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——石黑一雄国际化写作研究

李厥云 著

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前 言

二战以来,移民文学开始盛行并逐渐成为重要的主流文学话语之一。石黑一雄以及奈保尔、拉什迪和提摩西·默等当代移民作家描述了不同的文化传统和价值形态,揭示了当代移民群体的身份困惑与尴尬,并努力思索着解决文化身份困境的良方。作为当代杰出的英国移民作家,石黑一雄创作了一系列他自诩为“国际化小说”的作品,并因此囊括了英国文坛的几乎所有主要大奖。他的早期作品《远山淡影》(1982)和《浮世画家》(1986)付梓伊始即获得了评论界的赞誉并被分别授予温尼弗雷德·霍尔比奖和惠特布莱德年度最佳小说奖。他的第三部小说《长日留痕》(1989)喜获享誉盛名的布克奖,并奠定了他在世界文坛的地位;根据他的小说改编的同名电影《长日留痕》(1993)甚至荣膺8项奥斯卡奖提名。此后,作者尽管不断尝试新的艺术表现手法,却一如既往地探索着文化身份冲突的困境。随着声名日盛,他的作品已经被翻译成了30多种语言文字,备受评论者和读者的欢迎。时至今日,石黑一雄已经创作了6部小说,而本书则主要探讨了伴随作者创作生涯的国际化创作主题,以期读者能借此深刻理解作者文学创作的济时救世情怀。



石黑一雄的作家身世备受评论家关注,并成为读者领悟其作品内涵的重要基石。自创作伊始,作者的身跨英日两种文化的身份困境就引起了评论界的兴趣,而前两部小说中对日本人物形象的刻画更是增添了作品的异域情趣。拉什迪凭借《午夜的孩子》荣获1981年度布克奖后,石黑一雄幸运地成为英国文学趣味转向的宠儿,而他身份的日本性首当其冲受到极大关注,同时也引起了巨大争议,甚至人们将他戏称为“日本的拉什迪”。然而,令读者吃惊的是,石黑一雄坦言他深受西方文学传统的影响,并经常因评论者深究他小说中的日本因素而感到好笑。也许要作为某种反驳,他的第三部作品《长日留痕》则选择了英国作为背景,探讨国民的英国性和民族身份,展现出作者试图跳出东方主义的藩篱并创作国际化小说的雄心。以后,石黑一雄着手创作了融合超现实因素的寓言性小说——比如《不可安慰的人》(1995)即被视为心理现实主义的杰作并开启了他的国际化写作的文学历程——而不仅仅是作为日本或英国情愫的资料提供者。小说《上海孤儿》(2000)延续着石黑一雄一以贯之的跨文化身份主题,探讨不同文化碰撞下的身份危机并进而阐释其对重大历史事件与当代现实状况的深刻思索。小说以上海租界为背景,以英国侦探班克斯在东西方文化困境中挣扎的经历揭示了造成文化认同危机的根源,成为作者成功摆脱某一特定地域背景和民族文化限制的创作典范。近作《别让我走》(2005)则继续着作者对文化身份的探索,通过戏仿科幻小说的手法,作者刻画了克隆人凯西、汤姆和露丝追求人生真谛的短暂历程,使读者能够慢慢品味自己作为人类一分子因受文化意识形态影响而莫可名状的生存窘境和令人嗤之以鼻的丑陋人性。简言之,作者时时刻刻倍受压抑的文化身份贯穿着他的整个创作历程,通过文学之笔由近及远影响着不同文化与种族的千

百万天涯沦落人。

石黑一雄的小说需要读者不停地回顾历史、着眼现实而后再去深深地思索生存的价值和人生的真谛。本书借此希望与众读者分享石黑一雄寄情于文字、思索文明共存的魅力和感怀天下苍生的魄力。同时,读者亦需慢慢品悟他的文笔之美,感叹人生之艰,把握现世之乐。

拙作的付梓受益于我的导师李自修先生的悉心指导和帮助,在选题和写作方面提供了宝贵的意见和诚挚的鼓励。本书的出版得到了山东工艺美术学院出版基金的资助,山东大学出版社亦给予了大力支持,在此衷心致谢。

本书虽几经易稿,欠妥之处亦属难免,敬请学界批评、指正。

作 者

2013年6月

Abbreviations Used

<i>PVH</i>	<i>A Pale View of Hills</i>
<i>AFW</i>	<i>An Artist of the Floating World</i>
<i>ROD</i>	<i>The Remains of the Day</i>
<i>UC</i>	<i>The Unconsoled</i>
<i>WWW</i>	<i>When We Were Orphans</i>
<i>NLMG</i>	<i>Never Let Me Go</i>

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Introduction

[The] act of cultural translation (both as representation and as reproduction) denies the essentialism of a prior given originary culture, then we see that all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity. But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the “third space” which enables other positions to emerge. (Bhabha, 1990: 211)

Since the end of the Second World War, the world has undergone an influential shift across different countries, caused by racial, political, economic internationalization and diminishing of protective barriers. Along with Britain becoming more multicultural and multiracial, English literature begins to reflect and explain new features and themes, which, as a result, has built up a different imaginative world with “new nations, new areas of interest, and made fashionable reading about decolonization and the culture of Others” (King, 2008: 3). And then a market for literature of migration, which focuses on the international themes and subject matter of immigrants living in Britain, begins to turn up in the early 1980s.

Many of postwar historiographies are concerned with the rhythms of common life, in particular, with those living on the social margins.



With the flourish and collapse of British Empire, these immigrant novelists, such as Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad, E. M. Forster, Kazuo Ishiguro and Salman Rushdie, intend to set their novels in foreign contexts, and offer a deeper understanding about the characters' sense of self-consciousness, values, and cultural identities which reflect their general feelings of loss and depression. Thus the post colonial contexts and foreign lands are often applied to describe different experiences of unfamiliar cultures and values, and the loneliness of extending exiles.

With post-colonialism prevalent in western academies, the contemporary British writers, such as V. S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Timothy Mo etc., have described the sense of loss and confusing dilemmas they felt, and showed great concerns for the cultural and racial conflicts. Ishiguro, as one epitome of cross-cultural internationalization, has stated that he has been influenced by both "Western tradition" and "the Japan I actually remember" (Mason, 1989b: 336), and examined the confusing dilemmas his characters encountered. The writing career of Ishiguro can be identified as a cultural journey of identification between his Japanese tradition, in which he was born and brought up, and the English culture, with which he has been familiar because of his education in Britain.

In much contemporary fiction, the immigrant writers are aware of the changes which are needed to be focused on the traditional ideas of British identity in order to include the immigrants' experience and ethnic mixture of identities across national borders brought about by the post-war diaspora. Concerning the current or former colonies, these historiographies demonstrate the subjugation of colonies, their

rebellions and ceremonies and even people's daily life, continue the anti-colonial challenge to Western dominance, and chronicle a common concern in the issues of historical and ethnic identity. Racial conception, as Frantz Fanon claims, is a social articulation of common bias, rather than the biological category, which is held by a nation or people against Other. And thus the vision of migrants indicates, "to be a migrant is, perhaps, to be the only species of human being free of the shackles of nationalism (to say nothing of its ugly sister, patriotism) [...] Migrants must, of necessity, make a new imaginative relation with the world" (Rushdie, 1991: 124-125).

The contemporary immigrant writers derive the distanced observation of conventions from the early exiles and immigrants. Although these writers are concerned with cultural and racial conflicts, and sometimes even feel themselves torn between different cultures and ideologies, they seem to criticize or reflect the Third World as an outsider or Other. For example, Salman Rushdie, born in a Muslim family in Bombay but educated at Rugby and Cambridge, ambitiously deals with the new generation of Indians in *Midnight's Children* (1981). The protagonist Saleem is "handcuffed" to different cultural traditions and ideologies, and endowed with the perception to explore his family's and nation's destiny. What's more, Rushdie's own "handcuffed" state renders him an especially social and religious commentator on Indian culture and tradition. Timothy Mo, born in Hong Kong, has described the closed, protective, alienated society of the London-Chinese society in *Sour Sweet* (1983). Naipaul has left Trinidad for Oxford, and written an early sequence of Caribbean novels beginning with *The Mystic Masseur* (1957), a book dealing not just with political change but a new culture of displacement. In this



sense, the works of Japan-born Ishiguro are far less easily characterized as “post-colonial”, but raise no less demanding questions of cultural conflicts. These writers know well the idioms and assumptions of British life, but their past experiences make them outsiders of the rhythms of British society. As Burgess observes, British colonialism has “exported the English language, and a new kind of British novel has been the eventual flower of this transplanting” (Burgess, 1971: 165), and has indicated the process of a fragmented but multi-cultural Britain.

Generally speaking, along with decolonization and civil rights movement, writings by immigrants have been concerned about the themes of political and multiracial conflation, and even cultural conflicts. In his novel *All about Mr. Hatterr: A Gesture* (1948), G. V. Desani, a forerunner called by Salman Rushdie, presents “for his character of mixed Asian and Western origin an Indian English that exuberantly mangles cultures [...] like later ‘hybrids’, is also an expression of diaspora cultural conflict” (King, 2008: 32). In other words, many immigrants have encountered problems of identity or home, and prejudice, which means that maintaining traditional is to be savage, but adapting to Englishness to be *The Mimic Men*.

Like James Joyce, as an exile, V. S. Naipaul also begins with writing about his ambivalent past, and later turns to this new immigration land, in order to examine his dilemma of cultural identity. Since his arrival in the 1950s, Naipaul has examined memories of the West Indian scenes and predicaments of immigrant lives in London, and also contributed greatly to the formation of international novels. His earlier books, such as *Miguel Street* (1959) and *A House for Mr. Biswas* (1961), concern the fragmented society

in Trinidad and effects of colonialism, in which alien peoples are encountered with incongruous cultures and disappointing realities. In his later novels, like *The Mimic Men* (1967), *In a Free State* (1971) and *A Bend in the River* (1979), he is worried about the future of one nation derived from dissimilar cultures, and the violence brought by decolonization. In his autobiographical novel *The Enigma of Arrival* (1987), the narrator, as one Indian diaspora, also writes about the dilemmas of outsiders, which echoes his leaving off Trinidad, feeling settled and becoming part of Englishness. In a word, his writings involve the construction of identities, either national or personal, in which he has provided “the tension out of which emerges a rich and incisive reconstruction of post-colonial experience” (Ashcroft et al., 1989: 91) that reflects the wounds of the colonial past and as well the discrimination and racial tension in England.

Since the early 1980s, the image of British literature constructed by white people, has been deeply undermined, and begun to feature “a multiracial and international appearance”, resulting from “social energy in the study of black and Asian English history and an outburst of creative writing and other arts by people of colour” (King, 2008: 127). England finally begins to enter into a cultural reassessment phase, which means “individuals carry within them more than one culture and often belong to more than one ethnicity or class or, in some cases, more than one nation” (King, 2008: 139). In a sense, England has begun to form an artistic community of immigrant writers. Towards the end of the 20th century, however, the England, especially in the south, has changed into a new nation where “people of different races and cultures live side by side” (King, 2008: 225), and begun to feel no cultural conflicts in their daily life.



With the increase of writings by immigrant writers, Salman Rushdie becomes “a voice of diasporas” (King, 2008: 140), whose main theme is the conflict between oriental traditions and western modernity, and the predicaments between personal and national identity. In his novels, Rushdie has been applying magic realism, which examined “the fragmentation of the postcolonial condition” (King, 2008: 141), faced with the incongruities between tradition and westernization, and his own dilemma of multicultural identity. In *Midnight's Children* (1981) and *Shame* (1983), he shows us the histories of modern India and Pakistan, which is “handcuffed” to “the allegorical, fable-making traditions of both East and West” (Drabble, 2005: 885). And in *The Satanic Verses* (1988), he goes on with the theme of diasporan lives, allegorizing the experience of immigration, which is defined as “a positive post-imperial hybridity which was useful for understanding diasporas” (King, 2008: 145). Nevertheless, the fatwa after the publication of *The Satanic Verses* shows that the society has become multi-ethnic, though multiculturalism is not so easy as people once believed.

Though writing for their specific audience, these writers are accepted by readers who are international, and consist of dissimilar communities. The reception of Naipaul's works by Caribbean and Anglo-American and even non-western readers demonstrate the necessity of the claimed cultural internationalism. However, the publication of *The Satanic Verses* (1988) has been thought of as blasphemy by many Islamic readers. Despite the attempt of achieving the same interpretation and audience, this kind of multiculturalism will have to remain a controversy or challenge for long, as Booth states, “the more remote a work is from my home province, the more

mistakes I will make" (Booth, 1974: 222-223).

With Naipaul and Rushdie prominent on the literary scene, writings about foreign background and international events become more likely to be accepted by different readers. Timothy Mo, a product of mixed marriage, often examines his characters within Chinese or Asian culture as a result of his Chinese father. In his novel *Sour Sweet* (1982), he describes the lives and cultural conflicts of Chinese immigrants, who bring with them cultural traditions and have to adapt to English tastes, and even cultural confusions of outsiders and hybrids resulting from dissimilar traditions.

The Western critics claim that Rushdie is concerned with their feelings of guilt about colonialism and racism, and consider him as a representative of the new internationalism within British literature. Just like these exiles such as James Joyce and E. M. Forster, Ishiguro has also employed the conception of universalism and displacement of culture in his thematic innovation. In his early novels, Ishiguro looks back on Japanese settings and themes in the view of "an uncannily Japanese quality emanating from his perfectly English prose." (Shaffer and Wong, 2008:3). Ishiguro's Anglo-Japanese inheritance has been quite as powerful as Mo's Anglo-Chinese one. Through peculiar reticence and aesthetic innovation of his novels, he takes on a startling and unpredictable position concerning the ethnic connection with his native country. Therefore, his novels indicate some of the large historical events of the 20th century, either in the Orient or in Europe, but always indirectly, from the standpoint of a few chosen moments or the distanced quiet observers, which indicates that he probably has an occupational complex of inferiority when encountering England's new image of "a composite one, signaling a person partly



North-West European, partly Indian, partly African, partly Asian” (Sauerberg, 2001: 1).

With post-colonialism prevailing in the Western academies, many writers are concerned about the cultural and racial conflicts suffered by earlier exiles and immigrants, and often feel themselves torn by different traditions. Through several generational efforts of immigrants, England has become more international—“a mixture of peoples, tastes religions” (King, 2008: 235), in which writers concerned about the issues of immigration have remade its literary tradition. Homi Bhabha, one of the most important postcolonial literary critics, acknowledges the influence of Naipaul, feels that the lives and concerns of immigrants and minority turning up as major literary themes have symbolized “a celebrity of the transformation of England by its minorities” (King, 2008: 225). As one can see, many such writers like Naipaul, Rushdie, Mo and Ishiguro, etc., have examined the results of immigration, in which themes, such as cultural conflicts, diasporan lives, community versus individualism, etc., become part of cultural communication.

Thanks to the great hunger of this new internationalism, many writers such as Rushdie, Graham Swift and Ian McEwan, begin to look back to wars, especially the First World War, and become fashionable writers who have been conscious of this trend. As a result, British novels have become more multicultural, which indicates their cultural concerns about its multicultural and pluralistic composition. That is to say, these immigrant writers are of various racial and cultural origins, and hope “to straddle different worlds, and pick and choose from all traditions” (Iyer, 1993: 50). Because of their multicultural identities, these immigrant writers have begun to explore the