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Cultural Trauma and Healing in Kazuo Ishiguro's
Never Let Me Go

石黑一雄《别让我离开》中的文化创伤和愈合

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摘要

石黑一雄（1954-），日裔英国小说家，是诺贝尔文学奖获得者。移民经历使他拥有了跨越东西方的文化背景和独特记忆。作为移民小说家，异国文化中的成长经历使他在文学创作中更关注身份问题，并且从复杂身份中抽离出来，思考个人的社会责任。在多年的创作生涯中，他多以事实背景为依据创作小说，然而 2005 年小说《别让我离开》属于科幻题材，这部小说让人们感受到石黑一雄对于后人类世界“克隆技术”的关注。

《别让我离开》获得了布克奖和美国国家图书评论协会提名奖。小说中石黑一雄描述了一群生活在世界某个角落的克隆人，被赋予为生病的人类捐献器官的使命。他们有着和常人一样的喜怒哀乐和情爱纷争，却不曾拥有真正的人权。尽管他们对生存怀有渴望，却不得不完成自己的使命直到生命的最后一刻。

创伤是石黑一雄小说中的常见主题。目前许多学者从不同角度研究《别让我离开》中的创伤主题，但从文化创伤理论的角度进行研究的并不多见。本论文以杰弗瑞·亚历山大的文化创伤理论为依托，探究文化创伤在小说中的体现和愈合方式。通过运用文化创伤理论对小说进行分析，让读者从另一个角度去审视克隆人的苦难，也为研究石黑一雄的作品提供一个新的视角。

论文由三部分组成：引言、正文和结论。

引言部分首先对作家、作品进行概括性介绍；接着对《别让我离开》进行文献综述，通过总结、对比分析国内外批评家、学者的观点，提出文化创伤角度解析这部小说的可行性；最后介绍全文结构。

第二部分为正文，由三章组成。

第一章介绍创伤以及文化创伤的理论概念，为后文分析提供理论依据。

第二章分析小说中文化创伤，第一节中，论文从个人创伤着手，分析三位主人公承受的创伤和不同的创伤表症，并在第二节引出克隆人的集体创伤并分析原因。而文化创伤又是集体创伤的文化体现。因此，第三节中，运用杰弗瑞·亚历山大关于文化创伤的三个要素和四种体现的概念，对小说中的文化创伤进行分析。

第三章从两个方面探讨克隆人文化创伤的愈合之路：自我救赎和社会责任归属。自我救赎将从建立安全感、回顾与悼念以及重建联系三个方面进行探讨；

社会责任归属将从合理利用科技、进行抗争以及道德和法律约束三个方面探讨。

最后一部分为结论部分。该部分对论文的观点进行总结，指出克隆人文化创伤的根源，并对人类在其文化创伤中应当肩负的责任进行呼吁。从文化创伤的角度解读这部小说，可以使读者更深层次地理解作者的创作意图和小说的社会意义。克隆技术是把双刃剑，石黑一雄借助这部作品引发人们对科学技术发展的思考以及对弱势群体的关注。同时，作家通过对克隆人的刻画，让人们反思生命的意义。

关键词： 石黑一雄； 《别让我离开》；克隆人；文化创伤；愈合

Abstract

Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-), a Japanese-British novelist, is the winner of Nobel Prize for literature. The experience of immigration gave him a unique cross-cultural background and special memory. As a cross-cultural novelist, his exotic growing experience helps him focus on identity, get rid of the interference of complex identity and think seriously about his social responsibility. In his writing career, he wrote novels more based on real events. Nevertheless, the novel *Never Let Me Go* in 2005 was a science fiction which makes people feel his concern about “cloning technology” in the post-human world.

Never Let Me Go was nominated for the Booker Prize and American National Book Critics Association Award. In the novel, Ishiguro describes a group of clones who live somewhere in the world. They are given the task of donating organs to humans who are sick. They have the same emotions as human beings but without real human rights. Although they have a desire for survival, they have to complete their mission until the last moment of life.

Trauma is a common theme in Kazuo Ishiguro's novels. At present, many scholars study the trauma theme of the novel from different perspectives, but there are few studies done from the cultural trauma theory. Based on the cultural trauma theory of Jeffrey Alexander, this paper explores how cultural trauma is represented in the novel and how cultural trauma is healed. The present author analyzes this novel by the theory of cultural trauma, so that readers can understand the suffering of human clones through another perspective which will expand research scopes on Kazuo Ishiguro's works.

This paper is divided into three parts: introduction, the main body and conclusion.

The introduction gives a general introduction to the writer and his works. Then, the thesis makes a literature review of *Never Let Me Go*. By summarizing and comparing the views of domestic and foreign critics and scholars, it puts forward the

feasibility of analyzing *Never Let Me Go* from the perspective of cultural trauma. Finally, the research structure is introduced.

The second part is the main body which includes three chapters.

The first chapter introduces the theoretical concept of trauma and cultural trauma, which provides theoretical basis for the analysis.

The second chapter analyzes the representation of the cultural trauma in the novel. In the first section, it starts with personal traumas of the three protagonists and their different trauma symptoms. In the second section, it points out the collective trauma of the clones and analyzes the causes. As cultural trauma is the cultural embodiment of collective trauma, in the third section, it analyzes the cultural trauma in the novel by using Alexander's cultural trauma thesis of the three elements and the four key representations.

The third chapter discusses the ways of cultural trauma healing from two aspects: self-redemption and social responsibility attribution. Self-redemption will be discussed from three parts: safety establishment, review and mourning, and relevancy reconstruction. Social responsibility attribution will be analyzed from three aspects: rational use of technology, learning to resist as well as moral and law constraints.

The last part is conclusion. It summarizes the points, revealing the roots of the cultural trauma and calls on the human beings to take responsibility in the cultural trauma. An interpretation of the novel from the angle of cultural trauma is helpful for us to understand the author's intention and its social significance. Clone technology is a double-edged sword. Through his novel *Never Let Me Go*, Kazuo Ishiguro shows his contemplation of human nature loss in the course of technology development and calls for people to protect and respect the vulnerable groups. At the same time, through the depiction of human cloning, the author makes us reflect on the meaning of life.

Key Words: Kazuo Ishiguro; *Never Let Me Go*; clones; cultural trauma; healing

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Introduction

0.1 Introduction to Kazuo Ishiguro

Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-), a Japanese-born British novelist, was famous as a contemporary fiction writer and was rated by *The Times* as one of “the fifty greatest British writers since 1945” in 2008. He won Nobel Prize on October the 15th, 2017 and has received more attention ever since. Born in Nagasaki, Japan on November the 8th, 1954, Ishiguro immigrated to England with his parents when he was five years old and lived there ever since. He was born in Japan and lived in the UK. His experience makes people interested in him and his works. He was named as one of the “Three Immigrant Giants” together with Salman Rushdie and V. S. Naipaul. His novels are frequent visitors to almost every award or nomination of literary awards. *A Pale View of Hills* (1982) was honored by the Royal Society. *An Artist of the Floating World* (1986) was honored Whitbread Book of the Year Award for the best novel from British and Irish Book Association. *The Remains of the Day* (1989) was awarded the highest prize in Britain—Booker Prize which helped to win its high place in British literary. The *Unconsoled* (1995) was the winner of the Cheltenham Prize. *When We Were Orphans* (2000) was awarded Booker Prize again. *Never Let Me Go* (2005) was nominated for the Booker Prize and American National Book Critics Association Award. *The Buried Giant* (2015) was nominated for the 2016 World Fantasy Award for best novel, and the 2016 Mythopoeic Award for Adult Literature.

Based on his immigration experience, Ishiguro received dual influence of British culture and Japanese culture. On one hand, he accepted the orthodox English education with the boys at school and learnt to be a British boy. He got his bachelor’s degree of English literature when he studied in the University of East Anglia and Kent University. His works are written in English without exception for his high English proficiency and his language is unadorned and elegant in the calm and reserved writing style. On the other hand, he is also influenced by the traditional Japanese culture at home. At first his parents planned to stay only before the completion of the

work and then return to Japan, so they never let Ishiguro give up Japanese culture education. In addition, after he moved to the UK with his parents, his grandfather mailed parcels to him every month with Japanese cartoons for kids in order to help him better understand Japanese culture. In 1960s, the relaxed immigration policy opened Ishiguro's eyes to see the beauty and multiplicity of the world. From Japan to the United Kingdom, and from Britain to the rest of the world, Ishiguro crossed multiple geographic and cultural space. As a typical crossover, he was influenced by different geographic environment, political environment, cultural space and cultural traditions, etc.

He returned to his birth land 30 years later, and he began to realize that he had very little knowledge of modern Japan. However, he is still writing these stories which happened in Japan or with Japanese background. He even called himself the homeless writer, because he doesn't think he owned an identified social image. He points out that he is neither a typical British man nor a typical Japanese man. He has no exact social role and no duty to write for any nation. For these reasons, he has formed his international writing style. His international writing style is mainly because his wandering in the two culture systems and each culture affects him in strong or weak power. The antagonism between the two powers fights for his identity and shapes his identity. However, he is difficult to fit in any power completely, and cannot completely get rid of any power.

It is because of the fight between these two powers, Ishiguro has more opportunities to focus on identity discussion. At the same time, this antagonism helps him separate himself from the interference of various factors. He does not work for any authority. He begins to think seriously about his social responsibility. He is able to be fairer and more objective in dealing with the matters around him. He incorporates these thoughts into his literary creation which arouses greater resonance with the readers. During his early writing career, he wrote novels more based on the facts. Nevertheless, with the publication of *Never Let Me Go* in 2005, people could see his interest in the social focus "cloning technology". Ishiguro describes that in a corner of the world, there is such a group of clones, who are born to donate their organs to sick human. They are deprived of human rights and they are even not

humans but the products. In this work, readers can feel the warm-hearted concern for vulnerable groups on Ishiguro. As a writer, he advocates the communication and understanding between different cultures. It manifests the writer's social responsibility and historical mission which are showed by the carrying of cultural memory of literature and the thinking of the current political situation on his creation.

His social responsibility and historical mission also come from his experience as a volunteer. He took a year off from school and spent six months working as a community volunteer to help people in a residential area in Renfrew of Scotland. It was the decline of British manufacturing, widespread unemployment, and the grim social conditions that made him grow a lot spiritually. According to Ishiguro's reminiscence, it was just then that he began to think seriously about life. In 1978 he received a bachelor of arts degree at the university of Kent, then he engaged in social work in a group called "Cyrenian" which is to help the homeless. These homeless people are largely the archetype of homeless clones in the novel *Never Let Me Go*.

0.2 Introduction to *Never Let Me Go*

His sixth novel *Never Let Me Go* is a science fiction published in 2005 which is quite different from his other works.

In Part One, the story begins in a mysterious and isolated boarding school in Britain—Hailsham. There are a group of students who look no difference from other children. The three protagonists are Kathy, Tommy and Ruth who grow up together. The students there have no parents or relatives, and even no their family names which is instead by a letter. In the school, the guardians look after their lives. The students attend classes like music, art, PE and so on, and it seems that it has no difference with the normal school. In the school, they obey strict rules: no strenuous exercises, no going out and no refusal to eat prepared food. Being healthy is always the most important, and their bodies are checked by the guardians regularly, which makes them feel confused or uneasy and even have a sense of fear at times. But they still follow all the rules without query. In fact, their bodies do not belong to themselves when they are born. After growing up, their organs will be deprived inhumanly anytime

when their DNA owners need them. Because they are all clones. Among these students, there are two kids, Kathy and Tommy, who are getting on with each other with affection. They have classes together, chat with each other and look forward to the happiness of future. However, what they don't know is that they are just copies of human beings. The duty of their whole lives is providing parts of body. They are not treated as human beings and they are just like pigs fed in pigsty. They are asked to paint, and their paintings will be taken by a mysterious organization. This organization is the only one which is opposed to this donation plan. The members of the organization are fighting against the plan of the rich. They naively believe that if they can prove the clones have souls, they can save their lives. For this reason, painting becomes their only way to prove that their value of lives before they are donated to death. Although they successfully prove the extraordinary creative talents of the clones later, this proof causes more fearful responses of human beings. Because the DNA in clones is improved, they may own more ascendancy than humans, and they will threaten human safety. Before the forced closing of school, a teacher who sympathizes with the children tells the children about their miserable fate. All their hearts tremble and all their visions of the future turn to ashes. They have to accept the miserable lives even they haven't finished their childhood.

In Part Two, Kathy and Tommy didn't start their relationship before separating from school. After several years, they gathered in a Cottage to prepare for the donation. When they grow older, they want to know who are their "possible"(Ishiguro, 2005: 139). They try to satisfy their curiosity, moreover, to find their human identity. But they are all disappointed, because they find out that no matter who are their "possible", they still cannot get their sense of existence in the world, and will never change their fate. In the Cottage Ruth and Tommy fall in love and start their relation. Most of the clones fall in love. Some clones hear the rumor that the couple will be allowed to delay their donation if they can prove that there is true love between them. Kathy loves Tommy by heart. She cherishes their friendship of them three. So, she chooses to leave and becomes a carer of donors. However, Tommy and Ruth are broken up when they start to donate. They know they might not be couple forever and their days are numbered.

In Part Three, Kathy does her job well, but she lives in tough life and in solitude. Days have passed. Kathy has heard the news about Ruth that Ruth's first donation hasn't gone well at all. Kathy gets the chance to be Ruth's carer. They open their heart to each other again. With Ruth's encouragement, Kathy finds Tommy, when he has already finished his second donation, and they restart their spark of love. They believe that it is true love between them. Tommy wants to have more time to stay with Kathy. With Ruth's help, they find the lady of the mysterious organization. Tommy shows his paintings to prove that they truly fall in love. But rumor is rumor. No one can get deferral. At last, Tommy dies on the operating table in his fourth donation. The lonely Kathy is going to make her first donation.

In the story, Kathy acts as the narrator and the story is narrated in the first-person style. It can be considered as a reminiscence of Kathy. This novel has been nominated for the Booker Prize and U.S. National Book Critic Circle Award. With the background of the hot discussion of clones and bioethics, it instigates a well-received film adaption in 2010. The title of the novel is also the clone girl—Kathy's favorite song. She remembers it as a song that a mother is humming to her baby with love. This novel is a perfect combination of science fiction and dystopian fiction, which causes lots of critics to analyze the existential problems of clones with anxiety and deep thinking. Upon its publication, the book has gained high praise from both readers and literary critics. With his superb narration skills, this science fiction which is settled in a post-human society, summons critics' great attention and thought-provoking universal discussion.

0.3 Previous Studies on Kazuo Ishiguro and His Works

0.3.1 Studies Abroad

From the first published novel till now, Kazuo Ishiguro has attracted considerable attention abroad. Researches about Ishiguro's works, including his early short novels, later fictions and recent collection of short stories, are getting rich. The range of study involves multiple levels and can be categorized into the monographs, the collections of theses and the articles from 1900s till now. Earlier studies focus

more on Ishiguro's identity of immigration and arguments are mainly on his Japaneseness and Britishness. Later, the view of researches is broadened to narratology, postcolonial theory, narcosynthesis, response criticism and the like. The researches vary from Ishiguro's identity and Britishness of him and his works to ethical study.

The monographs start from Brain W. Shaffer's *Understanding Kazuo Ishiguro* (1998) which is the first book of study about Ishiguro. Shaffer points out that the individuals in Ishiguro's works always keep silence to protect themselves from painful experiences, or to suppress the hope that they cannot face or admit. Wai-chew Sim(2010) from Nanyang Technological University published new monograph *Kazuo Ishiguro* in 2010. This monograph is considered to be a relatively complete and comprehensive one. He introduces the life and work of Ishiguro in the first part, and gives brief introductions of his six novels in the second part. In the third part, he summarizes the different angles of critics including writing style, narratology, cross-cultural and post-colonial studies, psychological analysis method, global perspective and so on. These monographs reference study of value for the later research.

The most remarkable collection of theses about Kazuo Ishiguro is *The Novels of Kazuo Ishiguro* (2010) written by Matthew Beedham. In the collection, he classifies and sums up the main comments of scholars outlines the reaction of Ishiguro's fiction as well as analyzes the supporting arguments about main ideas. Through his classification, the directions of later study become clearer. It provides ideas for the diversity of research.

When searching in CNKI foreign literature, forty-six theses can be found in relation to the works of Kazuo Ishiguro from 1995 till now. In these studies, a dozen of articles are related to *Never Let Me Go*. But after narrowing down the range of research to cultural trauma research, the articles is rare.

More articles are focused on the discussion about human rights and identity. For example, in Titus Levy's essay, he examines Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *Never Let Me Go* (2011) as a type of "Bildungsroman"(Levy, 2011:1) which presents contemporary human rights issues. It shows how autobiographical storytelling functions within the novel, as a form of rights claim, and gives voice to the suffering of an oppressed

social group. In his article “The Failure of Humanizing Education in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”, Nathan Snaza(2015) argues that clones are given a model of humanizing education which is focused on aesthetic experience at Hailsham. This is a traditional conception of education. He argues that people need an education that does not set out to make them into full human beings, but rather enables them to affirm the continual process of “becoming-other-than-we-are”(Snaza, 2015:230). These are his points about what do we want from education and how to educate humans into real human beings with human rights.

Ishiguro’s writing strategy arouses much attention of scholars. In his essay “*Never Let Me Go* and the Horizons of the Novel” (2015), Patrick R. Query uses the theories of José Ortega y Gasset and Walter Benjamin to build the argument. *Never Let Me Go* “demonstrates the reader’s own nearly automatic practice of assenting to the created world of a novel” (Query, 2015:155).

Some critics analyze its aesthetic themes. In his “Ishiguro’s Diptych: Art and Social Democracy in *The Unconsoled* and *Never Let Me Go*” (2017), Martin Ryle embodies its aesthetic theme. In making aesthetic performance and aesthetic education theme to his dialectical evaluation of social democracy, Kazuo Ishiguro especially addresses teachers of culture. In *Never Let Me Go*, the experiment of giving clones an aesthetic education can be seen to have had a progressive aspect.

According to the genre studies, critics hold different views on the genre of *Never Let Me Go*. Most of them regard it as a science fiction. In his article titled “Science and the Cultural Imaginary: The Case of Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*”, Professor Gabriele Griffin(2009) believes that the task of a science fiction is to “animate the cultural imaginary to explore the meaning of the new biotechnologies in and for our lives and selves” (Griffin, 2009: 23). To Griffin, the novel *Never Let Me Go* does complete this task, as Ishiguro does search for the meaning of cloning technology for human beings, with rich cultural imagination. However, in “Unsettling Environments: New Pastorals in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* and Sarah Hall’s *The Carhullan Army*”, Deborah Lilley (2016) points out that the persistence of pastoral tradition in contemporary British writing is in conjunction with classical and contemporary pastoral writing and theory. However, brought into new contexts by

contemporary environmental concerns, it is being put to new uses, and adapted into new forms in these instances. New uses for and new formations of the pastoral tradition have emerged.

Moreover, some critics study the social ethic idea of the novel. James Tink (2016) proposes that Derrida's *The Death Penalty*, gives readers another way to think the ethics and pathos of *Never Let Me Go*. He argues that Ishiguro's modern fable of human cloning makes people rethink the ideas of authenticity, humanity and a life without cruelty, at the same time, shows the desire for life in the way of exploring a defense of life against the death penalty.

From above analysis, the diverse studies of this novel are presented. However, there are rare explicit studies of this novel from the perspective of cultural trauma.

0.3.2 Studies at Home

Compared with studies abroad, the researches about Kazuo Ishiguro at home start late but expand with high speed. *Never Let Me Go* was published in 2005. When the key words "Kazuo Ishiguro" and "*Never Let Me Go*" are entered in the search box, there are 69 pieces found in CNKI from 2006 till now: 51 articles and 18 Master's theses. These studies analyze the novel from different perspectives, such as, existentialism, the construction of protagonists' identity, narrative spaces and tragic aesthetics analysis. In her "A Study of *Never Let Me Go* from the Perspective of Existentialism" Zhang Cuiling(2014) analyzes the main existential plights that the clones face, explores the psychological situation of the main characters, and discusses the different transcendence of the state characters. In her master's thesis "On the Construction of Kathy's Identity in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*", Guo Ping(2016) analyzes the three aspects of Kathy's identity anxiety, Kathy's identity construction and its results. Li Dan's "Narrative Spaces in *Never Let Me Go*" (2013) discusses the novel from three aspects: physical space, memory space and power space. Through introduction and analysis, it not only reflects the unique narrative features of the novel in terms of structure and narrative time, but also vividly reflects the metaphor effect, the meaning of memory and the sociality of the novel. In "A Comparative Study on *Never Let Me Go* and *Doppelganger* from the Perspective of

Tragic Aesthetics”, Peng Ting(2015) compares the two works in three aspects: tragic ending the struggling spirit of tragic life, the tragic conflicts and the significance of the two texts in the angle of tragic aesthetics. She indicates that the comparative study of two novelists and the two texts from the perspective of tragic aesthetics could make us have a better understanding of the influence of cultural roots and culture exchange in literature.

There are only four articles which are dealt with trauma theory: one Master thesis and three articles.

The master thesis “A Traumatic Study of *Never Let Me Go*” by Liu Shuang (2016) is based on trauma theory. This paper is focused on the individual trauma and the collective trauma of the novel. Through the narration of Kathy’s trauma, and the analysis of the traumatic events in her memory, the traumatic impact of her personal trauma is explored the paper. Then she goes on to explain the collective trauma of the clones and the guardians in traumatic events. Through analyzing, she figures out that the trauma is unfinished and needs farther treatments.

Before her master thesis, Liu Shuang published an article “The psychological trauma of Kathy in *Never Let Me Go*” with her professor Wang Xiaoli. It can be considered as a tentative study of this novel. In this article, she analyzes Kathy’s individual trauma from symptoms, causes and treatments of trauma. It can be considered as the miniature of her master thesis.

The other two articles are “The Trauma Narration in *Never Let Me Go*” (Li Danling, 2013:201-215) and “On the Traumatic Memory and Identity Writing of *Never Let Me Go*” (Li Queyun, 2015:127-130).

Li Danling analyzes the novel from individual trauma, insidious trauma and cultural trauma. Li Danling analyzes the clones’ cultural trauma. She analyzes the clones’ collective trauma by Jeffrey Alexander’s theory. She points out that in Ishiguro’s novel, the trauma happens to Kathy as well as the whole clones. Most clones die from donation. Kathy is the narrator who narrates the collective trauma to her clone companions. In this way, the dissemination of cultural trauma happens. Li points out that the cultural trauma is constructed though Kathy’s recall. However, she doesn’t give solutions to heal the trauma.

Different from Li Danling's views, Li Queyun's study shows her purposes on concerning diaspora group's identity problem and promoting "new international" writing idea. Childhood trauma and growing-up experience are combined with civil rights and idealism after World War II. She aims to interpret the ethnic minorities' difficult solutions under the oppression of mainstream ideology hegemony.

As mentioned above, the researches of the trauma theme of the novel is in a rising momentum. But there are few specialized researches on this novel from the perspective of cultural trauma theory.

0.4 Overall Structure of the Thesis

In this thesis, the author analyzes individual trauma and collective trauma of clones. These analyses provide the conditions for the conversion of cultural trauma. In the introduction part, Ishiguro and his literary achievements are briefly introduced. In addition, relevant researches of *Never Let Me Go* and the present researches are presented. In the first chapter, the author discusses the definition of trauma, the development of trauma theory and the cultural trauma theory. The second chapter explores the cultural trauma representation in the novel from three aspects: individual trauma of clones, collective trauma of clones and conversion of individual trauma into cultural trauma. In the third chapter, the author discusses the healing process of cultural trauma from two aspects: self-redemption and social responsibility attribution. Self-redemption will be discussed from three parts: safety establishment, review and mourning, and relevancy reconstruction. Social responsibility attribution will be analyzed from three aspects: rational use of technology, learning to resist as well as moral and law constraints. In the conclusion part, the author summarizes the content of this thesis.

Chapter One Theoretical Foundation of Cultural Trauma

1.1 Trauma and Trauma Theory

The word “trauma” derives from the Greek word “τρυμα”. Its original meaning is “a piercing of the skin, a breaking of the bodily envelope” (Garland, 1998:9). At the beginning, it means the physical injury which is caused by the external force. Later, it extends to the medical and psychological treatment. In the 1960s, a French neurologist, Jean Martin Charot, advances the relationship between trauma and mental health for the first time. However, his theory of hysteria is not that popular at that period.

The students of Jean Martin Charot: Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud contributes great to the development of trauma theory. Janet puts forward the concept of narrative memory and traumatic memory, studies the influence of the patients’ traumatic experiences on personality development. He maintains that the main difference the former and latter is whether they can be narrated by traumatic or not. Freud confirms that the traumatic causes varied from person to person. It may cause death, abandonment, physical injuries and psychological burden. However, trauma sufferers had similar symptoms.

Freud’s researches on trauma lay a solid foundation for the later studies about trauma. He describes trauma as a response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, imaginations, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena. Just like he claims in his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (2010): people often unconsciously repress their painful experiences or deep memories. Repression becomes an important factor in the operation of the unconscious. Through observation of repression among different patients, he finds out that people are actually unaware of their burying memories or traumatic experiences (Freud, 2010:58).

In the 20th century, the two world wars and the Vietnam War led to a traumatic era. The people suffered a lot after the wars, especially the soldiers who had to

encounter the psychological trauma caused by the war. Most of them would bear the pain caused by the war for their whole life time as well as the pain from losing memory and perception. The researches of the psychiatrists on the war, had a major impact on the contemporary trauma studies.

Judith Herman sets milestone for contemporary trauma research. She is best known for her distinctive contributions to the understanding of trauma and its victims. In her second book, *Trauma and Recovery*, she concentrates on the classic study of the diagnostic category post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). *Trauma and Recovery* is considered as a groundbreaking work elaborating on the issues which is surrounding the topic of trauma and recovery. It brings a new level of understanding to trauma predicament which is traditionally considered as individual problems. Herman alleges that trauma should be analyzed under a broader political frame and social context. In this book, Herman also presents the destructive influences of trauma on trauma victims. One of the important narrative strategies is unreliable narration. In her *Trauma and Recovery*, Herman demonstrates that: People who have survival atrocities often tell their stories in a highly emotional, contradictory, and fragmented manner. In order to keep balance between the twin imperatives of truth-telling and secrecy, credibility about what they have said is undermined. Herman influentially sets out a three-stage sequence of trauma treatment and recovery. The first stage involves regaining a sense of safety, through a therapeutic relationship, medication, relaxation exercises or a combination. The second stage involves active work upon the trauma: fostering secure base and combining with a range of psychological techniques. The final stage is represented by an advance to a new post-traumatic life. Through all it involved is possibly broadened by the experience of surviving from the trauma.

The term “Trauma Theory” is first introduced by Cathy Caruth, a professor of Cornell University, in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. In her opinion trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events.

In the next few years, scholar and critic Anne Whitehead examines many works of trauma theorists such as Cathy Caruth, Geoffrey Hatrman and Shoshana Felman in

her book *Trauma Fiction* (2004). Most importantly, this book brings trauma theory and literary texts together for the first time. “Trauma Fiction” is firstly put forward in this book, which is focused on the ways in which contemporary novelists explore the theme of trauma and incorporate its structures into their writing.

In general, the development of trauma theory can be divided into two stages. The first stage of trauma theory appeared in the late nineteenth century. French neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet and Sigmund Freud firstly make the observation, classification, analysis and treatment of the hysteria. The second stage begins with the two world wars and the Vietnam War. The psychiatrists concentrate on the neurosis problems of the veterans after the war. Contemporary trauma theory has entered into multiple fields, such as history, literature, philosophy and so on. The excellent trauma theorists include Cathy Caruth, Judith Herman and Jeffrey C. Alexander.

1.2 Cultural Trauma

At the beginning of the 1980s, trauma theory is expanded to literature, philosophy, history, critical theory, and other fields. Researches about trauma develop in comprehensive interdisciplinarity. From then on, the researchers not only focus on individual trauma and victims, but also try to combine them with sociology, culture and literature. They reveal various social forces and constraints that cause trauma and arouse trauma understanding of our society. In addition, the branch of trauma study is wide. However, it is mainly focused on the vulnerable groups of society, for example, abused women and children, and minority groups who suffer from racial oppression. The main purpose of the contemporary trauma theory researches is trying to reproduce traumatic experiences of individuals or groups and help them out of trauma by recovering their traumatic memories. Cultural trauma is built on this atmosphere.

In 2001, the most influential American sociologist Jeffrey C. Alexander gives his authoritative definition of cultural trauma. He argues that:

Traumas occur when individuals and groups feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their consciousness, will mark

their memories forever, and will change their future in fundamental and irrevocable ways. (Alexander, 2004:1)

Cultural trauma, in his view, is intense, enduring, indelible and painful. It is a grievous experience which has negative effect on the future of individuals and collectivity. The importance of cultural trauma lies in its group dimension, which is a kind of collective injury experience, involving the collective identity.

Cultural trauma is not an empirical fact, but a conscious cultural construction with self-consciousness, subjectivity and introspection; it is the specific writing and representation of the empirical fact in a particular cultural system. He believes that events themselves cannot result in collective trauma, and the events are not necessarily traumatic. Trauma may occur synchronously with or before the events and may even after the events and finally becomes into reconstitution. In fact, sometimes events which cause deep trauma don't even happen at all. But the imagined events can be as traumatic as the events of the real world. The imagination also supports the construction of trauma, no matter it refers to the actual events or unoccurred events. Only through the imaginative process of reproduction, can the actor grasp the meaning of experience. Trauma can be attributed to the phenomenon of real or imagined which is not because their traumatisms or objective burstiness, but because it is believed that these phenomena are sudden and cause damage which affect the collective identity which involves cultural references. Only when the collective modeled meaning is suddenly expelled can the event be traumatized. It is the meaning, not the event itself, that provides the feeling of shock and fear.

The purpose of trauma theory is not aimed to experience the pain. Trauma is an acute discomfort that goes to the core sense of identity of this collectivity itself. Collective actors "decide" to show social pain as a fundamental threat about who they are, where they came from, and where they are going. Trauma process is the gap between event and representation. The members of this collectivity broadcast the enduring social events about the past, present and future. As members of it they have spread these representations. These group representations can be regarded as the "claims" of the social reality. The cultural construction of trauma begins with this

claim. “Carrier groups are the collective agents of the trauma process.” (Alexander, 2004:11) They have both ideal and material interests and in a special place in the social structure; And they have a special talent to claim. “The carrier groups may be elites, but they may also be denigrated and marginalization classes.” (Alexander, 2004:11) The trauma process can be considered as a speech act with three elements:

Speaker: the carrier group

Audience: the public, putatively homogeneous but sociologically fragmented

Situation: the historical, cultural, and institutional environment within which the speech act occurs (Alexander, 2004:12)

Speaker, that is, agent or trauma carriers with reflective ability, plays an important role. The agent is able to claim, reproduce and construct certain social events as traumas, and disseminate these claims and representations, and the cultural construction of traumas begins with such claims. Speaker is directly facing the audience. The goal of speaker is to project the trauma claim to audience in a convincing way. If speaker makes a success in “illocutionary”, the other carriers will believe that they have suffered a trauma as the audience, and the scope of audience will be greatly expanded to other indirect audiences in society. The trauma will be considered as something of business themselves, and audience will reflect on the disaster and trauma, no matter the construction of trauma or the construction of the audience must take place in the specific historical, cultural and institutional situation.

Alexander points out that a successful process of collective representation must provide compelling answers to four questions below: What is the nature of the pain; what is the nature of the victim; what is the relation between the trauma victim and the wider audience; who will take the attribution of responsibility. In fact, many audiences are not directly harmed or not directly involved when a hurtful event occurs. They seem very important that whether the cultural trauma can be successfully established; whether it can win the resonance from audience and what is the relationship between the trauma victim and the wider audience. They are directly related to whether the audience can establish identity with the victim group. Therefore, it shows the extraordinary importance about how to construct the trauma

of the carrier from a universalistic standpoint as a public trauma related to everyone. The last part is the question of responsibility attribution, which defines the identity and responsibility of the persecutor: who hurts the victim? Who causes trauma?

The collective identity will be greatly revised after such construction and representation of cultural trauma. The revision of this identity means, first of all, recalling the collective past, because memory is always deeply connected with the present existence and self-perception of contemporary people. Once the collective identity has been reconstructed, there will finally be a period of “calm down”, and people’s emotions will get lower intense. The next important job is to objectify traumatic memory and “lessons” of trauma into cultural memory.

Cultural trauma also necessarily calls for social responsibility and political actions, because cultural trauma more acts as a conscious cultural construction to some extent.

It is by constructing cultural trauma that social groups, national societies, and sometimes even entire civilizations not only cognitively identify the existence and source of human suffering but ‘take on board’ some significant responsibilities for it. Insofar as they identify the cause of trauma, and thereby assume such moral responsibility, members of collectivities define their solidary relationships in ways that, in principle, allow them to share the sufferings of others. (Alexander, 2004:1)

It is obvious that the construction of cultural trauma aims to clarify the source of its trauma. Moreover, it leads the way for victims to deal with the problem after a disaster or a trauma.

In terms of the healing of cultural trauma, some methods treatment can be found in Judith Herman’s book *Trauma and Recovery*. In his book, he figures out the stages of recovery: Safety, remembrance and mourning and then reconnection. His treatments lead the way of trauma healings. Besides, Alexander figures out that cultural trauma arouse responsibility in all society. The trauma of victims will be healed, only when the identity and reflection are taken in society.

Jeffery C. Alexander is the most authoritative sociologist in analyzing trauma in cultural and social background. His cultural trauma theory has been widely used in

analyzing literary works. It opens a new way of individual and collective trauma understanding. Based on the text of *Never Let Me Go* and the theory of cultural trauma, this thesis gives a comprehensive and detailed analysis of representation and healings of cultural trauma in this novel. And the analysis of cultural trauma in this novel provides a new perspective for the readers to understand social responsibility.

Chapter Two Representation of Cultural Trauma in *Never Let Me Go*

In this chapter, the author aims to represent the cultural trauma in the novel *Never Let Me Go*. The first part starts from the discussion of individual trauma of the three protagonists. The second part analyzes the collective trauma of clones. The third part further discusses the existence of cultural trauma in this novel from the following three aspects: whether the collective trauma of the clones in the novel conforms to the definition of cultural trauma; what are the three elements of cultural trauma in the novel? how are the four key points of cultural trauma reflected in the novel?

Individuals are the direct victims of trauma, and each victim of individual trauma will show their different symptoms of trauma. Even when they experience the same trauma event, the symptoms may differ from each other. Individual trauma aims to analyze trauma from personal dimension.

A collective trauma is a traumatic psychological effect shared by a group of people of any size, up to and including an entire society. Traumatic events witnessed by an entire society can stir up collective sentiment, often resulting in a shift in that society's culture and mass actions. In the novel, clones are a group, they are enduring the same trauma and stirred up collective sentiment. It is an event with collective dimension. Its effects are specific: fear, rage, depression, survivor guilt, and physical responses in the brain and body that can lead to illness and a sense of disconnection or detachment.

Cultural trauma is the culture field of trauma. Differing from collective trauma, the purpose of cultural trauma is finding out the source of cultural trauma, but the main thing is to figure out what people should do after the disaster and the trauma event. According to Alexander's point of view: It is the meaning, not the event itself, that provides the feeling of shock and fear. Cultural trauma is not an empirical fact, but a conscious cultural construction with self-consciousness, subjectivity and introspection; it is the specific writing and representation of the empirical fact in a particular cultural system. Sometimes events which cause deep trauma don't even

happen at all. But the imagined events can be as traumatic as the events of the real world. Thus, individual trauma and collective trauma are prerequisite and foundation of trauma, cultural trauma is the extent in culture field.

2.1 Individual Trauma of Clones

Trauma is a psychological term which is borrowed from medicine. It refers to a strong shock or serious injury which has effects on individual mental function activities. Freud defines the term “spiritual wounds” to refer to real or imagined unfortunate events that occur in childhood. These events have a significant influence on the individual life and decide the way he deals with stressors in his rest of life. He believes that all symptoms of neurosis are the result of early trauma. The extent of injury in adult life depends on the interaction between the severity of the stimulus and the personality quality of the external shock. In psychoanalytic theory, the term trauma refers to both the traumatic event and the impact on the human spirits.

Judith Herman figures out that all the spiritual trauma shares the same feelings: extreme fear, helplessness, loss of control and threat of death. The severity of traumatic events cannot be measured on any single level. However, specific experiences do increase the possibility of injury, including being frightened, trapped or exhausted. In addition, when traumatic events involve physical violence or injury, exposure to extreme violence or witness of horrific death scenes, it increases this possibility. In the above situation, the main characteristic is that this traumatic event has the power to break the limitation of the helpless and horrible sense.

In people facing danger, the threatening feeling will first activate the sympathetic nervous system, cause a surge of adrenalin and get on alert. The sense of threat can also focus attention on the situation at hand. Moreover, the sense of threat may alter normal perceptual abilities: people in danger often ignore hunger, fatigue or pain. Finally, the sense of threat can lead to intense fear and anger. In fact, all these changes are normal and adaptive. These responses will mobilize and arm the threatened individuals in preparation for resistance or escape.

Once they are in vain, these actions create a traumatic reaction. When they find

they cannot resist and escape, the human self-defence system will be crushed and become disordered. Even if the actual crisis has already been removed, the function of response to crisis will be ineffective and will tend to remain in a state of changed and overreacted condition for a long time. Traumatic events can cause serious and long-term changes in physiological arousal, mood, cognition and memory. What is more, traumatic events may block the original and holocoenotic function and cause the loss of coordination. “The traumatized person many experience intense emotion but without clear memory of the event, or may remember everything in detail but without emotion. She may find herself in a constant state of vigilance and irritability without knowing why.” (Herman, 2015:34) The symptoms usually share the same tendency that they try to break off the connection between the source of the wound and to get out of their own way. Many of the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder can be summarized into three major categories: “hyperarousal” (Herman, 2015:35) is the constant over-expectation of danger; “intrusion” (Herman, 2015:37) is a painful memory of an unforgettable traumatic moment surrounding all the time. “constriction” (Herman, 2015:42) reflects the numbness reaction after giving up.

2.1.1 Hyperarousal of Tommy

In *Never Let Me Go*, there is a boy named Tommy who attracts Kathy’s attention because his notorious bad temper. He is hyperarousal, which is caused by his traumatic experience.

There were more temper tantrums, like the time Tommy was supposed to have heaved over two desks in Room spilling all the contents on the floor, while the rest of the class, having escaped onto the landing, barricaded the door to stop him coming out. There was the time Mr. Christopher had had to pin back his arms to stop him attacking Reggie D. during football practice. (Ishiguro, 2005:14-15)

Several years after graduation from Hailsham, Kathy and Tommy come back to this topic about Tommy’s temper. Kathy is not sure when his big temper tantrums started. In her memory, he is always in bad temper, “even in the Infants” (Ishiguro, 2005:21). But Tommy claims that his bad temper only begins after the teasing gets

bad.

In Hailsham, students adore their classmates who have great reputation for poetry, though they even don't understand what it means. They just admire people with great creativity. Tommy is an exception with terrible creativity in art. Once he paints a picture he will be laugh at. However, his teacher—Miss Geraldine does her best to look at the picture with kindness and understanding. This is the beginning of teasing. In this school, every student is an orphan. They have no parents, no relations, no homes and even no family names. Their family name is just a letter standing for unknown. They crave attention from others, especially those they care about. Miss Geraldine is everyone's favorite guardian because she is gentle, soft-spoken, and always comforts them when they need it. Miss Geraldine's kindness is what they need. When she shows too much attention to someone, they don't like that much. They will envy him. So, Tommy becomes the target. They tease him in different ways. A lot of these are the usual stuff, but some of them sound nasty:

Like the time someone cleaned a toilet with his toothbrush so it was waiting for him with shit all over the bristles.... I thought sooner or later someone would start saying it had gone too far, but it just kept on, and no one said anything. (Ishiguro, 2005:15)

Following the strict rules of this school, he is also bearing the exclusion from his classmates. There is no one who could listen to his heart. And this anguish has surrounded him not for a day or two, but for quite a long term. In the long run, Tommy is traumatized. And it is the culmination of his inner trauma to learn that their mission is to donate their organs until the last minute of their lives. After a long period of exclusion and future disillusionment, Tommy is hyperarousal during his teenager. If the man has had a traumatic experience, his survival defense system starts up and remains on high alert, as if the danger were to come back. The state of being alarmed is the main symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder. The traumatic individual is very easy to be frightened and a little stimulation may make him cranky, and difficult to sleep. Tommy is the one who is easy to be cranky. When he is not the team-picking of his teammates, he begins to shout and scream at once. "Tommy burst

into thunderous bellowing.... Then he began to scream and shout, a nonsensical jumble of swear words and insults.” (Ishiguro, 2005: 9)

2.1.2 Constriction of Ruth

Judith Herman figures that “constriction” (Herman, 2015:42) is the third symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder. It refers that when a person feels completely helpless, and his resistance is hopeless, he may enter the state of surrender. His own defenses will be shut down. The helpless individual will not try to escape from this situation in the real world, but to change his state of consciousness. The alienation of these consciousness is similar to the hypnotic trance states. They have some common traits: renouncing independent actions, stopping the initiative and necessary judgment, subjective alienation or calm, changing sensory function (including numbness and analgesia) and reality distortion (including depersonalization and derealization) and the change of the sense of time.

In this novel, Ruth also bears trauma of “constriction” (Herman, 2015:42). She is the leader of a small group of schoolmates in Hailsham. She is high and mighty, arrogant and obstinate. She is always the backbone of her friends. However, after they move to the Cottage, Ruth becomes “constriction” (Herman, 2015:42). At first, she refuses to walk outside. “during the first months, we rarely stepped beyond the confines of the Cottages. We didn’t even walk about the surrounding countryside or wander into the nearby village.” (Ishiguro, 2005: 118) She refuses to adapt to her new surroundings and renounces independent actions. It is not long before Ruth realizes that her behavior doesn’t fit in the Cottages. She begins to imitate the “veterans” (Ishiguro, 2005:120) “Ruth realized the way she’d been carrying on with Tommy was all wrong for the Cottages...there was in particular this one gesture Ruth picked up from the veterans.” (Ishiguro, 2005:121) Ruth changes greatly. She becomes self-denying, renounces independent actions and stops the initiative and necessary judgment.

In Hailsham, clone kids have a good vision for the future. As for Ruth, she might be the most expectant one. She dreams that she is sitting in “beautifully modern open-plan office with three or four people who worked in it having some kind of joke with

each other. The place looked sparkling and so did the People.” (Ishiguro, 2005:144) This is her deepest desire and longing. She plans her future and wants to find her “possible”. When the bubble of her dream is broken, she becomes depersonalized.

We all know it. We’re modelled from trash. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts, maybe, just so long as they aren’t psychos. That’s what we come from. We all know it...If you want to look for possibles, if you want to do it properly, then you look in the gutter. You look in rubbish bins. Look down the toilet, that’s where you’ll find where we all came from.” (Ishiguro, 2005:166)

After traumatic events, traumatized patients become more vulnerable and the trauma events destroys their sense and judgment of themselves. Just like Ruth, she falls into deep self-doubt and self-denial, and she dismisses herself as the clone of the underclass of society. Because of her failure of finding her possible, she becomes suspicious of others as well as themselves, and the world is no longer what they supposed to be.

2.1.3 Constriction and Intrusion of Kathy

“Traumatized people who cannot spontaneously dissociate may attempt to produce similar numb effects by using alcohol or narcotics.” (Herman, 2017:44) In the study of Vietnam veterans and their civilian life, psychologist Josefina Card confirms that the people who are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder may extensively use sedatives or drugs. After returning to hometown, they are very likely treated for alcohol and drug abuse problems. They use sedatives and alcohol to control their excessive alertness and memory disturbances which plague them in insomnia, nightmares, agitation, and anger. In Hailsham, keeping healthy is the first job, and “at Hailsham we had to have some form of medical almost every week” (Ishiguro, 2005:13).

Everyone suffers the trauma. They want to escape, but they aren’t allowed to do anything harmful to their health. So, Kathy turns into depersonalization in the way of promiscuity to make herself numb. “I’d had a few one-nighters shortly after getting to the Cottages.” (Ishiguro, 2005:127) “It’s just that sometimes, every now and again, I

get these really strong feelings when I want to have sex... that's the only reason I did it with Hughie. And with Oliver. It didn't mean anything deep down. I don't even like them much. I don't know what it is, and afterwards, when it's passed over, it's just scary.” (Ishiguro, 2005:181) Kathy has a strong feeling for sex. She doesn't want to do it herself, but she just cannot control it. Facing death, she never tries to escape and she keeps the bitter memories silently. She chooses to make sex with random ones in numbness. In this way, she can temporarily forget her trauma.

Combining with constriction, Kathy also bears intrusion problem like flash back and hallucinations which is quite different from her active review. Flash back and hallucination are two symptoms of intrusion after trauma events which is uncontrolled by herself.

After Kathy accepts the job as a carer, she witnesses so many donations and deaths. It doubles her symptoms of trauma. She can't stop flashing back about the life in Hailsham. “There have been times over the years when I've told myself I shouldn't look back so much.” (Ishiguro, 2005:5) She has tried millions of times to resist flashing back but failed. When she drives around the country, she still sees things that will remind her of Hailsham. She may pass the corner of a misty field or see part of a large house in the distance as she comes down the side of a valley, even a particular arrangement of poplar trees up on a hillside will be recognized as Hailsham. Hailsham is her birthplace which fills her memory with complex feelings. Any tiny things will recall her memory, especially the strict management and bloodcurdling rumors about donation. After Ruth and Tommy's passing away, Kathy is still troubles with flashback. “When I'm driving around, I suddenly think I've spotted some bit of it (Hailsham)” (Ishiguro, 2005:286)

In addition to being bothered by flashbacks, Kathy suffers from hallucinations. This symptom is becoming worse when she has lost Tommy and Ruth. As she is standing there, looking at the strange rubbish and feeling the wind coming across those empty fields, she starts to imagine just a little fantasy thing.

I was thinking about the rubbish, the flapping plastic in the branches, the shore-line of odd stuff caught along the fencing, and I half-closed my eyes and imagined this was the spot where everything I'd ever lost since my childhood had washed up,

and I was now standing here in front of it, and if I waited long enough, a tiny figure would appear on the horizon across the field, and gradually get larger until I'd see it was Tommy, and he'd wave, maybe even call. (Ishiguro, 2005:287-288)

The hallucinations never get beyond that her tears roll down her face. She isn't sobbing or out of control. She just waits a bit, then turns back to the car. Her unusual calmness makes the readers feel her pain. She is too sad to express her feelings. She misses Tommy so much that she hallucinates something irrelevant to Tommy.

Moreover, the main impact of traumatic events is not only affecting on the psychological level, but also on the attachment between individuals and communities. Just like Judith Herman points out that the trauma events "breach the attachments of family, friendship, love and community" (Herman, 2015:51) Kathy is bothered with a strong sense of alienation in her experience. When they are abandoned from Hailsham, Kathy get recollections of the past occasionally. She feels alienated from her clone friends. Hailsham is the place like her home where she has grown up. It is filled with fond memories of her childhood. When she hears the news that Hailsham will be closed any day and there are plans to sell the house and grounds to a hotel chain, she is shocked. She worries about the students like her. "all the students who'd grown up with me and were now spread across the country, carers and donors, all separated now but still somehow linked by the place we'd come from." (Ishiguro, 2005:212) Besides, when she begins her job as a carer, she is also abandoned by her companions. Although, she is one of the clones, she is not a donor. She is alienated by other clones. "Then there's the solitude. You grow up surrounded by crowds of people, that's all you've ever know, and suddenly you're a carer. You spend hour after hour... no one to talk to about your worries, no one to have a laugh with." (Ishiguro, 2005:207) Her life is hard and the whole thing becomes a real struggle.

In a word, although they have different symptoms, the three protagonists bear psychological trauma. The donation program is clearly the source of their trauma. Tommy has terrible suspects of donation plan but cannot express it. After a long time of torture, he becomes hyperarousal. Ruth, a girl full of pride and leadership, becomes so desperate after failing in finding her possible. Together with Kathy, they bear the symptom of constriction. Kathy is more representative. She becomes

depersonalization in the way of promiscuity to make herself numb and she cannot stop flashbacking and hallucinating. Besides, she has the strong sense of alienation. From the analysis of these three clones, readers can see that they do bear psychological trauma and present different symptoms. It can help us better understand the individual characters and lay the foundation for analyzing culture trauma.

2.2 Collective Trauma of Clones

In this novel, the three protagonists are traumatic carriers. They are individuals who directly bear the collective trauma of clones. Collective trauma refers to “a blow to the basic tissues of social life that damages the bonds attaching people together and impairs the prevailing of community” (Erikson, 1995:187). A collective trauma is a traumatic psychological effect shared by a group of people of any size, up to and including an entire society. Traumatic events are witnessed by an entire society which can stir up collective sentiment, which often result in a changing of social culture and mass actions. The collective trauma is slowly, even unknowingly embedded in the consciousness of those who suffer it. So, it doesn’t have the kind of suddenness that usually comes from personal trauma, but it’s still a form of shock. Although the clones show different individual trauma symptoms, they bear the common collective trauma in bearing the responsibility of organ donation and suffering the fear of death. Firstly, they are living without safety. They bury a seed of dying from organ donation in their hearts with fear. Secondly, they are eager in searching their identity. Thirdly, they suffer from loneliness and lack of love.

2.2.1 Lack of Safety

In Psychologist Abraham Maslow’s *Hierarchy of Needs*, the demand of safety is the basic level of humanity requirement. Safety needs require the safety of social environment and the protection of life. It is the right of life together with physiological needs. However, the clones in Hailsham live in fear all days. They live in an isolated school—Hailsham, which is in a flat valley surrounded by hills with dark and gloomy forest. What the students can see is a dark fringe of trees. Most

students of Kathy's age are feeling the dark presenting day and night. When the weather gets bad, it is "like they cast a shadow over the whole of Hailsham" (Ishiguro, 2005:50). This ghastly atmosphere is also hazed on clones' mind. Every time when they turn their heads or move towards to a window, they will see the gloomy forest. "Safest was the front of the main house, because you couldn't see them from any of the windows. Even so, you never really got away from them." (Ishiguro, 2005:50) The location of Hailsham settles the atmosphere of whole traumatic event. The kids in Hailsham are swallowed by this scary atmosphere day after day. For clone kids, Hailsham is the safest place. They are afraid of going outside because of the horrible stories about the woods. "Once... a boy had had a big row with his friends and been found two days later, up in those woods, tied a tree with the hands and feet chopped off." (Ishiguro, 2005:50) Another rumor is about a girl who climbed over a fence just to see what it was like outside. When she tried to get back in, she was refused. She kept pleading to be let back in but failed. At last, she died in the woods. Her ghost was always wandering around the woods, gazing over Hailsham. They believe that the woods are related to death, which bring them insecurity. That is a biting sarcasm that Hailsham is a place to make them become organ donors and take their lives. On opposite, kids treat this place as their home and the safest place, and the frightening guardian Emily's existence makes them feel safe. Even when they move to the Cottages, they still live without safety. During the first months, they rarely stepped out of the Cottages. They don't even walk about surrounding countryside or wander into the nearby village. They are lack of safety, it is hard for them facing the real world and people. So they restrict their activities to a designated area or sphere. They try hard to keep calm to cover up their fear.

The donation event, which poses the greatest threat to their lives, is also one of the most thought-provoking and questionable problems in the novel. The incredible problem is why there is no one trying to escape from donation. Aren't they lack of awareness in guardians' "conspiracy theory"? (Ishiguro, 2005:82) When Tommy and Kathy were going over their lives in Hailsham, they began to realize Miss Lucy's "told and not told idea" (Ishiguro, 2005:82) These guardians have been very careful about everything about cloning students for all the days at Hailsham, so they are too

young to understand correctly. All this stuff about duty of donation in their heads are stored without having examined properly. They are devoted to the duty of donation. They are isolated from real world and the duty of donation has been ingrained in their lives. Besides, they cannot find safety in the unknown outside. So, no one try to escape from Hailsham, the Cottages or even hospitals.

2.2.2 Having Identity Anxiety

The biggest problem that clones are facing is identity anxiety. Identity anxiety involves to another symptom of psychological trauma. In this novel, the clones are anxious about their uncertainly identity and status.

They seldom suspect the guardians' purpose of education. They didn't find any difference between the guardians and themselves until they find Madame' disgust and fear to them. From then on, they begin to be a little curious about themselves. "Who we were, how we were different from our guardians, from people outside." (Ishiguro, 2005:36) They detect the difference, they even know that a long way down the line there were donations waiting. "But we didn't really know what that meant." (Ishiguro, 2005:69) They are too young to totally understand what the difference stands for. All the talks, videos, discussions, warnings only bring muddled truth. At Hailsham, they aren't supposed to discuss it. It is a both intrigued and disturbed topic.

They are lack of awareness and are deprived of their desire for survival from the scary atmosphere. However, in their deep heart, they haven't stopped searching for their "possible", more than that, they have their basic idea about it. After being sent to the Cottages, clones become more mature. They no longer feel embarrassed of discussing the topic. Since clones are copied from normal person, there must be their models getting on with their lives. If they keep eye out for "possibles", they may find them somewhere. Beyond these basics, they are vast and hazy in finding their models. They even haven't much consensus about what kind of person they should focus on. Even though, they never stop trying. One big idea behind finding their models is that when they find them, they'd glimpse their future. They aren't treated like a real person, and they are eager to find their identity through finding their models. Ruth is the most eager one. When she accidentally finds a paper of a newspaper which

shows a beautiful modern open-plan office with several leisurely people. She paints a picture of her sparkling future. When Rodney and Chrissie tell Ruth that they are very probably lucky in finding her model, Ruth can hardly wait in verifying it. But Ruth angrily find they are all wrong. “We’re not modelled from that sort...” (Ishiguro, 2005:166) She falls into deep self-deprecation.

“We’re modelled from trash. Junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps. Convicts, maybe, just so long as they aren’t psychos. That’s what we come from...then you look in the gutter. You look in rubbish bins. Look down the toilet, that’s where you’ll find where we all came from.” (Ishiguro, 2005:166)

If she doesn’t care about her identity, she won’t care so much about finding her clone model. When Tommy propitiates Ruth it is just a bit of fun. Ruth glares at Tommy in fury, then turns around and strides off.

2.2.3 Lack of Love

Guardians in Hailsham would sometimes laugh with their students and call them “sweetheart” (Ishiguro, 2005:36), but they never really become their sweetheart. When clones, who are represented by Kathy, glimpse themselves through the eyes of a person like Madame, they feel cold. It is just like walking through a normal mirror, but it shows something else, something troubling and strange.

Their head guardian, Miss Emily, doesn’t often say much; she always sits very straight on the stage, nodding her head absently; occasionally turning a frosty eye towards them. She knows them so well that no one could hide under her control. She uses two regular phrases “unworthy of privilege” and “misuse of opportunity” (Ishiguro, 2005:43). In her eyes, all the things they enjoy are the mercy of her and her school. The students in her school have duty to follow all her orders, observe all rules and regulations. They are not beloved but controlled.

The Madame, who selects their best work for her Gallery, turns up twice or more times each year. Although Madame’s visits are never announced, the students in Hailsham are getting anxious to a climax. But in fact, the Madame has no sense of these students. When she meets us, she just freezes and waits for us to pass by. “The

shoulder she seemed to be suppressing, the real dread that one of us would accidentally brush against her...she was afraid of us in the same way someone might be afraid of spider.” (Ishiguro, 2005:35) The complex feeling of Madame makes the students puzzled. But they can clearly get Madame’s instinctive reaction of disgust and fear of them.

After they are sent to the Cottages, they feel abandoned. They are “fearful of the world around them, and – no matter how much they despised themselves for it—unable quite to let each other go.” (Ishiguro, 2005:120) When they firstly arrive at the Cottage, they watch Keffers, the only person and keeper in the Cottage, going in and out of the farmhouse. They expect him to address them at any moment, but all they get is the odd irritated mutter about the students who already lived there. “Once, as he went to get something from his van, he gave us a moody glance, then returned to the farmhouse and closed the door behind him.” (Ishiguro, 2005:119) During a bitterly cold spell first winter, their boxy gas heaters are in trouble. Their keeper, Keffers refuses to deal with it, claiming that it is not his duty. But it is frozen to death. He finally hands them an envelope with money and a note of some igniter fuel they have to buy. All these experiences, make them feel lack of love.

2.3 Conversion of Individual Trauma into Cultural Trauma

Jeffery Alexander considers that “Traumas occur when individuals and groups feel they have been subjected to a horrendous event that leaves indelible marks upon their consciousness, will mark their memories forever, and will change their future in fundamental and irrevocable ways.” (Alexander, 2004:1) That is to say, cultural trauma does not come from the painful experience of the collective. Only when great uncomfortable feeling effects the collective and destroys their own identity, can culture trauma occur. It’s not necessary that everyone in collective experiences the trauma event, but it can be passed on from generation to generation of relatives, affecting every member; Cultural trauma is not negative of all; however, the collective memory may arouse the cohesion of the group.

Culture trauma is a strong, profound, indelible painful memory which has an

impact on the futures of individuals and groups. Trauma feelings and trauma experiences must be borne and experienced by individuals first. Cultural trauma is based on collective trauma and “Cultural trauma, national trauma and historical trauma are important elements of collective trauma.” (Xue, 2016:5) It does not deny the psychological response of individual members of the group after major events.

In Ishiguro’s work, the clones, who are represented by three protagonists, are suffering their individual trauma. Although they show different trauma symptoms, all their sufferance comes from the same original reason, and obstructs their identity construction. This collective has been subjected to the donation event which leaves indelible mark. Their futures are changed fundamentally and irrevocably from the beginning. Because donation is their mission, their futures are hopelessly settled. When they begin their donation plan, they are united for the common trauma.

The importance of cultural trauma lies in its group dimension, which is a kind of collective injury experience, involving the collective identity. In the novel, they are drowning in identity crisis. Clones haven’t stopped searching for their models. One big idea behind finding their models is that when they find them, they’d glimpse their future. In their whole lives, they haven’t been treated like a real person, and they are eager to find their identity through finding their models. Identity involves cultural references. Severe cultural trauma may lead to the common suffering experience of all human beings. Therefore, the reflection and repair of cultural trauma is the common mission of all human beings. In Ishiguro’s work, clones are not only a group of creatures, but the representative group of the oppressed and the exploited people in society. Therefore, organ donation in this novel has been consciously raised to the level of real society and causes readers’ deep thinking.

As a conscious cultural construction, cultural trauma is also a social responsibility and political action. By constructing cultural trauma, ethnic societies, various social groups and sometimes entire civilizations not only recognize the existence and root of human suffering, but also take on some deep responsibilities. Once the cause of the wound has been identified and the members of the collective have assumed this moral responsibility, they will band together in a way of sharing the suffering of others. The purpose of constructing cultural trauma is not only to find

out the root of cultural trauma, but also to point out what should be done in post-disaster and post-traumatic times.

In this novel the clones are enduring both physical and mental traumas. They have no choice but donating their vital organs several times until “complication”, and their thoughts are settled because “they have been told and not told. They have been told, but none of them really understand...”(Ishiguro, 2005:81) All the clones in the novel cannot get rid of the fate of donation. The donation of clones can be considered as a holocaust. With Kathy’s recalling, she acts as the cultural trauma speaker. The audiences are the clones which can be extended to the readers of this novel in this thesis. In the advanced clone technology environment, the greed and selfishness of humanity are disclosed by Kathy’s narrating, which is reflected in abused power and immoderate development of cloning. This novel is a potent critique of societal and medical inhumanity. To better explore these arguments, the cultural trauma theory is used to analyze this novel.

2.3.1 Three Elements of Cultural Trauma Represented in *Never Let Me Go*

Jeffery C. Alexander, the most authoritative sociologist in analyzing trauma in cultural and social background, figures that cultural trauma theory has been widely used in analyzing literary works. It opens a new way of understanding individual and collective trauma. He agrees that the trauma process can be considered as a speech act with three elements: Speaker, Audience and Situation.

Speaker refers to the carrier group, aims to persuasively claim the trauma to the audience-public. In the particularities of the historical situation, the carrier group makes use of the symbolic resources, the constraints and opportunities provided by institutional structures. If the speaker succeed in making the members of this collective convinced that they have been traumatized by a singular event. The audience for the traumatic claim would broaden it to other publics within the society. “A speaker should not only speak his own interests and thoughts, but also the opinions of others who should speak for the group.” (Smelse, 2001:268)

In this novel, Ishiguro adopts the first-person narrative which helps the narrator express her feelings directly, and makes it easy for readers to understand this feeling.

The narrator Kathy is a clone herself. She recalls her short and choreographed life. It is Kathy, combining her personal traumatic experience with the group cultural trauma in a broader sense and calling for collective reflection, who reflects her role as a representative of speaker.

Audience refers to “the public, putatively homogeneous but sociologically fragmented” (Alexander, 2004:12). Firstly, of course, the speaker’s audiences are members of the carrier group itself undisputed. In the novel, not only Kathy tries to arouse all the members of clones, but also wakes up all the people to face the selfish humanity. It is easy to find out that the audience is the collective of clones, but above all, it is broadened to the all humanity.

At the beginning of her narrating, Kathy uses “you” at least seven times (Ishiguro, 2005: 2). The author makes extensive use of the second person to establish a conversational relationship between the traumatic speaker “I” and the audience “you”. The author talks with the reader directly, forcing the reader immerse into the text. This brings the author, characters and readers closer. Unconsciously, the readers take the story of the clone as their own, and eventually participate in the text, which will lead to a deeper thinking on the topics mentioned by the author, and establish a broader empathic process among the characters, writers and many readers of the work.

Besides, this novel cannot be settled as a general science fiction because there is “no description about clone technology” (Sim, 2010:83). Ishiguro “weakens the particularity of the characters, narrows the distance between the reader and character” (Bu, 2012:97). When the particularity of the characters is weakened, the distance between the reader and the characters will be shortened. The readers will not pay too much attention to the special identity of human cloning, but will unconsciously set themselves as witnesses of clones’ suffering or even assume that they are part of clones and put themselves in the situation of the characters. Thus, it arouses readers’ sympathy to clones. They are real people like us. Just because they exist without identity, they bear their tragic fate. This is irony of the social reality about vulnerable groups. Although the novel is set in the contemporary hot topic—human cloning, it is not difficult to find that the tragic fate of human clones is similar to the socially vulnerable groups with similar situation. In the real world, there are quite a few

people who live in underclass. Their rights are deprived in varying degrees because they have uncertain social identity. They are forced to dissimilate. It is the vulnerable group who support the base of the pyramid to show the glory of the spire, however, no one looks down on their foundation.

Situation refers to “the historical, cultural, and institutional environment within which the speech act occurs.” (Alexander, 2004:12) It is the specific background of the story. In this novel, the story is settled in England, late 1990s. It was in 1997 that cloning first came into public concern and became one of the major events of the era. A British scientist named Ian Wilmut successfully created a lamb—Dolly, which was bred from cells. His success opened a new window of life science research. The word “clone” came into being. People are likely to find their way of producing what they need. Although it is controversial between total ban of cloning and supporting therapeutic cloning as well as opposing reproductive cloning, many countries have never ceased their research on cloning technology. Ishiguro was inspired by this hot topic and settled the story in this era after a long time of deliberation.

In recent years, the rapid development of human organ transplant technology has made great progresses and brings hope of life to many patients and their families. But it also brings the following problem. The demand for human transplant organs far exceeds the supply of human transplant organs. “At present, there are only two channels of the legal human organ transplantation in our country and most countries in the world: voluntary donation of human remains or live organ donation. There are still several countries allow the human organs transaction. On January 1, 2015, the mandatory imposition of condemned prisoner was finally banned in China.” (Ma, 2018:1) Ma points out that human organs undoubtedly cannot be classified into products, and shouldn’t be transacted. With more and more patients’ demands for organ transplant, it is difficult to collect donor organs by relying on the voluntary donation of human organs by citizens at present.

Over the past two decades, people never stop finding solutions. On November 27, 2017, the world’s first cloned monkey “Zhongzhong”, which was bred from cells, was born in the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Neuroscience. 10 days later, the second cloned monkey “Huahua” was born. That means the technical barriers to

human cloning have been removed. It means that human cloning is ready on a technical level. If there are no moral and legal restraints, the imaginary world in the novel would come true someday. Thus, it is not hard to understand the worries of Ishiguro.

Kazuo Ishiguro, as a Japanese-born British, shows his lyricism of personal feelings combining with the important feature of cultural trauma in a cross-cultural context. He constructs the collective trauma of clones as cultural trauma and questions the impact of cloning technology on social ethics.

2.3.2 Key Representations of Cultural Trauma in *Never Let Me Go*

Individual experiences of pain and suffering provide the foundation for the cultural construction of collective trauma. However, the fateful suffering threatens collective rather than individual identity. Not every member of collective would directly experience the trauma and imagination plays an important role in construction. The protagonists in the novel are just like the actors in the movies. The audiences witness what they have experienced and they share the same sense of being traumatized. What's more, the readers also imagine the suffering and pain of protagonists. When the reader and the sufferers build their resonance, the cultural trauma happens.

In *Never Let Me Go*, Kathy is the witness. She witnesses all the suffering of her kind: being an orphan; growing up in a great conspiracy; being disesteemed in the Cottage; being deprived of their organs time after time until death. However, she experiences more than that. She is also a carer who works for the exploiter—human. Her job is trying to pacify the donors. This job makes her guiltier when she witnesses the death of her love—Tommy, she quits her job and chooses to donate herself. Her narrative includes some introspection. Through her narration, other clones spontaneously recall their past and the readers would show their sympathetic imagination. Although the cloning of human beings is not realized, people have already possessed the technology of cloning of human beings. If the cloning of human beings is not restricted by morality and law, human clones would exist. People should keep alert all the time. At the same time, cloning raises deep questions about

why humans are so obsessed with cloning. The shortage of organ donation is obvious currently. Except for a few voluntary donations, more people choose to take risks: selling organs and arbitrarily depriving the life of vulnerable groups. Most of these deprived groups are children, women and the poor who become the victims of organ trading. Who will uphold their right to live? It's not hard to understand why people today have such a strong aversion to trafficking in women and children. The human trafficking reveals the ugliness of human nature and the disregard for life. For this reason, people will consciously compare the clones with themselves and stand by the side of victims in the novel.

In the novel, the three protagonists who bear the trauma are considered as the speaker of their collective. By analyzing the three characters, the four key questions of cultural trauma will be discussed:

- A. The nature of the pain.
- B. The nature of the victim.
- C. Relation to the trauma victim to the wider audience.
- D. Attribution of responsibility. (Alexander, 2004:13-15)

According to Alexander, construction of cultural trauma depends on constructing a compelling frame work of cultural classification. In order to make a successful construction of cultural trauma, the four questions above should be answered compellingly.

2.3.2.1 The Nature of the Pain and the Victim

When analyzing this novel in culture trauma, the first thing should be considered clearly is the nature of the pain and the victim. These two points are the hurtful nature of the entire traumatic event and the subject of the trauma.

The nature of the pain. What actually happened to the particular group and to the wider collectivity of which it is a part?

The nature of the victim. What group of persons was affected by this traumatizing pain? Were they particular individuals or groups, or “the people” in general? Did a singular and delimited group receive the brunt of the pain, or were several groups

involved? (Alexander, 2004:13)

In the novel, the protagonists are a group of clones. Kathy, Ruth and Tommy represent “humans” who are not recognized by humans. They are fleshy, sentient, and thoughtful like us without distinction, except for their unrecognized identities. They are treated as objects which are service for human and can be disposed of at will. They are more like human guided pigs that can be slaughtered when human need. No one really cares about their inner feelings. The pain of all this stems from the loss of human identity. Because of their loss of identity, they live at the bottom of the social heap, no different from livestock. Although the human clones do not exist in the world, they are the extreme examples of people in the real world who have been exploited and oppressed without proper identity.

The victims in the novel are the collective of clones who are affected by this traumatizing pain. This group are represented by Kathy and her friends in Hailsham as well as other schools. Each of them bears the pain and shows different symptoms of trauma in Hailsham. Beyond Hailsham, there are more clones who bear the pain. Kathy takes care of a donor in her third year as a carer. After the donor’s third donation, he hasn’t gone well and he knows that he is going to die. He can hardly breath in pain. The only thing can make him feel better is Kathy’s narrating about Hailsham. What he has experienced in his life is full of pain that he refuses to be reminded. Kathy realizes that although other guardian schools and the Cottages are not fundamentally different from Hailsham, Hailsham is a better place than any other guardian school. “All around the country, at this very moment, there are students being reared in deplorable conditions, conditions you Hailsham students could hardly imagine.” (Ishiguro, 2005:261) Thus, the audience would imagine that what a terrible living environment these groups of clones are bearing.

2.3.2.2 Relation to the Trauma Victim to the Wider Audience

Although the nature of the pain and victim is established, there is also a highly significant question to figure out: the relation of the victim to the wider audience. Alexander points out that most audience can barely realize the relation between the

victims and themselves at the beginning of the trauma. The audience will not participate in the trauma experience of the victim, if the victims haven't represented the larger collective's valued qualities. That is to say, the wider audience agree the trauma is accepted by all and they share sympathy to victims

In Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, he convincingly projects the trauma claim onto the audience, extends the trauma claim to other indirectly traumatized public figures within the whole society, allowing wider audience to experience identification with the directly victimized group.

For Ishiguro, writing is far more than a profession; it is a kind of social duty. It is just the moral and responsible commitment that witnesses his writing of traumatic memories. Without this awareness, victims would not be able to elevate the individual experience of catastrophic events into universal human disasters. At the same time, they cannot treat the writing of traumatic memories as a moral responsibility of the public world.

Ishiguro insisted on using "I" and "we" in the novel. Such a claim, on the one hand, is a way to make a sound through the writing for the group of victims, on the other hand. The readers will actively engage in the memory and retelling the events through this grammar.

There are three main kinds of characters in the novel: the clones, the guardians and the "sponsors" (Ishiguro, 2005:265) of the whole donation project who never really appear in the novel. They represent different social classes. The sponsors have a lot of power and wealth, and they represent their own interests. In the early 1950s, major scientific breakthroughs were rapidly emerging. But these achievements were not carefully evaluated and discussed by the society. Cloning technology is one of the most concerned one. Cloning technology becomes a cure for incurable diseases. "And for a long time, people preferred to believe these organs appeared from nowhere, or at most that they grew in a kind of vacuum." (Ishiguro, 2005:262) It is too late to consider clones after people enjoy the benefits of cloning technology. Their overwhelming concern is try to avoid their own children, their spouses, their parents, their friends to die from cancer or other diseases. Moreover, after the Morningdale scandal, the climate has quite changed. It reminds people of a fear they've always

have. It is an inadmissibility that people are replaced by clones in society. The sponsors are frightened and recoiled from that. They are the representatives of human selfishness and greed. The guardians like Emily, are a small group of people who try to struggle against humanity. They engage to overcome the barrier against seeing clones as proper human. But they are too dependent on the whims of their supporters. It is instability easily because the supporters are people themselves. Their struggling is weak and precarious. As for clones, they are the most innocent victims. All clones “exist only to supply medical science” and they are treated as “shadowy objects in test tubes”. (Ishiguro, 2005: 261)

After reading this novel, the wider audience will support the vulnerable consciously. At the same time, the wider audiences are also members of human beings, who sympathize with the victims as well as reflect the selfish and hypocritical nature of human beings. They will stand by clones’ side and oppose cloning technology.

2.3.2.3 Attribution of Responsibility

Establishing the identity of the persecutor is important in creating compelling trauma narratives. The “sponsors” (Ishiguro, 2005:265) in the novel seem to be the group of persecutors. Aren’t people themselves the members of these sponsors? They are nothing else but persecutors.

Cloning technology can bring many benefits to human beings. Through this technology, people can acquire more and more excellent species, save precious species from extinction, and make great progress in medical research to cope with the incurable diseases of human beings. But it’s a double-edged sword. As people have seen, the clone has plunged people into anxiety. They are tripped in stress and crisis awareness. The reason for such fear is that the issue of human cloning raises ethical dilemmas. When people are able to create people, they think about the question: what is a person? Is it a product of natural reproduction, or will it be a commercial product? Human potential is infinite, and human reason is supreme. Facing the problem of human cloning, people can’t help thinking what human do to themselves with reason. If human reason has no boundaries and human uses it to do whatever they want, what

will the world be like in the future? When we change the world without limitation, how do we position ourselves in the future? How do people go back to ask themselves questions like “where did I come from?” and “what am I?” This is the self-worth interrogation that people face, and it is the category of value reason. It is because the value rationality opposes to instrumental rationality that the ethical dilemma arose from the issue of cloning. If people insist on the rationality of human values, the conclusion is no more than that human cloning is forbidden. However, it is not the case. People are not willing to put such a practical tool of science and technology on the shelf.

The important proposition of the post-human context is that the clone is a milestone in the transition from natural evolution to artificial evolution. The clone comes from the asexual reproduction and they don't have parents, the most important factor in their consciousness is identity awareness. This paper does not discuss the existence legalization of clones. It discusses that human clones have been living in the same world with us as a collective. The various inhuman treatments they get are worth pondering. In *Never Let Me Go*, human beings create human clones, treat them as the carriers of organs, and deprive all their rights of living, which is obviously a kind of humanity loss. The purpose of creating human clones is to cure those complicated diseases of human beings. Under the pressure of human alienation, human clones have no choice but donate their vital organs and are “terminated”. Humans are selfish and cruel to the clone, indifferent and cruel to the organ donation.

In this novel, the story is settled in specific cultural social situations. The characters are facing loss and mourning while seeking catharsis and forgiveness. Because the characters in the novel are memory spreaders or contractors, Ishiguro's works are especially provocative, and they also symbolize how the state assumes or denies responsibility for certain events. This novel focuses on tormented individuals and their respective situations. Ishiguro emphasizes that the protagonists who effort to go back into the event to expose injustice, heal past injuries, and try to manage losses, while the persecutor—people should take the responsibility of rejecting the donation plan and stopping their brutal exploitation.

Chapter Three Healing of the Cultural Trauma in *Never Let Me Go*

Kazuo Ishiguro not only pays attention to the cultural trauma which the protagonists of the novel, but also cares suffer about how they get rid of the shadow of the trauma. This chapter elaborates on how the protagonists get out of the culture trauma. The way of healing the culture trauma are discussed from the following two aspects: self-redemption and social responsibility attribution. Self-redemption will be discussed from three aspects: safety establishment, review and mourning, and relevancy reconstruction. Social responsibility attribution will be discussed from three aspects: rational use of technology, learning to resist as well as moral and law constraints. These clones will rebuild their identity and their cultural trauma will be healed by these ways.

“Recovery unfolds in three stages. The central task of the first stage is the establishment of safety. The central task of the second stage is remembrance and mourning. The central task of the third stage is reconnection with ordinary life.” (Herman, 2015:155) There is no single course of recovery follows these stages through a straightforward linear sequence. The way to recovery process will be discouraging sometimes. However, in the course of a successful recovery, it should be possible to recognize a gradual shift from unpredictable danger to reliable safety, from dissociated trauma to acknowledged memory, and from stigmatized isolation to restored social connection.

3.1 Self-Redemption

3.1.1 Safety Establishment—Friends’ Support

Trauma prevents the sense of the victim about power and control. The first job of healing is to establish safety of the survivors. This task should take the first place over the others. And “establishing safety begins by focusing on control of the body and gradually moves outward toward control of the environment.” (Herman, 2015:160)

Clone's life can be doomed as a tragedy. They are given birth in this world without parents. Their only job is to complete the mission—donating their organs. They have no chance to control their way of life and even their bodies. They have to sacrifice their own body again and again and allow humans to pillage their vital organs. No matter three times or four times, the donation will never stop until the end of their lives. Their right of life is threatened. They are living without safety.

While growing up, they have no freedom, no family, no love from their parents and relatives, and they are treated as monsters rather than the normal people. But the clones, who live in such tragic circumstances, have no hatred for others and hold more love than the indifferent humans. “The clones have their own friendship and love. Just like Herman figures out that the survivor's relationship with other people tend to oscillate between extremes as someone attempts to establish a sense of safety.” (Herman, 2015:162) So, they carefully establish a trustworthy relationship in a safety environment.

The clones, represented by three protagonists, are growing up together from childhood in Hailsham, then being assigned to different the Cottages after youth. When they grow up, they will start their donations. Friendship is the only comfort and support between them. Kathy and her friends are brothers and sisters. Once, in Kathy's memory, she lost a tape containing her favorite song “Never Let Me Go”. After learning of the news, Ruth asks the other students to look for the tape. Although her tape is not found, Ruth gives her a new cassette to comfort her. Although the new tape doesn't contain that song and has nothing to do with music, but “it's become one of my most precious possessions”. (Ishiguro, 2005:76) according to Kathy. And suddenly, she feels the disappointment ebbing away and being replaced by real happiness. Apparently, Ruth's tape is full of her deep love for Kathy. In addition, although it seems that her another friend Tommy doesn't show great concern about the tape, he finds an old tape with this song at an old record store and buys it as a gift to Kathy many years later. It turns out that Tommy is not really unconcerned about Kathy, but too shy to express his love. That is how the clones establish their safety in their own way.

When they are sent to the Cottage, their friendship seems to be weakened by

their different lives. Ruth likes to be flamboyant. She wants to get everyone's attention, and a lot of her behaviors make Kathy feel dissatisfied. But when she learns that Ruth is likely to find her "possible", she is heartily pleased for her, and readily agrees to witness the important moment to Ruth. When they find out that the woman isn't Ruth's possible, Ruth falls into deep self-doubt and self-deprecation. She debases herself as a member of junkies, prostitutes, winos, tramps and even convicts. Kathy and Tommy show understanding about her gibberish in anger and sympathy about her deep hurt Ruth has received. Gibberish "is just what people say when they're feeling sorry for themselves... It's not worth getting upset about..." (Ishiguro, 2005:168)

Several years later, the three protagonists are separated into different places. Kathy becomes to be a carer. She does her job well. Tommy and Ruth start their donation. When Kathy hears the bad news about Ruth, she chooses to be Ruth's carer without hesitation. With Kathy's care and company, Ruth feels better. Ruth has always wanted to see the "famous" ship which is somehow stranded in the marshes. When they come to a barbed wire fence, which is tilted and rusted, the wire itself yanks all over the place and Ruth looks really upset. So, Kathy takes her arm, Tommy supports her elbow on the other side and they encourage her. With their support, she gets over lose her fear of the fence.

During the short and miserable life of the clones, it is this kind of close relation, especially the friendship among them, that sustains them through their whole lives. With friends, they can resist indifference and isolation from human society and face the darkness of life. This love between friends is in sharp contrast to the indifference and isolation of human society. They fill themselves with love, break the indifference and isolation between people with love, and rebuild the communication and feelings between them which helps to establish their safety.

3.1.2 Review and Mourning—Traumatic Narrative

"The second stage of recovery, the survivor tells the story of the trauma. The narrator tells it completely, in depth and detail. This work of reconstruction actually transforms the traumatic memory, so that it can be integrated into the survivor's life

story.” (Herman, 2015:175)

The recollection and the recollecting narration carry the strong redemption power. The clones in the novel are different from human. As the exploited and oppressed groups, their deaths are not a natural process, but the result of human tyranny. So, they’re dealing with death in a different way. Kathy, who is over 30, is already a “carer” and is going to be a “donor”. It means that she will soon end her life. She chooses the way of recalling to deal with her fear of impending death. She tries to remember Hailsham. She wants to remember the people and events where she has lived and what she has met.

“There have been times over the years when I’ve tried to leave Hailsham behind, when I’ve told myself I shouldn’t look back so much.” (Ishiguro, 2005:5) Years past, Kathy refuses to remember her past in Hailsham. But in her third year as a carer, she stops resisting. Although Hailsham is the main place for the protagonists to be disciplined, it is still the most special one among the numerous clone training schools in such an era. After the protagonist leaves Hailsham, whether in the Cottage or in the rehabilitation center, whenever the clones from other places hear that she is from Hailsham, they always show envy and jealousy to her. In her third year as a carer, Kathy meets a special donor, who is under his third donation. His operation hasn’t gone well. In order to distract him from his suffering, Kathy asks him where he comes from. His face is covered with sadness when he mentions the place in Dorset. And when he knows that Kathy is from Hailsham, he looks towards her and says, “I bet that is a beautiful place.” (Ishiguro, 2005:5) In the following days, he asks Kathy to describe everything about Hailsham in detail. Every time she narrates, his elegant smile will appear on his face, as if he has been immersed in this beautiful dream. As Kathy says, “what he wants is not just to hear about Hailsham, but to remember Hailsham, just like it had been his own childhood.” (Ishiguro, 2005:5) Combining with the anguish face, it is not difficult to imagine how terrible the place where he lives that he wants to replace his own memories with others in Hailsham. Kathy is reviewing her experience to herself than to patients. She is healing her own trauma better than patients.

The descent into mourning is at once the most necessary and most dreaded task

of this stage of healing. At the end of the novel, after witnessing the death of two most important people one by one, Kathy is powerless to change the sad ending. It's just like everyone of us is destined to come to the end of life. Although one of Kathy's favorite songs sings, "Baby, never let me go", she can't stop the person whom she loves from leaving. She will eventually leave the world.

When some donors complain that their memories fade surprisingly quickly, Kathy has different ideas. "I don't go along with that. The memories I values most, I don't see ever fading. I lost Ruth, then I lost Tommy, but I won't lose my memories of them." (Ishiguro, 2005:286) Although Hailsham does not exist, it is still rooted in Kathy' memory. Although she doesn't go back to Hailsham, parts of memory about Hailsham come into sight. When she is driving around, she suddenly thinks that she has spotted some bit of Hailsham. "So maybe some level, I am on the lookout for Hailsham." (Ishiguro, 2005:286) No matter where she goes, she has Hailsham with her, safely in her head, and that'll be something no one can take away.

The protagonists in the novel never refuse to review and mourn their past. Their missing of each other never stops through Kathy' trauma narrating.

3.1.3 Relevancy Reconstruction—Self-reconciliation

"Having come to terms with the trauma past, the survivor faces the task of creating a future. She has mourned the old self that the trauma destroyed; now she must develop a new self. Her relationships have been tested and forever changed by the trauma." (Herman, 2015:196) In the process of trauma healing, self-reconciliation is important. Traumatic events hardly hit the victim's self-perception, causing confidence losing, reality escaping and self-abandon by locking herself in the shadow of the trauma. If she can't reconstruct relevancy to society, she will not overcome the trauma.

In the novel, Ruth is a girl who looks strong but is not confident. She is decisive and has leadership. But when she moves to the Cottage, she feels more unconfident. Her imitation of "the veterans" (Ishiguro, 2005:117) shows her eagerness for attention. And the poor imitation and duplicity become the behaviors which Kathy could not approve of. Her old friends break the connection with her. Just like Laura says: "You

know, always telling everyone what to do. So, I was keeping out of her away.” (Ishiguro, 2005:210) Even her closest friend Kathy hasn’t kept touch with her. “She and I weren’t such great friends by the end.” (Ishiguro, 2005:210) However, after donation, Ruth is possessed with pain and alienation. She feels helpless and isolated and she needs friends. “Helplessness and isolation are the core experiences of psychological trauma.” (Herman, 2015:197) On her deathbed, she realizes that she had done some wrong things. So, she gives the address of Madame Marie—Claude and encourages Kathy and Tommy to do something for deferring. She gives her best wishes and deep apology to them. She imagines the happy life between them. She asks for their forgiveness.

“The survivor no longer feels possessed by her traumatic past; she is in possession of herself.” (Herman, 2015:202) It means that the survivor doesn’t imprison herself any more, she begins to understand herself. Just like Kathy, she takes the job as a carer. The job becomes a real struggle, and is so close to the pain and the worry. When a donor completes suddenly, she demoralizes for quite a while. She bears the solitude. She witnesses deaths of her old friends. She is always in a rush, or else she is too exhausted with the longtime work, broken sleep. While she becomes more adventurous in the world during this period, her life at the same time becomes more ordinary. As she reconnects with herself, she feels calmer and better able to face her life with equanimity. “Even the solitude, I’ve actually grow to quite like... I do like the feeling of getting into my little car, knowing for the next couple of hours I’ll have only the roads, the big grey sky and my daydreams for company.” (Ishiguro, 2005:208)

“The survivor who has accomplished her recovery faces life with few illusions but often with gratitude.” (Herman, 2015:213) For the clones, their lives may be tragic, but they have learned to cherish. As for Ruth, she gets forgiveness; Tommy gets his true love and peace; Kathy has a clear sense of what is important and what is not and she knows how to cling to what is good. So, she drives off to wherever she is supposed to be—a donor.

3.2 Social Responsibility

Since cultural trauma is a kind of collective trauma, the repair of trauma should also be collective. Individual psychotherapy is far from enough. “In other words, the memory of cultural trauma is a kind of common memory. No matter whether the group members have experienced the traumatic event or not, they will actively or passively identify with their cultural trauma memory, so their memory of cultural trauma belongs to the category of social memory.” (Wang, 2017:157) Alexander points out that it is necessary to find collective ways to remove repression and allow to express the loss and sorrow. Cathy Caruth also points out that traumatic events can only be identified by sharing them with others. That is to say, even if the audience does not personally experience this kind of cultural trauma, the narration of trauma survivor can make them agree with the occurrence of trauma and then form a collective memory. The trauma survivor’s review of the cultural trauma is supporting to rebuild a collective identity. Therefore, reconstructing the identity of trauma survivors becomes fundamental in healing cultural trauma. The correct guidance of the collective and the provision of their spiritual and material support are beneficial for the trauma survivors to recover the trauma and rebuild the broken interpersonal relationships. Thus, by finding the difficulty of identity establishment and eliminating the identity will be reconstructed. And then the cultural trauma can be finally healed. In order to build their identity, people should be rational in technology use, resist the exploiters and constrain morals and law.

3.2.1 Rational Use of Technology

On November 27, 2017, the world’s first cloned monkey “Zhongzhong”, which was bred from cells, was born in the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of Neuroscience. 10 days later, the second cloned monkey “Huahua” was born. That means the technical barriers to human cloning have been removed. That means human clone is no longer a dream. But people should get alert about it. How should these clones be classified? Are they humans or just products? Do they have souls? Do they have the power to choose the kind of life they want to live like people? As people see the advantages of technology, people should not forget that human clones

are also living bodies without identity. If people lose identity, should they be treated like clones? That is a quiet scary imagination that people refuse to face. Ishiguro, the bold and prescient writer, shows the imagination to people.

In addition, “The development of science and technology has squeezed the living space of human beings. The relationship between human beings and technology has become increasingly close. However, the relationship between human beings has become increasingly cold.” (Zhang, 2017:29) With the rapid development of information technology, communication in modern society seems to be frequent, but in fact the relationship between people is getting colder. Everyone is an isolated individual. People stay in touch with each other through network without leaving any traces in huge amount of information. More and more, modern people find themselves living in a bustling world but are isolated. Modern people, like human clones, have been isolated in the modern society. They live in a small self-space. People become selfish and indifferent.

Comparing with humans, clones are a vulnerable group in society. When clones need help, human beings have chosen indifference. The only purpose of cloning project is organ donation. The clones are trapped in the lowest stratum of society. The value of their lives is to donate more organs until death. Cloning project is a mirror of human greed and indifference. If human beings develop technology without limitation, let it be the tool of the power, who will protect the rights of the vulnerable groups.

3.2.2 Learning to Resist

A lot of critics point out that the novel explores the ethical implications of cloning and the possible future of the special group of human clones. However, the author expresses frustration with the public’s understanding. Just like what he said in an interview, he wouldn’t be thrilled if people told him this novel is a stark warning on how people treat cloning and biotechnology. This kind of understanding is also accepted by him. “But if they only read these, he doesn’t think they see the core of the book.” (Bates, 2008:202) So what’s the core of the book? As a serious writer, Kazuo Ishiguro focuses on “normal people” in reality. The core of the novel is to

explore how to face the inevitable survival dilemma and death threats. In the story of the clones, the author tells us: “facing the survival dilemma with tenacious attitude and living a conscious life, which consists in the memory of life by resisting the nothingness of death.” (Bu, 2012:96)

In the novel, the clones show their respect of identity in society, and hopes to extend their life to the readers. Among clones, there may be many “Tommys” who hold the spirit of resistance. Through the image of Tommy, the author tells us that even they are disciplined from their childhood, they still hold the power to break the routine and fight for freedom fearlessly. When Tommy and Kathy get the news about deferral, they begin to apply for an extension for more time of living. In order to prove the true love between them, Tommy paint a lot of pictures. Every picture is lovely, and even poor and vulnerable. His pictures are carefully created which reflects his understanding of life—the fragility of life. Tommy is persistent that even when they realize the deferral plan is just a rumor, he never stops drawing.

The guardians in Hailsham are the group who resist against the power. In the context of such an appeal, the Hailsham school emerged, which could be seen as a small step forward of human conscience. In this school, the clones are subjecting to education and protected well. They are nurtured with art and knowledge like normal people. The reason why guardians in Hailsham have actively supported and encouraged the creation of their art is largely because the art works fully display the clones’ soul. The paintings of the clones hanging in the galleries also prove that the clones are thoughtful and soulful. Emily and her companies have tried their best. They have paid all their heart and wealth. They also witness the suffering of the clones, and at the same time, they fight for the identity of the clone in their own way.

3.2.3 Moral and Law Constraints

In his “The Interpretation of Identity Construction in *Never Let Me Go* under the post-human context”, Zhi Yunbo figures that post-human does not necessarily involve the era after human, but is close to an awareness and cognition of self and historical situation. He classifies this novel as a post-humanist novel, and points out that “post-humanist is not to advocate the elimination of human beings, but to re-understand and

define human beings in the rapidly developing post-human era, with highly developed information technology, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and so on.” (Zhi, 2016:55)

The attitude towards science and technology should be optimistic. Human tragedy is caused by the unbalanced development of human scientific and ethical accomplishment. What we should do is not to deny technology, but to use it to benefit mankind under the guidance reason. As far as cloning is concerned, all that people can do is to try to perfect the technology, and get ready to promote education and legislature. Even when the technology is perfected, human cloning should be strictly controlled. Therefore, our job is not to restrict the development of science and technology, nor to start moralizing speaking, but to build a fair and free rule of society in law. In this condition, technology will be advanced, material is abundant, moral and legal will be complete.

“Some people pointed out that people can eliminate depression and express the loss and sadness through public memorial activities, the cultural review and public political movement.” (Tao, 2011:11) What Ishiguro reviews in the novel is greatly supporting it.

Conclusion

This is the only novel of Kazuo Ishiguro which is concerned with biotechnology. *Never Let Me Go* attracts many readers and critics with the clone theme. Critics can hardly consider it as a science fiction because there is no depiction of biotechnology in the work. With such a special group of clones as the protagonists, it reflects something more universal. The tragic fate of the clones is undoubtedly an unavoidable topic among the numerous studies and explanations.

Cultural trauma is constructed through the recalls of the three protagonists gradually. In the novel, the clones, who are represented by Kathy, Ruth and Tommy, experience their own trauma and present their different symptoms. From hyperarousal of Tommy, constriction of Ruth and intrusion of Kathy, it is not hard to see the clones' suffering. This special group suffers from collective trauma in safety loss, identity anxiety and lack of love. In fact, Kazuo Ishiguro successfully constructs the cultural trauma of the clones in his novel which is based on the collective trauma. Through the comparative analysis of the three elements: speaker, audience and situation in cultural trauma, four key questions of the construction of cultural trauma were answered. It is confirmed that the clone is enduring cultural trauma. The fundamental cause of trauma is the loss of identity. They have no social status, cannot be recognized by human beings. They are only products made by human beings and serve human beings. Kathy is speaking directly to the readers which arouses sympathy of the readers. So, they are willingly to endure pain and oppression together with the clones. In the novel, clones try hard in their own way of trauma healing, but it is far from enough. The effective way of cultural trauma healing is the cooperation between the victim and the public.

Cloning technology brings people more hope of survival as well as deep thinking. This technology is a double-edged sword. It is both harming the clones' right to life and interrogating human morals. It is not only an injury to dignity but also a disregard for life that human beings arbitrarily taking away the organs of clones. The author of this thesis aims to reveal the nature of the trauma and make an alarm for human society in order to avoid the loss of human nature in the course of

development and progress. The author tries to reflect the tragic fate of the most vulnerable groups in society by the narration of the clones and calls on protection and respect for the vulnerable groups.

Furthermore, Ishiguro wants to reflect something more universal. Through this novel, he makes modern people ponder over the meaning of life. In the real world, everyone is trying to prove the value of his existence. Facing the life pressure, depressed emotions and disillusioned dreams, people should make their short life warm and meaningful by love and responsibility. They should face the coming days positively.

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