

The American as *Mono No Aware* in Kazuo Ishiguro's "Cellists"

Ferhan ÖZTÜRK¹

İstanbul Üniversitesi, TURKEY

Abstract

This paper sets out to study Kazuo Ishiguro's "Cellists" by shedding light on the Japanese concept of Mono No Aware and its textual implications for Tibor who is the main character of the short story. Being a traditional notion in Japanese traditional literary criticism Mono No Aware serves as a transience that has a potential of producing lifelong repercussions. In "Cellists" the primary agent to mediate this transience is the American character Eloise who through symbolizing certain stereotypes leads one to reflect on the dilemma of talent versus hard work. Furthermore, Ishiguro brilliantly touches upon the orphanhood of man when it comes to finding functional mentorship and emotional guidance in life. Thus, in his short story Kazuo Ishiguro underscores the importance of acting on one's talent by constructing characters who use music as a tool for deeper communication and self-construction against a background of Mono No Aware.

Keywords: Mono No Aware, American stereotype, talent, music, transience.

1. Introduction

Life has interesting twists and turns for human beings. There are moments of self-realization which help achieve one's deepest potential. On the other hand, there are instances of disappointment when one feels life is wasted by having irreversibly gone down the wrong road. It would not be wrong to say that this is actually an unavoidable existential dilemma. Therefore, the flawed nature of man has always constituted the essence of literature and psychology. Very few people are content with what life has given them and even more so with what they have been able to craft out of it. So it is with Tibor who happens to be the main character of "Cellists", a short story written by the 2017 Nobel Laureate Kazuo Ishiguro. Being notable for his novels Kazuo Ishiguro, the Japanese-born writer, is considered among England's most

¹ Corresponding author: ferhano@ogr.iu.edu.tr

distinguished contemporary novelists and was of lately awarded the Nobel prize for literature as well as the Booker and Costa Book of the Year prizes for his outstanding literary merits. Ishiguro left his homeland Japan at age six to move to England due to his father's job as an oceanographer. Although he received a typical English education from age six onwards he experienced cultural shocks that even to this day has lead him to consider and define himself much more as an international writer. K. Ishiguro is at present a well-established author best known for his highly esteemed novels (Shaffer, 1998: 1-2). The recurring themes and motifs that emerge in his writing has led at first many Western critics to define Ishiguro's style as Japanese, however, it is not a secret that Ishiguro describes himself as "illiterate in Japanese language" (Taketomi, 2014: v) and even takes one step further to state that "nobody's history seemed to be my history" (qtd.in Shaffer, 1998: 2). Ever since his early days when he was trying to establish himself as a writer, Ishiguro has been persistent in his international-ness to such an extent that at present he is not coined as a Japanese writer anymore. However, the pathos seems to many to be still looming in his wordy art. According to Taketomi, many critics continue to denote Ishiguro's writing as pertaining to *mono no aware* features, i.e the sadness inherent in things (vi). Even so, Taketomi claims that the sense of nostalgia present in Ishiguro's writing is, like with many other things, tainted with American-ness (x). An important denotive of such American-ness could be stated as variety and versatility which according to Haruki Murakami is already present in Ishiguro's work and which is the reason for his personal fondness of the writer's style. According to Murakami, Ishiguro's past, present and future work are all part of an "immense painting" taking shape as time unfolds (Matthews and Groes, 2010: vii-viii) and which stretch out to include screenplays and short-stories as well. As being one of these short stories this paper will mainly dwell on "Cellists", taken from **Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall** published in 2009, and study it in the light of the Japanese notion of *Mono No Aware*. This notion itself was brought forward in the ground-breaking work of the literary scholar Motoori Norinaga who was a key figure in bridging feudal and modern Japan around the 18th century. Norinaga's stance against Chinese impact on Japanese cultural life is visibly seen in his studies concerning the Japanese classics. During his studies Norinaga coined and underscored a concept called *Mono No Aware* which is basically the ability to see the true nature of things and develop empathy through its features (Kaya, 2020: 149-155). The emphasis is on the assumption that the goal of good literature should be to contain this feature. Furthermore, the wonder, awe and sadness that is seen to be lingering in the word 'aware' is claimed to be a universal phenomenon. Since 'aware' includes emotions, it is deemed highly that the confinement of these to the heart will actually amplify the amount of aware (Elwood, 1998: 110-112). Similarly, this paper also argues that this advice of restraining one's feelings is observed to be present in Kazuo Ishiguro's "Cellists". It is also suggested that the young man, namely Tibor, experiences such an 'aware' moment in his encounter with Eloise McCormack, the American female figure who acts as the enigmatic and elusive source of such 'aware'.

2. Art and Memory: A Guide to Emotional Discovery

Although Kazuo Ishiguro is well known for his novels he is also prolific in story writing, song writing and screenplay writing. His interest in music is evident in **Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall** which is likened by Matthews and Groes to “an album in which musical motifs and themes recur” (2010: 7). In this collection Ishiguro does not merely aim to write about musicians. According to him art in general and music in particular serve to connect human beings and act as a mediator of self-conception. Through art/music the characters in his stories contemplate on issues of personality, politics and morality (2010: 3-5). Interestingly, the relation of art and self-conception can also be likened to the relation between writer, text and reader (2010: 8). The muse that the writer’s verbal output incites in the reader through his/her text is one of novelty and imaginativeness. The reader is invited to explore new depths of the intellect and contemplate fresh ideas. On the other hand, memory is another area of the intellect that engages one’s past dealings. Memory is evidently vital and functional in Ishiguro’s work. In one of his interviews Ishiguro states that his interest in memory derives from the fact that “...it’s a filter through which we see our lives, and because it’s foggy and obscure, the opportunities for self-deception are there. In the end, as a writer, I’m more interested in what people tell themselves happened than in what actually happened” (qtd. in Rennison, 2004: 74). Ishiguro believes that our revisiting the past serves as a tool to balance our present notion of life. Through memory one is able to shed new light on past misdoings. However, Ishiguro also claims that although this useful tool is at present underutilized, one’s wilful act of intellectual return to the past can still serve as an “emotional consolation” (Teo, 2014: 7-8) and bring peace to the mind. Ishiguro’s deep interest in the “emotional arena” (Schaffer, 1998: 11) showcases his writerly interest in topics of cultural myths. Therefore, the functionality that music plays in “Cellists” leads the dual narrators’ memories to bring out the much regretted and emotionally painful past of Tibor who is a talented cello player looking for a breakthrough in his youthful years. Revisiting the past creates a *mono no aware* type of mindfulness for Tibor and incites him to come to terms with his present life albeit bitterly and tediously.

3. The Beauty of Transience: *Mono No Aware*

At this point it is necessary to return back to the concept of *mono no aware* which is a feature of Japanese aesthetic ideal and an Eastern concept rather than Western. It is Japanese in origin with the literal meaning of “the pathos of things”. Another definition would be “having empathy because of the transience of the world” (*What Are Examples of “Mono No Aware” in The Tale of Genji by Murasaki Shikibu?*, 2015). Although not exercised in modern day Japan, it was one of the most well-known concepts in traditional literary criticism (Yoda, 1999: 524). Since this ideal is somewhat elusive the following lines might provide a hint to the nature of this concept. Professor Imai states that:

mono no aware is about the hidden corners of things, the deeper meanings, ... A *mono no aware* event is not sentimental or symbolic, but rather a true feeling that floats calmly through the mind and body. It is a rare moment when thoughts and feelings become fully

formed, ... It is what we feel when we experience something that makes us exclaim “oh!” and express our feelings in poetry, prose, art, or song. (qtd.in Shimoda, 2015)

To exemplify what is meant by this concept it would be useful to give the Sakura (the Japanese cherry blossom) tree as an example. When compared to other fruit trees the blossoms of the Japanese cherry tree are actually not more beautiful, yet what gives the Sakura its value is that it is transient by nature. The total period these trees blossom is around one week so it is this “evanescence of their beauty” that leads to heightened inner feelings in the viewer (Parkes, 2005). Interestingly, this concept also connotes the Buddhist understanding of things which underscores the temporariness in all that comes to pass, be it either good or bad (Meli, 2002: 60). The valuing of the temporary beauty in nature is also emphasized in relation to ‘unexpected forms’ (Prusinski, 2012: 25). If one would set out to add an interesting dimension to such forms, one could suggest the likening of Nature to the Female. As of late, the connection between the two have been put forward in many studies and theoretical research. Since the aim of this paper is not to delve into the details of this connection it should suffice to say that the transient beauty in nature could also be experienced on another scale; the temporary beauty of the moment experienced through an encounter with a woman. Both experiences would highlight notions of ‘nurturing...(yet) uncontrollable... general chaos’ (Najera, 2018: 12). A similar theme is definitely present in “Cellists” since meeting Eloise becomes an unsettling experience for Tibor. This acquaintance with her feminine presence changes the nature of Tibor’s self-perception. Therefore, the connection of *mono no aware* to the study and deeper analysis of “Cellists” is crucial since the portrayal of characters with this profound philosophy in the backdrop of Ishiguro’s writing leads the reader to “empathize” (Parkes, 2005) with this feeling of temporariness of circumstances while at the same time hinting to the dubious interplay of nature versus the female.

The empathy and hinting that Ishiguro so successfully achieves brings up the issue of the writer’s voice put forward by the philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin. According to Bakhtin, the novelist “speaks as it were, through language, a language that has somehow more or less materialized, become objectivized, that he merely ventriloquizes” (qtd. in Yoda, 1999: 525). In that sense Ishiguro is such a novelist since his “slightly different” writerly perspective arises from Ishiguro being not quite British nor Japanese (Shaffer, 1998: 1-2). The language that Ishiguro weaves in this short story epitomizes deep feelings like the effect of *mono no aware*. His story is in the first-person narrative style and the narrators often exhibit human failings. Ishiguro’s technique is to allow these characters to implicitly reveal their flaws during the narrative. The author thus creates a sense of pathos by allowing the reader to see the narrator’s flaws while being drawn to sympathise with the narrator as well. This pathos is often derived from the narrator’s actions, or, more often, inaction. (*Kazuo Ishiguro*, n.d.)

An ironic element of Ishiguro’s use of first person narrators, who are unreliable by nature, is that they actually fail to see the truth they are mediating (Shaffer, 1998: 7-8). Eloise is mediating that one should act upon one’s talent yet it is ironical that she herself has not been able to do so. What’s more is that she tries to excuse her inaction through blaming musical mentors who were not able to really ‘see’ her and her talent. Moreover, the suppression of

emotion (1998: 8) is a vital theme in this work which is clearly demonstrated through Tibor who is a young musician exhibiting pridefulness. Similarly, Ishiguro defines his own literary style, in Bakhtin's sense of the language of the novelist, as suppressing and hiding away meaning (qtd.in Shaffer, 1998: 8). According to Ishiguro his characters are not dumb yet they are lacking in insight and they cannot see beyond their surroundings thus awaiting the mercy of the world around them (qtd.in Shaffer, 1998: 6). Therefore, it is not surprising that Ishiguro's setting leads Tibor to withhold his feelings with regard to Eloise and his lack of insight is proven by his inaction when it comes to making use of an opportunity that comes only once in a life time.

4. Talent or Hard Work: Questioning Success

When we look at some other plot details of the story, we encounter an anonymous narrator together with his musician friend Fabian playing music for a decreased number of tourists in a public space in Italy. When he spots an old acquaintance amongst the audience he starts telling the story of a talented young man, Tibor, and his encounter with an enigmatic American woman named Eloise McCormack. This is actually a seven-year-old incident which also involved the presence of Giancarlo and Ernesto who were the other band players but who dissimilarly "moved on" (Ishiguro, 2010: 190) with their lives. Fabian has always been critical of Tibor and his relationship with Eloise. His criticism seems to stem from his inability to give credit to Tibor's talent since Fabian who is mentioned as an ordinary musical player, might show flaws in his taste in spotting and appreciating real talent. Fabian does not give in to "one of the great myths of our time that true genius comes from a source of in-born talent, not hard work" (Mathews, 2012).

The idea of talent is delicately dealt with by Ishiguro. In his point of view, the primary insistence on talent seems to be a peculiarly American point of view. In his story he uses the character Eloise to play with this idea. Ishiguro implies that based on this insistence "everyone is important, everyone has something to contribute, everyone has some talent at which they can shine" (Mathews, 2012). The inherent paradox in this is that rare talent, being a combination of quality and scarcity, is what makes something truly valuable. Thus, for Ishiguro, "Americans regularly exhibit a kind of cultural schizophrenia that is a result of the glaring disparity between their egalitarian, democratic rhetoric and the Darwinian reality of how they actually live" (Mathews, 2012). Therefore, Eloise McCormack's unwillingness to develop her talent as a cellist is reconfigured not as a failure, but as an "unrealized potential" (Mathews, 2012). She blames the insufficient teachers for not being able to "unwrap" her (Ishiguro, 2010: 212). Her logic explains why she never tried to play the cello yet it does not explain why she does not ask Tibor to be her private teacher since she claims they "have it" (2010: 212). She has the money, the need and the circumstances but she holds back for some reason which seems rather incongruent with her present condition.

A plausible theory by Cynthia Griffin Wolff would help to illuminate Eloise's dilemma of being a non-playing virtuoso. This theory suggests that Eloise fits in the stereotype of the American Girl which is a post-Civil-War phenomenon which grew out of economic and moral issues. Wolff explains that the "woman's function is to magnify the men who support her, she is the visible manifestation of their success and the repository of that traditional morality which

they...suspended during the process of amassing wealth” (2010: 215). An important characteristic of this American Girl is her accomplishment. She can afford to have an education which is not put to use. In a sense she becomes the ornament of a prosperous society. Her intellectual capacity is trained without any productive outcome. She has the task of bearing the torch of culture and if suitable can teach as a teacher in the East shaping young men or if not still continue her civilizing work. The woman adhering to this stereotype is confronted with a dilemma. She must develop her talents but not with practical outcomes (Wolf, 1972: 215-16). Eloise in general fits the definition of the American Girl stereotype. In the story she is a single American woman of forty-one who is on some kind of holiday in Italy. She boldly introduces herself to Tibor and befriends him for the purpose of bringing out his talent by inviting him to her room in a hotel and repeatedly listen to him play his cello. Eloise clearly fits the civilizing role of this stereotype both when she tries to bring out the best in Tibor and also when we learn that she was actually able to have many music teachers even though she never found them inspiring enough. Moreover, Eloise is waiting to be won like a trophy by a divorced Peter Henderson who is running a successful golfing equipment business in Oregon. She does not tell him about her exact whereabouts and expects him to find her so he can “deserve” her (Ishiguro, 2010: 218). She is a visible success of Peter’s quest for wealth and finally to be won like a prize. Peter represents the American capital; whereas, she is a representative of morals. Her lacking education in the field of her self-acclaimed talent has no productive value and at the end of the story she chooses a traditional path by accepting to marry a wealthy “music loving” man (Ishiguro, 2010: 219).

Both Eloise and Tibor suffer from what Langston Hughes calls “a deferred dream” (qtd.in Mathews, 2012). Eloise has a dream but chooses not to act on it. Tibor, on the other hand, is elevated to an artistic level but cannot realize his dream because he remains inactive by not asking openly and expressing his wishes and desires. In a way, Eloise is the element of *mono no aware* in Tibor’s life. She led him to experience an elevation in musical aesthetics during a few summer months, which is a transient period of time compared to an average human life. Tibor enjoyed the beauty of rediscovering his musical talent and the thrill of sexual desire for a mature woman. Eloise refuses her failure but Ishiguro believes that true talent is indeed rare and that one should be able to deal with failure in life. Accepting failure would not mean that our whole lives have gone to waste. Instead of living in “suspended animation” we can accept the failure, learn from past mistakes and try to see the beauty of it (Mathews, 2012). It would not be wrong to say that the narrators’ (Both Fabian and Tibor) reminiscing the events of a past summer is an attempt at trying to see the beauty of a long lost ‘aware’ moment and coming to terms with it.

5. The Guidance of Companionship

K. Ishiguro talks about an orphan condition for human beings. His orphan is a metaphor for a lack in guidance when being exposed to the real world. As humans we live in an illusion or imaginary life but we have to transfer into the real world if possible with the help of someone. If we are lucky this journey is a gradual process that enables us to cope with the harshness of reality (Shaffer and Ishiguro, 2001: 9). Likewise, Tibor is a kind of orphan because he is suddenly exposed to the reality that Eloise is leaving and he is left to tend for his freshly brought

out potential talent. His soul mate abandons him for a pursuit in traditionalism which is marrying a stereotypical American entrepreneur. Ishiguro views that the American value of striving for one's potential might be something good but at the same time there might be "casualties" (qtd.in Shaffer and Ishiguro, 2001: 14). On the one hand you do not restrict yourself and continue trying but on the other you might view yourself as a total failure. Tibor seems to have returned to where he has started since at the end of the story he returns to the place where his mindfulness began. Tibor's pursuit might have changed its course if he had not suppressed his emotions. His hidden implication of "...who could teach you" (Ishiguro, 2010: 219) directed at Eloise is quite different from asking openly "Would you like me to teach you?" Bakhtin proposes a dialogism called the self-other relationship. He states that with this relationship "communication, interaction and dialogue are significant for identity construction and the generation of truth" (Huang, 2013: 23). Tibor and Eloise within those few months become close friends. At first music plays an important role in their communication and interaction. Eloise invites Tibor to her hotel room and asks him to play certain pieces of music until she decides he has played well enough. Ironically, the name of the hotel, being Excelsior, implies highest quality which they are trying to achieve together. According to Pratt, music is the language of emotion and since emotion is basically the same no matter from which ethnic identity we belong to, it unites us. Pratt continues by adding that "music sounds the way emotions feel" (Ishiguro, 2010: 67-68). Music is also a vital instrument in art since as a form of aesthetic practice it is defined as the pinnacle of human experience (Eroğlu, 2011:63) and an embodiment of real experience (Dewey, 1934: 36). Therefore, music serves as a language that Tibor and Eloise speak initially. Tibor is somewhat inexperienced but learns along the way. Eloise seems to be an expert in sensing Tibor's state of mind and senses through the sound vibrations he is producing. She teaches him to follow her oral guidance and reach the emotional pitch that sounds perfect to the ear. Later on their friendship reaches a new dimension through their dialogues. Their interaction on a sexual level does not take place but we see that Tibor is acutely conscious of that possibility when he thinks "The idea of entering her room even in the middle of the afternoon, had struck him as awkwardly intimate, and he was relieved to find a large suite, the bedroom closed off entirely from view" (Ishiguro, 2010: 200). The identity that Eloise helps him to create through different kinds of communication unfortunately does not reach its peak and we see Tibor "...watching her walk back towards the Excelsior" (Ishiguro, 2010: 220) implying he is not ready to move on. Bakhtin claims that in a dialogic work, which "Cellists" seems to fit into, the process of variable communication "never achieves a solution" (Huang, 2013:24). The *mono no aware* moment(s) for Tibor remain unsettling and become mere memory.

Another important notion by Bakhtin is his concept of utterance. "Utterance" is the manifestation of thought and deed and is sized from a single word to a literary work" (qtd.in Huang, 2013: 25). Hence, Huang claims that *Nocturnes* which is the name of the story collection is an utterance and that the last utterance "Cellists" (by being the last story in the collection) is about education and responsibility (Ishiguro, 2010: 25-32). The stories in the collection are arranged chronologically and "Cellists" stands for the youth period. This might suggest that personal regrets which are a natural part of younger ages should not be experienced

in later life since it would not be possible to change things for the better. Tibor actually had a taste of two kinds of education because his quest for musical perfection led him to be shaped by Oleg who symbolized formal and Eloise who symbolized informal education (2010: 32). His perplexity is heightened after this informal education since that required him to channel his realizations into suitable paths. Sadly, we see that life does not grant him his much expected twist but rather serves him “a certain kind of bitterness” (Ishiguro, 2010: 221).

It would be useful to mention that the image of Eloise is bundled up with some other stereotypical images as well. Wolff states that the image of the sensuous women appears in counterbalance with the virtuous woman in literary works. The sensuous woman arouses sexuality; whereas, the virtuous woman arouses fondness and respect (1972: 208). Although Tibor and Eloise are co-characters in the story, the spotlight is on Tibor who tries to make sense of Eloise. Is she the virtuous or the sensuous? He turns from the sensuous to the virtuous when he has a dialogic exchange, “...a new dimension had opened in their relationship” (Ishiguro, 2010: 207). Wolff explains that a chaste woman leads to positive changes in a man’s life (1972: 208) which can be seen as exemplified through Eloise and her leading Tibor to artistic productivity.

Another stereotype concerns the blonde and fair which are deemed chaste whereas the dark-skinned are stereotypically sensuous and tempting (Wolff, 1972: 209). Since not much detail is given about Eloise’s physique it is somewhat difficult to place her on either side. Moreover, the chaste woman who is seen as an embodiment of conscience might render the man unable to act due to her harsh criticism (1972: 209). An instance to exemplify this would be to remember Tibor at the beginning of the story when he was sometimes impulsive concerning Eloise’s pretentious remarks and thus attempted to pack and leave but eventually did not. His inaction was the result of his confusion stemming from male or Eastern pride. Moreover, outside remarks of Eloise’s potential sensuousness come from Ernesto who likens her to “a flirty actress” (Ishiguro, 2010: 205) and as a group of males, they gossip about the possibility that Tibor and Eloise are “...at it...” (2010: 205). Another time Ernesto again states that “That woman has turned him into an arrogant little shit” (2010: 210). As a final statement it could be asserted that the changing nature of plot and events, and the opinion of various males concerning Eloise, place her to be closer to the virtuous side. However, it should also be marked that the first impression of a woman is always sensuous by nature.

6. Conclusion

To sum up, Ishiguro’s “Cellists” sets the scene for the reader to value the various chances and possibilities in life that might come our way. While some opportunities remain anchored and stable for a whole life time, some might come and go leaving a sweet whiff of *mono no aware*. Whichever it is, as humans we ought to value both instances yet preferably favour transient opportunities because ephemerality sharpens the senses in its utmost and has the magic to animate our formerly laid to rest potential. Through “Cellists” Kazuo Ishiguro argues that transient or *mono no aware* moments in life are both valuable and functional for finding and adding meaning to life. The arousal of meaningful depth might stem from single opportunities

that lie await to be put to good use. Furthermore, Ishiguro also underscores the dilemma between talent and hard work by suggestively implying that talent should be acted upon through hard work and performative determination since dysfunctionality is a slayer of artistic talent.

References

- Dewey, J. (1980). *Art as Experience* (23rd ed.). New York: First Perigree Printing.
- Elwood, M. K. (1998). An Attempt to Apply Motoori Norinaga's Concept of Mono no Aware to the Novels of Jane Austen. *英文学*, 27, 110-122.
- Erođlu, A. (2011). *John Dewey'de Deneyim Ve Sanat*. Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Felsefe Ve Din Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, Doktora Tezi.
- Huang, Yu-min. (2013). Musicians' Enigma in Kazuo Ishiguro's Nocturnes. *The Asian Conference on Ethics, Religion & Philosophy 2013, Osaka, Japan*.
- Ishiguro, Kazuo. (2010). *Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall*. Vintage International.
- Kaya, M. (2020). Japon Dini Ve Milli Uyanışında Motoori Norinaga'nin Etkisi . Anasay , (13) , 149-165 . DOI: 10.33404/anasay.714449
- Kazuo Ishiguro*. (n.d.). Wikipedia. Retrieved January 10, 2017, from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazuo_Ishiguro
- Mathews, Peter. (2012). English Literature Today. *English Literature Today*, englishliteraturetoday.com/page/3/. Accessed 7 Jan. 2017.
- Matthews, Sean & Groes, Sebastian. (2010). *Kazuo Ishiguro: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Meli, M. (2002). 6. Motoori Norinaga's Hermeneutic of Mono no Aware: The Link between Ideal and Tradition. In M. Marra (Ed.), *Japanese Hermeneutics: Current Debates on Aesthetics and Interpretation* (pp. 60-75). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780824863104-009>
- Najera, M. (2018). *Nature as Feminine: An Eco-Feminist Reading of Selected Latin American Narrative*. University of California, Riverside.
- Parkes, G. (2005, December 12). *Japanese Aesthetics*. Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/japanese-aesthetics/>
- Pratt, Carroll C. (1948). Music as a Language of Emotion. *Jstor: University of California Press on behalf of the American Musicological Society*, (11-12-13), 67-68. www.jstor.org/stable/829298
- Prusinski, L. (2012). Wabi-sabi, mono no aware, and ma: Tracing traditional Japanese aesthetics through Japanese history. *Studies on Asia*, 4(2), 25-49.
- Rennison, Nick. (2004). *Contemporary British Novelists*. Taylor & Francis Group.
- Shaffer, Brian & Ishiguro, K. (2001). An Interview with Kazuo Ishiguro. *Contemporary Literature*, 42(1), 1-14. doi:10.2307/1209082

- Shaffer, Brian W. (1998). *Understanding Kazuo Ishiguro*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Shimoda, T. (2015, October 19). *Oh! A Mystery of "Mono No Aware."* Ohthenovel. <https://ohthenovel.wordpress.com/mononoaware/>
- Taketomi, R. (2014). Mono No Aware in Kazuo Ishiguro's A Pale View of Hills. *Society of Comparative Cultural Studies, Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies, Kyushu University, 5-1*. <https://doi.org/10.15017/1518296>
- Teo, Yugin. (2014). *Kazuo Ishiguro and Memory*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- What are examples of "mono no aware" in The Tale of Genji by Murasaki Shikibu?* (2015, January 10). Enotes.Com. <https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-examples-mono-no-aware-tale-genji-shikibu-525046>.
- Wolff, C. (1972). A Mirror for Men: Stereotypes of Women in Literature. *The Massachusetts Review*, 13(1/2), 205-218. Retrieved February 17, 2021, from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25088222>.
- Yoda, Tomiko. (1999). Fractured Dialogues: Mono no aware and Poetic Communication in The Tale of Genji. *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies*, 59(2), 523-557. doi:10.2307/2652721