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碩士論文

追尋自我：

石黑一雄《我輩孤雛》中的反偵探敘事

In Search of the Self:

Kazuo Ishiguro's When We Were Orphans as an Anti-Detective Narrative

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中華民國九十七年七月

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中文摘要

本文旨在探討石黑一雄（Kazuo Ishiguro）如何運用反偵探敘事（the anti-detective narrative），聚焦於克里斯多夫·班克斯（Christopher Banks）在《我輩孤雛》（When We Were Orphans 2000）小說裡自我追尋的過程。作為一名偵探，班克斯在偵辦他父母親的案子的同時找尋他的人生意義。班克斯試圖透過重述他過去的經驗，讓讀者們對於他的過去感同身受，並且了解其「自我」的變化。本文強調唯有透過敘述及解釋過去發生的故事，班克斯和讀者才得以塑造、再塑造新的自我，並且獲得新的敘事身分，使得他們的生命更豐富、更有意義。

第一章簡介石黑一雄的生平以及在他多部作品中所呈現的主題。班克斯在《我輩孤雛》中身份錯置、無家可歸。唯有透過發現關於其父母親的真相及敘事自我，他才能找到在這個世界安身立命之道。

第二章以保羅·理柯（Paul Ricoeur）自我和敘事身分理論以及攸關偵探敘事的討論作為文本分析的基礎。本文將《我輩孤雛》視為反偵探小說敘事，因為原先猜想的班克斯父母親的綁架案最後證明僅是想像的情節。

第三章針對第二章的理論框架進行文本分析，特別是關於主人翁「自我」的部分。本小說結合社會背景、小說的主題與敘事結構，顯示班克斯不穩固的自我如何在他的生命當中逐步發展。藉由敘述他過去的日常生活而重新恢復自覺，班克斯才能夠對他的內心的渴望知道得更多，並且在某種程度上加以改變。事實上，沒有透過生活的實踐與敘述，新的自我將不容易形成。

第四章概述前面幾個章節的要點，總結說明新的自我如何擺脫舊思維模式的束縛。一個人的身分是不穩定的，每當書中主角敘述他的故事的時候，其多變的自我將不斷地被讀者重新敘述和解釋。

關鍵字：自我、敘事身分、保羅·理柯、反偵探敘事、石黑一雄

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Abstract

This thesis attempts to analyze how Kazuo Ishiguro utilizes the anti-detective narrative structure to focalize the process of self-searching for Christopher Banks. As a detective himself, Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans sets out on a quest for the truth of his parents' case as well as for the meaning of life. Through narrating his past experience, Christopher Banks tries to let readers identify with his past condition and understand his evolution of the self. It is stressed that only by means of narrating and interpreting stories of the past experience are Banks and readers able to fashion and refashion their new selves, thereby acquiring their narrative identity and making their lives more meaningful and colorful.

Chapter One briefly introduces Kazuo Ishiguro's biography and the themes of his works. Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans is displaced and homeless. This thesis intends to contend that only through discovering the truth of his parents and narrating the self is Banks able to discover his own placement in the world.

Chapter Two explores some key concepts mainly based on discussions of selfhood and narrative identity proposed by Paul Ricoeur as well as the detective narrative to lay the foundations for the interpretation of the text. It is argued that When We Were Orphans is an anti-detective narrative since the supposed Banks's parents' kidnapping turns out to be an imagined story.

Chapter Three deals with how the theoretical scheme is applied to explain the novel, particularly in connection with the protagonist's self. Combining the social context and Ishiguro's intended theme with the narrative structure of the novel, this thesis shows how Banks's unstable self is to evolve ultimately in his life. It is stated that by narrating what is on the move in his everyday life of the past to regain self-awareness, Banks is able to know more about his inner desire and then alter it to some extent. Without the practice and narration of life, a new self is not to be easily formed.

Chapter Four concludes the thesis by summarizing the previous arguments and making final remarks on the textual analysis of this novel. The text shows how restrictions ultimately are lifted from the new self. It also shows that identities are unstable, and the ever-changing self is to be narrated and interpreted each time the character relates his story in communication with readers.

Keywords: selfhood, narrative identity, Paul Ricoeur, the anti-detective narrative, Kazuo Ishiguro

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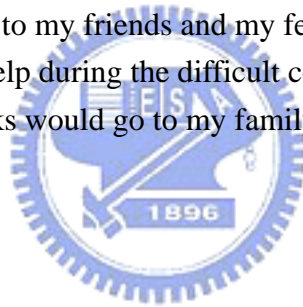


Table of Contents

Chinese Abstract.....	i
English Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Table of Contents.....	iv
Chapter One Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two Narrating “I” and the Detective Narrative.....	13
Chapter Three Banks’s Self Narration through the Anti-Detective Narrative.....	36
Chapter Four Conclusion.....	82
Works Cited.....	89



Chapter One

Introduction

Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-) was born in Nagasaki, Japan, and then emigrated to Surrey, England, with his family when he was barely six years old. Majoring in Philosophy and English, he graduated with honors from the University of Kent in 1978 and completed his Master's degree from the University of East Anglia in 1980 in Creative Writing (Lewis xi-xiii). Unlike his relative failure as a musician, he has achieved rapid and remarkable success in his writing career.¹

The brief biography, though apparently not extraordinary, accounts for Kazuo Ishiguro's prominence in his new country not only because of his personal effort, but because of the shifting perspective and standard of the English literary canon. The most significant phenomenon in the British literature in the latter part of the twentieth century is its tendency to become increasingly multi-ethnic.² In this background, those who write on themes concerning more than one country or nation are newly

¹ Ishiguro's debut novel [A Pale View of Hills](#) was first published in 1982, and was included in Best of Young British Novelists' campaign (Winifred Holtby Prize, 1983). Subsequent novels include: [An Artist of the Floating World](#) (1986, Whitbread Book of the Year), [The Remains of the Day](#) (1989, Booker Prize for Fiction), [The Unconsoled](#) (1995, Cheltenham Prize), [When We Were Orphans](#) (2000, nominated for Booker Prize), and [Never Let Me Go](#) (2005, shortlisted for the 2005 Booker Prize and for the 2006 Arthur C. Clarke Award). His short stories include: "Getting Poisoned" (1981), "A Strange and Sometimes Sadness" (1981), "Waiting for J." (1981), "Summer after the War" (1983), and "A Family Supper" (1983). In 1983, Ishiguro was one of the "Best of Young British Novelists" in Book Marketing Council campaign. His screenplays include: [A Profile of Arthur J. Mason](#) (TV) (1984), [The Gourmet](#) (TV) (1993), [The Saddest Music in the World](#) (2003), [The White Countess](#) (2005). With regard to the movie industry, Ishiguro's novel [The Remains of the Day](#) was adapted into a feature film by Merchant Ivory Productions in 1993, nominated for eight Academy Awards (Lewis xi-xiii, and [The Internet Movie Database](#)).

² The cultural trend in Britain which becomes multiethnic is further expounded as follows: The last half of the twentieth century witnessed a monumental shift in the character of both literary and national identity: the 'novel in English' supplanted the 'English novel' in significance and cogency. What was at one time on the margins of canonical literature—the English language but non-British (or 'Commonwealth') novel—is at present squarely at its center: the English-language novel is now a genuinely international affair, with postcolonial Anglophone and 'black British' works as widely read and critically esteemed as 'British' ones. As important as the English novelists of this period have been and continue to be, it is non-English novelists who now arguably dictate the parameters of literary debate and attract most interest. (Shaffer, [Novel](#) 15)

named the “internationalist” writers. They include Shiva Naipaul (1945-1985), Salman Rushdie (1947-), Buchi Emecheta (1944-), Timothy Mo (1950-), and Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-), creating their artistic works touching on either their mother countries or their emigrant lives, or both, and yet in many cases they even achieve eminence in the mainstream English literary realm.³

This is in part as a result of certain historical trends and other aspects of culture, because for the last two hundred years, people’s opinions of science and technology have been shifting.⁴ For example, during the modernist period, science and technology may have shaped the minds of people and brought progress as well as order and class distinction to society. As a consequence, the norms of culture, gender, ethnicity, and knowledge are gradually totalized as a metanarrative⁵ which is intended to enable people to comprehend why things occur as they do and have their lives in control.⁶ Postmodernism,⁷ on the other hand, stresses new religions as opposed to technology and progress, leaves room for the de-centered self, and is skeptical about the unity and hierarchy of social order. In this way, local culture, queer sexual identities, hybridism, and just-in-time knowledge have gradually become the norm (Breisach 123). This is how writers of myriad cultural backgrounds have increasingly

³ The aforementioned writers have the similar training or qualification in the United Kingdom. Therefore, “they are distinguished from other expatriates by virtue of their British education and citizenship” (King, “New Internationalism” 194).

⁴ See Martin Day, The History of English Literature: 1837 to the Present (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1972), 265-72.

⁵ With its prefix *meta* in Greek meaning for “beyond,” metanarrative, in other words, indicates that one narrative replaces another one. To be specific, it replaces the former term with the accusation of the old name’s privileged status. Thus metanarrative is a keyword constructed in accordance with a new thinking about the concept of history (Breisach 123).

⁶ The rising of the uniformity of the story instead of various stories is in part due to the “objectivity, repeatability” of the print age. Yet, electronic media undermine the belief (Hipps 68).

⁷ According to Lyotard, postmodernism, when simplifying its definition to the utmost, refers to a disbelief of metanarrative (xxiv). Therefore, he says that after World War II, people lose faith in certain unified truth or reality in favor of multiplicity. Hence, “in contemporary society and culture—post-industrial society, postmodern culture—the . . . grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation” (Lyotard 37).

flourished in the British domain.⁸ Of course, due to the shifting perspective and standard of the literary canon as well as the efforts of the frequent award-winning colored writers in the UK, these residents, including Kazuo Ishiguro, living abroad and writing their literature about Third World societies, the Commonwealth and immigrants, have received considerable attention (King, “New Internationalism” 192-94). Consequently, a variety of topics related to these writers have been discussed and published in diverse journals.

Among the international writers, this thesis intends to concentrate its research on Kazuo Ishiguro and his literary works, especially When We Were Orphans (2000). Discussions with respect to Kazuo Ishiguro’s writings can roughly be divided into four groups: On the one hand, critics including Susanne Wah Lee, Ryan S. Trimm, Ellen S. More focus on the dignity, professionalism, and servility in some of the leading or minor characters in Kazuo Ishiguro’s writing. They stress the methods by which lower class workers gain their noble bearing by keeping discipline in their lives. On the other hand, reviewers like Mike Godwin and Jeff Giles elucidate Ishiguro’s treatment of ethics about clones and effect of technology upon human beings and society. They shed light on cybernetic organism, the cyborg, examining the ethical problems resulting from scientific progress. The third group of scholars, including

⁸ How social rearrangement and technological advancement have influenced the British literary circle is indicated below:

The changing radical composition of England as a result of immigration helps explain the new nature of England’s literature, but that is only part of the story. There were the continuing ties to the Empire, now the Commonwealth, the attractions of life in London, the ease of being published in London compared with many other nations, interracial marriage. Each writer had a unique reason for being in England and not all were English authors in the sense of having or wanting British citizenship. Some were part of the international community that resided full- or part-time in London . . . Modern transportation and communications made international lives possible, and some writers divided their time between England and visiting family, gathering material to write about, or working, abroad. The end of empire resulted in new nations, new areas of interest, and made fashionable reading about decolonization and the culture of others. There was a market for literature about this new world. (King, Oxford 2-3)

Bruce Robbins, focus on psychological doubles and globalization in the chaotic and much-changing world. They incorporate the uncanny in a rapidly changing world. Apart from these critics and topics, in the fourth group, critics such as Cynthia F. Wong, and James M. Lang deal with memory and self-dispossession about characters in Ishiguro's novels. It revolves around how memories linger in the characters' minds that are hard to forget and ignore.⁹ For example, Barry Lewis on the whole contends in his book titled Kazuo Ishiguro that, as in Kazuo Ishiguro's novels such as A Pale View of Hills (1982), An Artist of the Floating World (1986), The Remains of the Day (1989), and The Unconsoled (1995), the main characters are "being displaced from their natural surroundings" (3).¹⁰ In Lewis's view, Ishiguro's novels usually deal with the question of being homely and/or unhomely in a world which becomes much less meaningful in the aftermath of the Second World War. Indeed, as is pointed out by the same critic, with the advent and popularization of technology around the two World Wars, travel becomes much easier.¹¹ This is how the protagonists in Ishiguro's novels are likely to journey frequently to almost anywhere they like. Home, consequently, whether with its concrete or abstract denotation and meaning, is a concept fast becoming more unstable or complicated for people to grasp. People tend to be

⁹ I bypass the four groups and, instead, look at the protagonist in When We Were Orphans in a more affirmative, productive, and transgressing perspective. For instance, memory could be firstly remembered and then forgotten a little; rules could be disobeyed; subject could gain percipience and self-awareness; finally, insecurity could be ameliorated with narration. Of course, there may be limitations to my over-optimistic attitude. Yet, it is supposed to give alternative consideration to the central character. For more information, theses published in Taiwan are listed below: Ching-chih Wang's "In Search of an Unhomely Home in a Floating World: Strangers in the Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro."; Shu-yuan Chang's "Postmodern Experience of Time in Kazuo Ishiguro's The Unconsoled."; Hua-yen Liao's "Traumatic Memory: A Bakhtinian Reading of Kazuo Ishiguro's The Remains of the Day and The Unconsoled."; Kang-fang Jen's "Residue of the Idealism: A Critical Analysis on Fantasy, Fascism and Everyday Life in Ishiguro's The Remains of the Day."; Ching-huan Lin's "Cosmopolitan Ethics in Kazuo Ishiguro's The Unconsoled." My contribution is to discuss selfhood in the form of the detective narrative which is yet to be dealt with in Taiwan.

¹⁰ The reason why I choose to focus on this novel of Kazuo Ishiguro's in preference to others is that Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans not only travels to different places, but he also narrates the situation of a foreign nation (e.g. war) more vividly.

¹¹ For related sources please consult Everett Mendelsohn and Merritt Roe Smith's Science, Technology and the Military (New York: Springer, 1988).

physically and psychically at home everywhere and nowhere. On the one hand, Pico Iyer argues that in an age when going “through countries [is] as [if] through revolving doors . . . [n]othing is strange to us, and nowhere is foreign” (“Transit Lounge”). On the other hand, Lewis stresses that protagonists in Ishiguro’s various novels such as “Etsuko, Ono, Stevens, Ryder and Banks are exiles, displaced persons, ‘lone rangers’ in their memories and imaginations. Their homeless minds make them perfect representatives of the century of displacement” (7). In other words, houses for them are “simply dwellings” (7).

Nevertheless, a view different from the two aforementioned viewpoints are presented here, because in When We Were Orphans, Christopher Banks, as opposed to Iyer’s opinion, still feels a sense of strangeness and insecurity in different places. Also, unlike Lewis’s viewpoint, some conditions (like the white house and Akira’s house) are more significant than others to Banks. Accordingly, the subject’s state of mind is affected by the surroundings. Besides, his travel and movement facilitate his mental variation.¹² By focusing on Christopher Banks, the main character, this thesis aims to show how his search for the past develops and at the same time forms his self in When We Were Orphans. In this way we may define Banks as a becoming subject. As Frumkes points out, “Ishiguro’s works often deal with how people are shaped by events or circumstances in their past . . . [and] the maze of human memory—the ways

¹² The argument here is somewhat perplexing. Generally speaking, when one is in a familiar place, he/she feels more at home. And when in unfamiliar place, one tends to feel more uneasy. Yet, the physical and the psychological are frequently intertwined and not to be simplified as the former division shows. For instance, as Bhabha tells us, unhomeliness

is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural intentions. To be unhomed is not to be homeless, nor can ‘unhomely’ be easily accommodated in that familiar division of social life into private and public spheres . . . In that displacement, the borders between home and world become confused; and uncannily, the private and the public become part of each other, forcing upon us a vision that is as divided as it is disorienting. (Bhabha 9)

On the other hand, this is also true with homeliness.

in which we accommodate¹³ and alter it, deceive and deliver ourselves with it—is territory that Kazuo Ishiguro has made his own” (25-26). This means that his first priority is to create an environment for his characters to go through what bothers them in their lives, whether psychically or physically, and let readers see how they manage to tackle problems in their lives and still move on.

Narrating “I” and the Search for Home

According to Barry Lewis, “Adam Zachary Newton claims that ‘literary texts play host to various kinds of homelessness, even and perhaps especially that most heimlich of discursive forms, first-person narrative, where ‘home’ fits into the quiet chamber of the narrating ‘I.’ When We Were Orphans is a homefelt exploration of the quiet chamber of the self” (151). Through Christopher Banks’s narration in When We Were Orphans, the readers readily learn that it tells of the journey of its protagonist, Christopher Banks, who not only strives to become a well-known detective but uncovers his most important secret in life—the reasons why his parents have gone missing in China. From its narrative perspective, the readers follow Banks in his first-person narrative to delve into his internal world step by step in search of the truth concerning the events of his parents, while gaining knowledge from his narrative as to how Banks is able to ultimately come to terms with himself and other. Both a narrator and detective, Banks’s self is to be combined with that of the detective narrative that

¹³ Tova comments on Banks’s memories. In fact, Banks’s memories are intermingled with his self-deceptions or false impression about what really happens in the past. Therefore, truth unfolds as the plot goes, and it is how Banks himself is changed by them. To be more concise:

Banks’s memories, subjective by nature, are brought to life through Ishiguro’s meticulous choice of detail . . . [a]gain and again, as the memories unfold, details of this sort uncover the transparent self-deceptions and expose the reality [e.g. Banks thinks his ambition to become detective is kept as a secret; ironically, it seems that everyone knows about his aspirations so that a magnifying glass is sent as a birthday gift to him. From the novel, readers would know that Banks’s recollection could be fragile and fluctuating]. (Tova 43)

helps examine how When We Were Orphans is different from a typical detective story that Ishiguro utilizes for him to bring forth the themes about the emotional aspects of Banks's self.

Kazuo Ishiguro traces Christopher Banks's experience of drifting from one world into another, with his consciousness at the same time getting deeper into "a sort of internal world . . . [feeling that] when you heal your own past, the whole world will come to be put back together again" (Shaffer, "interview" 4). In When We Were Orphans, Banks tends to cherish a childhood bubble, at a time when people believe that the world is a better one than that when they grow up (7). As the bubble bursts due to traumatic family events, the protagonist hopes that by the time the problem is solved, his life will have been totally back on track. Toward the end of the story, however, Banks seems still unable to totally fix his uneasiness about life and yet he believes "at least he's kind of gotten rid of it. He's come to some resolution . . . He knows he's a certain way" (12). This is why this thesis chooses to concentrate on the character's search for self through narrative and his possible freedom from desire despite his pondering the total lack of it¹⁴ though Banks cannot totally solve the disgraceful past events with regard to his parents in contrast to his ability to successfully crack other cases.

Narrating Self-identity through the Detective Narrative

¹⁴ When reading Kazuo Ishiguro's When We Were Orphans, one may recall Charles Dickens' Great Expectations (1860). The orphaned Pip in Dickens' novel is somewhat similar to Christopher Banks's condition, because of their strong upward mobility to assimilate into the upper class. Nevertheless, the result is rather disappointing when they actually get there, particularly when they learn about the scandalous truth regarding their financial support. After Banks knows the truth of his life scandal, he abandons his life missions. Yet, in his deepest heart, he cares about his former goals of life, from which readers can learn his concerns about Sarah's having a romance with a less ambitious man like the French count. The fact that he reads the newspapers in the British Museum about his past achievement again manifests that he cannot altogether discard his old thinking. However, he accepts his truth of life and is relatively more at ease than before his search for his parents. Other writers, besides Dickens, also influence Ishiguro, including "Dostoevsky, Kafka . . . Charlotte Brontë, and Chekhov" (Childs 123).

Since “life examined...is a life narrated” (Ricoeur, Reader 435), Ricoeur’s narrative identity, according to Mark Muldoon, is formed between: (1) narrative text and (2) the reader. To begin with, a narrative is a text “recounting of someone[(self)] being and doing” (75) by emplotting life experience into something more coherent and sensible. Through narrative, when people tell their own stories in a sustained manner, they are able to be recognized as “belonging to a certain family, locality, tradition and culture. This character, in turn, finds him- or herself enmeshed in a complex web of prior stories that make up a narrative heritage founded upon the epics, tragedies and dramas (both orthodox and subversive, both real and unreal)” (Muldoon 75). Thus, they may find out how they are part of a tradition that they are to make up their own stories describing their distinctness relating to the social network. For example, the 19th century narrative regarding the model detective Sherlock Holmes figure¹⁵ and childhood of the period has partially influenced Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans. Through Banks’s own narration, how he is similar or dissimilar to the past story and culture is to be unveiled. In addition to the narrative text there is the act of reading. A text usually “sets up a novel space of indeterminacy for the reader where normal expectations are suspended and other variations on themes, dilemmas and crisis are presented” (Muldoon 76). It will be argued in this thesis that the role of the reader consists of not only the others’ vision but also the

¹⁵ The traditional detective narrative derived from the realistic novels that like those novels, the conventions served as a powerful reinforcement of man’s belief in external order and meaning. The outcome of the detective’s search for truth . . . in a crucial sense, predetermined . . . every mystery could be shown to have a code that could be broken . . . Thus in reading Sherlock Holmes tale, we always enjoy the assurance that no matter how bizarre or seemingly inexplicable the events, reason will prevail, the guilty party will be captured and punished, and the ‘real’ order of things will be reestablished. (McCaffery 39)

However, in the twentieth century, “with its epistemological skepticism; its principles of Indeterminacy, Uncertainty, and Relativity; and its more sophisticated understanding of the limits of both deductive and inductive reasoning—has seen readjustments being made in detective fiction” (39). As a novel in the anti-detective narrative style, When We Were Orphans is a work of the twentieth century, different from the traditional detective narrative, too, which will be elaborated in later chapters.

different vision of the self that looks at its own text. Thus, “[u]nlike an egological entity based on an immutable substance, self-consistency of the narrative self will include change and mutability within the cohesion of a lifetime” (Muldoon 76). Paul Ricoeur’s three mimeses, prefiguration, configuration, and refiguration, are to be mentioned to help explain the triad self’s experience, narrative, and the reader’s vision in a more systematic way. In sum, narrative identity of the self is variable with the ongoing telling of life’s stories and endless interpreting of them. In the thesis, prefiguration and configuration are to be compared with Tzvetan Todorov’s theory of the detective narrative which includes story of crime (fibula; story) and story of investigation (sjuzet; discourse) both of which require the joining in of readers’ vision. The combination of the theories makes Banks’s status as a narrator and detective more explicable. Nevertheless, it is further argued that Banks’s story is different from the typical detective narrative. Readers in When We Were Orphans are simply duped into believing it is a regular detective story, with its outward signs.

In addition to the background information presented in Chapter One, the detective narrative is introduced in chapter two to first discuss the genre’s framework which is supposed to be linked with the narrative self and related themes (e.g. the sense of morality or the purpose of solving the case). The readers, like the sleuth himself/herself, are to participate in the action of discovering what the truth is. With a traditional detective narrative scheme, the narrative text usually intends to delay the final revelation of truth. It is also usually not narrated chronologically in that the crime has happened prior to the beginning of the detective story. Thus, the detective and the reader are to join in externalizing the truth of crime. Then, four kinds of the typical detective narrative plots are introduced. It is argue that When We Were Orphans is an anti-detective narrative novel, which cautions against being read like a

typical detective novel. The crime of the anti-detective plot is actually secondary, because it focuses on the narrative mode itself tantalizing readers' expectation of solving the crime. In the novel, Banks's parents are not kidnapped by any evildoer, so readers try to interpret Banks's life through his tale, which seems more important given the novel's focus on the emotional aspects of the sleuth. Moreover, the themes concerning morality and guilt are involved. In addition, the interpretive process of the detective narrative is repetitive that each time the text is analyzed, something new is added up to the former incomplete deduction until more satisfying outcome is reached (Porter 108-263). Yet, the transgressions of the themes of morality and guilt as well as the Chinese-box structure in the typical detective narrative are to be examined, too.

Preliminary Conclusion

According to the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, to narrate means "to tell (as a story) in detail," and narrative refers to "the representation in art of an event or story" (772). Broadly speaking, with the incidents having happened in the past and the preservation of memory, almost every person has stories to tell in that "[h]uman beings are a narrative species. We tell stories incessantly; we read and listen to them" (Reich 1789).

It is significant that Kazuo Ishiguro's novels are usually written in the first-person point of view. The narrators often tell their own stories through looking back on what have already occurred and how the things of the past can become helpful for narrators to tell them to others in the story and the readers of the novel. As Reich Tova puts it,

[m]emory—its stratagems, its selectivity, its obsessional quality, its refinements, its expedience and uses—constitutes one of Ishiguro's great

preoccupations. It is through the strata and associative quality of memory that the author constructs this novel. It moves with seemingly effortless grace from the protagonist's memories of different moments in the present to an equally rich and varied trove in the past. Indeed, the flow of the narrative is essentially a circuitous journey through memory.

(43)

From the passage above, we know that it is the power of narration which helps the protagonists to deal with their troubles of the past, making the unbearable, at least, more bearable. As a detective himself, Kazuo Ishiguro utilizes the detective narrative structure to bring up the themes of self-searching for Banks in When We Were Orphans. Through narrative perspective of Christopher Banks himself, other roles within or outside the story provide their visions giving the story more possibilities and making it become more variegated and colorful: "in his novels Ishiguro reaches back and forth in time with later events prefiguring earlier events, so that even to a reader with a highly retentive memory who reads the book at one sitting the significance of what is earlier revealed is not available until a second reading on which the novel will read like a new novel about familiar people" (Shaffer, Understanding 11). In other words, to get a whole picture of what this novel is about, a reader has to read it several times to enable himself/herself to interpret the text insightfully. In fact, the more the narrative is analyzed and interpreted, the more probable explanations are there to be offered in the text.

The whole thesis is thus divided into four chapters. Chapter One as shown above is the introduction. Chapter Two explores the concepts mainly based on discussions of selfhood, narrating self and time and three mimeses, as well as the detective narrative to lay the foundations for the interpretation of the text. It is argued

that When We Were Orphans is treated as an anti-detective story. Chapter Three deals with how the theoretical scheme is devised to explain the novel, particularly in connection with the protagonist's self. Combining the social context and Ishiguro's intended universal theme with the narrative structure of the novel, this thesis shows how Banks's unstable self is to evolve ultimately in his life which enables himself to become a new individual in When We Were Orphans. It helps manifest how Banks, by narrating what is on the move in his everyday life of the past to regain self-awareness, is able to know more about his inner desire and alter it to some extent. The narration of retelling the past helps gradually unveil the protagonist's memory. Without the practice, a supposed new self is not to be easily formed, let alone making readers understand his past. Chapter Four concludes the thesis by summarizing the previous chapters and making final remarks on the textual analysis of this novel. It addresses itself to how Banks mistakenly believes that restrictions ultimately are lifted from the new self. From the above-mentioned sections, we know that mobility contributes to the making of his shifting identities¹⁶ and at the same time helps Banks discard old beliefs, especially those concerning his family. It shows that identities are unstable, and the ever-changing self is to be narrated and interpreted each time the character relates his story in communication with the readers.

¹⁶ The new identities are targeted at the traditional ones such as “the core belief systems upon which human civilizations have developed and survived . . . Beliefs and values guide persons in their actions and in the ways they interpret their lives as meaningful in everyday living, but also they define our social, cultural, and political public institutions” (Lum 4).

Chapter Two

Narrating “I” and the Detective Narrative

[I]t is certainly true that life is lived and the story told. An unbridgeable distinction remains, but it is, in part, abolished through our capacity to appropriate in the application to ourselves the intrigues we received from our culture, and our capacity of thus experimenting with the various roles that the favorite persona assume in the stories we love best. And so we try to gain by means of imaginative variation of our ego a narrative understanding of ourselves, the only kind of understanding that escapes the pseudo-alternatives of pure change and absolute identity.

—Paul Ricoeur, A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination 437

Memory, I realize, can be an unreliable thing; often it is heavily coloured by the circumstances in which one remembers, and no doubt this applies to certain of the recollections I have gathered here.

—Kazuo Ishiguro, A Pale View of Hills 156

Selfhood

To comprehend the personal or narrative identity exemplified by the protagonist Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans, it is preferable for us to ponder on his selfhood. As David Pellauer points out, “the question of personal or narrative identity leads to the question of what it means to be a self” (90). To Paul Ricoeur, the self is composed of unchangeable and changeable characters so that it has to be attested by indirect methods. Evolving from the mere thinking of the cogito self

and the realization of the complexity of human consciousness of the shattered cogito, the hermeneutic self is to facilitate people's understanding of how the alterable ipse identity, is to be added to the inflexible idem identity whenever people comprehend or redescribe their experience in the past. According to Patrick Crowley, "Idem refers to a notion of identity based on Sameness whereas ipse, described as Selfhood, can incorporate change within a recognizable entity (1-2). It is through hermeneutical self that people can make their lives more meaningful while understanding time and again their past action.

In Oneself as Another, Paul Ricoeur discusses the question of selfhood. To elaborate on the self, he begins by mentioning three intentions behind it. To begin with, the "reflexive mediation" self is stressed over the "immediate positing of the subject" (1). Secondly, utilizing ipse and idem, Ricoeur divides identity into the changeable and unchangeable ones. That is, while idem "unfolds an entire hierarchy of significations . . . [of which] permanence in time constitutes the highest order, to which will be opposed that which differs, in the sense of changing or variable" (2) that usually remains the same, "ipse implies no assertion concerning some unchanging core of the personality" (2). Thirdly, identity consists of the "dialectic of self and other than self" (3) which is the sameness of self and selfhood of the self. This emphasizes that oneself usually "implies otherness to an intimate degree that one cannot be thought of without the other" (3). In the following, how hermeneutical self, which Ricoeur emphasizes, will be introduced after its derivation from the cogito, and its transformation to the shattered cogito of the self.

Ricoeur says that the question of the self, or the "I," the ego cogito derives from the Cartesian belief that in "Meditations—the 'I' who does the doubting and who reflects upon itself in the cogito is just as metaphysical and hyperbolic as is doubt

itself with respect to all knowledge. It is, in truth, no one” (Oneself 6). The question is: what is “this ‘I’ who doubts, so uprooted with respect to the spatiotemporal bearings of my body?” (5). To Ricoeur, without the focus on the body, what is left for the self is “a mind, or soul, or intellect, or reason” (7) because “I am therefore precisely only a thing that thinks” (7). As opposed to this idea of the self, Ricoeur tells us that the former ‘I’ is by no means “the speaker, the agent, character of narration, subject of moral imputation” (7) to whom the shattered cogito must be introduced.

For the shattered cogito, Nietzsche is the one who “brings to light the rhetorical strategies that have been buried, forgotten, and even hypocritically repressed and denied, in the name of the immediacy of reflection” (Oneself 11). In other words, nothing is really direct and simple. For instance, language and consciousness can be deceitful: (1) in The Course on Rhetoric, it is proposed that “tropes—metaphors, synecdoche, metonymy . . . are inherent in the most basic linguistic functioning. There is no non-rhetorical ‘naturalness’ of language. Language is figurative through and through” (12). Besides, “everything that reaches our consciousness is utterly and completely adjusted, simplified, schematized, interpreted” (14). Therefore, language and consciousness are not straightforward and need to be scrutinized. In this way, the hermeneutical self is introduced.

The hermeneutics of the self is “the detour of reflection by way of analysis, the dialectic of selfhood and sameness, and finally the dialectic of selfhood and otherness” (Oneself 16). To the “reawakened, liberated, regenerated” (20) past experience, hermeneutics is helpful for further explaining human action which is the “fundamental mode of being” (20).

Self and Narrative

Hermeneutical self must learn about its self by means of knowing its relation to others and the self to itself. J. Lenore Wright categorizes them into inner and outer selves. The former self involves one's relation to others without distance to one's self and the latter is one's relation to the self with distance. Narrating the hermeneutical self is to strike a balance between the two and make sense of the self in a more elaborate way by not stressing merely abstraction of social identity concerning gender, class, race and so forth but by setting sight on the more delicate layers of being an individual in a society. Therefore, narrative identity is to be formed through one's narrating self experience in relation to one's self and others in a detour to widen the scope of one's life. Christopher Banks's narration in When We Were Orphans which tells his story in relation to himself and others makes his self understood more thoroughly. As a narrator and detective, Banks self with inner and outer views helps readers to share his looking at his past experience and 'solving' the crime.

Besides, Wright develops his thinking about how the self comes to terms with its encounters in life by expanding his view from different philosophers' ideas of autobiographical accounts. He thinks that writing about the self is "a process of revelation in which a particular image of oneself emerges as a result of one's ontological views of the self and in response to the rhetorical forces shaping self-representation" (3). Indeed, the writing is not only a revelation of the self in narrative but also a philosophical self-reflection. Wright points out that for Alexander Nehamas, "self construction is both a literary and philosophical accomplishment" (4). In response to this, Wright bifurcates the two levels of self examination: one is ontological (the inner self), another is rhetorical (the outer self). The ontological self is 'the writer self' who narrates his/her relations to other people. It has no distance from the self's view. In contrast, the rhetorical self is 'the author self' who presents

his/her relatedness with his/herself. The authorial self situates at some distance beyond the first level of the self (6). This twofold self looks alike but bypasses being trapped in the fallacy of the binary oppositions of social construction. Scrutinizing the self is, so to speak, transcending the abstraction such as class, gender, race, and thus becoming concerned more with the uniqueness in each individual. This is why we should explore “layers of our existence—temporal, psychosocial, spiritual, historical, and metaphysical” (6). In order to care for the complexity and subtlety of the self, Wright argues that the true self lies between the outer and the inner self, without laying particular stress on either of the two (5-6). Drawing philosophical works such as Saint Augustine of Hippo’s Confessions, René Descartes’ Meditations on First Philosophy, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s The Confessions, Friedrich Nietzsche’s Ecce Homo, and Hazel Barnes’s The Story I Tell Myself Wright discusses the concepts of God, time, memory, and knowledge in the narrative (108). As Wright puts it, Augustine tries to bring together the memory of humans’ fall of the past, along with human beings’ existence of the present and the hope of God in the future. Augustine, as Wright sees him, is the first philosopher who mentions that the self-reflective view of the ontological “I” forms the cogito of the self-presence. Yet, Augustine is not acknowledged until the Enlightenment as a philosopher of the self. Descartes otherwise concentrates on the thinking ability of one’s self. In terms of the well-known saying cogito, ergo sum (I think, therefore I am) by Descartes, Wright believes, the reflection on the self can simply be done through rational reflection on the self, instead of phenomenological existence. Then, Rousseau strikes a balance between the mind and the body, suggesting that the self forms its identity by placing his/herself in society and history. Yet, this identity is to be changed or diversified through the written narrative about it. For instance, through the narrating of the self,

the boundary between ontological and rhetorical self can be blurred. This is the case with Banks in When We Were Orphans because after a close reading we find his true self straddles both ontological self and rhetorical self. For Wright, the opinions of Nietzsche's self come from his creative will to power. As a consequence, he thinks that Nietzsche no longer believes in the physical notion of the inner self anymore, claiming that God is dead (172-73).

In addition, combining the phenomenology (the science of human experience) and hermeneutics (the science of interpretation), Paul Ricoeur denies 'the claim of immediacy, adequation, and apodicticity made by the Cartesian cogito and the Kantian 'I think'' (Hahn 4). He does not think that self-identity and human consciousness are direct and immediate. That is, people should reflect on and interpret the objectifications in life by analyzing and interpreting them in a creative manner, because to Ricoeur, human lives are almost never transparent as they apparently seem. Thus, to him, there is "no self-understanding that is not mediated by signs, symbols, and texts" (Ricoeur, Text 15). As a result, we are placed in a world where signs of language permeates. In order to make sense of the selves when encountering the worldly signs, humans interpret them time and again since there are almost always gaps among the interpretations that the process is never complete. Therefore, Ricoeur "pursues a reflective process that leads back indirectly to the self through an analysis of how the self manifests or objectifies itself in language, action and narrative" (15). This runs counter to the view of Husserl who posits that there is an immediate and intuitive transcendental self which can be separated from the outside, empirical and contingent one. It results in an ego which is "an egology without ontology" (Ricoeur, Husserl 194) and an ideal self Ricoeur tends to avoid (Ricoeur, History 101ff). To Ricoeur, Husserl's self overlooks its importance in existence as well as the crucial

aspects of the interaction of the self with others. Following Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and even later Husserl emphasize the world's influence on the self. Hans-Georg Gadamer further brings the pure reflective phenomenology to a hermeneutic interpretation that Ricoeur appreciates and says that phenomenology and hermeneutic should be complementary to each other.

Narrating Self and Time

How one's experience is preserved is through remembering one's self in time by memory. Consequently, people make sense of their own time through memory as opposed to calculated cosmic time. Yet, memory which is related to one's flexible consciousness is subject to change under the influence of imagination and fragment, as well as incomplete, or incorrect preservation of the past action. Narrating the memory of the past is both making sense of the self and creating something new to the self. In this way, nothing actually repeats itself in the same way in time, but continues looking at the self with multiple vision. Banks's narration in When We Were Orphans manifests how narration of the past is to be presented in a creative manner. To be sure, the more memory is portrayed, the greater possibility it brings while the self is being narrated.

If ontological life calls for interpretation, it adds up to this: human life has something that is worth mentioning and preserving. As Muldoon puts it, “[n]o other physical existent is historical in quite the same manner as a human being. Only a human self lives a present while being conscious of the past and future replete with memories, regrets, wishes, and hope” (65). To discuss this question, we should now turn to the writings about being and time. In opposed to the cosmos time which always goes by, it is through memory that we regain the past time. Therefore, “time is

nothing more than the distension of the soul” (Lloyd 16). The discrepancy between what has really happened in time and the events remembered by memory shall be resolved through how people are able to form the unity between them by plotting and telling their own stories. In this way, “[m]emory and self-knowledge thus belong together” (20).

The past is never lost, however; it is preserved as two kinds of memories: habit of memory, and recollection of memory. When we think of the past, it is modified through the present, changing into a new present. A case in point can be found in When We Were Orphans. When Banks retells his life story he has already experienced it. He relates from his memory. That is why the major portion of the text is in the past tense, but near the end of the story it is reversed to the present tense. It is worth noting that “no event is for the sake of any other—that there is no natural teleology ordering events in relation to each other—leaves the way open for a multiplicity of narratives to give significance to event in a variety of ways” (Ishiguro, Orphans 121).

Three Mimeses

Ricoeur’s “three mimeses” tells us how the gap between the personal and cosmic time is to be bridged through narrative. Through narration people tell their story by mimicking what has happened in new ways. The three mimeses clarify how the constitution or comprising fraction of memory which happens in time is to be made into a possible whole or entirety. What is important is that the perspective of the reader to the narration is to be included in the third mimesis. As a result, while Banks in When We Were Orphans is narrating his own story in the novel, the readers’ perspectives are helpful for adding meaning to the plot, too. How three mimeses are connected with the detective narrative will be discussed in later sections. Particularly

the crime happens in cosmic time is to be described in the story in the terms of personal time so as to defer the revelation of the facts about cases of wrongdoing.

Aporia (Ricoeur, Time 3:261) refers to the discrepancy between “phenomenology of time (moral/ subjective time) and cosmic time (science/objective time)” (Muldoon 64). To account for the past, people would gradually realize how time can be incorporated in narrative. Consequently, to Ricoeur, “time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal experience” (Time 1: 52). Since the cosmic time is insurmountable, mortal passage in time is also enigmatic, the paradox between the two ought to be ameliorated through the ‘poetic’ explanation for the unresolved aporia experience of time (Time 3:4). Borrowed from Aristotle’s Poetics, the term poiesis refers to active composition of the plot making the aporetics of temporality into comprehensible accounts. Like tragedy, people act and suffer in time’s passing. Only through reorganizing the happenings in narrative can we reshape the past and make life more valuable. As a result, two key words, mythos and mimesis, are worth noticing here. While the former means “the ability to plot events together into a system” (Muldoon 66), the latter signifies “the imitation—representation—of human action (praxis)” (66). The mimesis is creative in the sense that we look at things in new ways (Ricoeur, Reader 134). For example, in tragedy, “human action is redescribed as geater, nobler, than actual life is” (Ricoeur, Reader 84). This is why re-description of reality or fiction depiction can expand the scope of real life.

Ricoeur amplifies the mimesis by dividing it into three levels: Mimesis 1 (prefiguration), Mimesis 2 (configuration), and Mimesis 3 (refiguration). The second mimesis is the plotting measure mediating between the first mimesis and the third mimesis. Mimesis 1 is the pre-knowledge of pragmatic knowledge of action and

life conditions, whereas Mimesis 3 denotes the reaction of the reader to Mimesis 2. To start with, prefiguration brings forth “semantics of action” to differentiate action from the body movements and incidents (Ricoeur, Reader 433). In other words, subordinating conjunctions such as after, until, when, while, then, are present in language to delineate events. Yet, another case of the prefiguration is that people tend to have the common sense of the sequence of occurrences of life without necessarily being taught repetitively how time goes on in the way it does. Secondly, configuration is to let the sporadic and fragmentary become a segment of a whole. There are two types of the configuration: one is episodic (chronological) and the other is configurational (nonchronological). Episodic configuration expects a conclusion with its developmental process of the story. It makes people wonder “What is next?” in the middle of the plot. Configurational configuration, on the contrary, is to have various progressions simply in need of pointing to an idea or theme to make it known as a complete recountal. Thirdly, refiguration underscores the importance of readers’ reaction to the text, which is “to remake action” (Ricoeur, Time 1:81) succeeding to the composition itself.

Reader as a Different Vision

The third variety of the three mimeses mentioned above is to widen its scope by including self’s own vision in addition to readers’ view in interpreting or understanding past action in telling one’s own story. Hence, Christopher Banks in When We Were Orphans is supposed to look at himself differently after retelling his own past in his story.

The three mimeses in Time and Narrative is broadened in its scope by Ricoeur in his works, especially the Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination. Muldoon

mentions that after Time and Narrative, Ricoeur “universalize[s] the role narrative, making it fundamental to the emergence and reality of the self” (77). In other words, life experience and narrative are interconnected. For example, Ricoeur says that “If it is true that fiction cannot be completed other than life, and that life can not be understood other than through stories we tell about it, then we are let to say that a life examined, in the sense borrowed from Socrates, is a life narrated” (Reader 435). To begin with, the first mimesis shows that there is an underlying structure of life that regards “life as an activity and a desire in search of a narrative” (Ricoeur, Reader 434). As Ricoeur suggests, the urge to narrate for the self is coming from within, rather than from without, “deriving from the narrative intelligence through which we attempt to recover . . . the narrative identity which constitutes us” (Reader 436). In his opinion, there is something larger than life as nothing more than existence. Hence, people tend to interpret their lives with narrative. Secondly, people are influenced by the stories told orally by the tradition as well as the literary works handed down in writing. From these legacies, they create their own narrative so that “each of us becomes our own narrator without becoming authors and bearing the mask of a fictive persona” (Muldoon 77). Life writing is needed for people to know themselves. As Ricoeur’s narrative identity suggests:

- a) knowing of the self is an interpretation; b) the interpretation of the self finds narrative, among other signs and symbols, to be a privileged mediation; c) this mediation borrows from history as much as from fiction making the life story a fictive history as much as from fiction making the life story a fictive history or a historical fiction comparable to biographies of great persons where fiction and history are blended together. (“Narrative Identity” 78)

This is why writing of the self is a way for making sense of one's life, whether in typical autobiographical style, and whether this person is of the higher social status, or lower status, or whether he/she is truly a writer/artist. Consequently, the third mimesis in this light does not merely rely on the role of the real reader to the text which is produced by a great novelist. Rather, it can be taken as a third vision that looks or interprets the narrative created by an ordinary person, thereby making understanding of the self possible and more thorough.

Narrative Identity and the Anti-Detective Narrative

Since Christopher Banks, the narrator of When We Were Orphans, is a detective, it is interesting that the story he tells about himself has some bearing on career. As a result, how Banks's narration is to be put under the detective narrative framework is to be dealt with in the following sections. Considering both the generic aspects of Banks's narrative and his searching for narrative identity, we are able to know more about him from the two dimensions of his self. In Chapter Three how sjuzet and fibula are analogous to Ricoeur's mimeses is to be explained to combine the anti-detective narrative with narrative identity.

The most crucial aspect that the detective narrative is related to narrative is its form. Like the three mimeses mentioned by Ricoeur, the detective narrative is not structured chronologically. It requires emplotment of the detective and the reader so that they are able to make out the crime in its original sequence. And finally, the detective and the reader are able to accomplish the purpose of interpretation and form their new selves. When reading When We Were Orphans, readers expect to know about the crime concerning Banks's parents' disappearance while understanding more about Banks's self. However, the crime does not really exist so that the readers can

only accomplish the latter purpose desired. Therefore, Banks's narration is depicted as an anti-detective narrative.

Pyrhönen remarks that the detective narrative is a "self-reflexive textual enigma" (7) which examines its "narrative poetics, demonstrating how it self-consciously mirrors its own form and implies a commentary not only on its own narrativity but also on narrativity in general" (7). For this reason, the detective story is to be read as a work which can be examined in relation to its own narrative form. For instance, S.E. Sweeney's "Locked Rooms: Detective Fiction, Narrative Theory, and Self-Reflexivity" (1990) sees the detective narrative as "represent[ing] narrativity in its purest form" (3). This is because it is mostly presented in uncomplicated way. To Sweeney, the detective form is quite simple and linear, "[by] emphasizing narrative sequence, suspense, and closure; by making the hierarchical organization of narrative levels visible; and by reflecting reading, writing, and interpretation" (8).

To objectify the forms of the detective narrative, some critics discuss the detective narrative in relation to its space and time. Basically, the so-called space of the detective narrative is one-dimensional and straightforward, and the time is presented anachronistically that is in need of readers' reorganization of it. For instance, Porter compares the detective fiction to architecture, whose spatial organization is worth analyzing. Thus, Porter points out that the detective story "contains itself an artifact available, like a building, for visual inspection" (229). However, Pyrhönen does not agree, because he thinks that detective fiction is not in fact three-dimensional like a building, yet it is merely due to some sequence of the content is switched and organized so that it makes people feel that way. Thus, Slavoj Žižek mentions that the detective novel is like that of the modernist one because it is impossible that either of them can be described in uncomplicated, chronological way, but each of them is to

attempt to depict a coherent, seemingly ‘real’ story instead (48-49). Joseph Frank regards spatial form as the self-reflexive construction spatially structuring the various sentiments and opinion for the incidents in the plot into a unified whole in time (“Spatial” 8-9). Yet, the literary approach “undermine[s] the inherent consecutiveness of language, frustrating the reader’s normal expectation of a sequence and forcing him to perceive the elements of the [work] as juxtaposed in space rather than in time” (10). To him, the spatial form refers to the plot which is organized in time which, however, does not have to be as straightforward as it passes by in reality. Frank Kermode and Peter Brooks thus think of the plot as a means to arrange the episodes of life occurring in time. Brooks states that plot is “an organizing and ‘intentional’ structure (in the sense of forward-moving and end-oriented) that locates the reader as if on a map or a graph by means of its shape-giving coordinates (11-12). Kermode looks upon the plot of the detective fiction as a “concordant structure” (6) by which the readers are able to grapple with the connectedness among the beginning, middle, and end through time. It is the plot which assists the readers in their understanding when it moves along, and it gives the story frame so that readers have visions of figuring out the whole development. Brooks calls the readers’ manner of reading the “anticipation of retrospection” (23). They imagine that they will make out the total story in the process of reading. In the early stages of When We Were Orphans, like those of the regular detective narrative, readers presume that sooner or later they will realize what has happened to Banks’s parents. However, though the generic framework makes them expect that they will succeed in doing so, the knowledge they gain about Banks’s past is simply the shameful truth of his family. There is no real crime as regards Banks’s parents. Yet, in the process of reading, readers know more about Banks as a person.

Brooks further points out that the spatial form of the story is related to “figures

of design” of narrative (4). Prince remarks that the narrative terms such as fabula or story as well as sjuzet or discourse can be applied to the detective plot (30, 87).

Fabula or story means “the set of narrated situations and events in their chronological sequence; the basic story material” (Pyrhönen 10), and sjuzet or discourse signifies “the set of narrated situations and events in the order of their presentation to the receiver” (10). In Tzvetan Todorov’s point of view, the plot of the detective story joins together fabula or story and sjuzet or discourse. This is because the former is the elements of the wrongdoing, and the latter is the order of the detective story shown to the receiver. Since the presence of fabula or story, the evil acts are committed before the story begins. Then, the novel provides clues for the readers and the detective. After that, the analysis starts. The “spatiality” of the detective narrative requires the readers and the detective to rearrange the fragmentary presence of the fabula or story, and endlessly reorganize the sjuzet or discourse by emplotment, the creating of the new plot to wholly make sense of the crime (10).

The above-mentioned time and space of the detective narrative show how they are not described in ordinary ways that the detective and readers’ participation is necessary. The effect is to make the story engrossing. Porter says that the basic rule for the detective narrative is that through its structure it makes people wonder the question of “Whodunit?” that piques their interest in the tale. They have to sort out the details and evidence so that they are able to make out what might have happened in the story (85-86). Searching for the answer to “Whodunit?” is equally trying to respond to the suspicion that requires investigating “Who is guilty? To answer this question, the detective and the readers cannot but join in searching for the truth and in turn knowing about the selves.

Detective Plots

In terms of plot, there are mainly four types pertaining to detective fiction for the readers to choose from: The classical detective story (the whodunit), the hard-boiled detective story, the (police) procedural, and the anti-detective story (Pyrhönen 21-22). In my opinion, Kazuo Ishiguro's When We Were Orphans belongs to the last type, which will be dealt with in Chapter Three. To facilitate the later discussion, readers need to first familiarize themselves with the plot. Thus the plot of Kazuo Ishiguro's When We Were Orphans is briefly summarized as follows. It tells of the journey of its protagonist, Christopher Banks, who not only strives to become a well-known detective but uncovers his most important secret in life—the reasons why his parents has been missing in China. Despite minor cases, Banks's story of his parents' case is unlike a typical detective narrative. This is because with the outbreak of the second Sino-Japanese War, Banks's search for Yellow Snake results in encountering Uncle Philip, who finally reveals the family scandal to Banks. The truth of the scandal destroys Banks's fantasy of his parents' case because his parents are not kidnapped due to their righteously fighting against the opium trade—in fact, his father ran away with his mistress and his mother was forced to become a war lord's maltreated concubine. The protagonist feels dejected and goes back to the UK after meeting his mother, who has gone mad and hardly recognizes him. The nonexistence of the crime is how the plot of the story diverges from the typical detective narrative.

The first type of the detective story is the classical detective story (the whodunit) that presents the crime, furnishes clues, then identifies the outlaw, and explains the solution. The text is usually depicted in incomplete manners so that the fragments of the evidence invite the readers to attach themselves to the analysis of the evildoing. The detective and the police are in friendly competition in this division of the

detective narrative. Besides, they belong mostly to the upper of middle class and are educated people. Traditionally speaking, the whodunit describes the world which has been peaceful before the criminal intrusion. Consequently, to solve the crime is to restore the peaceful environment.

Secondly, the hard-boiled detective story stresses the importance of the incitement of the investigation to the detective. Generally speaking, the process of solving the crime becomes more and more complicated in the hard-boiled detective fiction. This is because it can get entangled in amorous affair and new-level trouble in the crime which is under study. Usually set in the corrupted urban surroundings, the sleuth has to ponder over moral matter, and single out what is the most critical matter he/she really has to deal with. The tension in this type of novel is greater than that in the whodunit. Therefore, the readers are more emotionally engaged in hard-boiled detective story. Unlike the classical detective story, the investigator in this type is the comparatively insignificant private detective or the police who tackles the problem of the extremes of society—the wealthiest and the poorest social groups. Therefore, both the underworld and the professional crimes are grappled with.

Thirdly, in the (police) procedural, some clues are hidden from the readers, yet the readers know who the wrongdoer is. In comparison, the police is rather ignorant of who the outlaw is. This makes the readers wonder whether or not the police will be able to solve the crime. The plot in this group keeps the readers in suspense by drawing a parallel between the exploration of the police and the evildoer's crafting and doing the crime. The progression of the investigation is slow, drawing attention to the skills and competence in dealing with the crime. The readers of the (police) procedural could easily take notice of and find interest in positions of various policemen on the illegal matters. The story of this category is often presented in the

urban setting and depicted like an investigative report.

Fourthly, anti-detective story (or for that matter the metaphysical detective story, the postmodern detective story, and the analytic detective story) emphasizes the textual techniques and narrative effects in the novel. The lawlessness is contemplated upon through the influence of the mysterious impression made by the complication of plot and formal design. As a matter of fact, the crime and the wrongdoing in metaphysical detective story are secondary to the metanarrative or self-reflexive mode of the text. The complexity of the narrative form itself plays the pivotal role to be scrutinized. For example, the author of this group plays tricks on time and interconnection among the plots. That is, the story might appear so complex that the readers can hardly make out what the story really means. Moreover, at times it does not provide a solution to the crime, or, the outcome of the detective's efforts does not lend help to the coherence of the plot. Anti-detective story constantly parodies the conventions of the detective novel for the purpose of inviting the readers to partake in making up stories in the novel. While the readers participate in the creation of a logical wholeness of the plot, they may be driven to attend to the format and characteristics of the detective genre. As Sweeney puts it, “[m]etaphysical detective stories—composed in equal parts of parody, paradox, epistemological allegory (nothing can be known with any certainty), and insoluble mystery—self-consciously question the very nature of reality” (4).¹⁷ The postmodern detective story looks “like a detective tale which cautions against reading like a detective” (Dettmar 156), thereby allowing more possibilities for the readers than other types of the detective fiction. The thought-provoking part of the type of the story is its “meta-narrative processes of

¹⁷ Well-known examples provided by David Herman are Jorge Luis Borges's “Death and the Compass” (1942), Umberto Eco's The Name of the Rose (1980), Vladimir Nabokov's Pale Fire (1962), and Thomas Pynchon's The Crying of Lot 49 (1966) (120).

creating and sustaining a sense of a crime and an investigation. The text itself now becomes the mystery to be solved . . . it uses the conventions and the settings of the mainstream variants in order to textualize reality, drawing attention to its constructed nature” (Herman 120). As a result, this type of the detective narrative particularly requires readers’ participation in reading and interpreting the text, because their contribution to the text is usually “the major, often even the only, means of lending coherence to the narrative” (120).

Morality and Guilt

The typical themes in the detective narrative often involve morality and guilt that make the narrative more intricate and action-packed. But in When We Were Orphans, Banks’s moral status of figuring out the crime first seems apparent but later becomes ambiguous. Aside from minor cases, he thinks that by dealing with his parents’ case, he is able to save the world. That is, people can trust him to rescue them from war. However, the story becomes even more complex because his parents are not as moral as he thinks and he cannot save the world, either.

The themes concerning the identification of guilt and the search for moral codes in examining the causes of criminal offense by the detective are those that make the detective fiction go beyond its formal structure. To Roger Caillois, it is the depiction of death, murder, and violence that fascinate the readers of conventional topics (“Detective” 12). There are usually suspects who appear to be capable of doing something illegal. And it is by placing the reliance on the detective’s intuition and ability of reasoning that the investigator is able to “evaluat[e] . . . who had sufficient cause to harm the victim” (Pyrhönen 17). The detective and the reader are placed at the same level so that they are both given “all clues” and shown the “most likely

suspect” (18). For the detective to determine whether the culprit is guilty or not, the benchmarks include not only the judicial but also the moral criteria. In particular, there are times when the question “Who done it?” is not equal to the inquiry about “Who is guilty?” The investigator sometimes oscillates between legal matters and moral guilt. Ideally, if society functions within the laws, injustices should no longer exist. Nevertheless, morally speaking, there is frequently something justice leaves behind. At this time, the society in the detective fiction inclines to rely on the detective, instead of the police. This is due to the fact that people in the detective story “has to trust [the detectives] to be familiar with the law, understand the morals subtending communal life, know how to apply both codes, and how to balance the codes against on another in a situation of contradiction” (18). This is why detectives are believed or ought to be deemed a protector whom the common people in the story trust and confide in (Auden 15-24). In another situation, the detective has to use unlawful means to achieve the goal of solving the case. Borrowing from Martha Nussbaum’s term, there is a “picture,” a view of life which manifests itself that “from the reader’s perspective, the investigation is just as much as a probing into and a revelation of an investigator’s moral principles as it is a scrutiny of the suspects and their social context” (Pyrhönen 19). As a consequence, the moral or legal issues in the detective novel are presented by the author to be judged by the readers. They in turn shape readers’ concept of life. Their attitudes toward the themes of morality and law add another possibility to transcend the restriction of the detective novel’s form. In When We Were Orphans, Banks gives up his moral ideal due to the fact that his parents are not as upright as he imagines. He is also indirectly involved and benefits from the opium trade. Readers have to decide whether Banks himself is rightful enough or equal to his job as a detective. Banks abandons his dream of saving the

world because he does not think that people can still trust him and rely on him any more.

The Chinese-Box Structure

The Chinese-box structure enables each level of interpretation to have its importance of making clear how events have possibly or truly happened in the story. In the detective narrative, the more the crime is interpreted, the more the investigator or readers know about the truth of crime. If Banks's story is to be studied, not only Banks's parents' situation is to be unveiled gradually, but readers can also know about Banks's life itself through repetitive interpretations. Yet, Banks's parents' situation is not related to real crime committed to them; thus it is utilized for readers to comprehend Banks's reality and past life that makes When We Were Orphans an anti-detective novel.

The final characterization of the detective genre is the repetitive nature in its narrative form. Donald P. Spence designates it as a recursive operator, which is a spiral structure that is composed of repetitive mode. This style catches the readers' attention to the typical picture in the detective form (190). The operator transforms the detective's and the readers' interpretations into the figurative structure that functions with seemingly similar layers yet practically of slightly different styles. That is to say, the structure makes the analyses of the sleuth and the reader a repetitive and a becoming process. As a detective himself, Banks narrates his past self so that readers look at the character from the perspective of his past vision before he discovers the truth regarding his parents. By collecting clues from the story, readers know what really happens to the Banks's family step by step as the detective searches for the truth in the past.

The Chinese-box structure is supplemented with the detective's and readers' creation of their own interpretations by recognizing and discerning the gaps among each level of the repetitive form. The form "primarily concerns each and every participant's conclusive interpretation of another's story at each narrative level" (Pyrhönen 261). Each level contains its limited view so that the next layer of it gives a new expression to the partially similar idea. Readers have the satisfaction of reading other's (e.g. the detective's) interpretations and creating their own in the reading process. Thus, the importance of the detective fiction not only lies in its conclusive ending which tells the truth of how the crime has happened, but each level of interpretation is significant. It is said as "an asymmetrical, abysmal structure," that each of the Chinese-box structure has "no analysis . . . [that] can intervene without transforming and repeating other elements in the sequence, which is thus not a stable sequence, but which nevertheless produces certain regular effects" (Johnson 213-14). The readers know and feel disappointed that in each Chinese-box layer, there are limitations regarding the explanation of the repetitive and similar plot which requires yet another level to help pass on the story. Therefore, the "detective fiction reflects the analysis of its own narrative mysteries as well as the mysteries of our own analysis, which is itself solipsistic and self-reflexive" (262). Each interpreter in every level thinks that his/her thinking is right, but ultimately is frustrated by repeated failures of knowing the truth. Sometimes the issues which apparently look familiar or straightforward turn out to be something quite unexpected as people might assume. As a consequence, "The best detective narratives use the familiar, the well-known, and that which goes without saying in order either to probe into the features giving them this quality of familiarity or to question our supposed familiarity with such things" (262-63). Indeed, the repetitive Chinese-box characteristic of the detective structure

arouses the readers' curiosity as they delve into the plot and the elements of the story. While they understand a detective narrative, they come to know themselves better as well.

The ideas concerning selfhood, time, and narrative, three mimeses, and the detective narrative are mentioned in this chapter so as to lay the groundwork for illustrating Christopher Banks's search for the self through narrative in When We Were Orphan as an anti-detective story in the following chapter. For example, Idem and Ipse of selfhood are applied to Banks's self which is both influenced by and dissimilar to the 19th century heroic character of Sherlock Holmes and the childhood experience of the period. With the passing of time, memories, even though they still preserve the past experience, often vary from time to time. This is because what happens in the present affects the concepts regarding past happenings. Banks's adventure to the old places makes him alter his mind concerning his childhood. Thus, through narrative, readers are to join in making sense of Bank's life. Moreover, generic aspect of the analysis of the text is to contribute to interpreting and scrutinizing Banks's self as a detective and narrator of his past story. The anti-detective structure helps reader to realize how they are manipulated into believing that Banks's parents' case truly exists mainly because Banks is a detective by occupation. In sum, in the following chapter, the major ideas mentioned in Chapter two and related examples with regard to Banks's story will be further elaborated.

Chapter Three
Banks's Self Narration
through the Anti-Detective Narrative

What would we know of love and hate, of moral feelings and, in general, of all that we call the self, if these had not been brought to language and articulated by literature? Thus what seems most contrary to subjectivity, and what structural analysis discloses as the texture of the text, is the very medium within which we can understand ourselves.

—Paul Ricoeur, Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences 143


Where now are our ardent prayers? Where now are our best gifts—the pure tears of emotion which a guardian angel dries with a smile as he sheds upon us lovely dreams of ineffable childish joy? Can it be that life has left such heavy traces upon one's heart that those tears and ecstasies are for ever vanished? Can it be that there remains to us only the recollection of them?

—Leo Tolstoy, Childhood 44

Narrating the Components and Divergence of the Self

Idem and ipse identity helps manifest how Christopher Banks's character is formed as well as how it is placed in and influenced by the past narrative and the way he remains the same or diverges from what is expected from the novel. Narrating the self makes it possible to understand one's self in a detour. Through the narrative, idem and ipse identity of a person is revealed as a new way of comprehending how the self occurs and evolves.

In When We Were Orphans Kazuo Ishiguro creates his character Banks who is nostalgic about his childhood and driven by the mission to search for his lost idealized parents. To Ishiguro, the background of the novel is secondary to what the main character in it has tried to convey to readers. Ishiguro states that the main purpose of his novels is not to present what is faithful to what really happens, or how truthful his works are to the historical facts. To be more precise, he says: “I’m supposed to invent my own world . . . I look at a certain time in history, because I think it would help to bring out certain themes” (Wong 310). Indeed, the historical background is intended to manifest issues regarding the protagonist in the story. Ricoeur mentions that idem identity is possibly made up of the habit or character with minor changes that make a person identifiable. What is noticeable is that aside from the character that one is born with, culturally speaking



the identity of a person or a community is made up of these identifications with values, norms, ideals, models, and heroes, in which the person or the community recognizes itself. Recognizing oneself in contributes to recognizing oneself by. The identification with heroic figures clearly displays this otherness assumed as one’s own, but this is already latent in the identification with values which make us place a ‘cause’ above our own survival. (Oneself 121)

Aside from the above-mentioned acquired character, the idem identity generally means the “lasting dispositions by which a person is recognized” (121) which repeats almost the same itself. Thus idem identity, whether it is innate in or acquired by the self, makes Banks recognizable. On the one hand, due to the fact that Ishiguro is creating his protagonist as a person who has often wanted to preserve his childhood experience and memory, the idem identity is innate in this respect. On the other hand,

since When We Were Orphans alludes to how past detective stories or figures impact Banks's traits, the idem identity of Banks can thus be acquired. It shows the traces left by the historical past of the Sherlock Holmes figure that makes Banks's sense of nostalgia no longer merely pure and innocent as Ishiguro would have intended. In other words, Banks might be nostalgic in the sense of desiring to preserve the strong ability of his own as he wishes to appear representing his mother country's competence as a powerful nation. Glad to say, since Banks is depicted as a main character distorted by his obsession, When We Were Orphans is hardly a typical detective story like Conan Doyle's. For one thing, while Sherlock Holmes reflects logical thinking, Banks is troubled by his nostalgia for and complacency about his childhood. Through narrative, mediating between idem and ipse identity, not only is Banks's obsession with his childhood somewhat resolved, but also readers know the darker sense of nostalgia is being made fun of through Banks's quixotic thinking in the narrative he writes about his self. Moreover, Banks knows about the false knowledge of his own concept and life story after his quest for the truth, allowing himself to let go some part of his sense of mission and the desire to save the world.

Ishiguro intends to make Banks a nostalgic person in the purest and most innocent way. In other words, the author simply would like to focus on Banks's internal or emotional attempts to return to a better time in his personal past. Literally speaking, nostalgia is derived from the "Greek words nostos, or 'return,' and algos, or 'pain' . . . 'an obsessive return that cherishes the pain of absence' and as "an orientation toward the past that freezes past existence, preventing rather than encouraging true investigation and dialectic" (Shaffer, "Interview" 6). That is, though Banks is a detective who ought to almost always stay level-headed and logical, his nostalgic mind hinders himself from rationally dealing with his past and his parents'

case. The term nostalgia used to connote something evil of the English people, which they tend to turn a blind eye to: “It’s seen as something that skirts around the darker side of Empire—the glories and comforts and luxuries of Empire—without actually taking into account all of the true costs and true evils of Empire” (Shaffer, “Interview” 7). Furthermore, “[p]eddling nostalgia is seen as something that promotes our forgetting the suffering and exploitation of colonial times” (7). Although Ishiguro mainly focuses on Banks’s pure dwelling on his childhood period, it is difficult, however, to overlook the dark side of nostalgia. To resolve the two opposites of nostalgia, Banks needs to resort to the zigzag way of knowing his self. Through narrative, on the one hand, Christopher Banks, an obsessed protagonist by his own thinking and of his own world, is to rediscover the truth and make sense of the past. On the other hand, being a detective and alluding to Sherlock Holmes once in a while, Banks himself is a parodying figure far away from the model detective, who ultimately becomes aware that to save his parents and to long for contributions to humanity are irrelevant incidents and vain attempts.

Below is a brief introduction to the cultural background in the 19th century relating to Sherlock Holmes and people’s concept of childhood in that period, from which we may infer how Banks is unlikely to be a person who fits in perfectly with Britain’s ideal. Firstly, despite his fame as a detective, Banks is a character who digresses from the tradition, a person both an alien himself who used to provoke xenophobia in the past and an innocent person distinctly distorted by his obsession with his childhood and heroic fantasy. That is, Banks is unable to be like the all-powerful Sherlock Holmes figure because, while Holmes usually tackles problems emanating from the returned expatriates, Banks himself is a troubled character who

returns to the Britain from a foreign land.¹⁸ In addition, Banks's childhood experience in the past hints at the possible influence of 19th century childhood on him. Yet, it is unusual for him to be obsessed with childhood, since ideally, children of the era when the Sherlock Holmes stories prevail should get rid of childish thinking and behavior as soon as possible. Hence, the 19th century Sherlock Holmes figure and childhood are to be discussed so as to be compared with those of Banks's.

The Sherlock Holmes figure is created in the 19th century when "expressions of anxiety about social regression and national decline were widespread" (Boehmer 33); as a consequence, the mythical making of the grandiose and majestic narrative is most required. This is due to the fact that according to Abrams, "[t]he final decades of the [19th century] saw the apex of British imperialism, yet the cost of the empire became increasingly apparent in rebellions, massacres, and bungled wars" (Anthology 1052). Though the empire is powerful, it nevertheless faces underlying possible crises. There were two inclinations in the late 19th century's British Empire, "increasingly divided between irrational grandiosity on one hand, and fears of decline and decay on the other" (Simmons, "Chivalry"). Thus, the conquering feeling comes from the British Empire of which each member needs to "compel the Other's recognition of him and, in the process, allow his own identity to become deeply dependent on his position as master. This enforced recognition from the Other in fact amounts to the European's narcissistic self-recognition" (JanMohamed 19). Once the backward nations gradually become agitated and reactionary, particularly in the late 19th century, the British Empire's mixed feelings are manifested in the tales about the famous character Sherlock Holmes.

¹⁸ Examples regarding Sherlock Holmes's stories that reflect the ideas are provided as follows: "The Gloria Scott, The Crooked Man," The Sign of Four, "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," "The Adventure of the Empty House," The Hound of the Baskervilles (Simmons, "Chivalry").

Indeed, as a character who is much celebrated around the time before and after the British Empire reached the peak of power, Sherlock Holmes was a household name in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Under the so-called “hyper-efficient surveillance of Holmes” (Fluet 182), Holmes embodies the “rational ‘intervention’ of the Victorian detective [who] can also serve to render the detective’s disciplinary professionalism complicit with surveillance over a specifically national imaginary” (182).¹⁹ Since the people of the period in Britain are highly narcissistic, “imperial subjects are urgently needed to shore up the vulnerable grandiosity of the imperialist” (Simmons, “Chivalry”). Holmes’s expertise together with his “surveillance over London serves as an automatic metaphor for surveillance over empire, enabling and reinforcing distinctions between national and colonized subjects” (Fluet 182). The image of the intelligent detective represented by Sherlock Holmes personifies a “grandiose image of Britain.” In the meantime it also embodies those who used to make a living in the backward nations and now return to their home country, bringing back evil and terror which impair the nation’s perfectness and faultlessness. Thus, the Holmes figure is created to help exhibit the empire’s “vulnerability to the shame and guilt that are washing into the country as a result of British activities abroad” (Simmons, “Chivalry”).

Envisioned as a part of a splendid history of its own nation, the “grandiose self-image created by the British during the imperial period was the vision of the exalted mythic past” (Simmons, Narcissism 18). That is to say, in the creation of the boastful image of the imperialist kingdom along with the imagination regarding the medieval romance, the chivalry adventure is revoked. John M. MacKenzie explains

¹⁹ Holmes of the detective genre has the “explicit bringing-under-surveillance of the entire world of the narrative” (Miller 35).

that the “British imperial cult” brings about the “perverted” form of medieval chivalry in which “heroes from both the distant and recent past were assiduously promoted through children’s literature” (Imperialism 3). As Simmons points out, the chivalry adventure stories are so deeply rooted in British people’s mind that they seem to occupy a crucial position in their history that endlessly prevails and “[has] always been a part of English life” (Narcissism 18). In the nineteenth century, Holmes, treated as “a modern day knight, hungry for modern day adventure . . . seems to speak to a fear that the mundane minds of professionals are unequipped to protect England against the new and nearly fantastical menace washing in every day from a variety of bizarre lands and cultures” (Simmons, Narcissism 79). He is a character who is invented and becomes popular and much loved because there is time when the British people idealistically would like to be imaginatively take the role of the Holmes’s omnipotent position. This is due to the fact that “Holmes’ fantastic abilities and unfailing superiority guarantee eventual triumph over all challenges, an unquestionable superiority that may have been so attractive precisely because it is an attitude the British fear they may be losing” (79). This is the myth most fitting for the desire to preserve the all-powerful empire. Ironically, Banks is not as omnipotent as he thinks that he can save the world. Instead, he cannot totally deal with his own foreignness in his home country in England, nor can he cope with his own domestic troubles. In fact, he is a character who is rather vulnerable, so that he gives up his desire to be a world savior eventually. As a result, he does not appear to be a mighty and potent model like Holmes.

As Banks’s self narration mainly centers around his childhood, it would be appropriate to discuss the general concept of the children and childhood in in the 19th century. Simmons observes that the middle class’s and the upper class’s children are

mostly raised by servants (“Chivalry”). Although there may be amicable and loving surrogate caretakers, these hired persons almost always take care of the external chores of the household instead of paying special attention to the master’s children’s psychological needs. Simmons further explains that the failure of a ceaseless support psychically from the parents or the caretaker is likely to be caused by the narcissistic wound of the children with “[u]nsatisfactory early relations [which] might lead to traumas that provoke feelings of terror around separation or anxieties about fusion with others” (Ryan 36). The servants’ care may lead to “‘various overt and covert attitudes of rejection’ or to ‘overindulgence,’ or a pernicious mix of the two” (qtd. in “Chivalry”) which result from the different status between these hired people and the household employers. Simmons mentions the Puritan thinking of the 16th century that children are evil, thus leading to the aloofness or the brutality that treats the children of that period unkindly. The well-to-do may send children to boarding schools, in which lives are often unfriendly or even cruel (“Chivalry”). Not only are they deprived of the normal concern of the parents, but they are also expected to live up to the expectations of the British Empire. They are fed with numerous texts and publications educating and instilling into them the notion that peace and civilization are the glory of the empire which can be brought to the “backward nations of the earth” (Simmons, Narcissism 18). The children of the period are instructed both in the ideal of the imperialist self and in the image of the inferior others (18). The feelings are ambivalent: English people at that time feel downgraded at home, but when looking at the “uncivilized” nations, they feel proud and triumphant as conquerors. While self-consciously afraid that they are not strong enough in the nation, their desire for the total control of the world turns out to be overwhelming.

Extending the aforementioned explanation of the Sherlock Holmes figure and

the 19th century childhood, the following discussions are about how Banks's situation and anticipation diverge from them. As mentioned previously, the children in Britain are not properly treated. To Mannoni, the modern Westerner is an "orphan," "trying clumsily to behave like a grownup" (56). Simmons states that the evolution of the Western culture is "specifically the drive to relinquish ancestral gods and traditions and family structures in the name of individualism and rationalism" (Simmons, Narcissism 20) that are "drawn to imperial power" (19). Therefore, they have to learn to be independent, clever, strong and capable adults as soon as possible. In the novel Orphans, Banks's childhood seems to be related to the account of the children's caretaker and their education mentioned above. Indeed, like those in the middle- and upper-class English families, Christopher Banks is raised by his parents and a servant, Mei Li, the amah. It is interesting that all of them do not provide him with sufficient psychological support, but Banks favors his mother personally and thinks of her as a "beauty in an older, Victorian tradition" (Ishiguro 56). Banks can never forget the happy occasion in which his mother plays with him as exemplified in the race in Jessifield Park (196). Despite their inadequacy as his elders, ironically, Banks cherishes his childhood when he is able to live with them.

Unlike the children in the 19th century, Banks is not an orphan in the sense that he is ill-treated in his boyhood in Shanghai or in a boarding school in England. As James Wood puts it, "[t]here is only Christopher. Nor does the novel, in defiance of its title, really describe any moment when Christopher was an orphan: we see him as a happy child, and then as a successful adult. The time when he was an 'orphan' (at St. Dunstan's) is precisely the book's, and presumably Christopher's, painful lacuna" (49). As a result, compared with the time when his parents are beside him and when he is a foreign person in a new "home" country in England, his childhood in China seems to

him much more desirable. Like the “orphaned” modern Westerner or English people, Christopher Banks is “trying clumsily to behave like a grownup” (Mannoni 56) after his childhood in China and strives for a better position as a successful detective in England. However, he is not totally at home, psychologically speaking, after being forced to leave behind his childhood in Shanghai. In the novel, the word “orphan” refers “to that moment in our lives when we come out of the sheltered bubble of childhood and discover that the world is not the cozy place that we had previously been taught to believe” (Howard 415). Here the bubble refers to the fantasy inspired by the adults or parents, which makes the child believe that the world is a care-free and cosy place in which it is “a kind of emotional equivalent to idealism” (Shaffer, Understanding 7). Ideally, children are supposedly being thrown out from that bubble “gradually, with guidance” (7). That is, before realizing that the world is a much harsher, darker place, a child ought to be prepared beforehand, preferably being informed of the challenge he/she may face ahead. Nevertheless, if “you’re unfortunate, like Christopher, one day you’re just thrown out of it. And of course then you grow up with a sense of disappointment—perhaps a profound disappointment—that the world isn’t quite as nice as you once thought it was going to be” (7). In Christopher Banks’s case, he is not prepared to realize that “the world was as dark as it was” (7). Banks is suddenly taken away from the place where he spends his comfortable period as a child. As a consequence, his problem lies in being suddenly deprived of his parents.

In respect of the ideal detective figure, Banks is not likely to match Holmes’s status, since he is an outsider himself, coming back from a foreign land. Besides, Banks is haunted by his childhood and his own subjective thinking, thereby lacking the rational shrewdness and logical thinking of Sherlock Holmes. When We Were Orphans is presented as an anti-detective narrative, reflecting Banks’s twisted self.

The novel is portrayed as “something between a pastiche of Conan Doyle and a parody of the kind of gossipy, metropolitan, highly ‘English’ prose written by Anthony Powell” (Wood 45). The “creepers and ivy [which] are to be found clinging to the fronts of fine houses” (Ishiguro, Orphans 3) foreshadow the imminent death and devious events. According to Banks’s narration, his childhood years were “around the turn of the last century” (Wood 44) when his father participated in the great opium trading company of Morganbrook and Byatt. Even in his middle age, Banks lives in the rented flat which is outdated in a “tasteful manner that evoked an unhurried Victorian past; the drawing room, which received plenty of sun throughout the first half of the day, contained an ageing sofa as well as two snug armchairs, an antique sideboard and an oak bookcase filled with crumbling encyclopedias” (Ishiguro, Orphans 3). In Wood’s point of view, Christopher’s world appears to have been borrowed from an English novel, and this is surely Ishiguro’s intended effect. Christopher is producing a masquerade of a style that is already something of a masquerade; he is not entirely real—not to himself, not to those who encounter him, and not to Ishiguro’s readers. It is not that Ishiguro is postmodernistically concerned to suggest that this kind of ‘Englishness’ does not exist, though the stability of the entity is certainly a casualty of his novel (47). In Wood’s opinion, the novel wants us to see Christopher as a man deformed by the effort of conformity—deformed into genre, into unreality, and, if necessary, into falsehood (47). Embarking on Banks’s journey, ipse identity is added to Bank’s self, and narrative makes clear the self and the futility of his attempts to recover his ideal past and to fulfill the utopian sense of responsibility and false obligation. Since “otherness at the heart of selfhood [is] found in the tension between its idem-identity and ipse-identity” (Pellauer 107), the hermeneutics of selfhood considers “the contrast between selfhood and sameness,

then turns to the dialectical relation to the other, culminating in self-understanding that is obviously a form of self-interpretation” (107). In the following section the self’s relation to other people is added to the hermeneutic of selfhood, and a distance narrating point of view is to objectify the first level of the self.

Writing about the Self in Relation to Interactions with Others

Writing about the self bifurcates it into inner (writer) self, the ontological self, a subjective view with interactions with others and the outer (author) self, the rhetorical self, an objective view which looks at the self with itself (Wright 49). Though autobiographical writing usually has the twofold of the self, some authors have particular focus. To Lenore J. Wright, two groups lay stress on inner or outer self. On the one hand, Augustine, Descartes, and Rousseau, are inner autobiographers, who “treat autobiography as a discursive act of self-description in which the remembered self becomes the recorded self” (Wright 51). On the other hand, Nietzsche and Barnes are outer autobiographers, who “regard autobiography as an ongoing discursive process of self-ascription in which the constructed self becomes the characterized or ascribed self” (Wright 51). The former group thinks that life writing is to “recall, recite, and record those inner, private memories, beliefs, etc. that constitute [us]” (Szabados 2). The latter group regards

identity as constructed (or co-constructed), often alterspectively and atemporally. The constructed ego or subject is best expressed as an Outer self, a self that is embodied (or circumscribed) by a text. A set of shifting literary and cultural contexts constitutes the meaning of the rhetorical subject and the interpretation of the text. Hence, there is no knowable or identifiable self behind the author, and no meaning beyond the text.

(Wright 51)

It is the ontological level of the self that has mutability with polysemy of otherness.

Otherness to the self not only includes ipse-identity but also otherness of another person. The rhetorical level of the self is the presentation of the existence of the ontological self as illustrated by Banks's telling the story about his past experience with other people and the alteration of his concept of the self. Pellauer points out that Ricoeur does not emphasize either inner self or outer self, but rather the dialectical connection between them: it "is based on the mediation of reflection by linguistic analysis, but also goes beyond simply being a claim about language usage. It presupposes that this use of language is about something beyond itself; in this case, the self in its very being" (107). In other words, textual analysis of the outer self reflects the recording of the inner self that delineates the interactions with others in everyday life and preliminarily inscribes the occurrences in existence on memory. Despite the fact that the objective perspective of the outer self is a necessary construct, it cannot break away from the primary inner self. This is because, as Ricoeur puts it, "[t]here is no discourse so fictional that it does not connect up with reality" (Hermeneutics 141). Since the story is narrated by Banks in When We Were Orphan, Banks's inner and outer selves are present in his narrative. From the text, what has happened in Banks's past is crucial, and though the story is told by an unreliable narrator in many respects, the incidents he describes may still be useful for readers to realize what he might have really experienced. That is to say, the text would not be a totally false account that completely dissociates itself from Christopher Banks's self and personal life. Of course, the participation of readers is also vital in interpreting the text narrated by the self.

The memory of his journey after he leaves China is grounded primarily in his

childhood in the foreign land. The most impressive narration is Banks's account of his childhood experience, especially regarding his most cherished relations with his best friend Akira, his parents, and Uncle Philip. From Banks's final paragraphs in the narration of his whole story, readers know that he feels more at ease after relating his own tale. In fact, only after narrating his adventure of returning to this very place he grows up in the International Settlement and the discovery of truth does he make himself into a person who becomes mature and disburdens himself of his childish and idealistic mind, with some contentment in his life.

When in people's young age, the connection between self and others is much closer than that of adulthood. In Banks's case, apart from his caretaker and parents, he has his best friend Akira with him in Shanghai. This is another aspect showing that childhood is more desirable compared with adulthood. Accordingly, it is found "only among the young and the eccentric, to establish an immediate and vital connection between self and other" (Chew 110). In *Orphans*, Akira quotes a Japanese monk as saying that "it was we children who bound not only a family, but the whole world together" (Ishiguro 73). One main reason is that "nostalgia is the emotional equivalent of idealism. You use memory to go back to a place better than the one you find yourself in" (Mackenzie, "Between" 17). In this way Banks often recalls the time with his playmate Akira when they are very young. At that time, Banks seems to be lighthearted and carefree, with people close to him.

Banks's childhood memories are sweet and his and his friend's worry is enough proof of their solid friendship. In particular, as children Banks and Akira are afraid of anything that might change their present state of being together. For example, they are both self-conscious about their behavior and nationalities. Banks, an Englishman, and Akira, a Japanese, represent two peoples who live in Shanghai, anxious about having

to be forced to go back to their respective mother country. On one occasion Banks asks Akira why parents stop talking to each other, and Akira answers that the crucial point is that Banks is “not enough Englishman” as Akira is “not enough Japanese” (Ishiguro, *Orphans* 72-73). Yet, despite their different nationalities, Akira says that children are “like the twine that kept the slates held together” (73), which seems to assure their friendship regardless of their different cultural backgrounds. Once Akira returns to Japan, Banks “was listless for much of that period” (87) since his relations with other friends do not reach the “same level of intimacy I had had with Akira” (79). The separation intensifies their companionship, especially when Akira shows his reluctance to “go back [sic] Japan” (89) again. Banks assumes that his friend might have been incompatible with the people in Japan, so that he is so terrified of going back again: “I surmised that he had been mercilessly ostracized for his ‘foreignness’; his manners, his attitudes, his speech, a hundred other things had marked him out as different, and he had been taunted not just by his fellow pupils, but by his teachers and even . . . the relatives” (89). What is more, Banks also guesses on the basis of some circumstantial evidence: the “tear on the sleeve of the kimono” (88), the “bad thing” (89) may have happened that Akira frets himself over being sent to Japan again. Another incident is that they steal the “magic lotion” (95) in the room of the Chinese servant, Ling Tien. They falsely imagine that the Chinese servant Ling Tien is able to “turn severed hands into spiders” (91). Fearing that the robbery may be discovered and Akira will be sent to Japan again, they determine to put the bottle back in its place again next time. They think that everything will be fine after Akira’s older sister Etsuko returns the object for them. However, they would never predict this time that it is Banks who will leave Shanghai due to his father’s disappearance. From these events, we learn that Banks and Akira are anxious and worried about their separation.

The memory during this period is idealized by Banks not only in his solid and seeming everlasting friendship with Akira, but also in his projection of the moralistic image onto people who he believes are trustworthy and faultless. Banks's sense of nostalgia is also connected with his sense of ideal and flawlessness in these people. His life in the International Settlement, Shanghai, is affluent and initially does not lack anything. That is the time when Banks's parents, Uncle Philip, and Akira are beside him. In his memory he even perceives his father as repentant of his immoral business in China. This is why Ishiguro says that Banks builds up the image of his parents and thinks that "they're grander and more heroic than they really are" (Shaffer, "Interview" 8). It establishes the standard he later lives up to, the *raison d'être* as he grows up. The time in Shanghai is conceived as "more naive, more innocent days" to Banks due to his false consciousness. In this way it is "a world that is actually purer, one less flawed than the one we know we must inhabit" (7). The disappearance of his parents in China manifests how Banks's childhood bubble bursts suddenly, which has traumatized him. Fanciful moralistic life in childhood Shanghai has much to do with the business about the opium trading company of Morganbrook and Byatt.

Banks's mother in the novel is portrayed as courageous and rightful when confronting the evildoing of the opium business. Though her husband is involved, she still endlessly makes her own efforts in persuading people related to the evil business to change their thinking and terminate their crime. Akira is supposedly awed by Banks's mother because of two reasons: her beauty and her sense of morality. She is "handsome . . . elegant, stiffbacked, perhaps even haughty, but not without the gentleness around her eyes" (Ishiguro, *Orphans* 52). Once the health inspector comes to the Banks's house and tells his mother that the servants from Shantung lack "hygiene and health, but also their honesty" (59). Besides the "low standards of

hygiene, the high incidence of contagion” (59), the place is also corrupted by people’s smoking of opium. Banks’s mother is informed that the servants may start to steal others’ belongings due to the addiction of buying and using the drugs. At this moment, she begins her tirade, telling the health inspector that “importing Indian opium into China in such massive quantities had brought untold misery and degradation to a whole nation . . . which is ‘un-Christian’ [and] ‘un-British’” (60) act of which the British people should be ashamed. During the time when Banks’s father is at work, his mother would gather some of the company’s wives and convince them of the immorality of the company’s wrongdoing. Thus, Banks thinks of his mother as being “known and admired far and wide as the principal enemy of the Great Opium Dragon of China” (52). In addition to Banks’s regular impression of his mother, the “dining-room episode” again shows the mother’s aggressive sense of righteousness. Banks recalls his mother’s giving utterance to air her view in the household, reminding his father of how the family participates in “[a] disgrace’ . . . the sinful trade” (70), and reprimanding the father for doing the business: “Are you not ashamed to be in the service of such a company? How can your conscience rest while you owe your existence to such ungodly wealth?” (70). Banks’s mother is furious at her husband because the evil of the company engulfs the whole family: “You’re making us all party to it! All of us! It’s a disgrace!” (70).

On the other hand, despite his father’s imperfection, Banks still has good words for him. Ironically, Banks’s father makes a living for the family by means of taking part in Morganbrook and Byatt Company and usually does not attend the occasions concerning the campaign against the opium. Yet, in Banks’s opinion, Banks’s father tries to assure himself of his righteousness in his occupation. Banks describes his father as mostly “modest in his manners and [the father] found boastfulness in others

embarrassing” (Ishiguro, Orphans 82). Nonetheless, his father justifies his work at the opium company. Banks recalls there are two times of his father’s boastfulness that impresses him most. Firstly, his father mentions that the dock workers who are Chinese “[s]poke jolly good English . . . Of course these Chinese always speak very effusively, these speeches of theirs have all to be taken with a pinch of salt. But you know, dear, I had the distinct impression he meant it. Said I was their ‘honoured hero.’ How do you like that? Honoured hero!” (82). Here Banks’s father is trying to convince himself of the fact that the Chinese are very pleased that the English people are in the International Settlement. That the Chinese people learn English proves their eagerness to seek communicating and connection with the foreigners in the area. More emphatically, relating his being praised as an “honoured hero” (82). Secondly, Banks’s father claims that he is a changed person influenced by his mother, Diana. In speaking of Diana, Banks’s father tells Banks that his mother is among those who stick to their own rules and changes him to a better person: “All these people. Ask them and they’ll all profess to have standards. But you’ll see as you get older, very few of them really do. Your mother, though, she’s different . . . She’s made your father a better man . . . Someone, I dare say, Puffin, you’ll one day be proud of” (84). Though Banks’s father’s frail resolutions are only temporary, Banks does not think of him as an evil person. Thus, as Banks grow up, he would believe that his father is gone because he stands up to the opium trade.

Banks also idolizes Uncle Philip and looks upon him as a figure who is rightful. Uncle Philip used to be employed by Morganbrook and Byatt. However, Banks tells us that he quits the former job because of his consciousness of the wickedness of the company, deteriorating Chinese’s health. As a result, Uncle Philip runs a “philanthropic organization called the Sacred Tree dedicated to improving conditions

in the Chinese areas of the city” (Ishiguro, Orphans 74) instead. Banks remembers that Uncle Philip’s office appears to be the “Union Church in Soochow Road,” in which the air is “so much purer” (74). This is why even after his father disappears, Banks has started to think that “Uncle Philip could always take my father’s place” (118). So, even though with only one parent at home, Banks is not worried about his mother’s safety because of the presence of Uncle Philip.

From time to time Banks feels a sense of inadequacy being a foreigner in China. Though being with his parents, Uncle Philip, and Akira is wonderful, Banks’s anxiety about his “Englishness” prophesies his “orphan” state in his future life in England. It makes the sense of “foreignness” come to fore. For example, the Banks’s family usually has visitors that are the new employees of the Morganbrook and Byatt. Since they just come to Shanghai, Banks describes them as having “the air of the English lanes and meadows I knew from The Wind in the Willows, or else the foggy streets of the Conan Doyle mysteries” (Ishiguro, Orphans 52). They are the “figures to study and emulate” (52) for Banks. In addition, Uncle Philip says that “You’re growing up with a lot of different sorts around you. Chinese, French, Germans, Americans, what have you. It’d be no wonder if you grew up a bit of a mongrel . . . I think it would be no bad thing if boys like you all grew up with a bit of everything. We might all treat each other a good deal better then” (76). Yet, Banks still wants to become more “English,” and requires to imitate Uncle Philip’s behavior. Perhaps it is because people “need to feel they belong. To a nation, to a race. Otherwise, who knows what might happen? This civilization of ours, perhaps it’ll just collapse” (77). So Banks wants to be more English in order to feel a sense of belonging. Both Banks and Akira are not quite pure enough as people of their own nations. Not only is Banks not English enough, but Akira is also not Japanese enough, either. Akira plays with Banks,

an Englishman's child, and learns "English lessons" from Mrs [sic] Brown (52). Both Banks and Akira do not completely belong to any country.

Almost all good memories regarding Banks's childhood come to an end when Banks's father disappears, Uncle Philip betrays his family, and then his mother is also missing so that Banks is forced to go back to England and part company with his own family and Akira. When the War lord Wang Ku visits his house, Uncle Philip "marched out to greet the plump man" (Ishiguro, Orphans 116). The man is yelled at by Banks's mother, and is called a "traitor to his own race" (116). Banks further feels that "Uncle Philip was not on 'our side'" (118), in that Uncle Philip seems to support Wang Ku's idea: "But we have to pursue every possible avenue, don't you see?" (118). Everything appears to be vague and Banks merely senses something wrong among incomplete sentences in the dialogues. The foreshadowing of Banks's being abandoned in the middle of the journey when he is beguiled into accompanying Uncle Philip to a false excursion reveals Uncle Philip's possible betrayal afterward. Everything is gone when Banks returns home himself and sees merely Mei Li weeping, alone. The disappearance of Banks's parents compels him to leave China to a place where he does not belong.

Narrating the interactions with other in Banks's most cherished childhood in China is to be compared to his narration of his experience revisiting the house Banks lives in his childhood and the witnessing of the place where Banks's parents are assumed to be poisoned. The contrast between the two narrations manifest the vicissitudes of Banks's life and self. Banks's narrating which he has gone through in the past is by means of his outer self that objectifies the past happenings in the text of the story. The author (outer) self that narrates the recorded (inner) self of past memories and adventures is to be discussed later that the embodiment of the

experience through narration is to assist readers with partaking in interpreting Banks's discovery of truth and evolution of self.

Past and Present: The Retention and Creation of Time

Memory preserves episodes that have occurred in the past but stays in Banks's mind. The episodes have constantly influenced his consciousness and mentality during his journey. Despite Banks's persistent memory of his wonderful childhood and immature idealistic cause, he learns from his experience afterward in revisiting the old places he used to live and considers that his parents are taken captive. The contrast of perceptions between past and present in the same places makes it explicit that not only cosmic time never repeats but human mind thinking is subject to change with effect of recollection on each present self.

Memory is conditioned by the passing of time and subject to change. When Banks revisits Shanghai, his former classmate Mogan takes him to the house where Banks lives as a child. The Lin's family who live there right now seem to have waited for Banks's coming back to the place for a long time since the Lin's have lived there for eighteen years. Banks calls to mind that "[t]he room in which I was now standing was in fact what used to be the entrance hall of our old Shanghai house" (Ishiguro, Orphans 186). Also, Banks finds that "the minstrels' gallery at the back [of Lin's house] clearly correspond to the balcony at the top of [the] grand curving staircase" (186) of Bank's childhood house which makes him recall his childhood when he "had made a habit of coming down the long curve of the stairs at huge speed" at the place. Yet, during Banks's visit, Lin comments that as time goes, things are never the same. Not only has the setting in the house been changed, but the city Shanghai changes, too: "[e]verything , everthing has changed and changed again" (191). Nevertheless, Banks

does not know how vast the city and his mind have changed in that he is not able to live in the same place with his loved ones.

With his imagination he feels like living with his family there again. At the time of Banks's visit, he only thinks of the minor changes of the interior design of the dwelling Banks cites Mr Lin's words mentioning "how inevitable it is that a house undergoes alternation whenever its occupants change" (Ishiguro, Orphans 193). Banks not only starts thinking of his parents but also Sarah and Jennifer. He envisions a possible reunion there with his family. Thus, Banks says that when he comes to live in this house, he will also make his change for his household. What is different is that Banks includes orphans such as Jennifer and Sarah as his possible relatives. These two persons have no blood connection with Banks as well. In the old house, as Mr Lin says, "[b]lood is important. But so is household . . . I felt as much grief as when my blood sisters passed away" (194). Hence, a household is not merely connected to the blood of its members, but also related to marriage or adoption as Banks imagines. Mainly, it is love that binds people together. Even the servant Mei Li, the amah, is to be regarded as a member of the family to Banks, too. As Banks says, "Mr Lin, it's a great pleasure to talk to you. It's rare to find someone so immediately understanding" (194). The concept of household strikes a chord with Banks, and in this way, the orphans such as Banks, Sarah, and Jennifer or even the servant are to be thought of as family members, broadly speaking. As Mr. Lin puts it, "[w]hen one has lived as long as I have, and through the turmoil of these years, one knows many joy and sadness" (194). The household becomes more important in a chaotic and ever-changing world that people are to find a sense of warmth and security. However, as we know from the novel, Banks forsakes the chances to live with Sarah, Jennifer, and his mother. His father is gone and probably dead. The good old days of childhood and the family are

irretrievable since Banks himself and his situation have changed.

In addition, changes in the city are mentioned and manifested in his experience, suitably echoing Banks's frantic mind. Banks looks for the place where he believes his parents are held captive, and finds that people he regarded as idols and his friends are at variance with reality. In the French Concession, Banks finds Inspector Kung in the Inn of Morning Happiness. Though a "good officer once" (Ishiguro, Orphans 204), Inspector Kung appears to be an opium addict and says that "this city defeats you. Every man betrays his friend. You trust someone, and he turns out to be in the pay of a gangster. The government is gangsters too. How is a detective to do his duty in a place like this?" (204). In the spring of 1915, when investigating Wu Cheng Lou Shooting Incident, Inspector Kung interrogates a suspect called Chiang Wei, a "member of a kidnapping gang" (205). Inspector Kung has searched in the houses of the addresses Chiang Wei gives him, except for one whom Inspector Kung is prevented from searching by the authorities concerned. Banks believes that it is the one who holds his parents in captive.

The route taken by Banks from the Gramophone Records shop to the house near Yeh Chen's place in which Banks believes his parents are held captive is presented in a maze-like style in the story, which parallels his twisted mind and unreliable memory. At first Banks asks a young man to drive him to the house. The journey consists of a devious route fraught with the chaos of war. The twists and turns along the way is described with phrases such as "we took another narrow side-street" (Ishiguro, Orphans 224), "turned a corner into an alley even the narrower than the one before" (225), "took another alley nearby" (225), "for a few more turns, he stopped and reversed again" (225), "we steered around more narrow corners and little wooden houses" (225), "blocked by a barricade of sandbags and barbed wire" (225), "[went]

all the way round” (225), “down more alleys” (226), and finally “left the Settlement” (225) and “arrive[d] in Chapei” (226). Since the fighting is very near, Banks asks the young man to draw a map and show him the nearest police station. Then, Lieutenant Chow of the police station occupied by the Chinese army leads Banks on the way to his destination in person. Along the way, they have to stagger on in spite of the “rubble-strewn ground” and “holes in each wall” (240).

The latter part of the journey with the lieutenant is also full of challenge requiring passing through holes of endless walls. The topsy-turvy world not only makes Banks lose his patience but also helps Banks further engender a jumble of ideas: his illogic sense of rescuing both his parents and the rest of the world. Yet, as his parents are not in the house Banks intends to search and Akira is not the playmate he thinks he is, Banks starts to break away from his illusion. He often thinks that the debris they walk over is formerly the houses or mansions of various families: “I would find myself suddenly overcome with renewed anger towards those who had allowed such a fate to befall so many innocent people. I thought again of those pompous men of the International Settlement” (Ishiguro, Orphans 241). When Lieutenant Chow is no longer appropriate to lead the way due to war, Banks blames him and his men for failing to “[do] their jobs properly” (244). Still, the lieutenant makes clear that his men have done their best. Banks misunderstands the lieutenant for thinking that the former is the one who ought to take the blame for the battle: “[y]ou believe this is all my fault, all of it, all this terrible suffering, this destruction here, I could see it in your face when we were walking through it all just now. But that’s because you know nothing, practically nothing, sir, concerning this matter” (245). In fact, Banks is obsessed by the desire for saving the world and rescuing his parents, though the two may be quite irrelevant things. Banks embarks on his journey

by himself afterward: “[v]ery well, I shall do so! I shall raid the house single-handed” (245). This time Banks passes the houses along the way which are less damaged, with mostly women, children, and the elderly. Banks comes across a wounded Japanese soldier before long, surrounded by children there. The soldier is accused of stealing and killing by the Chinese, yet Banks takes him as Akira. Banks helps to save him from the place, while wanting him to take the soldier toward the East Furnace which is near Banks’s destination. Finally, they arrive at the house they look for. Sad to say, there is nothing Banks wishes to find, such as his parents or the kidnapper, except for some dead bodies and a Chinese girl with her wounded dog.

More often than not, Banks lives in his fantasy, and selects what he thinks is true as he goes on his life mission. At the same time, however, something new is created when each present coexists with past memory. For instance, Banks is later sent “to the British consulate” (Ishiguro, *Orphans* 275), being taken away by Colonel Hasegawa who tells Banks about the situation he is in. Banks, who used to hold firmly the view that the Japanese soldier is his childhood playmate Akira, is now unsure of his own perception. Being told by the colonel that the Japanese soldier is “suggestive of cowardice and betrayal” (277), Banks replies that “I’m beginning to see now, many things aren’t as I supposed” (277). Colonel Hasegawa cites a female Japanese poet, commenting “how our childhood becomes like a foreign land once we have grown” (277); that is, people suffer after they grow up with the sense that the lighthearted time has already passed. Nonetheless, Banks does not totally agree with the colonel, telling him “Well, Colonel, it’s hardly a foreign land to me. In many ways, it’s where I’ve continued to live all my life. It’s only now I’ve started to make my journey from it” (277). From the quotations cited above, we may say that by narrating the past childhood and the past journey, the self and readers know more about how

Banks evolves his notions.

It is interesting that the scenes of Banks's returning to the house he lives in as a child and the place where Banks's parents are supposed to be taken captive foreshadows how Banks's story in When We Were Orphans is to be an anti-narrative one. This is because as Banks visits the old places again, things do not appear to be as what he thinks. Being obsessed by his childhood memories of wonderful life in China and idealistic parents, Banks is not rational enough to be a Holmes-like character. The reality gradually discloses that there will possibly be no such case regarding Banks's parents and thus Banks becomes relatively reasonable so that there is room for him to embark on a new life in the future at the end of the novel.

Emplotting and Reception of the Text

It is worth noting that people know readily that each person's lifetime and experience begins from childhood, young age, to middle age, and to older phase. This is why Banks simply presents his story in the order after his configuration of his experience before his middle age and then starts from his friend Osbourne's visit, instead of starting directly from his most cherished childhood. In fact, he delays with some foreshadowing. With his mock detective setting, he deceives readers into assuming that there may be a crime which has happened before, and there may be a sleuth that exists in the story. In any case, readers would simply follow Banks's emplotment of his story as the novel is narrated in its sequence. It is his configuration that is not chronologically stated by Banks, but he specifically sorts out major transitions into the novel's parts which make it appear more sequential. Banks's configuration of his life also assists him in hermeneutically reflecting on his past self so that his narrative is not as straightforward as it ought to be if his past events are to

be shown chronologically as they occur. The detour of the narration aids readers in understanding multiple aspects of Banks's becoming or changing self in relation to others and himself.

The novel begins in medias res ("in the middle of things") after his childhood and his years at the boarding school have passed. Though readers know at the end of the story that the events before his stays in London in 1958 are all happenings of the past, Christopher Banks still narrates his story in the first-person point of view. That is to say, he presents his past self as a character in his story of bygone days. As we know, Banks's past self as well as readers are in the dark about what has actually happened to his parents, or what the truth is in the past. Like Banks's past self, readers are eager to find out what reality is about his parents. Banks's past self and readers desire to become or act as detectives, embark on or participate in the quest to go back to China, and then uncover all the clues to fulfill the mission as well as feel the sense of accomplishment after the truth of crime is revealed. The narrative related by Banks's past self, who is bewildered by the missing of his parents and his loss, is to deliberately make readers sympathize with his eagerness to figure out everything unknown to his most important case about his parents and also make them join in Banks's role as detective to search for all the clues or try to perceive the people's behavior around him that used to bewilder Banks immensely. Readers suspend their disbelief to concentrate on Banks's narration and follow his text step by step in order not to miss anything crucial about his life and his parents' case, thereby making themselves act like sleuths while reading the novel. Childs points out the sheets within sheets of the package which encase his magnifying glass that Banks receives from his school friends. This birthday gift serves as "[a] good metaphor for the narrators' investigations into the layers of their own lives" (Childs 129). The scene is vividly

described by Banks: “[a]s I set about opening it, I quickly realized the package had been wrapped in numerous sheets, and my friend would laugh noisily each time I removed one layer, only to be confronted by another. All the signs, then, were that I would find some joke item at the end of all” (Ishiguro, Orphans 8). Indeed, when readers follow Banks through his narration, they know that he is a character who is more emotion-prone and less of a protagonist who puts his emphasis on telling readers about his ratiocinative ability himself. Rather he boasts about his fame and superiority in terms of morality which reemphasizes his obsession about his childhood memory so that it is fair to say that “[t]he narrative develops a delusional quality, reinforced by Christopher’s lack of self-awareness” (Whitaker 57), yet “in the closing chapters, to a rational perspective. Having taken us on a voyage into a mind unhinged by loss, Ishiguro seems to need to resolve the story that started us out on the journey—tying up loose ends” (57-58). Although this is what a typical detective story should do to give a neat solution to the crime, Ishiguro chooses not to follow this line of thinking. Instead, he tends to focus on Banks’s change of mind because in such an anti-detective narrative, strictly speaking, there is no crime about Banks’s parents and the family problem is not really solved as well. As a famous sleuth himself, Banks is paradoxically unable to totally cope with domestic problems which are at first thought of by him as relating to a crime. Banks cannot deal with his family scandal through his professional skills, mainly as a result of his emotional flaw.

However, little by little, through narrative, Banks’s unconsolated past self discloses his story of how he gradually gets over his life difficulties by waking up from his childhood fantasy. From the narrative, Banks is to emplot his experience and let himself and readers make sense of his life journey.

Different Vision about the Self

Narrating the past self experience enables Banks to represent his past life and finally come to terms with his self in the present at the end of the text. As a reader looking back at his past self, Banks rethinks and represents his own life in search of the self and may have altered his own thinking concerning his life journey. Ultimately he has to come to terms with his fate or life mission and resign himself to it.

Firstly, Banks is not able to let go of the past. From the time his parents vanish, Banks is burdened with the memory of their disappearance. Some people like Banks “to some extent have built their sense of the ideal upon a parent or parent figure” (Shaffer, “Interview” 8) and they try to live up to this self-constructed standard. To find out why his parents are gone, he appears to be a mock Conan Dolye figure who illogically considers that if he saves his parents, he is able to rescue the world as well. Banks “gives himself a version of events that makes [his parents] very dignified and heroic” (8), but he fails to notice that “the people [he] emotionally admire or emulate are [possibly] shabby figures” (8). He naively thinks that they are kidnapped due to some moralistic causes.

Second, though Banks becomes successful in England as a prominent detective, he feels that he has to recover from his past trauma. It is generally accepted that once people grow up and become adult, they are capable of coping with the difficult situation they face. But Ishiguro says that “as I’ve gotten older myself, I’ve noticed that’s not the case. Around me, people I imagined were coping with their lives perfectly well in their twenties seemed to crash on some rocks” (qtd. in Shaffer, “Interview”10). As is the case with Banks, though he becomes successful in his career, he cannot let go of his past. In addition, unless he returns to the places where his childhood takes place, he cannot feel at ease without finding out what the truth is.

There are not as many twists and turns as people usually believe as they grow up, and before life stabilizes they feel that with hopes and efforts, they are able to achieve accomplishments they desire to attain. Banks turns out to be a successful detective, but after the “seeming open-endedness keeps people going for a certain time . . . [though] until now they’ve been able to keep going on certain hopes and plans, suddenly all this baggage from the past comes in and overwhelms them” (10). At this point, Banks begins to embark on his journey. Ishiguro comments that “it’s not really a case of whether these people are acting correctly or incorrectly—that’s almost irrelevant—or whether their lives end on a hopeful note or not” (12); they are determined to see things through. Otherwise, people like Banks would feel that they lack something to make their lives an integral whole.

Thirdly, by relating his past life to readers he presents his situation of living like an “orphan.” He thinks that he finally becomes more relaxed with life after he tells his story in search of the truth of parents in the end of the story. Along with other orphans, Banks is “given a compulsive task by circumstances, by life. Whatever they may wish, they have to see this task through to the end, until it’s resolved in some way” (Shaffer, “Interview” 12). He thinks that his memorable childhood happens “before his parents disappeared; that he can pick up where he left off just by going to the old house. Somehow, he feels, things would be more or less how they would have been had things continued on uninterrupted, had the real world not intruded” (10). Yet, by means of going back to China, he discovers that his childhood and ideal parents are forever lost. Through narrating his past story, Banks presents the eerie part of his past thinking that he believes over these years that his parents are still confined by evildoers to readers. He needs the readers to sympathize with him while reading and going through the traumatic past of his life with him. In this way, Banks heals himself

by means of story telling and then knows how to move on at the end of the novel.

In Banks's perspective, he writes his own past without actually being a writer himself. Thus, without the presence of the author Ishiguro in the story, Banks actually writes his own story as a detective in When We Were Orphans. Ricoeur's third mimesis helps readers look at the character from his point of view and create their own interpretations in the process of reading. As a result, Banks and readers are able to establish their respective narrative identity and ponder on their lives differently henceforward.

Narrative Identity of Banks's Self and the Anti-Detective Narrative

The link between narrative identity and the detective narrative is subtly established in Christopher Banks's occupation as a sleuth himself who narrates his own story. Moreover, it is a coincidence that Banks as a detective is trying to solve his parents' case while at the same time searching for his self as a narrator. As a result, this is how the generic format of the novel is helpful for examining the development of Banks's self that binds the construction of narrative identity and the detective narrative together.

The way that narrative identity and the detective narrative are connected consists in the non-chronological spatial structure of When We Were Orphans and it engages the reader to rearrange the plots and clues. The combination of the two helps explain how Banks as a detective tries to make sense of his life experience, particularly in relation to his childhood in China.

The detective narrative usually presents itself anachronistically. As proposed by Tzvetan Todorov, generally speaking, detective stories have two stories: the story of the crime (fibula; story) and the story of the investigation (sjuzet; discourse). In the

story of the crime “there is no inversion in time, actions follow their natural order” (45), whereas the story of the investigation is how the events of the evildoing is arranged in the order intended by the writer to be shown to the readers (45). The spatial aspects of the detective narrative to a certain degree are parallel to those of Ricoeur’s three mimeses for the interpretation of the text and the formation of narrative identity. That is to say, prefiguration of the detective narrative is similar to the story of the crime and configuration of the text is comparable to the story of investigation.

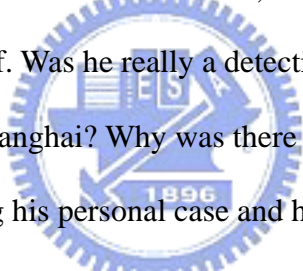
As is indicated by Wood, the setting of When We Were Orphans appears to be a make-believe of a traditional detective novel (44-45). As a matter of fact, the generic aspect of the literary work is to provide the text with the expectation of the constituent parts and the progression of a detective narrative framework. That is to say, with the setting of a detective novel, it is assumed that gradually, “the reader is presented with what actually happened and why, with the facts of the case” (Shaffer, “Interview” 5). Ishiguro utilizes Banks the sleuth as both a real detective in his profession and the narrator, which makes reading When We Were Orphan a twofold task: since Christopher Banks is the narrator and detective at the same time in When We Were Orphan, readers naturally expect to gain knowledge concerning the crime from him. Besides, since he is telling his own story, readers are supposed to know about his life through his narrative as well. This is how the double function of Banks makes reading the novel all the more interesting.

Following Banks’s description of his past experience, readers first learn that he chooses his career and gains fame to deal with the problem of how his parents are kidnapped and missing. In the context of the detective setting of the novel, readers at this point start to guess, as Banks might have imagined, that his parents have been

forcefully taken away due to their moralistically acting against the opium trade. As a result, readers expect that Banks, who successfully solves other crucial cases in England, will smoke out the truth of his parents and bring to justice the criminal who take them away. Indeed, why Banks's parents are gone has happened in the past as the story of the crime and Banks's narration is the story of investigation. Scholes summarizes Todorov's idea that "the story of the investigation serves as a mediator between the reader and the story of the crime" (303). Therefore, the story of investigation that Banks as a detective delineates piques readers' interest and makes them want to know about the ins and outs of the story of the crime. Accordingly, at the beginning of the book, readers readily join in Banks's search for the facts of the evil-doing concerning his parents' trouble as Banks the detective and the narrator depicts his story. As far as the conventional role of the detective is concerned, Pyrhönen mentions how the detective is to become the agent who is able to bring together the form and theme of the genre (5). In the regular detective narrative form, he/she has to analyze and clarify the mystery before him/her. Yet, When We Were Orphan is an anti-detective narrative so that Banks is unable to know the truth himself about his parents if not through Uncle Philip's revelation. In addition, it is to be noted that there is no real crime which is committed to Banks's parents because Banks's father actually runs away with his mistress and his mother is simply taken away by Wang Ku.

From the perspective of the typical detective narrative of the story of investigation as well as the story of crime, readers know that Banks's tale is not representative of the two stories of the detective narrative. This is due to the fact that it is an anti-narrative one. For example, after reading this novel, at most, people can merely say that the truth about Banks's "family scandal" in the past is "discovered,"

but not that the “crime happening to his parents” is “solved” by Banks. The problem comes from Banks’s emotion-prone characteristic. Banks lacks the criterion of the professional and standard detective who is clever and rational like that of Sherlock Holmes. Since the truth of the wretched scandal is simply revealed by Uncle Philip, the solution to the “story of the crime” of Banks’s parents is rather simple compared to exhibiting Banks’s ratiocinative power. Readers’ desire to know “whodunit” to Banks’s parents’ case is thus attenuated a great deal. The interference of Banks’s obsession by his memory of childhood suits with the emphasis of the author Ishiguro on examining the protagonist’s emotional quality in his life (Whitaker 57). Thus, besides following the incidents regarding Banks’s parents,



the reader perhaps has more work to do, concern questions about Christopher himself. Was he really a detective? Was he just a fantasist? Was he really in Shanghai? Why was there this apparent connection between his solving his personal case and his saving the world? Why is it not just him but other people he meets who share this assumption? Why would his parents still be sort of frozen in time by these kidnappers?

(Shaffer, “Interview” 6)

In other words, readers begin to question the reliability of this questionable narrator, Banks. From this quotation, we know that readers have to ponder on his self with the help of his narration rather than consider his text as a mere detective narrative whose purpose is mainly to figure out the evildoing of the criminal. In this respect, When We Were Orphans differs from a typical traditional detective story.

Divergence of Typical Detective Plots

In terms of the detective narrative plots, with some minor cases of the regular

“Whodunit,” When We Were Orphans beguiles readers into expecting typical constituents of detective stories. Nevertheless, the crucial case as regards Banks’s parents’ disappearance is mainly to be categorized as an anti-detective novel (Pyrhönen 21-22). The effect of putting the novel under the anti-detective narrative framework is that it is able to tantalize readers’ anticipation of the outcome of the text and make the story more thought-provoking. Thus, the interpretation about Banks’s self under the influence of his nostalgic mind is not to be overlooked.

On the one hand, in his cases other than his most crucial parents’ case, his narrative is presented as a normal whodunit: friendly competition with the police, and restoring the peace before crimes occur in harmonious communities. For instance, similar to “Whodunit,” minor cases such as Banks’s Charles Emery’s case in Shackton are crimes which occur in peaceful places. Like the usual expectation of a detective case in this situation, people in the town rely on the sleuth to help them restore the harmony and perfection before the evil crime has happened. In When We Were Orphans Sarah exists in the episode to remind Banks and readers of the respect for him, thereby strengthening his belief in his parents’ vanishing and self-importance of being a well-known detective to crack his parents’ case. Sarah shows up to meet Banks there in examining the spot about Charles Emery’s case, and she pays him a compliment on his ability as a detective who has “the most brilliant investigative mind in England” (Ishiguro 33). Particularly, Sarah explains to Banks that if the crime is to be solved by Banks, “they’ll remember you here for ever” (33). She says so because the town used to be a happy and thriving one. If Banks is to clear up the case, in Sarah’s opinion, he can save the whole town by eradicating its evil.

On the other hand, in spite of solving the minor cases and attempting to break his parents’ case, the world around him is chaotic and far from peaceful. In addition,

there have been no policemen in competition with Banks in that the kidnapping of Banks's parents is simply his fabrication. It befits the author to stress Banks's emotional aspects, especially his selfhood despite ostensibly depicting his novel as a traditional detective novel. The anti-detective narrative of Banks's story is to exhibit the problem of Banks's self. As is indicated in Chapter Two of this thesis, anti-detective story is sometimes hard for readers to decide the result of the text. At times, the crime is not really solved. The ambiguity of the type of narrative facilitates readers' explanation of the insoluble questions of Banks's life, especially with respect to the moral or emotional aspects of the characters in the novel. For instance, whether the main characters are good or evil is hard to judge with regard to the welfare of the Chinese people or Banks himself. In addition, if good and evil are the possible criterions for people to judge who are the "criminals" in Banks's thinking, the crime is to be left unsolved because of the puzzling questions of who have really committed crimes in such a chaotic world. Sometimes the "crime" being thought of as evildoing in a peaceful situation seems normal in such circumstances as in the war. It echoes former elaboration on Banks as an anti-detective or mock detective. He is not a typical detective like Sherlock Holmes in that he has stayed in China with his family that used to join in evil opium business there. Besides, unlike a traditional sleuth, Banks, being enchanted by his childhood memory, lacks logical and rational power to be an all-powerful detective. As a result, the anti-detective narrative makes room for readers to have their own interpretations based on the relevant and irrelevant remarks, clues and information provided.

Morality and World Salvation

In When We Were Orphans Banks combines the notion of solving his parents'

case and saving the world. Nonetheless, after he finds that his family is corrupt itself, his sense of righteousness begins to falter. He comes to realize that he is no longer the kind of character that people can trust and rely on.

According to his false memory, Banks naively believes his parents have been held in captive because they idealistically oppose the opium trade that make the mishap befall them. As a result, with Osbourne's connection, Banks would like to take the chance of becoming a well-known detective, both to unravel his parents' mystery, and try to emulate them with respect to their high moral status as he imagines them to have while being an idealistic detective himself. When arriving at the Charingworth, he enters a circle which he is not familiar with, in which "most conversations centred on people or issues about which I know nothing" (Ishiguro, Orphans 13). In fact, Banks finds himself quite out of place, and gradually becomes more and more impatient. Thinking of his missing parents, he imagines an idealistic righteous mission which he has to accomplish by rescuing them as a detective. Oddly, he combines his ambition with the responsibility of saving the world: "I felt I had every right to despise the people around me; that they were for the most part greedy and self-seeking, lacking any idealism or sense of public duty" (13). The more determined Banks is to concentrate on his decision to break his parents' case, the more Banks is to avoid the distractions of the frivolous things such as socializing and having romance.

After the Mannering case, Banks comes to realize that in order to be like his moralistic parents, he has to achieve the "most cherished goals. My intention is to combat evil" (Ishiguro, Orphans 21). Thus, he knows to gain recognition from the public is secondary to his main purpose. He turns out to be more isolated and "became more deeply immersed in my work" (21) without too much socializing. The second case that makes Banks famous again is the Roger Parker case. He feels that to check

out the underlying wickedness means much not only to its directly related people, but also to “the public at large—to be cleansed of such encroaching wickedness” (30). He is determined that he should not divert his attention to the superficial social activities in London, but to “understand, perhaps, something of what had made it possible for my parents to take the stand they had” (30); that is, the rightfulness of his parents that makes them popular with the public.

Banks’s moralistic view derived from his childhood parallels Sir Cecil Medhurst, who is yet another person who embodies the spirit of idealism “[a]ll of that I was saying earlier at dinner. About this world being made a safer, more civilized place. I do believe it, you know” (Ishiguro, *Orphans* 43). He also asserts that people like himself are able to help alleviate the present situation of the world: “The evil ones are much too cunning for your ordinary decent citizen. They’ll run rings around him, turn him against his fellows. I see it, I see it all the time and it will grow worse. That’s why we’ll need to reply more than ever on the likes of you, my young friend” (43-44). When Sarah has the chance to talk with him on one occasion, she says that since her parents are both dead, she does not want to waste time on any worthless person, but “someone who’ll really contribute. I mean to humanity, to a better world . . . I come in search of distinguished ones” (47). Sarah’s confession to Banks lets down his guard and eases the tension between them. This is why Banks tells her his childhood story which he has never revealed to anyone else thus far. Sarah is later married to Sir Cecil, and the couple plans to go to Shanghai together to let the husband have his “crowning achievement” (143) and “sort things out over there” (144). Apparently Banks and Sir Cecil are both idealistic.

Aside from Banks’s desire to look for his parents and Sir Cecil and Sarah’s decision to go to Shanghai, there are two events that inspire Banks to go back to

China, where he used to spend his childhood. Firstly, while investigating the crime involving the death of some children, Banks tells the police inspector from Exeter that they are the ones “whose duty is to combat evil” (Ishiguro, Orphans 135). And the best way of defeating evil is through going to the “heart of the serpent” (136). The police inspector tells Banks that he should go to the serpent’s (evil’s) heart instead of wasting time on its numerous heads. Secondly, at the Royal Geographical Society, after H.L.Mortimer delivers his lecture, the cleric Canon Moorly tells Banks that the storm is “in the Far East. In Shanghai” (138). Banks believes that to return to his childhood place means to save his parents and to save the world at the same time. He does not know that nothing has left there except the shameful truth of his family to be revealed by Uncle Philip, which comes as a blow and makes him lose the sense of morality and the desire to save the world simultaneously.

In the story, Uncle Philip seems to be the one who knows the whole situation regarding Banks’s parents and the opium business. He mentions that Banks’s “father ran off one day with his mistress. He lived with her in Hong Kong for a year, a woman called Elizabeth Cornwallis . . . in the end they had to rush off to Malacca or some such place. Then he got typhoid and died, in Singapore. That was two years after he left you” (Ishiguro, Orphans 286). We learn that, Banks’s father is not gone for courageously fighting against his company. In addition, as to Banks’s mother, she is subjugated by Wang Ku’s power. Ironically, it is Wang Ku’s money that supports Banks to become a famous detective. Due to the financial reason and great love for his son, she sacrifices herself to earn money from Wang Ku, the evil man. Wang Ku takes Banks’s mother as his concubine and humiliates her in front of his guests. Ultimately, Banks learns of his “aunt in England. She was never wealthy. [The] real benefactor, all these year, has been Wang Ku” (293). Uncle Philip says to Banks:

“Your mother, she wanted you to live in your enchanted world for ever. But it’s impossible. In the end it has to shatter” (294). In this way Banks’s utopian pursuit regarding childhood memory in China is ultimately annihilated. All this seems reasonable and less tragic in that the world is itself evil, and it is merely the fault of Banks whose naïve thinking makes him unaware of it before his trip, investigation, and narrative.

In time Banks has to face the truth of his life. At this point, Banks wakes up from his dream and a sense of duty of combating evil on earth: “I dare say it will soon engulf the whole world. But that’s not my fault. In fact, it’s no longer my concern. I mean to start again, and this time to find her” (Ishiguro, Orphans 296). While Banks and his mother are the victims of the miserable family scandal, they are both doomed to be part of the evil opium trade themselves. By now Banks no longer cares about his so-called sense of morality and the desire to save the world which seems ridiculous after Banks has known about the truth of everything. What consoles Banks in the end is that he knows his mother still loves him. Besides, he takes comfort from reading about his successful case as a detective from the past newspaper report in the British museum. After his parents’ case is revealed to Banks as a scandal by Uncle Philip, Banks no longer cares about the sense of responsibility of saving the world except his mother’s love.

Repetition in the Story

The repetitiveness of the Chinese-box structure in the novel of When We Were Orphans consists of two levels: the understanding the truth of the crime regarding Banks’s parents’ and that concerning Banks’s life. It helps clarify Banks’s situation of his past life and the possible future which is rather difficult for readers to perceive

without interpreting Banks's text time and again.

Pyrhönen argues that the mirror motif is not only helpful for the identification of the crime, but is also beneficial to the whole detective genre, for it can support its narrative formula. What is to be added is the role of the readers, because they have to envisage themselves in the roles of the detective and the criminal so as to understand the detective story. Specifically, it is called the narrative transmission (24-25). Brooks tells readers that the narratives "invariably express a concern for transmitting whatever is focal in them to readers. Narrative is a way of informing, teaching, warning, impressing, and even contaminating readers. Reading thus places the reader in a situation of exchange, asking for something in return for what reading supplies" (216-21). As a result, the relations between the detective and readers are organic; otherwise, the plot cannot be interpreted by the vision outside the text itself. Indeed, due to the active engagement of readers, the thematization is to show how interpretation of the clues in the midst of reading the detective fiction can enable readers to guess at the final solution to the crime and the whole plot.

As Pyrhönen points out, a detective in the traditional detective novel is much like a philosopher who does not judge circumstances in ordinary ways. Rather, the detective tends to prove general assumptions wrong and additionally "to identify the criminal and to assign guilt" (4-5). Pyrhönen explains how the detective is to become the agent who is able to bring together the form and theme of the genre. In his opinion, in order to find out who the criminal is, the detective turns out to be in the shoes of readers. He/she has to analyze and clarify the mystery before him/her. By so doing the detective functions as the so-called "model reader whose readerly and interpretive activities mirror[s] the reader's own activity" (5). The detective is the model reader not only because of the fact that he/she mirrors the reader who reads the

story outside of the fiction to interpret the text, but also he/she sometimes has to be put in the situation of the criminal.

Contrary to Pyrhönen's theorizing of the traditional detective novel, When We Were Orphans is an anti-detective novel with many features of its own. A traditional detective novel is defined as a story "whose principal action concerns the attempt by a specialist investigator to solve a crime and to bring a criminal to justice" (Porter 5). However, anti-detective novel is almost always devoid of the traditional reader satisfaction. In other words, the detective fails to crack the criminal case that the author presents. As Porter points out, an anti-detective novel does not propose "a hidden order satisfying both the reason and morality" but contributes to "a core of doubt" (45). For instance, in an anti-detective novel, usually no wrongdoer recounts the false story. There is only a the detective, like Banks in When We Were Orphans, who produces his own text of which readers must be aware in terms of its inaccurate aspects of the incidents and idealized description of what has possibly and actually taken place (Hühn 457). On the other side, readers have to "play detective" in order to reflect on what they do as they read detective stories" (Pyrhönen 6). By so doing readers unravel and invent the narrative in the same way the detective does and find satisfaction not in 'solving the crime' with the detective, but in coming up with their own versions of interpretations about what may or may not have happened in Banks's past.

On the whole, Banks's search for the self in When We Were Orphans repeats its pattern of self-delusion. As Childs says: "[a]t more than one point Banks appears to be on the verge of repairing the psychological damage of his desertion in childhood, especially through a possible relationship with Sarah Hemmings, another orphan, but instead his life is marked by repetition" (126). Banks's life is full of mutability

because, even until the story ends, he is still alone, except with the casual visit by Osbourne or probably his adopted daughter's invitation to visit her place. He is not able to form close relationships with others especially in terms of family and romance. "He abandons Sarah, as he abandons the orphan he adopts, Jennifer, and as indeed he once abandoned Akira, replaying his own abandonment by both his parents and his 'Uncle Philip'" (Childs 126). Also, he abandons his sense of mission of saving the world when his parents' situation is not so honorable and righteous to him as he thinks. Moreover, strictly speaking he is part of the evil himself because he benefits from money of the opium trade.

Despite his supposed success in search for the self, he still suffers from a sense of loss and emptiness. In a sense he is still an "orphan" doomed to live alone without the company of his family members and friends. Most of the time, he rambles around the city of London by himself when telling his life story. The fact that he actually does not change totally after his self narration bodes ill for his future. For instance, in his narrative readers can see that there is a gap among Banks, Sarah, and Jennifer. To begin with, Banks does not fulfill his promise of going along with Sarah, thus missing the chance to be with her forever. Yet, he cannot believe that Sarah is to live happily with other man without a special sense of commitment to any impressive goals. He misses her from time to time though he distrusts any possibilities that for orphans like them they can completely live in idleness. As Banks is still concerned about his mission in breaking his parents' case and saving the world, Sarah tries in vain to convince him of giving up his mission: "Oh, Christopher, we're both as bad as each other. We've got to stop thinking like that. Otherwise there'll be nothing for either of us, just more of what we've had all these years" (Ishiguro, *Orphans* 212). Sarah couples herself with Banks, saying that they both are used to chasing dreams of

achieving unattainable goals in life. She means that if they both pursue the dreams incessantly, they would just make vain attempts to do so, without truly realizing anything after all. Hearing that Sarah creates a picture of a family with both of them and Jennifer as their child, Banks thinks that it might “turn out well” (214). He consents to go with her at this moment. However, he does not actually go with her. Years after his mission in Shanghai, he merely hears about what has become of Sarah after their parting. Paradoxically, Banks’s concerns about Sarah have remained despite their separation. On one occasion Banks is very pleased to hear that when Sarah tells stories about him as a famous detective and she feels great admiration for him. It appears that Sarah’s marriage is a happy one, but Banks remains doubtful. Banks insists that for those “orphans” in the world like himself and Sarah, their goal is to achieve bigger aims than being “always trusted so much to fate . . . [going] out in the evening with no plan, quite happy to see who they bumped into” (311). No wonder Banks thinks “[m]y feeling is that she is thinking of herself as much as of me when she talks of a sense of mission, and the futility of attempting to evade it” (313). Sarah, in Banks’s opinion, cannot be as happy as she says by living with the French Count; she should live with someone like himself who used to care much about bigger aims in life.

In addition, busy with his mission, Banks also ignores Jennifer from time to time. Banks adopts her simply to make himself feel moralistic and to have a family member to himself. Yet he fails to know that Jennifer requires more familial support than he imagines. He is over-optimistic about his adopted daughter’s strong will to survive without his care. At the point he is leaving to solve his parents’ case, he decides to tell her in person when the plan is settled, supposing that “Jennifer is a child of remarkable spirit, and there is no reason to suppose she would be so

devastated just on account of my departure” (Ishiguro, Orphans 146). Before the last visit, Banks meets Jennifer at St Margaret’s. Banks finds the place full of mist, and like happenings of Jennifer’s life it is mysterious to Banks, though he knows there is certain “austere atmosphere” involved (147). The coldness of the place also implies the unfriendliness of the area and the loneliness of Jennifer’s heart. We have good reason to conclude from this episode that Jennifer is sometimes lonely at school. Yet, Banks is rather ignorant of her plight: “[y]ou’re making a marvelous job of putting the pieces together again. You really are. I know it can never be quite the same, but I know you have it in you to go on now and build a happy future for yourself” (149). After Banks finishes his task, Jennifer, now living in a boarding house, is still alone. Jennifer’s words of inviting Banks to live near her place prove “a source of consolation over the years” (310) to him. However, the two “orphans,” Banks and Jennifer, both remain single and live alone when the novel ends. That is why “emptiness” (313) still fills in Banks’s heart and perhaps Jennifer shares this feeling of being a lonely orphan as well.

After narrating his childhood and life mission, Banks feels relieved from the burden. Yet, from the above-mentioned passages concerning Sarah and Jennifer, readers know that Banks has chosen to sacrifice his probable family life living together with the two orphans. Sarah’s life after she leaves Banks and Jennifer’s future combine to make readers and Banks’s past self ponder on whether he really can discard old beliefs of chasing the vanishing shadows of his childhood memory and parents or can be optimistic about the future. As a successful detective himself, Banks can solve other cases but is unable to tackle the problem regarding his parents. In the story, he finds himself in the awkward situation of having to face the reality aside from narrating his past thinking and experience to readers through the text. The

descriptions of the other two orphans, especially as regards Banks's self, prompt readers to have their own interpretations of the text as an anti-detective novel. Banks's unknown future is to be reflected on in relation to his attitudes toward Sarah and Jennifer, thus raising possibilities to the seemingly closed text narrated by Banks from his point of view.



Chapter Four

Conclusion

The thesis applies the theories concerning the self, narrative identity as well as the anti-detective narrative to see how Banks, as a detective himself, copes with the situation he encounters in his lifetime by means of narrating his story.

Kazuo Ishiguro's When We Were Orphans relates the story of Christopher Banks's life journey through the juxtaposition of his childhood memory. During his encounter, Banks alters his own thinking and value judgments in the formation of his self. In the novel, Banks spares no efforts to live successfully in England as an investigator, and then goes to China to solve his personal problem with regard to his parents and their disappearance. Yet the afore-mentioned fulfillment cannot totally satisfy the protagonist as well as readers. On the one hand, though his searching is done, Banks still feels a sense of inadequacy in the long run despite society's and his mother's great expectations of him. The way for Banks to get rid of his sense of rootlessness is not only to find out the truth concerning his parents but also narrate his own story to readers to engage them in his investigation of the past, thereby creating new meanings to readers as well as Banks himself. On the other hand, after finishing reading the novel, careful readers tend to feel "deceived" into treating When We Were Orphans as a traditional detective novel. In fact, it is an anti-detective story.

According to M. H. Abrams, narrative refers to any story which is narrated in the form of "prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do" (173), including "[s]ome literary forms such as the novel and short story in prose, and the epic and romance in verse, [which] are explicit narratives that are told by a narrator" (173). As a first-person narrator, Banks relates what has happened to

him in the past and then fabricates his own text out of his former experience. It is interesting that in Lukács's opinion, "[t]he inner form of the novel has been understood as the process of the problematic individual's journeying towards himself, the road from dull captivity within a merely present reality—a reality that is heterogeneous in itself and meaningless to the individual—towards clear self-recognition" (80). As a detective in When We Were Orphan, Christopher Banks is presented as a mock figure in contrast to the traditional protagonist, Sherlock Holmes. Ironically enough, Banks as a detective can crack many cases for others, but cannot solve his own case as regard the missing of his parents. The effect of Banks's divergence from the traditional character echoes what Lukács calls the problematic nature of the protagonist. Banks is problematic in the sense that his conception of his time, surroundings and adventures are at times incongruous with that of the relative objective perspective of the world. Banks's plight attests to what Ishiguro says about his focusing primarily on the emotional aspects of his characters rather than putting emphasis on the historical truth of the background of the novel (Shaffer, "Interview" 8). Indeed, Banks's case at the first level matches Lukács's thinking about the protagonist of the novel that in the novel

there is a nostalgia of the soul when the longing for home is so violent that the soul must, with blind impetuosity, take the first path that seems to lead there; and so powerful is this yearning that it can always pursue its road to the end. For such a soul, every road leads to the essence—leads home—for to this soul its selfhood is its home. (87)

As a result, Banks embarks on his journey in search for the truth related to his parents. Yet, in this thesis Ricoeur's notion is applied to argue that a mediation of the text is needed to make understanding of the self an indirect mode instead of mere immanent

intuition. Consequently, after his adventure, Banks has to sort out, put together, and retell his story to make sense of the self so that he is able to release himself from the burden of his life mission. Only by so doing can he feel more “at home” henceforward.

In terms of searching for the self we find Ricoeur’s narrative identity useful to the analysis of When We Were Orphans as an anti-detective novel. Ricoeur thinks that narrative identity, which is divided into two kinds, “is a response to the question of how an identity can bespeak both change and permanence” (Crowley 1). It facilitates dialectical relationship between the so-called idem and ipse identity that makes hermeneutical self possible despite cogito and shattered cogito. Idem identity refers to the minor changes that make a person recognizable. It can be an inborn feature or an obtained trait. In the novel, readers perceive that Banks is seen as a character haunted by the memory of his seemingly pure and lively childhood. In other words, he has a strong feeling of nostalgia for the imagined good old days as a child in China. While Banks is nostalgic in the sense that he cannot let go of his innocent past days, it is still probable that he is influenced by a tradition with connotations of nostalgia in a more negative sense. The model detective Sherlock Holmes who is mentioned once in a while in the novel is able to remind readers that Banks is affected by this legendary figure created to uphold the grandiose and imaginative image of the British Empire that can satisfy English people’s pride and dispel fear of the country’s diminishing power. In this novel it is easy to draw a parallel between the intention of the creating of the character Sherlock Holmes and Banks’s false ambition of wanting to save the world. Yet Banks is a person who cannot suit the icon of the model detective perfectly in that he is foreign to his own country as a result of growing up in China and lacking the ability of ratiocination. Thus, we know that though Banks is influenced by the

detective tradition, he diverges from it. So, ipse identity is introduced when the change in a character becomes observable.

To add to the two kinds of identity is the inner and outer selves that are to be discovered when one is writing the narrative of the self. The inner self is formed through the recording of one's everyday life interaction with and relation to other people. In comparison, the outer self is constructed by the ascription of another vision of the self with distance that can be embodied by a text. From the bifurcating of these two selves of making sense of one's relation to others and to oneself, otherness or the ipse identity, joins in one's idem identity because experience and construction of the self make itself change. Ricoeur lays stress on the fact that between the two ways of bifurcating of writing the self, the reality of one's experience is not to be overlooked behind the creation of the text. Thus, from the narrative we understand that Banks's most cherished period is his childhood. He describes his relations to his parents, Akira, Uncle Philip, and so forth. From the account readers learn about Bank's interactions with them. Looking upon himself as an orphan, Banks recalls how his childhood is suddenly arrested and how his experience of growing up, a bit like a mongrel living among different cultures and nations, makes him feel like an orphan without a sense of belongingness. This is why narrating the self is necessary for Banks to come to terms with his problem despite his ostensibly all-powerful appearance as a successful white male protagonist himself.

The preservation and creation of memory is helpful in explaining Banks's situation. What has happened in the past is not lost but, rather, is coexistent with that of the present self. However, human time that passes in the cosmic time never repeats itself because memory, which is preserved through human time, cannot remain the same due to the fact that whenever events are remembered, something new is created

to the past memory. The most interesting episodes are found when Banks goes back to Shanghai and finds out that the place where he lives in the past and the place he thinks his parents are held captive have undergone drastic change and no longer in the same situation as he imagines. However, in the process of his new discovery and variation of the self, Banks's memory lingers. Facing reality after long years have passed after his childhood, Banks begins to formulate more different conceptions from his old memory.

The three mimeses reveal the importance of the narrative in understanding the self. They are the three steps that imitate or represent human action. The first mimesis, prefiguration, is the "individual's experience of being-in-the-world that is semantically construed but without clear form or figure" (Crowley 2). The second is configuration which refashions the fragments of events into plots. The third mimesis is refiguration which occurs in the "noetic act of reading where the self comes to a greater understanding of human experience over time through the mediation of narrative" (3). This final act thus includes the participation of readers.

The novel When We Were Orphans starts from the middle of Banks's story rather than from his early childhood. It delays readers' understanding and let them take part in the situation of Banks's past self so that they are able to sympathize with Banks's eagerness to find out the truth. Since Banks's parents are already gone and his childhood has already passed, readers rely on his narrative to glean more and more clues about them. Since information provided is fragmentary and not chronological, readers can not understand the story of Banks's life experience in an immediate way, but in a detour so that it both intrigues and fools them.

Through his anti-detective narrative, besides readers, Banks the narrator is able to know more about himself as well. This is because a narrator can be a reader of his

narrative which “results in a transformative understanding of one’s self in the world” (Crowley 3). In Ishiguro’s view, people usually think that in the process of their growing up, life is full of potentiality so that with their hopes and efforts, they are able to achieve certain goals and accomplishments. As in Banks’s case, he becomes increasingly famous after he has successfully solved many cases. Then the time has come when Banks has to crack his parents’ case; otherwise, being a well-known person in his career in England is not sufficient enough for him because life will not change that much afterward despite his return to China. By means of telling his story Banks is able to reorganize his past experience. Moreover, despite its inadequacy as a detective story, the novel provides readers with an opportunity to “fill in” the void left in its narrative, and thus lets readers empathize and sympathize with Banks.

Ultimately, through narration, along with readers’ selves, Banks’s self sees how he looks at himself differently and forms a new vision of his life subsequently.

In the framework of the detective narrative, When We Were Orphans is studied in the light of the characteristics of the generic form of the novel. Since Banks’s parents’ incident has happened, readers have to engage themselves in discovering the truth, depending on the clues provided in the novel. As Larry McCaffery who analyzes the anti-detective story states, the mystery to the novel is mainly connected to the “question of identity: what the ‘self’ is, how it organizes and evaluates its perceptions, and, finally, how it communicates to the world what it knows of itself—and that is a mystery with an immeasurable number of clues and possible solutions. But for the narrator, the process of creating his fiction has done its job” (45). That is, in transgressing the normal detective narrative structure, the anti-detective narrative is the text where “all the many clues we have encountered . . . lead nowhere, and fixing the blame is obviously irrelevant . . . the mystery of the

narrator himself as exhibited through his fiction . . . remains . . . there are no neat wrap-ups, no simplistic summaries of the ultimate meanings of the characters” (45). In an anti-detective narrative like When We Were Orphans, readers have to interpret the text time and again by bridging the gap so that each of their analyses has its merit in terms of comprehending the text, increasing the meaning of the narrative and sustaining their interest in reading.

This thesis has attempted to analyze Christopher Banks’s self in Kazuo Ishiguro’s When We Were Orphans from the perspective of a narrative, that is, an anti-detective story, to be more precise. Banks, as a first-person narrator, is a detective who tells his story to readers. He sets out on a quest for the truth of his parents’ case as well as for the meaning of life. With the experiences of his past, he tries to narrate them in his own way so that he is able to reexamine and relive his life. Banks withholds the information from the start and discloses information about his past bit by bit. Because of its lack and inadequacy as a traditional detective narrative as discussed previously, the novel “descends into a region of murkiness, where the reader and the protagonist grasp at moments of clarity together” (Mirsky, “Orphans”). Interpretations of When We Were Orphans are open-ended and thus vary from person to person. In the process readers tend to identify with Banks’s past condition and understand Banks’s evolution of the self. The result is that Banks and readers all fashion and refashion their new selves significantly because we all feel “orphaned” in one way or another and from time to time in the contemporary world.

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