

Nation, Identity, and Subjectivity in Globalizing Literature

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Abstract: Since the end of the 20th century, particularly after the Cold War ended, national borderlines have been redrawn many times in the areas of the Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and a wide range of Asia, and people started crossing national borderlines to immigrate to other countries. As a result, the definition of a modern nation with one ethnicity, one language, and one culture collapsed. Under the policy of multiculturalism, Australia accepts immigrants from all over the world, and Australian literature at present is characterized as being ethnically, culturally, and linguistically hybrid. In this paper I look at Australian writers such as Brian Castro and Nam Le and compare them with other writers who are considered post-colonial writers, such as Salman Rushdie, V.S. Naipaul and Kazuo Ishiguro. I focus on how these writers attempt to present their identities along with their subjectivities. I also compare them with a Japanese writer, Haruki Murakami, whose literary works are widely read throughout the world, crossing cultural, ethnic, and language barriers, even though he writes in Japanese and has a mono-cultural background. I investigate the reason why Murakami's works are accepted by many contemporary readers worldwide. I finally explore the meaning of national identity and subjectivity in the globalizing world, and clarify the transformation of modern literature.

Keywords: nation, subjectivity, globalizing literature

In the autumn of 2012, we heard that the Nobel Prize in literature 2012 had been awarded to a Chinese writer, Mo Yan. The Swedish Academy introduced Mo Yan and his life, and praised his writing:

Mo Yan's imagination soars across the entire human existence. He is a wonderful portrayer of nature; he knows virtually all there is to know about hunger, and the brutality of China's 20th century has probably never been described so nakedly, with heroes, lovers, torturers, bandits – and especially, strong, indomitable mothers.¹

It is clear that Mo Yan portrayed Chinese people and their life, particularly life in the countryside about which non-Chinese people know little. It is always very difficult to

predict the winner of the Nobel Prize in literature as its criteria are not always as clear as those in the fields of sociology, economics, mathematics or sciences, although its laureates are always distinguished writers.

There have been two Nobel Prize winners for literature from Japan so far. The first was Yasunari Kawabata (1972) and the other was Kenzaburo Oe (1994). When Kawabata was awarded the Nobel Prize, I was a postgraduate student in Tokyo, majoring in English and American Literature. I was taking a lecture by the Japanese poet Junzaburo Nishiwaki, a professor of English. Professor Nishiwaki was a very distinguished poet and professor in Japan, but maybe more famous outside Japan. The students at that time knew that Professor Nishiwaki was expected to receive a Nobel Prize, as it had been said that the world-famous American poet, Ezra Pound recommended him. However, the prize went to Kawabata.² After this incident, the professor said in class that "Kawabata was awarded the Nobel Prize because he is a writer who reflects specific Japanese features well in his works." His remarks seemed to me very significant because, being westernized as a writer as well as an academic, Nishiwaki's literary works were far from Japanese; rather, they were western. His works might have been considered as too western and this may have been one of the reasons why he was not awarded a Nobel Prize.

In the early nineteen-seventies, literature was supposed to represent the nation to which a writer belongs. Works by Yasunari Kawabata, Junichiro Tanizaki, and Yukio Mishima were widely read outside Japan through translations mainly because these writers reflected Japanese culture, society, tradition as well as a Japanese sense of beauty. The readers of these writers outside Japan probably read their works in order to learn about the Japanese people, culture, tradition, and sense of beauty, which were very foreign to them. Their works attracted a great number of non-Japanese readers and a lot of researchers have continued to study them.

From the nineteen-sixties to eighties, the Japanese economy developed greatly so that Japan became one of the economically strongest countries in the world, and the function of Japanese literature for foreign readers changed. Japan became more westernized and academics as well as business people went to Europe, America and Asian countries and stayed there for some years. Many also studied for several years at universities overseas. The images of Japanese people and culture became less foreign to non-Japanese people, and some works by writers such as Kenzaburo Oe or Kobo Abe began to be understood by western readers through a philosophical knowledge shared with Oe or Abe, who were very familiar with western literatures, philosophies and cultures. Their works reflect western influences and this trend demonstrated the development or transformation of Japanese literature towards westernization. The functions of Japanese literature had been transformed from those of Kawabata, Tanizaki, and Mishima. Though non-Japanese readers came to share something with Japanese writers, they still seemed to read these writers' works as representing Japanese literature which definitely reflected Japanese people, society, culture and tradition.

In Haruki Murakami's case, however, something is very different from his predecessors, who clearly represent Japanese literature. Murakami's works are now read on a worldwide scale, and his books have been translated in more than 30 languages and in more than 40 countries. None of his predecessors had shown such a trend, which suggested that something new, something different was happening to Japanese

literature. The definitions of nation and culture, as well as this change, are directly connected to the trend of literature in the globalizing world.

It has been quite common in English speaking countries that writers published their works outside their own countries, but usually only in other English speaking countries. However, these days, it is not so unusual for writers to cross national, ethnic, cultural and even language borders. The works of Haruki Murakami, for example, cross language borders, as they are sometimes read more widely than works by writers of their own countries, even though Murakami's works are read in translation. Some writers even write in languages which are not their ethnic languages and they are highly rated where they are published.³ It has become quite difficult for readers to identify writers' nationalities or ethnicities only by reading their works. This is a trend of the globalization of literature which has been progressing since the late twentieth century, and in this paper, I would like to discuss the worldwide trend of literature, in relation to nation, ethnicity, and language, and think about the issue of subjectivity which is a key word for literature.

A literary work reflects a country's culture, history, and social ethos inherent to the time and place to which its author belongs. Modern literature, born in Europe, has thus continued to play an important role in unifying a nation on the basis of a common language, culture and ethnicity. The author was the central figure, being privileged with subjectivity and controlling power of national, cultural and social consciousness, and literature became an institution supporting a nation. However, in the mid-twentieth century, Roland Barthes argued in his "Death of the Author" that the idea of the author was "the invention of authorship in the cultural history of the West, of Europe"(Barthes 142-148), and as Andrew Bennett says in his book *The Author*, "the modernist aesthetic, developed in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, ... offers a model of the text that resists the capitalist insistence on individuality, and then on the "tyranny" of the author"(Bennett 16-17). Michel Foucault then developed the idea of authorship in his "What is an Author?"(Foucault: 141-160).

The question of "authorship" has become, indeed, very complicated since the mid-twentieth century, as the definition of a nation began to be transformed at the end of World War II. After the ideological framework in Eastern Europe changed at the same time as many countries in Asia were decolonized, political, ideological, and ethnic frameworks also changed, and the map of the world was greatly altered. Along with this, a large number of displaced people or refugees moved or migrated to other countries, giving rise to a fusion of ethnicities, cultures, and sometimes languages, and because of this, the definition of a modern nation drastically changed.

In the mid twentieth century, literatures in Australia, Canada, South Africa, and India, and other former European colonies attracted a great deal of attention in the English speaking world, and literary interests among readers or academics shifted from English/American literature, which had been the centre of modern English literature, to postcolonial literature. Postcolonial writers were colonized or displaced people or sometimes immigrants who had left their home countries. Salman Rushdie and V.S. Naipaul, for example, are widely known as representatives of postcolonial literature, both having been displaced: Rushdie from India, Naipaul from Trinidad. After decolonization, they restored their subjectivity and attempted to write works which came to be treated as a new form of literature—postcolonial literature.

As exiles without roots, postcolonial writers such as Rushdie or Naipaul are in between two perspectives: hope for the future and memory from the past. They “want to be like the people of their host country; they want to be singular and complete,” as Cristina Emanula Dascalu, argues in her *Imaginary Homeland of Writers in Exile* (Dascalu 42). They seek to become part of the mainstream or seek to transform into being British, but in so doing, they experience some problems. In order to restore their own identities, which are supposed to be firmly supported by their own nation, culture and language, they have to restore their own home, culture and language. Rushdie, for example, attempts to write the previous thirty years of Indian history as his grand subject in order to establish his own Indian identity, but it is “bottled in thirty jars, preserved in the aromatic oils and spices of his memory”(Desai xii) as Anita Desai argues in her introduction to Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*. She also remarks:

What Rushdie tapped into, in *Midnight’s Children*, was that unquenchable vitality and fecundity created by just such fluidity and interconnectedness. Refusing to see the English language as a barrier, he used it instead for its pan-Indian, inter-regional versatility so as to plunge into and plunder what lay in so many different areas of Indian society and reveal the essential commonality described by Jawaharlal Nehru, in the ‘high’ style of political oratory, as ‘a noble mansion of free India, where all her children may dwell’ and, in the ‘low’ style adopted by Rushdie’s hero Saleem Sinai, as ‘black and brown and white, leaking into each other...like flavours when you cook’. (Desai x-xi)

Rushdie’s novel shows that “to understand just one life, you have to swallow the world,” because what he wants to restore is not only his own home, but also for it to take him into its mainstream just like his host country. He tries to find a home to return to, but in reality he cannot. Exiles are not, as people of the modern era are, “safe in understanding that their home is singular and their identity safely anchored to the ground, that they are guaranteed by the land in which they live” as Dascalu also argues (Dascalu 37). Their home is not stationary, but floating in their memories and imagination, only appearing in more fantastical forms that illustrate the author’s dreams, nightmares and delirium as much as his country’s history. Rushdie is physically alienated from India, which means that he will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost. Therefore, he says in *Imaginary Homelands* that “[he] creates fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind” (Rushdie 10). This means that he writes novels in his search for an identity, not in his actual homeland, which does not exist in reality, but in a home created in his fiction.

V.S. Naipaul, another well-known postcolonial writer, began his life in exile by doing the same thing as Rushdie, but in Naipaul’s case, his identity is more complicated: he is a Trinidadian-British writer of Indo-Trinidadian heritage. He was born in Trinidad but his grandfather had been taken there as an Indian labourer for the sugar plantations. Naipaul left Trinidad and went to London to look for his identity as he had wanted since he was only eleven. He wanted to be a writer, and to write “in English” to become a central figure in the 20th century literary world, just as Rushdie wanted to become British. However, in London, he got lost; he underwent a kind of culture shock:

I came to London. It had become the centre of my world and I had worked hard to come to it. And I was lost. London was not the centre of my world. I had been misled; but there was nowhere else to go. It was a good place for getting lost in ... Here I became not more than an inhabitant of a big city, robbed of loyalties, time passing, taking me away from what I was, thrown more and more into myself, fighting to keep my balance and to keep alive the thought of the clear world beyond the brick and asphalt and the chaos of railway lines. (Naipaul 42)

As an exile, Naipaul wanted to become English, the identity of his host country, and went to London. However, he could not find his place in London, which instead took him away from what he himself was, rather than giving him a sense of his own identity. He was not successful in his attempt to become English and, as a result, his portrayal of the characters in his novels was constructed entirely out of “a montage of fictional representations of an imaginary concept of England.” In his attempt to restore his other home, India, which no longer actually existed, he collected a pile of his dreams and nightmares and transformed his writings into fragmentary memories from the past to show that his past cannot construct any stories, that is to say that there is no identity in the past. The explorations of both India and England lead Naipaul nowhere (Gurr 83). Most of his works, therefore, appeared to be “a struggle to face the new identity he then had to acquire, of permanent exile”(Gurr 9).

As exiles, Salman Rushdie and V.S. Naipaul were in the postcolonial framework—that is in the binary system between the two opposites: English and Indian or Trinidadian; the colonizer and the colonized; the West and the East. Displaced from their geographical home, they went in search of a cultural home and chose to become English, the identity of the colonizer, to retrieve “subjectivity” by obtaining an English identity, which was firmly based on a language, an ethnicity and a culture. Although they use English, their identities are suspended; they become neither English nor Indian/Trinidadian, just floating between the two. Their “subjectivity” is in between the two opposites, and split into many selves instead of a unified, whole or inviolate “subjectivity,” and eventually it becomes ambivalent, a hybrid of the two opposites.

The framework of postcolonial literature is thus binary, having two centres of equal value: the colonizer and the colonized, while colonial literature has only one centre with a single unified value which controls the marginal. Exiled writers, who are homeless and borderless, tend to present their “subjectivity” or identity in the act of writing literary works. Their works are not based on the concept of modern literature as in the cases of English, French or German literature, which were individually unified as national literatures, based on one culture, one language, and one ethnicity. Postcolonial literature thus became somewhat different from modern literature in that postcolonial writers assert their cultural and ethnic identities against their colonizers by using their “colonizer’s” language. This is the state of the exile: “an ambivalent hybrid of these two different lands” (Rushdie 45). The postcolonial subject or “subjectivity” is represented as being split in their dreams or illusions.

The question “Is the novel dead?” had been repeatedly asked in the West. It is noteworthy that Edward Said refers to the change of literary concept in his *Reflection on Exile and Other Essays*.⁴ In this work, Said argues that the concept of literary theory is changing in relation to anthropology as well as cultural politics and his remarks seem to

be based on the literary theory of postmodernism, but they are perhaps closely related to nation and exile. What postcolonial writers who left their countries such as Rushdie and Naipaul did was to open up possibilities in cross-fertilization and revitalizing what had seemed faded, dormant and close to decay. They definitely changed modern literature as they changed the notion of literature through the loss of the notions of subjectivity or identity.

As the age of post-colonialism proceeded, there appeared quite a few countries which became “multicultural societies” such as the United States, Canada, and Australia, leading to drastic changes in the literary situation. As these countries accepted many of the displaced or refugees, as well as immigrants from other countries, the nation became ethnically and culturally mixed and, as a result, literary works born in these countries are very complex and certainly do not come under the notion of modern literature.

In a multicultural society like Australia, all kinds of cultures and ethnicities are equally treated and there are no cultural or ethnic centres as in the cases of colonial and postcolonial societies. In contrast to colonial and postcolonial literatures which were written against the background of the “others,” there can be no “others” in multicultural literature, if there are no cultural and ethnic borders. In a multicultural society, there is no central figure which represents cultural and ethnic identity and therefore there is no “subjectivity” to assert against the “others.” This situation is the “melancholia” of postcolonial criticism as Eli Park Sorensen calls it:

In a world after the so-called ‘revolution’, the occurrence of melancholia as a symptom in postcolonial studies may be linked to the current status of the literary, given the fact that literature still occupies a substantial part of postcoloniality’s objects of study, yet for reasons that are highly ambiguous. As I noted earlier, postcolonial literary criticism seems to be characterized by what one may see as a kind schizophrenia; the literary constitutes a *problematic* (sic) within postcolonial studies—a problematic to which the discipline has responded either through an unbalanced emphasis on allegedly radical textual modalities, or by ignoring literary form entirely. (Sorensen 18-19)

If cultural or ethnic boundaries disappear, the issue of “subjectivity” disappears; if there is no subjectivity, the issue of identity disappears; if the identity issue disappears, then the concept of modern literature disappears or becomes something different.

In order to verify this issue, I would like to examine the cases of two writers who left their home countries. One is Brian Castro, an Australian writer, who came from Hong Kong, and the other is Kazuo Ishiguro, a Japanese-born writer who became a naturalized British citizen. They were neither “refugees” nor “exiles,” but they could be called “diasporic,” that is, immigrants and others who have left their homelands permanently.

Brian Castro was born in 1950 in Hong Kong and at the age of sixteen was sent to high school in Australia. Since then, he has continued to live in Australia and write novels as a self-professed Australian writer. Castro’s father was of Portuguese, Spanish, and English descent, and his mother, English and Chinese. As a result, Castro has a multiracial origin that is composed of a mixture of two oppositional others, the Occident

and the Orient. When Castro went to Australia in the 1960s, Australians of Anglo-Celtic origin clearly comprised the mainstream of Australian society, and Castro recalls that he felt overwhelmed and even assaulted by the word “identity” (Castro 10). Being “hybrid,” he was never going to be valorized as “authentically” anything. For Castro as for Rushdie, identity does not have its foundation in the nation. Rather, “identity” as it appears in Castro’s writing is constructed by a “multiplicity of selves,” selves who lie between a variety of different identities and cultures.

These multiple identities cross borders without being hindered or assimilated by one particular nation or traditional culture. For Castro, home is Hong Kong, a place which, since its restoration to China, no longer exists in the form he knew. For him home became surreal, a place which existed temporarily, but which now merely remains in the form of memories. Castro believes that there should be no boundaries in writing, and that the concept of nation puts too much pressure upon the writing process. Castro even argues that if writers start to write about identity, they destroy the activity of creative writing. That he belonged to nowhere and was therefore released from that form of identity gave him the impetus to write and make discoveries and this became the source of his creativity (Arimitsu 137-138).

Kazuo Ishiguro lives outside his family homeland and writes novels. He moved to England when he was five years old because of his father’s occupation and has lived there since. Ishiguro’s situation is similar to that of Castro in that he is neither an exile nor a refugee, but unlike Castro, Ishiguro is not of mixed heritage, but ethnically “pure” Japanese. Ishiguro was naturalized as a British citizen in 1983 and has become a successful British writer. He spent his early childhood in Japan, and considers Japan, rather than England, to be his home, despite having lived longer in the latter. He says that memories of his childhood remain in his mind, and that these nurture him both as a person and a writer, and influence his whole life (Ozaki 6). This statement echoes Brian Castro’s sense of home: just as Castro’s home is in his inner self, so is Ishiguro’s in his memories or subconscious, and to recover these memories, he too writes novels.

In Ishiguro’s novel *When We were Orphans*, the central character lived in Shanghai with his parents as a child, but at the age of ten, his parents disappeared. He returned to England, where he was raised as an orphan. He visits Shanghai again to investigate the truth about his missing parents as well as to recover the landscape of his childhood “home” but the city of Shanghai is not what he retains in his mind. He can visit Shanghai in a physical sense, but the Shanghai he visits now is no longer his home; there is a gap between the real Shanghai and that of his memory. The experience of real Shanghai leads him to find his place, the “home” of his essential self. His “home,” “his original being” is in his memory, in his fantasy, or in his subconscious.

The super-realistic world —a world whose boundaries are uncertain and unknowable— is real for him, and this is the way to construct his identity as a person who has lost his own home. In this, Ishiguro is similar to Brian Castro, who has lost his home and searches for the reality of his own being in his memories or subconscious. While Castro deconstructs the old and solid view of history, Ishiguro severs the continuity or succession of culture, tradition, and family ties. Both have lost their lineage and heritage, and therefore are orphans who have lost their parents or homelands. They symbolize the discontinuity of family, history or tradition and the ongoing ramifications of “diasporas.” They are “diasporic” writers, and “diasporic” writers who leave their

home countries and have multiple cultural or ethnic backgrounds which deny their original cultural or ethnic identity which was based on such notions of history or tradition. For them, historical facts or truth are composed of multiple memories and “truth is available only in the telling and has no privileged existence in real life beyond human language” (Castro 116). Ishiguro belonged to nowhere and therefore being released from such a form of identity gave him the impetus to write and make discoveries.

From the post colonial age onwards, the issue of identity has thus been disappearing, and the concept of modern literature has been evolving into something different. Identity of authorship, the central tenet of literary texts, has been disappearing as, to quote Roland Barthes again:

a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. (Barthes 148)

This remark brings to mind an author who is attempting something very new, something very different from modern national fiction, reflecting multiple selves.

Nam Le, a Vietnamese-Australian, is another writer who opened a new possibility in modern literature. He was born in Vietnam in 1978, and his parents escaped from there after the Vietnam War ended in the 1970s. His family stayed in a refugee camp in Malaysia for a while and then arrived in Australia as boat people and made their home there. He could be considered as a postcolonial writer as his background shows, but his writing does not reflect the framework of the postcolonial binary. Nam Le made his debut and his collection of short stories, *The Boat*, was published. His name had a strong impact on the publisher as it reminds readers of the Vietnamese, and the title of the book particularly reminded them of boat people. His book was a great success (Arimitsu 399).

Nam Le's success, however, was not because he was an ethnic writer or because his writing was about his experiences as a refugee. His seven short stories neither reflect the author's ethnicity nor are they about the author's experiences, although the settings of two stories are in Vietnam or about Vietnamese people. The remaining five stories have nothing to do with the author's ethnicity, personal experiences or even his times. The characters in the stories do not have anything at all in common with the author himself. Ironically, this is one of the important reasons why his book attracted the attention of so many readers as well as critics.

What Nam Le was interested in was to write something which transcended the national, ethnic, cultural as well as religious boundaries, instead of writing something reflecting his own background. He wrote stories with settings all over the world. Nam Le attempted to write from various viewpoints, transcending a single focused viewpoint, and to look at others through “other eyes” (Cunningham 134). If he is trying to do something new in his fiction, he is trying to transcend his own “subjectivity.”

Nam Le has multiple identities within himself; his ethnicity is Vietnamese, his nationality is Australian, and it is difficult for him to tell which his actual identity is. For

him, there is no clear border between “self” and “others” in the framework of post-colonialism. In Nam Le’s case, no national, ethnic and cultural identities hinder him from writing fiction. It might be said that he became interested in a totally different way to write.

In his collection of short stories, the author wrote about several characters of different national, ethnic, cultural as well as religious backgrounds crossing all these borders. However, for the author, crossing borders does not simply mean to present multiple identities or to fuse them but to remove “subjectivity” from himself as well as his characters. The author could be anybody else other than himself and could create any characters disconnected from his own identity. Most of his characters, therefore, do not act of their own accord because they are not based on a national, ethnic and cultural background. As a result, the author lets the characters float in their memories, illusions, and dreams as well as sub-consciousness. The author tends to keep a distance between himself and his characters. Nam Le thus writes about these characters not from his own viewpoint, but from their viewpoints.

Nam Le simply narrates a human reality unenclosed by the limits of national, ethnic and cultural identities. He creates characters with various identities without reflecting his own identities but depending on something else, something beyond national, ethnic and cultural identities. He uses memories, fantasies, dreams and sub-consciousness, which are not solid or stable, but changeable, floating and ambiguous. While Castro or Ishiguro attempt to sever themselves from the past, Nam Le attempts to remove his “subjectivity,” and is able to create characters disconnected from the author’s identity.

In his first collection of short stories, Nam Le fully removed “subjectivity” from his characters and created characters with multiple selves, locating them in any place or time by using his imagination. For him, transcending “nationality,” “ethnicity” and “cultural identity” is to remove “subjectivity,” and he thus took on the challenge to write fiction in a totally different style. It was necessary for him to do so, as the world is so rapidly globalizing that a single focused self is now disappearing and multiple selves are observed in many ways.

Finally, I would like to go back to Haruki Murakami. As I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, Murakami’s works are read on worldwide scale, although they were originally written in Japanese. His readers outside Japan, therefore, have to read his works in translation but they are still well understood and evoke readers’ sympathy and affinity. His works thus transcend national, ethnic, and particularly linguistic boundaries. The reasons why Murakami is accepted by many non-Japanese readers could be that his works have something in common with contemporary readers, something to do with losing their “subjectivities” in this globalizing age. In Murakami’s works, the character’s mind is usually floating just as if it were blown by the wind, difficult to understand, difficult to grasp. His central character usually chases his dreams but the fragments of the dreams are not linked to each other and never seem to create any story. The character does not usually concern himself with others at a deep level, just as he does not concern with himself at a deep level either. As Masashi Miura argues, Murakami’s character behaves just as if he were air; as if his body did not exist, even did not belong to himself (Miura 235-238).

Murakami is asking the question, what is “subjectivity” or “identity” in the present time, as one of the characters in his novel *The End of the World and Hard Boiled Wonderland* asks:

What is identity? It is the system of thought which is brought about by the accumulation of one's past and memories. You could call it mind. Everybody's mind is all different from each other but almost nobody has not yet grasped most of your system of thought. I have not grasped it yet, nor have you. (Murakami 79)

According to this passage, Murakami seems to believe that your mind is limitless and if you concentrate on the relation between literature and nation, you yourself set the limit to your literature. If you practice your literary study in your relation to the modern nation-state, that study ought to concentrate on realism in historical and materialist terms. Paul Jay argues that

We need to continue to reorganize the study of literature in ways that move us beyond one outmoded nationalist paradigm in which we still operate and that highlight how during various periods literature has been caught up in the multi-directional flows Friedman identifies. (Jay 107)

For Murakami, concentrating on the relation between literature and nation was not his way to write a novel. This is the major reason why he goes beyond Japanese literary lineage; he has not been directly influenced by his predecessors. It is often said that his creativity was not greatly supported by historical or conventional Japanese literature, but rather influenced by American contemporary writers such as Scott Fitzgerald, Truman Capote, Raymond Carver, Raymond Chandler, Kurt Vonnegut, and Richard Brautigan, etc. He is a contemporary novelist as well as a good translator of these writers' works. Murakami himself has crossed national, cultural and linguistic borders.

Junzaburo Nishiwaki, the Japanese poet I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, was not successful in being awarded the Nobel Prize in the 1970s, since he was far from being “a typical Japanese poet.” This was at a time when literature was supported by “national frameworks.” Murakami's success makes it possible to say that the definition of modern literature has thus drastically changed in this globalizing age. As I mentioned previously, not only Murakami but also many writers from other countries cross national, cultural, and language barriers. This is a worldwide trend of contemporary literature, and this trend verifies a drastic change in modern literature, based on one nation, one culture and one language, and this eventually leads to the transformation or collapse of “subjectivity,” which had been an essential prerequisite for the development of modern literature.

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i. The Nobel Prize in Literature 2012, Award Ceremony Speech, Presentation Speech by Per Wästberg, Writer, Member of the [Swedish Academy](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2012/presentation-speech.html), Chairman of the Nobel Committee, 10 December 2012, Nobelprize.org, The Official Web Site of the Nobel Prize Online Posting, n.p.
<http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/2012/presentation-speech.html>

ii. In January 2013, it was made public that Nishiwaki, together with Tanizaki Junichiro and Kawabata Yasunari, had been one of the candidates for the Nobel Prize four times from 1958 to 1962. Machida Shinya, "Tanizaki, A Candidate for Nobel Prize Four Times," *The Yomiuri Shinbun*, 2013, January 14, 1-2.

iii. The Chinese writer Yang Yi was awarded the Akutagawa Prize, a Japanese Literary Prize for promising writers, in 2008 for *Toki ga Nijimu Asa*; David Zopety was awarded the Subaru Literary Award in 1996 for *Ichigen san*; Ian Hideo Levy was awarded several prestigious literary awards such as the Noma Literary Award (1992), the Osaragi Jiro Award (2005), and the Itoh Sei Award (2009). These writers write in Japanese.

iv. Edward W. Said, *Reflection on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002), 269; Gayatri Spivak declares the death of comparative literature in the era of globalization in her *Death of a Discipline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); The Japanese critic Karatani Koujin remarks that Japanese modern literature is coming to an end, although literature itself will continue, and says that the literature of the future will be unrecognizable. Karatani Kojin, *Kindai Bungaku no Shuen* (Tokyo: Inscript, 2005), 30-31.

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