbor carrying shoulder baskets filled with freshly caught fish or street stalls, including *kujibiki* stands, getting crowded with vigorous passersby, et cetera, evoked a certain exoticism for Lewis. And yet, Lewis might have thought that the scenes recall childhood nostalgia to Japanese. However, for Japanese, these scenes are familiar and definitely not "touching." These interpretation differences sometimes occur when stating foreign

culture or tradition. The phenomenon that might seem exotic to foreigners' eyes does not seem so to Japanese.

From the non-Japanese scholars' understanding, it seems to me that the transient atmosphere, *mono no aware*, felt through Japanese movies or Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*, is strongly linked to a sense of nostalgia. The nostalgia for traditional things or thoughts passed down for generations disappeared when American culture and products began to be imported into Japan and modernized materials and thoughts took over long-standing daily traditional Japanese things.

2. Comparing *A Pale View of Hills* to Kawabata Yasunari's *The Sound of the Mountain*

2-1. *Mono no aware* in Kawabata Yasunari's *The Sound of the Mountain*

According to Sukehiro Hirakawa, Yasunari Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain* "contains numerous *mono no aware* which is rare in Japanese modern literature." (204; my translation) Hirakawa also explains *mono no aware* as follows: "*mono no aware* is a feeling which is brought about by nature and in *Dai Gen Kai* [Japanese dictionary] it says, 'It is a scene of nature that evokes sorrow at heart and brings profound thoughts.'" (204; my translation) Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain* has much *mono no aware*. There are many natural scenes that display human emotions and psychological state. Hirakawa says that this aesthetic sense in *The Sound of the Mountain* is particularly difficult for Western readers to comprehend and is not thoroughly understood. (205; my translation) As mentioned earlier in Mason's quote, *mono no aware* was coined by Norinaga Motoori (1730-1801) to describe the dominant mood in Lady Murasaki's eleventh-century novel, *The Tale of Genji* (de Bary 1958, 172-173). It is a collaboration of natural scenes and the human mind that calls profound vision and thoughts to the readers. I think this works on the Japanese sense of beauty that has been passed down from generation to generation. *The Sound of the Mountain* has a lot of scenes with creatures and plants in nature that give an account of a character's emotional state. In the following scene, Shingo Ogata gazes at the night sky; the motion of the moon and clouds display *mono no aware*:

[...] the clouds, and the moon too, were cold and faintly white. Shingo felt autumn come over him. [...] In a single night after the storm the sky had turned a deep black. [...] Shingo felt a lonely chill pass over him, and a yearning for human warmth. (52)

The white dimmed moon and clouds draw sentimental feelings. Shingo feels lonely and

yearns for company. Reflecting Shingo's emotional state in the moon and clouds is a typical stage effect of *mono no aware*. *Mono no aware* is the aesthetic sense or feeling that readers sympathize with the protagonist's emotion through natural scenes. It is a similar interpretation method used when reading *waka* or *tanka*.

In Chapter One of *The Sound of the Mountain*, the protagonist, Shingo feels he is aging because he forgets things easily and fears death approaching. One night, he cannot sleep and opens the shutter. He hears a screeching of insects from his garden. Then, "A locust flew in and lit on the skirt of the mosquito net. It made no sound as he picked it up. 'A mute.' It would not be one of the locusts he had heard at the tree. [...] he released it." (7) The locust that Shingo released was old, close to its death, unlike the ones making noise in the garden. It mistakenly flew in, lead by light, and landed on the mosquito net. In this scene, we can read that the locust is a metaphor of Shingo. It is old and wandered into a wrong place. Soon after that Shingo hears "the sound of the mountain" which is the title of this novel:

Not a leaf on the fern by the veranda was stirring. In these mountain recesses of Kamakura the sea could sometimes be heard at night. Shingo wondered if he might have heard the sound of the sea. But no—it was the mountain. [...] A chill passed over him, as if he had been notified that death was approaching. (8)

In previous studies of *The Sound of the Mountain*, this sound of the mountain is interpreted as "death notification." (Tsuruta 17; my translation) In Japan, a locust is known for its short life and is a metaphor of "transient life." The mute locust and the sound of the mountain project Shingo's fear of death, and Shingo projected himself onto the mute locust, and this event of nature draws *mono no aware* to the readers.

The next scene is a good example of arousing complicated *mono no aware* to the readers who read the scene of nature. It is the scene where the protagonist, Shingo watches sunflowers in the neighborhood's garden and he thinks as follows: "The power of nature within them made him think of a giant symbol of masculinity." (26) However, at the same time, the readers feel Shingo's vitality is deteriorating and his youth is disappearing. Before the sunflower scene, readers are reminded that Shingo is consciously aware of his old age, so in this scene, the sunflower works as stimulant and displays Shingo's weak vital signs by contrast and indirectly induces a feeling of evanesce and transience, *mono no aware*.

In the beginning of Chapter Four, Kikuko, tells her father-in-law, Shingo, that "The ginkgo is sending out shoots again, [...]" (53) Then Shingo feels a little

disappointed and says, “You’ve only just noticed? [...] I’ve been watching it for some time now.” (53) Shingo always paid attention to the changes of plants in the garden. Shingo noticed the shoots on the gingko some time ago, and he thought Kikuko had noticed them as well. However, with her comment, Shingo realized that he was the only one enjoying them furtively and Kikuko was not. It was merely his fantasy of her that made him think she had noticed the shoots too, and he feels “a touch of sadness.” (54) We can read that the shoots on the gingko tree is a metaphor of Shingo’s vigorous affection towards young Kikuko. The shoots on the gingko tree are obviously unseasonable, and they can be interpreted as appearance of Shingo’s erroneous love. Shingo never confesses his feelings to anyone, even to the readers, but readers can perceive Shingo’s feelings from these scenes. This is another sample that evokes complicated human’s psychological state, *mono no aware*, that corresponds to the change in nature. In *The Sound of the Mountain*, we can observe more scenes beside the above one, which link feelings and nature.

2-2. *Mono no aware* in Ishiguro’s *A Pale View of Hills*

In Ishiguro’s *A Pale View of Hills*, there are also scenes that include nature and insects. The most impressive landscape in *A Pale View of Hills* can be a scene with the river or mountains seen in a distance. This is a scene in Chapter One when Etsuko is looking out at a river from her apartment window:

One wooden cottage had survived both the devastation of the war and the government bulldozers. I could see it from our window, standing alone at the end of that expanse of wasteground, practically on the edge of the river. It was the kind of cottage often seen in the countryside, with a tiled roof sloping almost to the ground. Often, during my empty moments, I would stand at my window gazing at it. (12)

This is a scene where Etsuko reminisces about one wooden house remaining near the construction site of an apartment complex (*danchi*) after the A-bomb devastated Nagasaki. In this paragraph, you will see phrases like, “One wooden cottage,” “survived,” “devastation of the war,” “standing alone,” “expanse of wasteground,” “empty moments” that remind us of the scars left by the war. Further, Etsuko spending time “alone,” vacantly in the apartment is overlapped with the wooden house standing “alone” near the river. However, this is just explaining the situation and not the “scene of nature that evokes sorrow at heart and brings profound thoughts” as we confirmed in

The Sound of the Mountain. Although some Japanese scholars point out that *The Sound of the Mountain* was influential to Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*, in my opinion, *A Pale View of Hills* does not contain *mono no aware*.

The beginning of Chapter Two of *A Pale View of Hills* starts with Etsuko explaining the landscape of Nakagawa district as follows:

In those days, returning to the Nakagawa district still provoked in me mixed emotions of sadness and pleasure. It is a hilly area, and climbing again those steep narrow streets between the clusters of houses never failed to fill me with a deep sense of loss though not a place I visited on casual impulse, I was unable to stay away for long. (23)

Here we can also see Etsuko giving vent to her ambiguous feelings; such as, mixed emotions of sadness, a deep sense of loss, and pleasure that arise from sadness of losing someone she loved in the war and nostalgia from her memories. In addition, we can read that Etsuko, who carries intricate emotions, is having a hard time forgetting her hometown in the sentence, "I was unable to stay away for long." Etsuko talks of hazy memories about pitiful devastated Nagasaki and the people who carry emptiness in their hearts after the war in a calm first narrator style. Moreover, when Etsuko recalls the view of Nagasaki, she inserts the river, damp wasteground, and insects as follows:

As the summer grew hotter, the stretch of wasteground outside our apartment block became increasingly unpleasant. Much of the earth lay dried and cracked, while water which had accumulated during the rainy season remained in the deeper ditches and craters. The ground bred all manner of insects, and the mosquitoes in particular seemed everywhere. [...] I crossed that ground regularly that summer to reach Sachiko's cottage, and indeed it was a loathsome journey; insects often caught in one's hair, and there were grubs and midges visible amidst the cracked surface. (99)

The insects drawn in this scene are noxious insects; such as, mosquitoes, grubs, or gnats. In addition to the harmful insects, by writing about unpleasant Japanese summer of high humidity and unarranged unsanitary land conditions Etsuko readily gives us an image of devastated Nagasaki after the war.

One last scene I would like to pick out is the end of Chapter Ten, the climax of *A Pale View of Hills*. Etsuko goes out in the dark looking for Mariko along a bank of a

river. In this scene, Etsuko gazes at the night sky analogous to Shingo in *The Sound of the Mountain*. I would like to consider if there is any element of *mono no aware* in this scene.

Insects followed my lantern as I made my way along the river. Occasionally, some creature would become trapped inside, and I would then have to stop and hold the lantern still until it had found its way out.

In time, the small wooden bridge appeared on the bank ahead of me. While crossing it, I stopped for a moment to gaze at the evening sky. As I recall, a strange sense of tranquility came over me there on that bridge. I stood there for some minutes, leaning over the rail, listening to the sounds of the river below me. When finally I turned, I saw my own shadow, cast by the lantern, thrown across the wooden slats of the bridge. (172)

The landscape near the water in Nagasaki has an eerie image that recalls Japanese ghost stories. The image includes rivers that were filled with the victims after the A-bomb strike in Nagasaki as well. Further, this river can be interpreted as *Sanzu no Kawa*², but the way Etsuko's shadow is described above, it seems to have more of a Western gothic image. Typically, a ghost appears under a willow tree or in the darkness in Japanese ghost stories, but Etsuko's shadow cast by the lantern is symbolic and reminds us of Death. In this scene, Etsuko is looking for Sachiko's daughter, Mariko; however, it is apparent that Etsuko is thinking about her own daughter, Keiko, when using the character of Mariko. When Etsuko finally finds Mariko, she mixes up a pronoun saying, "if you don't like it over there, we'll come straight back." (173) If Etsuko's memory were correct, she would use "you" instead of "we." Etsuko feels responsible for Keiko's death, driving Keiko away to commit suicide, so Etsuko could be drawing herself as Death in this scene.

As comparing scenes in *The Sound of the Mountain* and *A Pale View of Hills*, it is clear that *A Pale View of Hills* does not have equivalent elements of *mono no aware* as *The Sound of the Mountain* has. We all tend to think an ordinary life will continue forever just like we see in Ozu films, but it can disappear instantaneously, and many scholars could be feeling some transient factors or pathos in it.

2-3. Image of loss in *A Pale View of Hills*

In the beginning of *A Pale View of Hills*, Etsuko mentions the loss of her daughter who killed herself by hanging in an apartment in Manchester. Etsuko then talks about

a mother and a daughter, Sachiko and Mariko, who she met one summer in Nagasaki. She uses their story to tell her own story in a roundabout way. Readers do not know what her real story is and what is not, but can discern Etsuko's feelings when she sometimes mixes up memories or pronouns in some parts of the novel. I would like to give one example in Chapter Six. There is a scene where Etsuko returns to Sachiko's home and sees Sachiko scolding Mariko. Then Mariko suddenly runs out of the house.

For some time, Sachiko continued to stare at the teapot. Then she sighed and got to her feet. She went over to the window and peered out into the darkness.

"Should we go and look for her now?" I said.

"No," Sachiko said, still looking out. "She'll be back soon. Let her stay out if that's what she wants."

I feel only regret now for those attitudes I displayed towards Keiko. In this country [England], after all, it is not unexpected that a young woman of that age should wish to leave home (87-88; my emphasis).

Here, Sachiko is saying, "She'll be back soon. Let her stay out if that's what she wants" and we all know that she refers to "Mariko"; however, like in my emphasis, Etsuko suddenly refers to "Keiko." From this story, readers are reminded that Etsuko's mind is always occupied with her beloved daughter, Keiko. She is talking about Sachiko and Mariko but the story is switched from their story to her own unconsciously. It shows how intimately Etsuko is psychologically tied with Keiko and how strong Etsuko is guilt-ridden.

Before the war, Etsuko was living in a wealthy family. She enjoyed playing the violin and her mother spent time making water-color paintings. Etsuko lost her parents and her fiancé in the war, and soon after, she was taken along to Ogata's home. Ogata looks back and says, "You were very shocked, which was only to be expected. We were all shocked, those of us who were left." (58) to Etsuko. *A Pale View of Hills* contains a lot of female characters that strive to live sternly and try to make ways to better their lives in Nagasaki after the war. For example, Mrs. Fujiwara mentions a young lady who she sees every time she visits the cemetery. She thinks it's a shame to see a six or seven month pregnant lady spending her holiday thinking about the dead. However, Mrs. Fujiwara herself lost her family members in the war. Etsuko describes Mrs. Fujiwara as follows: "She had five children. And her husband was an important man in Nagasaki. When the bomb fell, they all died except her eldest son." (111) Sachiko talks about her life before the war and says, "My father was a highly respected man, Etsuko. Highly

respected indeed. [...] He was abroad much of the time, in Europe and America. When I was young, I used to dream I'd go to America one day, that I'd go there and become a film actress." (109) All of them used to be living happily with their family members. However, the war instantly took everything away from them, including their fiancé, husband, and parents. When unveiling the sadness that lingers beneath *A Pale View of Hills*, we see "the image of loss." By drawing pathetic conditions and people who were forced to live miserable lives in Nagasaki after the war, the "loss" and people whose lives changed irrationally clearly stand out.

3. Conclusion

In this paper, I believe I was able to clarify some of the terms used to describe Ishiguro's novels, such as *mono no aware*, *yugen*, or *haiku* were inadequate. I think these terms themselves have exotic factors and produce a Japanese atmosphere and give a Japanese impression, so they were very convenient for foreign critics to use. I also compared Yasunari Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain* with *A Pale View of Hills* and analyzed if there were any *mono no aware* in *A Pale View of Hills*. As comparing scenes in *The Sound of the Mountain* and *A Pale View of Hills*, I come to a conclusion that *A Pale View of Hills* does not have equivalent elements of *mono no aware* as *the Sound of the Mountain* has. I pointed out that many non-Japanese scholars who consider pathos that lingers beneath Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* to be *mono no aware* is in fact sadness over loss of ordinary lives, tradition, or family members after the war. I also pointed out that there are scenes inserted to provoke an exotic quality in *A Pale View of Hills*, including the scene of the *kujibiki* stand.

Lastly, I would like to say that *A Pale View of Hills* contains stories of women whose destinies changed drastically in the war. These women's, including Etsuko's feelings of loss are consistently penetrated throughout *A Pale View of Hills*, and these "images of loss" certainly formulate Ishiguro's peerless pathos.

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¹ Refer to "Kazuo Ishiguro no *A Pale View of Hills* Ni Shimiiru *Yama No Oto (The Sound of the Mountain)* exudes in Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*," No. 99, *Nihon Hikaku Bunka Gakkai*, Nov. 2011, for more information.

² In Buddhism the river is called the River of the Three Hells; it is equivalent of the River Styx. Mariko frequently mentions a woman, who seems to be a ghost, who asks her to visit her on the other side of the river.