

Memory, Gender, and the Predicament of Modernity: A Study of Identity Narratives in *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Sense of an Ending*

Wenshuo Yu

College of Foreign Studies, Hunan Normal university, Changsha 410000, China

Abstract

This study constructs a three-dimensional analytical framework integrating memory narratives, gender politics, and critiques of modernity through examining Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills* and Julian Barnes's *The Sense of an Ending*, aiming to investigate how individuals construct identity amidst historical ruptures and cultural transformations. The paper argues that protagonists Etsuko and Tony represent two typical modern dilemmas—"excessive history" and "deficient history" respectively—while gender power operates as a hidden thread profoundly shaping their narrative strategies and identity formation. Etsuko's memory ambiguities and self-silencing reveal women's dual repression under postwar Japan's patriarchal order and modernization impacts, whereas Tony's memory deceptions reflect both the decline of male authority and the moral subject's weightlessness in postmodern context. Through cross-cultural comparison, this research demonstrates that memory serves not merely as narrative object but as gendered existence practice and power contestation field, with identity construction occurring not only within time's flow but being consistently constrained by specific power structures. Both works ultimately converge on a core proposition: narrative becomes the individual's final homeland amidst modernity's ruins, while its forms and possibilities remain inevitably marked by gender and history's profound imprints.

Keywords

Unreliable Memory; Gendered Narration; Predicaments of Modernity; Identity Construction; Cross-cultural Comparison; *A Pale View of Hills*; *The Sense of an Ending*.

1. Introduction: The Triple Entanglement of Memory, Gender, and Identity

The self-construction of the modern individual is an enduring struggle played out between fluid spatiotemporal contexts and solidified power structures. It is perpetually accompanied by historical ruptures, the dissolution of overarching meaning, and profound transformation alongside inherent conflict in socially prescribed gender roles. As Marshall Berman profoundly reveals in his classic work *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, the core paradox of modernity lies in the fact that it "pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal" and simultaneously "makes the world magical again," yet ultimately casts individuals into a state of "boundless and bottomless" alienation[1]. This sense of "void" finds particularly salient representation in the literary landscape of the twentieth century. Whether in Eastern societies grappling with the trauma of war, the legacy of colonialism, and the pangs of "forced modernization," or in the Western world navigating the twilight of empire and the waves of consumerism in its post-industrial, postmodern phase, both individuals and collectives broadly face the loss of traditional anchors of identity and a rupture in the continuity of life narratives.

Edward W. Said further points out in *Culture and Imperialism* that the residue and permeation of colonial history and cultural hegemony often subject individuals, both in the East and the West, to the dual constraints of historical burden and cultural dependency in the process of identity construction[2]. Yet, beyond this grand framework of historical and cultural analysis, a more fundamental and concealed order-gender as a basic structure organizing social relations and distributing power-similarly intervenes profoundly in the shaping of memory, the organization of narrative, and the pursuit of identity. Gender norms not only dictate “who may speak” but also tacitly influence “how one speaks” and “what is spoken.” They are internalized as the individual’s self-perspective and externalized as the attribution of narrative authority. As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu notes, narrative and discourse are key media through which power operates. They naturalize specific worldviews, rendering them self-evident truths, thereby producing and maintaining a symbolic order[5]. In the realm of gender, such “symbolic violence” misrecognizes the historical construction of patriarchy as the natural order, leading women to unconsciously accept their subordinate status and participate in the reproduction of unequal gender relations. This further elucidates how narrative and discourse partake in the production and maintenance of power, thereby influencing the workings of the gender order.

Kazuo Ishiguro and Julian Barnes, as prominent figures in contemporary British literature, approach the core motifs of modern literature-the unreliability of memory, the ambiguity of history, and the fluidity of identity-from the respective contexts of post-war Japan and Western postmodernity. Ishiguro’s *A Pale View of Hills* presents the internalization of trauma in a culturally displaced post-war Japanese woman through Etsuko’s circuitous and reticent narration. Barnes’s *The Sense of an Ending* reveals the spiritual weightlessness of a middle-class white British male in a vacuum of meaning through Tony’s dishonest and self-deceiving recollections. Although the two works are rooted in distinct cultural and historical soils, they engage in a profound dialogue at the triple intersection of memory, gender, and the predicaments of modernity. This paper aims, through comparative analysis, to uncover how the identity narratives in these two works intertwine the complex interactions between the individual and history, memory and forgetting, and gender and power.

Despite being grounded in markedly different cultural contexts and historical backgrounds, these two works converge significantly in their perspectives on memory, gender, and the dilemmas of modernity. This paper seeks, through juxtaposed close reading and comparative analysis, to reveal how the identity narratives in these works intricately weave together the individual and history, memory and forgetting, narration and silence, and, crucially, the hidden interplay of gender and power. It will first dissect the specific predicaments of modernity faced by Etsuko and Tony and their narrative representations, then systematically introduce feminist critical perspectives to delve into the gender politics underlying their narrative strategies. Finally, within a cross-cultural comparative framework, it will comprehensively discuss the dialectical relationship among memory narratives, gender structures, and modern experience, aiming to provide a more holistic and deeper literary interpretation of the identity crises confronting modern individuals.

2. Ruins and Exile: Etsuko’s Trauma Narrative and Identity in Displacement

Kazuo Ishiguro’s *A Pale View of Hills*, marked by its characteristic restraint, understatement, and elision, unfolds a nebulous recollection suspended between the ruins of postwar Nagasaki and the trauma of the individual psyche. The novel begins with Etsuko, now residing in England, offering an exceptionally plain statement: “It was a fine morning, the house was quiet, and I sat alone drinking tea.”[12] This seemingly mundane, tranquil utterance functions as a thin yet resilient psychological veil, establishing a narrative tone of “silent trauma” for the entire work.

Beneath its calm surface lies repressed historical upheaval and personal sorrow too overwhelming to confront directly. Etsuko's entire narration consistently exhibits a vacillation between the "self" and the "other." She commences with memories of life in postwar Nagasaki, yet the focus of her recollection continually shifts toward the story of her neighbor Sachiko and Sachiko's daughter, Mariko. This narrative suspension and displacement are direct textual manifestations of post-traumatic stress.

As Cathy Caruth elucidates in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*, the nature of traumatic events lies in "the fact that its force is evident yet it is not truly perceived, returning belatedly and indirectly"[3]. For Etsuko, the brutalities of war, the shadow of the atomic bombing, the loss of loved ones, and, above all, the irreparable estrangement from her daughter Keiko that culminated in suicide constitute the "unclaimed" and verbally inaccessible core of her pain. By employing the stories of others Sachiko's conflicted desire to leave Japan and Mariko's peculiar behavior masking deep-seated fear as psychological compensation and narrative proxies, Etsuko manages to indirectly approach and process memories too burdensome for her conscious mind to bear directly, maintaining a relatively safe narrative distance[19]. Kim J D also notes in his study that such narrative displacement in *A Pale View of Hills* is not a random literary technique but a deliberate strategy closely linked to the protagonist's trauma and ethical predicament, which enables Etsuko to avoid direct confrontation with painful memories while subtly conveying the depth of her inner suffering[10].

A profound understanding of this unique form of Etsuko's memory requires situating it within the specific sociocultural "vacuum" of postwar Japan. The Japanese political theorist Maruyama Masao described this period as a state of "spiritual vacuum"[13]. The traditional value system and ethical framework centered on the imperial institution collapsed abruptly following defeat, while Western democratic ideals and models of modernity, imposed externally, had not yet been genuinely internalized and assimilated by the social fabric. As Mr. Ogata, Etsuko's father-in-law, laments in the novel: "Discipline, loyalty-it was these things that held Japanese together in the past... But nowadays people don't talk about such things. They talk about democracy." [12] Etsuko epitomizes this era of radical transition: she can neither return to the old order sustained by "discipline and loyalty" nor wholeheartedly embrace the new, foreign cultural values. Her choice to emigrate, moving from Japan to England through marriage, further exacerbates and materializes her cultural rootlessness. He Jiajun observes that Kazuo Ishiguro constructs the identity crisis of cross-cultural migrants in a postmodern context through ambiguous narrative boundaries and fragmented memory presentation. The fog of Etsuko's memories essentially embodies her identity anxiety in the cultural divide between East and West[15]. Adopting trauma theory as the core analytical perspective, this analysis is characterized by an emphasis on selective memory, fictional storytelling, the pursuit of cross-cultural identity, and the reflection on intergenerational trauma transmission, thus offering new insights into the research on Ishiguro's early works[19]. Moreover, it embodies what Homi K. Bhabha theorized as "hybrid identity": an identity forged in the "Third Space," fraught with both potential and profound fragmentation and unease[4].

When examined through a gender lens, Etsuko's predicament reveals even more complex and oppressive dimensions; she is a dual victim of the collusion between patriarchal order and historical violence. In postwar Japan's pursuit of economic recovery and social stability, traditional gender roles and family structures were often summoned for restoration and reinforcement, with women once again expected to serve as the bedrock of familial stability and the silent comforters of trauma. As Simone de Beauvoir reveals in *The Second Sex*, women in patriarchal culture are systematically constructed as the "Other," their subjectivity frequently defined and validated through men[6]. Etsuko's silence, her ambiguous memories, and her narrative strategy of projecting her own experiences onto the more ostensibly

rebellious figure of Sachiko can all be interpreted as forms of survival wisdom and oblique resistance developed within this gendered structure of trauma. For instance, her recollection of Sachiko's hesitation about leaving Japan—"Perhaps I should leave here. But I don't know where to go." [12]-serves as a precise mirror of Etsuko's own predicament and inner state: her departure and her profound sense of belonging nowhere. The tragic relationships—between Etsuko and Keiko (who committed suicide in England) and between Sachiko and Mariko (facing separation in Japan)-are consequences not only of cultural dislocation and intergenerational conflict but also manifestations of motherhood being brutally torn between patriarchal expectations of the "good wife and wise mother" and the female individual's yearning for freedom and escape from a traumatic environment.

Thus, Etsuko's memory becomes a fogged mirror, reflecting not merely the collective scars of history but also how, within a specific gender order, the individual female voice is systematically suppressed, and how it seeks arduous expression through circuitous, metaphorical, and self-divided means within the interstices of narrative. Her narration constitutes an aesthetic practice that simultaneously conceals and intimates trauma and fragmented identity through the piecing together of scattered memory shards [16]. This practice itself stands as the most authentic testament to her state of identity-in-exile.

3. Weightlessness and Self-Deception: Tony's Narrative Crisis and the Dissolution of Male Authority

In a stark and profound contrast to the "excessive history" borne by Etsuko, Tony, as portrayed by Julian Barnes in *The Sense of an Ending*, experiences a spiritual void born of the "deficient history" and the dissolution of meaning. A typical middle-class white male living in postmodern Britain, Tony's life lacks grand historical events or overt, dramatic traumatic shocks. His life trajectory is smooth and orderly-school, work, marriage, parenthood, divorce, retirement. Yet, it is precisely this "normality," devoid of depth and weight, that plunges him into profound disorientation and existential anxiety in his later years. Tony's opening line—"I remember, in no particular order ... no, that's not true, I remember in the order I choose to remember" [14]-self-consciously exposes the inherent constructedness and unreliability of memory from the outset. He is dedicated to shaping the past, particularly the romantic and friendly relationships of his youth, into a "calm, ordered, harmless" version. He describes his former lover Veronica as "cold," "inscrutable," and even somewhat mean-spirited; he attributes his friend Adrian's shocking suicide to a purely "rational" philosophical choice. In this process, he deliberately evades and downplays any potential moral responsibility he might bear-such as the letter filled with jealousy and malice he wrote to Adrian.

Tony's "rationalizing" reconstruction of memory is essentially a psychological defense mechanism against the postmodern vacuum of meaning. He attempts to cloak and fill the inner emptiness and value-nihilism with a logical, seemingly objective narrative veneer [2]. His psychological state is deeply intertwined with the sociocultural transformations in late-twentieth-century Britain. Following World War II, the British Empire dissolved, the welfare state was established, and consumerism and mass culture rose, leading to the complete collapse of grand narratives like the "imperial story" and "class order" that once underpinned British identity. As sociologist Anthony Giddens argues in *The Consequences of Modernity*, in post-traditional societies, individuals must engage in continuous "reflexive self-construction"-actively weaving coherence and meaning into their lives through personal narrative in the absence of fixed value referents [11]. Tony represents a failed case of such "reflexive construction." He attempts to define the legitimacy of his life through being "rational," "unremarkable," and "not making trouble," only to be forced decades later, prompted by a

modest legacy, to re-examine his past. In the surviving pages of Adrian's diary, he is horrified to confront the brutal truth of his self-deception.

Crucially, Tony's narrative crisis is intricately interwoven with his identity crisis as a middle-class white male-or the decline of his discursive authority-forming the core of his predicament. In traditional British fiction, particularly narratives from middle-class male perspectives, the narrator is often tacitly assumed to be the "holder of truth" and the authoritative interpreter of the story. Barnes, however, deliberately subverts this tradition by crafting Tony as a discredited narrator. Veronica and her mysteriously reserved mother remain largely inscrutably silent within Tony's account; they rarely defend themselves or offer clear explanations. Yet, it is precisely their "shadowy" presence that holds the key to the truth, and it is their very silence that quietly dismantles the meticulously constructed, logically coherent narrative Tony has built. Veronica's recurring, mantra-like judgment-"You just don't get it"-is not merely an accusation of Tony's personal emotional obtuseness and moral shallowness; it is a thorough repudiation of an entire presumptuous, self-justifying mode of male cognition and discourse that claims rationality.

Tony's unreliable narration thus transcends the merely personal psychological realm, pointing sharply to the dissolution of traditional male narrative authority and the profound crisis of its moral legitimacy in postmodern society. The viewpoint of the "dissolution of narrator authority," as proposed by You Deqing in analyzing Ishiguro's narrative strategies[17], applies equally to the figure of Tony here[18]. More ironically and tragically, Adrian's suicide-the event Tony had long "rationalized"-itself acts as a resounding slap, exposing the hollowness of the "rationality" Tony clings to when confronting ultimate questions of life. When existence loses moral passion, historical weight, and a transcendent dimension, rationality often devolves into a sophisticated excuse for evading the void and masking moral cowardice. In the end, Tony is forced to ask: "What else had I got wrong?" This questioning is both a faint spark of individual conscience and a silent interrogation of the entire spiritual condition he represents.

4. Mist and Resistance: Power Structures and Identity Construction in Narrative Strategies

Placing memory narratives within the lens of gender studies reveals how power shapes individual self-perception through invisible symbolic orders. Sociologists point out that the most effective domination is often achieved through symbolic violence-an invisible force that causes power relations to be misrecognized as natural order or moral obligation, and thus unconsciously accepted by the dominated. When gender roles are glorified as feminine nature, or when specific cultural standards are packaged as universal values, symbolic violence accomplishes the reproduction of unequal structures in everyday practice. The narrative differences between Etsuko and Tony serve as literary testimony to the workings of this symbolic order-the former reveals the unconscious complicity of the dominated, while the latter exposes the narrative crisis following the loss of privilege for the dominator.

4.1. Etsuko: The Internalization of Symbolic Violence and Unconscious Complicity

The concept of "symbolic violence" was first proposed by Pierre Bourdieu in *Masculine Domination*: "Symbolic violence is a form of power exercised through non-physical means, such as culture and language, by which the dominant class imposes its values upon the dominated, leading the latter to unconsciously accept and perpetuate social inequalities"[5]. Through symbolic violence, which involves controlling culture, thought, and discourse, men impose a social cognition upon women, leading them to believe in and support this cognition, thereby confirming their own position within this male-dominated ideology. In this process, men tend

to reinforce their authority and rationality through subjective bias, distorting or denying women's memories. When recalling shared experiences, male characters may reshape memories according to their own will, interpreting female behavior in patterns that align with male expectations while ignoring women's true intentions and feelings. This "unreliable memory" not only affects the present understanding of events but also further consolidates patriarchal narrative hegemony through intergenerational transmission and cultural dissemination, causing women spiritual oppression and identity dilemmas. In Bourdieu's theory, "symbolic violence" is "an invisible violence exercised through complicity," whose core lies in the power structure naturalizing relations of domination through symbolic systems, causing the dominated to internalize oppression as "common sense"[5].

Within the social context of post-war Japan, women, as the "dominated" party, were long immersed in a symbolic system that universalized the male perspective. This system regarded female silence, obedience, and selfless devotion to the family as "virtues," while viewing direct female self-expression and the pursuit of desire as "abnormal" or "disorderly." Etsuko's narrative mode is precisely the result of this internalized symbolic violence. She is not consciously resisting; rather, she unconsciously becomes an "accomplice" to this violent order, organizing her traumatic memories through a narrative that conforms to gender discipline. Gilbert and Gubar's research on 19th-century women writers shows that such internalization of patriarchal norms and the resulting indirect expression is a common predicament faced by women writers in a male-dominated literary world, and Etsuko's narrative practice in the novel echoes this predicament across time and space[9].

Her inability to directly articulate her own pain and the guilt of her choices is not merely due to personal psychological defense mechanisms but also because the symbolic order does not grant her the legitimate language for straightforward expression. Consequently, she adopts a circuitous, indirect narrative mediated by others-one that aligns with expectations of "femininity." As Beauvoir stated, woman is constructed as the "Other"[6]. Within Bourdieu's framework, this Othering is the very foundation of symbolic violence's operation. Etsuko's narration of Sachiko's story can be seen as a form of indirect self-expression within the limited scope permitted by the symbolic order-an unconscious way of using established rules to bear experiences that cannot be directly spoken. Her narrative thus becomes a practice shaped by structure, imbued with a "submissive wisdom." This is not cowardice but the only possible mode of survival within a specific field. Her "unreliable narration" thereby serves as a vivid illustration of how symbolic violence transforms relations of domination into part of the subjective experience of the dominated.

4.2. Veronica: Silence as a Form of Resistance

In *The Sense of an Ending*, memory is not merely a representation of the past but is deeply influenced by the hegemony of patriarchal narrative, becoming a form of "unreliable memory" that exerts "narrative violence" upon women. As Beauvoir critically noted: "Patriarchy objectifies women, turning them into the 'Other' in male narratives." In the novel, Adrian's suicide is attributed by Tony to "fate," while Veronica's mental breakdown is reduced to "genetic defect"-a narrative strategy that obscures the structural oppression of individual psyches by patriarchal society[1]. Tony attempts to seize narrative dominance by reinterpreting diaries and wills, but in reality, this is merely a contest over a male interpretation of history under patriarchy. As Beauvoir asserted, "Man defines woman by defining himself"[6]; Tony's manipulation of memory is essentially a continuation of patriarchal narrative hegemony. In Tony's self-proclaimed "objective" nostalgic narrative, women are consistently positioned as objects of the gaze. Veronica-the projection of his youthful desire-is reduced in male discourse to "a symbol intertwined with the curve of hips and the scent of library ink," while Sarah Ford (Adrian's mother) is flattened into "a blurry silhouette holding a tea tray"[14]. Through this

deliberately simplified portrayal of female characters, Barnes exposes the inherent gender-power mechanism in traditional historical narrative-when men reconstruct the past through a nostalgic lens, women's subjective experiences are systematically erased within the folds of memory. Driven by unease, the protagonist Tony's quest for truth also lays bare how men reproduce male domination through symbolic violence under patriarchy.

Beauvoir proposed that humanity must move forward by continually forgetting and negating predecessors[6]. Tony's memory reconstruction falls into a paradox: he seeks to evade responsibility through forgetting while simultaneously attempting to attain ethical redemption through memory reconstruction. This contradiction reflects the identity dilemma of men under patriarchy-they rely on patriarchal narratives to establish their own legitimacy, yet this narrative collapses when exposed. At the end of the novel, Tony acknowledges the fragility and unease of the self: "There is accumulation. There is responsibility. And beyond these, there is unrest. Vast unrest"[14].

The silence of Veronica and others constitutes a sophisticated strategy of resistance-"No, you just don't get it." They refuse to enter Tony's symbolic system, refusing to be captured by the categories he imposes (such as "cold," "inscrutable"). They offer no explanations, engage in no debate, rendering Tony's presumptuous cognitive tools utterly ineffective, thereby further undermining his narrative authority. This silence is not powerlessness but a resolute negation of the reproductive mechanisms of male hegemony-exposing the particular standpoint behind so-called "rationality" and "objectivity" through non-cooperation. When Veronica says, "You just don't get it," she effectively declares the bankruptcy of the entire symbolic system upon which Tony relies to comprehend the world. Their persistent presence-the fact communicated by their silent existence-renders men's claim to universalize their own perspective untenable, and their supposed "rationality" and "objectivity" vanish entirely.

4.3. The Gender Divide in Narrative Politics

From the perspective of gender studies, the narrative differences between Etsuko and Tony reveal a clear theoretical lineage. Etsuko's unreliable narration is a structured practice, a narrative habitus formed under prolonged symbolic domination. Her indirectness and ambiguity exemplify how systemic discrimination becomes internalized as an individual's natural response through misrecognition.

In contrast, Tony's unreliable narration is an expression of anxiety amid a crisis of symbolic privilege. His seemingly rational reconstruction and self-deception regarding memory represent an effort to maintain the symbolic order that grants him superior status. When this order is challenged by silence, when misrecognition fails, his narrative reveals inherent fractures and contradictions. His predicament signifies a profound crisis of traditional male symbolic power in the new era.

Memory narrative thus becomes a crucial site for the interaction of gender and power. Etsuko's story demonstrates how symbolic violence achieves internalized domination through misrecognition, while the silence of Veronica and others shows the possibility of breaking that misrecognition. In this sense, memory is not merely a representation of the past but an ongoing struggle over legitimacy.

5. Two Forms of Modern Predicament: Memory and Gender in Cross-Cultural Comparison

The cases of Etsuko and Tony clearly demarcate two endpoints on the spectrum of modern experience: one crushed by the weight of history, the other rendered weightless by its dissipation. The dimension of gender provides a more nuanced and tension-filled cultural interpretation of these two forms.

Within the context of Japan's "forced modernization" after the war, Etsuko's suffering stems not only from a crisis of cultural identity but also from the violent oscillation of gender roles between tradition and modernity. She is both a witness to the old order and a marginal figure in the new world. Her tragedy lies in bearing the dual burden of historical trauma and gendered repression. Conversely, within the "vacuum of meaning" in postmodern Britain, Tony's dilemma manifests as the failure of male-centric narrative and the blurring of moral coordinates. The sense of the end of history that he represents is not merely political but signifies the end of masculine subjectivity and narrative authority.

Thus, the two novels form a profound intertextual relationship. Etsuko's "mist of memory" and Tony's "self-deception of memory"-one evades speech through silence, the other evades responsibility through speech. The intervention of gender power renders their narrative strategies fundamentally different: Etsuko's silence is a structural aphasia, while Tony's speech is a face-saving gesture following the loss of authority. Yet, on a deeper level, they share the same core of modernity: after the dissolution of a stable worldview, the individual can only rely on narrative to reconstruct the self amidst the fragments of time-a process inevitably intertwined with the politics of gendered identity[7].

6. Conclusion: Dwelling in Narrative

Through their distinct narratives of memory, *A Pale View of Hills* and *The Sense of an Ending* collectively respond to the core dilemma of modernity: how do we construct the self after the collapse of history, tradition, and fixed identity markers? A process that requires weaving together scattered temporal experiences into a coherent whole to anchor the self in the flux of existence. This study demonstrates that this process of construction is not merely temporal and psychological but also gendered and political. The circuitousness and silence of Etsuko in Ishiguro's work reveal how women write the self in oblique ways under historical weight and patriarchal discipline. The self-deception and weightlessness of Tony in Barnes's work expose the crisis of male narrative authority and the predicament of the moral subject in postmodern society.

Their stories jointly affirm Bourdieu's insight that narrative identity is the medium through which we construct ourselves in time. However, their narrative practices further reveal that this construction does not occur in a vacuum but unfolds as a practice of survival within specific fields of gendered power. Whether it is the mist of memory Etsuko relies on for survival or the clarity of memory Tony attempts to depend on, both ultimately point to the same truth: in the unease of modernity, narration is our last dwelling place.

References

- [1] BERMAN M. All that is solid melts into air[M]. New York: Penguin Books, 1988.
- [2] SAID E W. Culture and imperialism[M]. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.
- [3] CARUTH C. Unclaimed experience: trauma, narrative, and history[M]. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- [4] BHABHA H K. The location of culture[M]. London: Routledge, 1994.
- [5] BOURDIEU P. Masculine domination[M]. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- [6] BEAUVOIR S D. The second sex[M]. New York: Vintage Books, 2011.
- [7] RICOEUR P. Time and narrative[M]. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- [8] FUKUYAMA F. The end of history and the last man[M]. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- [9] GILBERT S M, GUBAR S. The madwoman in the attic: the woman writer and the nineteenth-century literary imagination[M]. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2020.

- [10] KIM J D. Study on narrative structure and ethical meaning in Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills*[J]. *Studies in humanities*, 2020, 64: 81-105.
- [11] A. Giddens: *The Consequences Of Modernity* (Yilin Press, China 2022).
- [12] Kazuo Ishiguro: *An Artist Of The Floating World* (Shanghai Translation Publishing House, China 2023).
- [13] Masao Maruyama: *Studies In The History Of Japanese Political Thought* (SDX Joint Publishing Company, China 2000).
- [14] Julian Barnes (J. Barnes): *The Sense Of An Ending* (Yilin Press, China 2021).
- [15] He Jiajun: Postmodern Writing and Cross-Cultural Studies-Taking *An Artist of the Floating World* as an Example, *Literature and Art Weekly*, Vol. (2025) No.11, p.19-22.
- [16] Quan Yingying: On the Fragmented Narrative in Kazuo Ishiguro's *An Artist of the Floating World*, *Yangtze River Novel Appreciation*, Vol. (2024) No.23, p.83-86.
- [17] You Deqing: The Impact of Narrative Strategies on Readers' Cognition in *An Artist of the Floating World*, *Jiaying Literature*, Vol. (2025) No.14, p.62-64.
- [18] Chen Rong: Postmodern Narrative in Historical Novels-A Review of Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an Ending*, *Foreign Literature Trends*, Vol. (2022) No.4, p.78-82.
- [19] Liu Si: A Study on Memory Narrative in *An Artist of the Floating World* from the Perspective of Trauma Theory, *Contemporary Foreign Language Education*, Vol.6 (2023) No.2, p.55-61.