

# Japanese roots of Nobel winner Kazuo Ishiguro celebrated

By Mari Yamaguchi  
The Associated Press

**T**OKYO — His kindergarten teacher recalls Kazuo Ishiguro as a quiet boy who liked to read books. The British writer left Japan at a young age, but his birthplace became part of his artistic approach, which was recognized with the Nobel Prize in literature.

"It's like a dream come true," his former teacher, 91-year-old Teruko Tanaka, told Kyodo News service at her home in Nagasaki. She saw Ishiguro when he visited the southern Japanese city after winning the 1989 Man Booker Prize for *The Remains of the Day*.

"It was a difficult book," she said and laughed. "I had to read the same pages over and over."

Ishiguro left Nagasaki when he was five years old and didn't make a return visit to Japan for 30 years, but that hasn't stopped some in the country of his birthplace from celebrating his roots. His family moved to England for his father's work, and Ishiguro studied English and philosophy at the University of Kent.

Speaking to the media in London after the prize announcement, the British writer said, "although I've grown up in this country and am educated in this country, a large part of my way of looking at the world, my artistic approach, is Japanese. Because I was brought up by Japanese parents, speaking in Japanese inside a Japanese home. And so I think I've always looked at the world partly through my parents' eyes, as we all do."

On a visit to Japan in 2015, the British writer said his knowledge of the country is largely based on childhood memories, said Keiko Nagano, an editorial staff member at Hayakawa Publishing Co., which has translated his novels into Japanese.

He clearly remembered his old neighborhood in Nagasaki, even the name of a department store, she recalled. "I was so impressed by his memory, and thought that he still treasures his memories of where he came from."

In his debut novel, *A Pale View of Hills*, Ishiguro describes Nagasaki soon after the 1945 U.S. atomic bomb attack that killed more than 70,000 people.

"I'm so proud that Nagasaki is remembered as an indelible scene from the



**NOBEL-WINNING NOVELIST.** British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro smiles during a press conference at his home in London. Ishiguro, best known for *The Remains of the Day*, won the Nobel Prize in literature, marking a return to traditional literature following two years of unconventional choices by the Swedish Academy for the \$1.1-million prize. (AP Photo/Alastair Grant)

great author's childhood memory, becoming an important motif of his work," Nagasaki mayor Tomihisa Taue said in a statement, adding that he hopes Ishiguro will visit soon.

While his first novels were set partially or entirely in Japan, Ishiguro shifted mainly to Europe for his later works, including *The Remains of the Day*. The Japan he writes about is a bit imagined, his personal Japan, writes Richard Medhurst, an editor at Nippon.com, a Tokyo-based website that seeks to introduce Japan to a global audience.

"It's not quite the way you normally relate to a country, but he had this very strong personal connection to it," he said in an interview.

In some of Ishiguro's later works, Medhurst sees a sense of dislocation that may reflect the author's background, a person living between two nationalities.

Ishiguro's Nobel came as a surprise in Japan, where for several years the talk had been whether Japanese author Haruki Murakami would win the prize.

Speaking in London, Ishiguro said he is in discussions with people to work on a graphic novel. "This is a new thing for me and reconnects me to my childhood, my Japanese childhood of reading manga," he said.

*Associated Press writers Jill Lawless in London and Ken Moritsugu in Tokyo contributed to this story.*

means the "honeymoon is over."

"The huge drop in the president's rating must serve notice to him: the people expect nothing but the truth on the allegations of corruption, ill-gotten wealth, and drug smuggling facilitation levelled against him and members of his family," the alliance said. "Mr. President, we reiterate our call: sign the bank waiver!"

"The people are now seeing through the hype and fake news, and are realizing that change is not coming under President Duterte's watch," left-wing representative Emmi de Jesus said, citing "nonstop" drug killings, the rise in prices of commodities, and the entry of a large shipment of illegal drugs through the Bureau of Customs in Manila.

There was no immediate comment from Duterte, but he has repeatedly denied that he condones extrajudicial killings of drug suspects even though he has publicly threatened drug dealers with death. He won the presidency with a wide margin last year on a pledge to eradicate widespread crime, especially drug trafficking and use, and corruption.

Police officials said the arrests of more than 100,000 suspected drug offenders in 71,393 anti-drug raids since July last year help prove that suspects only get killed when they fight back and threaten law

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