



**A Pale View of Grief: Maternal Guilt, Displaced Memory, and Migration in
Kazuo Ishiguro's *A Pale View of Hills***

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Abstract

A Pale View of Hills is the first novel of Sir Kazuo Ishiguro. It narrates the story of Etsuko, a Japanese woman who is living alone in England after her elder daughter Keiko's suicide. She is reminded of her life in post war Nagasaki when her younger daughter Niki visits her. She remembers meeting Sachiko, a mother who plans to move from Japan to America with her daughter Mariko. Mariko feels lonely, frightened and is not willing to go. Slowly, Sachiko's story parallels Etsuko's story, especially her migration to England with her daughter Keiko. As the narrative moves on, we start to feel that Etsuko indirectly speaks about her guilt through Sachiko's story. The novel deals with memory, motherhood, grief, migration, and hidden trauma. The story starts after the death of Etsuko's daughter and moves toward post War Nagasaki and Sachiko and Maiko. This movement gives a displaced structure to the novel. The memory of another daughter and another child acts as an indirect means through which the readers know about Keiko's suffering and Etsuko's guilty conscience. In this paper, we aim to analyse how Ishiguro presents this maternal guilt. We also analyse the four connected aspects of the novel: Etsuko's guarded reaction about Keiko's death, the parallel mother daughter relationship, the geographical difference between England and Nagasaki and the uncertain conclusion of the novel. Based on the theories of Caruth, Balaev and Lacapra, we analyse trauma through displacement, silence, repetition, and spatial memory. Migration creates uneven emotional consequences. While it makes the mother escape, migration exposes the child to fear, estrangement, and loss of belonging.

Keywords: Trauma, Memory, Migration, Maternal Guilt, Displaced Narration.