

Functions of Memory in Kazuo Ishiguro's the Remains of the Day

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Abstract

This article seeks to shed light on the different functions of memory in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day*. Ishiguro dilates on the dialectic of memory and forgetfulness. The protagonist, Stevens the butler, keeps continuously resorting to memory for different purposes. Very much obsessed with the past, he pursues his physical and emotional journeys into past occurrences, talks, geographical spaces, values, and stories with a great sense of heartbreak, remorsefulness and distress at times and of satisfaction, pride and admiration at others. Memory as a recurrent theme in the novel serves as a scaffold upon which Stevens relies to communicate his life experiences, views, and attitudes. Thus, this humble work is an attempt to delineate the roles and uses of memory in the fabrics of *The Remains of the Day*.

Keywords: memory, forgetfulness, functions, referent bin, factual, emotive, and journey

Introduction

Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* is thematically rich and significant. One of the basic themes which occupy a very central place in the fabrics of the novel is memory and its functions in human life. Stevens the protagonist does heavily rely on what his memory accumulates and stocks to build up his personal stories, narrate his life experiences, defend himself, shape his views, externalize his feelings and emotions, and make known events of great historical value not only for him, but also for the people around him, and more importantly for the author and his readers. Through a series of flashbacks, Stevens is immensely engaged in the process of raking over past life experiences and sharing them with people around him and with readers.

Being concerned with memory is deliberate for Kazuo Ishiguro. On March the 17th, 2015, in an interview conducted by Tina Srebotnjak in the Appel Salon, he states that many "societies grapple with this question: to what extent should we remember our past? To what extent should we forget it?" According to him, the act of remembering or forgetting the past is a societal issue. It does not concern only individuals but societies at large. He expresses his interest "in this question: how does a nation, how does a society decide when it is better to remember things? And when it is better to keep certain dark memories just buried?"

The deliberate focus on memory is done for different purposes. Memory is an important 'referent bin' (a concept cited in Wyer, Robert S., and Thomas K. Srull, 1989) for Stevens. His life is shaped in the light of what his memory stores. It is sometimes utilized as a way to pore over the past events to sift the most significant ones and narrate them with a sense of pride and high regard at times and of sorrow and pity at others. It is a journey into the emotions of merriment and sadness. It is a means to escape moments of confusion, astonishment, and embarrassment. It helps draw a comparison between life in the past and now. It is also a tool to bring homage, esteem and privilege to the self and community.

However, memory can be also seen as a source of suffering and unease. Remembering some sad incidents may bring a lot of harm to the heart, wound prides, cause trauma to the mind, and unsettle the serenity of both individuals and communities. One more thing, nostalgically sticking to the past may hinder self-development and result in the resistance of change and reluctance to embrace new experiences, ideas and views. In other words, it leads to the existence of people with dogmatic and conformist mode of thinking and living.

Memory as a 'referent bin':

Memory is like a data recorder to which Stevens resorts to relate the diverse feelings he goes through, and share the scenes his eyes witness and the sounds his ears hear. It is a reliable reference for him. Everything seems to be referenced and stored in it. It chronicles even the smallest details of his life experiences. It documents every bit and piece of his existence. Some of his remembrances may sound trivial and not worth telling to the reader. But for him, they are to be related to give a sort of photographic description of what exactly happens. Perhaps, the truth resides in the smallest details. Every little bit helps. The sound of summer and the light breeze on his face he experiences during the trip are among the things that his memory has stockpiled and shared. Remembering the sound and breeze is an indicator that the memory is like a moving camera which films everything which comes within its ambit.

There is a strong interconnection between memory and the personal traits and profiles of the remembered people, regardless of whether these traits and profiles are good or bad. Stevens recalls so many people in terms of the traits they exemplify, the behaviors they do, and the values they represent. He has "a referent bin"

containing the knowledge about each one of them. He has a “memory location” pertaining to the description of each one. This means that deep in the cerebral sphere of Stevens, each remembered figure is associated with certain traits and values which ease the recollection process. In the mind of Stevens, for instance, Lord Darlington is associated with such concepts as greatness, seriousness, nobleness, professionalism, discretion, dignity, and real aristocracy.

This could be better clarified with more examples. Mr. Farraday is most often remembered for his mirthful sense of typically American bantering and chat about such topics as football and love-making. When these traits and topics are raised, the name of Mr. Farraday is brought to the conscious mind of Stevens. Mrs. Kenton evokes in the brain of Stevens the memories of missed love opportunities, unfinished love stories, feelings of self-denial and altruism, pent-up emotions and desires, and professional service. His fellow professional Mr. John Campbell is associated with the talent of impersonation. Mr. Herman, another fellow, is known for his distinctive opinions, special laugh and Yorkshire charm. This means that Stevens’ storage bin carries referential hallmarks which characterize each individual and ease the process of vividly remembering them.

Factual journey of memory

Recalling the past memories is actually a journey towards the resurrection of either buried or forgotten facts or emotions in Stevens’ past life. It is the remembrance of “a past that remains deeply buried until the point of revelation” (Yogin Teo, 2014, p. 63). It is an attempt to rediscover and recuperate past occurrences and feelings. It is an instrument to retrieve history with all its great and tragic facts. Meanwhile, it is a real test for Stevens’ mnemonic abilities. He is “in-between the mastery of memory and the force of forgetting” using Paul Ricoeur’s terms (stated in Wiercinski, Andrzej, 2005, p. 106).

Kazuo Ishiguro seems to be interested in so many facts which characterized the English society and history in the first half of the twentieth century. His novel does, in a manner of speaking, chronicle the way the hierarchical system as well as the social class divisions work in England at that time. Those at the top of the social ladder are signaled out to be the mastermind of everything. They are qualified to discuss issues of great political value, make and take decisions at a high political level; whereas Stevens and his likes unquestioningly accept this hierarchy for the simple reason that they do not want anybody to put blame upon them in the case of the existence of some political mistakes.

Ishiguro seeks to allude to the fact that England of the past was in a state where the common people were placed on the margin, regarded as second-rate citizens who could not have a say and participate in the making of political decisions. Even when it comes to democracy, it was seen as something obsolete and outdated. Such a view is expressed by Lord Darlington in such a way: “democracy is something for a bygone era” (Kazuo Ishiguro, p 199). This statement is an explicit revelation that there is no need for the ordinary people to believe in democracy and justice. They have to stay where they are and let their superiors think and act in their place.

Stevens’ memory takes us to the time of Nazism and Adolf Hitler within the dynamic dichotomy of strength vs. weakness. Historically speaking, Hitler assailed the Jewish people and committed genocides and carnages against them not only out of hatred but out of strength as well. It was the practice of anti-Semitism against a weak minority at that time. Viewed from this perspective, *The Remains of the Day* makes references to some historical figures and incidents with intent not only to narrate their stories and cast light on them through literature but also to criticize the past ideologies grounded on social hierarchy, injustice, and anti-Semitism as dehumanizing forces.

Stevens’ journey of memory reveals England, albeit implicitly, as a colonial power. The relationship which binds him to Lord Darlington the master can be considered a microcosm of the relationship between England and its colonies. In this vein, Randall Bass describes Stevens as an ideal colonial subject whose loyal and conformist service of Lord Darlington is “an individualized model for the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized”. In the same context, Carla Guttmann states that “the Egyptians who died in forced labor while digging the Suez Canal in 1854 [...] realized the high price they paid due to colonialism, so too does Mr. Stevens confront the sacrifices that he has made by succumbing to the system of hierarchy within English tradition” (cited in Abu Baker, Ahmad M. S. and Mohammad Almostafa, 2015).

The mention of Versailles Peace Treaty, which brought World War I to an end and caused atrocious economic harms to Germany, is another important aspect of the factual journey of Stevens’ memory. Lord Darlington feels guilty and calls for meetings in his House to ask Europeans to reconsider the terms of the Treaty, especially that his intimate German friend, Herr Karl-Heinz Bremann, commits suicide after the war. He even invites the British and German leaders to prevent the Second World War, but to no avail.

The narrative structure of the novel makes us visualize and relive different historical events. In addition to the reference to the two world wars and Versailles Peace Treaty, Nazism and its role in the outbreak of the second war is also documented. While Lord Darlington tries to organize meetings to keep war II from happening, the Nazi agenda takes the world to this war, causing much harm to the world and his reputation. After the war, so many nations are severely destroyed and Lord Darlington is remembered as a Nazi advocate and traitor.

Emotive journey of memory:

Stevens' journey of memory touches not only on facts but also on feelings and emotions. The incentive which lies behind the acceptance of Stevens and his ilk to do 'eclectic' roles and duties has its deep roots in the language of emotions. They do it to gladden the hearts of their masters and gratify them. They are fated to work days and nights both mentally and physically to look for the apt keys which can best fit the wards of their lords' hearts. They hardly think about the locks of their hearts and about how they can be opened to embrace freedom and happiness. They are ready to be in anxiety to win the praise of their bosses. They consecrate their time and efforts for the well-being of others. The service of masters, as Stevens' memory reveals, is a real source of pride, admiration, greatness and dignity. Readers travel along with Stevens to the realm of memory to rediscover these emotions.

Stevens the butler seems to find warmth in living within past memories. He is in the middle of his non-stop reminiscences of his past days in Darlington Hall, using different avenues to stay there. From a neuro-psychological point of view, his mind is programmed in a way which gives much weight to the remembrance of the past with little regard to the future. He seems to be in trance going forth and back to the past. He is emotionally overwhelmed with the power of past memories. He seeks to remember things rather than forget them. He seems to find joy in playing the game of memory.

The effect of sporadically going back to the past is so huge. Its negative traces are irremovable. It can lead to depression. "Don't keep looking back all the time, you're bound to get depressed" Stevens' mate says. His journey was perturbed by the recollection of past incidents. Stevens in so many occasions expresses his willingness to remember only happy things especially those related to his employer Lord Darlington as it is the case with his two-hour meeting with Mrs. Kenton in the tea lounge, "predominantly [they] concerned [themselves] with very happy memories" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p 10). He doesn't like to remember the terrible insinuations made by newspapers about his lord throughout the war. Instead, he favors the recollection of those great moments at Darlington Hall when great events and important gatherings take place. When talking to Mrs. Benn, he says:

"Oh yes, Mrs. Benn. But enough of this. I know you remember Darlington Hall in the days when there were great gatherings, when it was filled with distinguished visitors. Now that's the way his lordship deserves to be remembered" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 10).

Stevens peruses Mrs. Jane Symons' books (*The Wonder of England*); the seven volumes which were written in the thirties, "each one concentrating on one region of the British Isles" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 11). It is really strange that he seeks descriptions and photos of different places in England in old books instead of new ones. He is wholeheartedly haunted by the past. Perhaps these books are associated in his mind with the sad moment when Miss Kenton chose to depart for Cornwall in 1936 to start her married life. Her departure and the writing and perusal of books all occurred in the thirties. The reminiscences triggered in his mind in the fifties by Kenton's letter arouse in him his love of Mrs. Jane Symons' books. The mention and remembrance of one evokes the other.

The inclusion of memory sounds sometimes to be elegiac in its approach as it confers on the remembered incidents a mournful touch. Mrs. Kenton's letter, for instance, to Stevens evokes in his mind the wistful old love story they had at Darlington House. The sad tone which emanates from the letter gives Stevens a real headache as he starts pondering upon the reasons why such feelings of unhappiness perch upon her heart. The letter has given free rein to his mind to dwell on regretful past moments he had in her company. His yearning wish to get her back to Darlington House makes him feel acute nostalgia for the days they spent together. It can be also considered a sort of emotional bereavement Stevens' memory records and displays.

The fact that Stevens evades assuming responsibility for the political mistakes made by leaders and masters is remembered with a sense of impeccability and pride. He does not feel a tinge of regret or shame for Lord Darlington's failures to lead a successful life and deal with a number of issues. He says: "it is hardly my fault if his lordship's life and work have turned out today to look, at least, a sad waste- and it's quite illogical that I should feel any regret or shame on my account" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 201). He is just a servant who fulfils his master's orders and wishes, and thus the blame should be put at none's door but his lord's.

Upon having a scrutinizing look at Stevens' inner persona, one get the feeling that it is, in one way or another, split asunder between the dictates of the past and the requirements of the present. His motoring trip around the West countryside of England can be considered a move towards independence and selfhood. But his inability to establish his own post-colonial persona independent of his service of Lord Darlington confers on his story a touch of disappointment and frustration. His late realization that "the passage of time has shown that Lord Darlington's efforts were misguided, even foolish" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 201) adds more dispiritedness to his already broken heart.

Stevens' memory is a carrier of his feelings of disenchantment with his erstwhile master's wrong deeds and mistakes. This memory makes us read the inner psychic package of emotions of regret for having wasted a lot of

effort and so many years in the service of a man who is no longer noble. They are the emotions of disappointment and discontent with a lord's faked and simulated achievements. Coming to these conclusions in the last days of an aged man who has deep respect and esteem to his employer is no longer emotionally easy, a fact which aggravates the uneasy emotive situation of Stevens even more. Memory turns out to be an open book for readers to rediscover the world of emotions Stevens meticulously narrates and describes.

Memory as a means of escapism, self-defense and self-privilege:

Memory is sometimes used as a means to escape moments of bemusement and embarrassment. Stevens searches in the repository of his memories for specific moments, feelings and incidents which can help keep him aloof from unpleasant realities and get out of embarrassing situations. It is a sort of relief from uncomfortable instants. It is like a safety valve which opens to Stevens and his likes to alleviate the ordeal of being under the pressure of giving a required response or reaction to please their masters. It is a distraction strategy used to avoid being prey to mockery and humiliation.

This could be clarified with an example. When Stevens gets flabbergasted at whether to reciprocate with Mr. Farraday the repeated mirthful bantering remarks wondering if it's appropriate or not, he pretends to remember something of great urgency. It is used as a strategy to evade any sort of bewilderment caused by not being able to respond appropriately and quickly. It is also a way to make the interlocutor change the subject. It is a tactic to show him that it is not easy to exchange ideas and views to the required standards. It is a manner to draw Mr. Farraday's attention to the point that Stevens is not wont to do this kind of duties and to engage in matters which lack seriousness and tear the thread of respect he has for his employer.

Memorizing certain things does actually serve as a savior for Stevens when he is at an impasse as it is the case when he faces a professional difficulty which has to do with the limited number of the servants in comparison to the past. He recalls the twenty-eight employees in Darlington Hall and compares it with the staff of four now, showing to his new employer Mr. Farraday how hard it is to handle the work with this very small number. Thus, he starts thinking about hiring more employees, and bringing back Mrs. Kenton to Darlington Hall to benefit from her experience as a professional housekeeper.

Viewed from this angle, it sounds plausible to vouch that memory is actually a sort of defense mechanism. When Stevens finds it difficult to cope with the demands of the new era under the lordship of Mr. Farraday, he regressively resorts memory to face the state of unease he goes through. It's like a pressure release using Dr. John M. Groho's words. Resorting to past memories in these conditions gives Stevens the chance to be calm and secure and avoid troubles. He also seeks to project his remembered emotions onto his peers and ordinary people. This defense mechanism, according to Dr. John Groho is called projection.

Memory can be also seen as a source of evidence in debates and discussions. It is a scaffolding tool at Stevens' disposal. It bears testimonies to so many occurrences and instances in the life of Stevens and his likes. In the course of defining the greatness of butlers and the standards which determine this greatness, Stevens recalls "many hours of enjoyable discussion on this topic around the fire of the servants' hall at the end of a day" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p.22). He also remembers the organization of the Hayes Society and the criteria it sets for butlers of the first place. His arguments for what a great butler is are strongly built upon what his memory stores. He seems to intelligently select his instances and cases to demonstrate his greatness and defend himself as a butler.

Stevens' memory stores warm feelings of admiration and respect for his fellow professionals who had great talents. Thus, memory turns out to be a means to privilege butlers and servants in general, bring homage to them and show that they own certain artistic gifts. To exemplify this, Stevens remembers Mr. Wilkinson, valet-butler to Mr. John Campbell, for his ability to impersonate prominent gentlemen, Mr. Davidson from Easterly House for his capacity to debate different points, and Mr. Herman, valet to Mr. John Henry Peters, for his "extreme views no one could listen to passively, but whose distinctive belly-laugh and Yorkshire charm made him impossible to dislike" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 16).

Memory as a tool of comparison:

Memory can be also seen as a means to draw comparisons between different situations or people. It is a rich repository to rely on to compare the past with the present, showing the points of convergence and divergence and expressing preferences for certain tendencies and standpoints. It is like a tripod upon which the memorizer's mental camera rests to have a sort of panoramic comparative view about individuals in the past and now. It functions as a cerebral referent to gauge the value of so many past events, reread them in the light of the present ones and draw interesting lessons from them.

Stevens resorts to his memories in the service of Lord Darlington to show how easy it was to do one's duties and consult fellow professionals at times of difficulty, and how hard it is now to fulfil the same responsibilities. His butler service in the past endowed him with opportunities to learn from guests and fellow valets. He expresses such a concern in this simple comparative way:

Such difficulties as these tend to be all the more preoccupying nowadays because one does not have the means to discuss and corroborate views with one's fellow professionals in the way one once did. Not so long ago, if any such points of ambiguity arose regarding one's duties, one had the comfort of knowing that before long some fellow professional whose opinion one respected would be accompanying their employer to the house, and there would be ample opportunity to discuss the matter. (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 15)

Memory is thus a source upon which Stevens heavily relies to compare his past with the present. He gives free reign to his memories to stress the stark differences between the topics broached in the evenings at Darlington Hall at the times of Lord Darlington and now. In the past, the guests and visitors focused their debates and discussions on important issues and events. They were serious controversies whose results could immensely affect many nations worldwide. On the contrary, the guests of today are very much obsessed with topics like football associations and spend their evenings enjoying their drinks.

Thanks to Stevens' recollections, one can spot the differences between social classes within the framework of the relationship which binds servants to their masters. Stevens and his peers lead a hand-to-mouth existence, showing conformism, submissiveness and compliance as a *quid pro quo* for their masters' basic materialistic gifts. They are put on the periphery of society on the grounds that the sole justification of their being is the ideal service of and loyalty to the upper echelon in the hopes of getting their biological needs such as food, clothes and accommodation in return. They cannot have a say about issues of great political weight. The upper-class people in the society can do that in their place.

One more thing, memory helps come to the view that within the same sect or group of people, there are differences between individuals. Stevens and Miss Kenton, for example, belong to the group of servants in Darlington Hall, but they are different in so many respects. She manifests her ability to express her emotional warmth that Stevens never dares do. She brings him flowers as a way to draw his attention to her love, but gets no response except disregard. As the narrative goes on, she displays herself as a woman who has a personality and can live her life of love and independence. When she realizes that her love of Stevens cannot end in marriage, she makes and takes the decision to marry another man.

Stevens' reminiscences make us visualize the distinction between two different but strongly related eras: the colonial era and post-colonial one. The first one is marked with a lot of bloodshed, oppression, injustice, inequality, self-suppression, atrocities and human suffering; whereas the second seems to be associated with independence, self-awareness and the struggle with the residue of the first. Stevens' memory, toward the end of the novel, carries a sort of backlash against the old colonial ideologies and signals the coming of seemingly new ones for which the likes of Stevens have to psych themselves up. By the way, the date of July 1956 in the novel can be considered a demarcation line separating the two epochs.

Stevens remembers Mr. Harry Smith as a man who defends such values as democracy, social justice and freedom. Contrary to Stevens' conformism to the already established norms and mores, Mr. Harry Smith raises his voice in a halo of rebuff of anything meant to inferiorize the masses for the sake of the highly-placed people. Mr. Smith can be considered a representative of the collective consciousness of the post-colonial people who are aware about the significance of change and the need to forget about the hierarchical traditions, atrocities and genocides of the past. He is a man of revolutionary values and principles. His attitude stands in sharp contrast to the conventional view that ordinary people are just consumers rather than producers in the domain of politics. He places a special stress on the necessity to fight against the enslaving and dehumanizing power of colonialism.

Memory as an obstacle to change and self-emancipation:

It may sound a little bit strange to say that memory can be sometimes a real obstacle to change. Living the present with the mentality of the past hampers the development of both individuals and communities and makes them stagnant and backward-looking. Being stuck in the past and remembering it with a great nostalgia means being satisfied with it and having a burning desire to relive it. Stevens with his memories can be considered a relic from the past of Darlington Hall. He looks at the past with a touch of sacredness and resists the change brought along with Mr. Farraday. He shows some reluctance to embrace any shift which can take him far away from the life he is accustomed to. The past memories with their ups and downs provide some security to him. New things for a man of his age are more likely to bring about uncomfortable experiences to him.

The fact that Stevens seems to be deeply enmeshed in the abyss of his past memories endorses the idea that memory can sometimes work as a prison. He confines the minutes of his life to the blind, unquestioning loyalty to and utopian service of his employer to the extent of quasi-deification. His life is actually no more than the recollection of a series of pent-up emotions and desires for the luxury of Lord Darlington. As he proceeds in the narration of his history, he gives the impression that he is in search of the possibility of the past being present again. The shackles of the past have the upper hand on him.

Thus, he can be held to represent the post-colonial man who finds it very difficult to accommodate with the

waves of the present and cope with the residue of colonialism. Toward the end of the novel, he takes the plunge to unchain himself from the shackles of bygone memories and lead a normal calm life, but, to his misfortune, the result is a sheer fiasco. It is no longer easy for him. He is imprisoned in his memories which constitute the backbone of his life. He seems to enjoy the memory game which possibly gives a sense to his being not just as a butler but as a human being.

Stevens' constant return to the past with a sense of joy and satisfaction mingled with a touch of remorsefulness puts spokes in his wheel as far as his readjustment with the new living conditions is concerned. The memories of his old superior and the housekeeper come unbidden to his mind. He cannot act or speak without referring to the past. He admits that he is "unable to prevent himself from continuing to wander along these same tracks" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p. 211-212). Past memories surround him wherever he goes, and affect his deeds and talks; thus, they hamper his change, hinder his growth and make his adaptation to the new mode of life so difficult.

This past which straitjackets any attempt to embrace new ideas and modes of life leads Stevens to define dignity, greatness and professionalism in terms of what his father did. He defines them according to already established norms and practices. Greatness, for him, is "the dignity in keeping with one's position" (Kazuo Ishiguro, p.42). Great and professional butlers are those who are able to show equanimity and avoid being shaken out by the least provocation on the part of his employer or his guests. It is the memorized old definition of greatness and professionalism which dictates on Stevens what a great butler is and prevents him from developing a new one. Stevens remembers the story of his father bringing two disturbing inebriated gentlemen, Mr. Smith and Mr. John, to their sobriety just by abruptly stopping the car and without manifesting any physical violence.

Metaphorically speaking, the past memories for Stevens are like dolls or teddy bears for children. The presence of these toys gives these children a sense of who they are. The same thing holds true for Stevens whose presence is contingent on his past which determines important parts of his identity. The loss of this past means the loss of this identity. Most of the things readers learn and know about him come basically from his memory. Dispensing with the past may put Stevens in a state of fear and anxiety, and thus it is safer for him to warmly stick to the past and resist the changes which may be possibly brought with the present.

Memory and expectations

The function of memory after any human interaction is worth considering in the fabrics of Kazuo's *The Remains of the Day*. Stevens recalls so many conversations and events which took place in Darlington Hall. The questions to be raised here are: what makes him vividly remember them? What is impressive and special about them? What kind of conversations and incidents does he recall? Does his memory work well when his expectations are met or not met? And what type of individuals and occurrences does he remember well?

One way to account for Stevens' ability to remember the human interactions and happenings he witnessed is to consider his expectations about the individuals involved in them and the weight of respect and admiration each one has in his heart and mind. If we take the case of Lord Darlington, Stevens speaks about him with a great sense of homage, glorification and appreciation. His expectations about him are always high standards. He expects his master to act nobly, speak eloquently, eat elegantly, live luxuriously, discuss wisely, listen attentively, feel warmly, and behave correctly. Memory functions well according to what is expected of the remembered thing or person. The flow of memories comes as a response to these expectations.

Conclusion

To sum up, it's obviously clear that the inclusion of memory in the fabrics of Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* is not done out of blue. There is a rationale behind that. It is used for different purposes: to make references to individuals and objects, to state facts, to exteriorize and describe emotions, to escape from unpleasant realities, to defend one's views, to privilege the self, to draw comparisons and meet expectations. But still to note that it can sometimes negatively impact individuals and communities, hinder their development, and prevent them from embracing the air of change and progress.

Still one more thing to add is that Kazuo Ishiguro deals with memory as a matter of personal choice. He doesn't want to talk about the past in terms of what happened or didn't happen. He wants it to be remembered in terms of what might or mightn't have happened, using such expressions as "I think", "perhaps", "maybe", and "I could". This sounds for him to be more authentic as it resembles the way people tend to remember or forget things in real life. This is what he says in an interview conducted by Jessika Gedin during the Nobel Prize banquet on December 10th, 2017 and published on December 18th, 2017 in nobelprize.org after his being nominated the 2017 Nobel laureate in literature. Therefore, Stevens' past is remembered and narrated in this way.

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