

Spiritual Liberation in Simulated Societies: A Study of Inner Consciousness in the Select Works of Haruki Murakami

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**Doctor of Philosophy
In
English Language and Literature**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis titled **Spiritual Liberation in Simulated Societies: A Study of Inner Consciousness in the Select Works of Haruki Murakami** is a bonafide record of studies and research carried out by **Ms. Anupama A** under my guidance and submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English. To the best of my knowledge, this research work has not been previously formed based on an award for any degree, diploma, fellowship, or any other similar titles. Its critical evaluation represents the independent work on the part of the candidate.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis titled **Spiritual Liberation in Simulated Societies: A Study of Inner Consciousness in the Select Works of Haruki Murakami** submitted to the University of Calicut for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy in English** is an authentic record of observations and bonafide research carried out by me under the guidance of Dr. Sherly M.D. as my Research Supervisor and Dr. Sijo Varghese C as Research Co-supervisor at the PG Department of English and Research Centre, Vimala College (Autonomous), Thrissur. I hereby certify that no part of this work has been submitted or published for the award of any degree, diploma, title, fellowship, or recognition.

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DEDICATION

To those who suffer without realising the existence of a unique “self” that can transform life.

A NOTE ON DOCUMENTATION

I, hereby, would like to acknowledge that the documentation in the thesis is prepared following the style format suggested by *MLA Handbook* (9th Edition).

Contents

Sl. No.	Name of the Chapter	Page No.
Chapter 1	Introduction Japan through the Eyes of Haruki Murakami	1-24
Chapter 2	Haruki Murakami and his Literary World — Beyond Borders	25 - 83
Chapter 3	Interrogating “Reality”: The Working of Simulation and Inner Dilemma	84 - 155
Chapter 4	Transformation within: Decoding Murakamian Spirituality	156 -228
Chapter 5	Conclusion From Alienation to Association	229 -241
Chapter 6	Recommendations	242- 244
	Works Cited	245 - 260

ABBREVIATIONS

Intext	Parenthesis		Original Title
<i>Wonderland</i>	<i>HBWEW</i>	:	<i>Hard Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World</i>
<i>Wood</i>	<i>NW</i>	:	<i>Norwegian Wood</i>
<i>Dance</i>	<i>DDD</i>	:	<i>Dance Dance Dance</i>
<i>Wind Up Bird</i>	<i>TWBC</i>	:	<i>The Wind Up Bird Chronicle</i>
<i>Kafka</i>	<i>KOS</i>	:	<i>Kafka on the Shore</i>

Chapter 1

Introduction

Japan through the Eyes of Haruki Murakami

Postwar Japan, after fighting against all wartime calamities became successful in establishing its domain among developed nations of the world. A great transformation happened to Japanese society at the end of World War II because of the lessons learned from previous events. Even though Hiroshima and Nagasaki incidents remained unforgettable scars on the Japanese minds, the nation rose like a phoenix from its ashes. After the Second World War, the “baby boom” generation which includes people who were born between 1946 and 1964, wanted to prosper their nation in all ways. They forgot about the loss and concentrated on a wealthy future. A hi-fi culture was developed to beat any western nation and the land prospered as a result of economic and industrial growth. It became a model for other nations in matters of social, economic, industrial, and educational development. Production and consumption were of primary importance and products from Japan received worldwide acclamation due to their quality and workmanship. Life of the people changed tremendously with facilities like jazz clubs, massage parlours, huge buildings, giant metros, fully-fledged subways, and all types of western facilities like billiard halls, vending machines, bowling alleys, imaginary towns, amusement parks, indoor skiing in summer, and so on.

Haruki Murakami, the representative writer of Japanese society, through his fictional world gives another side of these magical developments. Murakami was born in Kyoto in 1949 and became a writer unexpectedly at a young age itself while

running a jazz bar. He studied drama in college and got married at the age of twenty-two. The couple made a living from the jazz bar named “Peter Cat” showing their affection towards cats and becoming independent without falling into the web of the corporate culture. The selected novels are sharp criticisms of the hyperreal societies with Japan as the base. They are; *Hard Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1985), *Norwegian Wood* (1987), *Dance Dance Dance* (1988), *The Wind up Bird Chronicle* (1994), and *Kafka on the Shore* (2002). They are more serious in social criticism than Murakami’s earlier novels like *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979) and *Pinball, 1973* (1980). Other novels like *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982), *South of the Border, West of the Sun* (1992), *Sputnik Sweetheart* (1999), *IQ84* (2010), *Colourless Tzukururu*, *Tazaki and his Years of Pilgrimage* (2013), and *Killing Commendatore* (2017) have increased the popularity of the writer all over the world.

Apart from novels, he has penned short story collections, memoirs like *Underground* (1997), *What I Talk about When I Talk about Running* (2007), *Abandoning a Cat: Memories of my Father* (2020), and essay collections like *Novelist as a Vocation* (2015) which are as popular as his novels. The short story collections include; *The Strange Library* (1983), *The Elephant Vanishes* (1993), *After the Quake* (2000), *Birthday Stories* (2002), *After Dark* (2004), *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* (2006), *Men Without Women* (2014), and *Desire* (2017), and *First Person Singular* (2020). Many of his novels and short stories have been filmed and gained wide acclamation; *Hear the Wind Sing* has got filmed in 1981, *Wood*, and *Wind up Bird* in 2010. Noteworthy short stories like “The Second Bakery Attack”, “On Seeing the 100% Perfect Girl One Beautiful April Morning”, “Tony Takitani”; “All God’s Children can Dance” and “Barn Burning” have also been short-filmed in Japan. The writer has translated some English novels into the Japanese language like *The Great*

Gatsby and *Tender is the Night* written by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Big Sleep*, and *The Long Goodbye* by Raymond Chandler, *Breakfast at Tiffany's* by Truman Capote, *Breakfast of Champions* by Kurt Vonnegut and *Trout Fishing in America* by Richard Brautigan. He has been shortlisted twice for Nobel Prize and the Harukists (Murakami admirers) are eagerly waiting to see him achieve the prestigious award soon. Other achievements like the Jerusalem Prize for the Freedom of the Individual (2007), Franz Kafka Prize (2006), Yomiuri Prize for Literature: Fiction (1995), Tanizaki Prize (1985), and Noma Literary Prize (1982) are among his successful career.

Murakami belongs to a generation that was affected by hyper-materialistic culture. The high industrial growth, poverty in the lower sections of people, and attraction towards western ideals created a cultural vacuum in the society. The Japanese mindset was greatly influenced by consumerism and American culture. Peaceful family life became a question and as a result, divorce and suicide rates rose rapidly. People who were working like robots got exasperated with their workplaces and monotonous life. Desperation, dissatisfaction, violence, and teen prostitution increased. These challenging circumstances provide an accurate background to the study of Murakami's novels. His protagonists are young men in their thirties or below thirties who find a void within themselves and society. It is accurate to say that his novels are a true depiction of contemporary Japanese youth and the dilemmas they face. The older generation who had suffered poverty and was a part of the economic boom celebrated the financial growth proudly. They competed to adopt western-style and to find happiness in materialism. But the young generation who was born into the developed nation began to feel a disconnection with it. They materialise the term "lost generation" who resisted the system and American cultural dominance and realised the problem of alienation. Afraid of losing individuality in the hands of capitalistic

powers, the students' uprising movements in college campuses and universities in the 1960s were examples of their protest and intolerance against the system. Murakami belonged to the latter section and he was a part of those riots. But later, such revolutions were hijacked by capitalist powers and proved to be futile. This caused disappointment in the young minds and they were compelled to shift their attention to the artificiality of the surrounding culture to make their life "comfortable".

In an interview with Larry McCaffery, Murakami stated the situation of Japanese society at those times,

I belong to a generation of Japanese people who grew up during the counterculture era and the revolutionary uprisings of 1968, 1969 and 1970. The Japan when I was a child was poor and everybody worked hard and was optimistic that things were getting better. But they are not. When we were kids, we were a poor country but very idealist. That began to change in the sixties; some people just got rich and forgot their ideals, while other people struggled to save idealism [...] Then very quickly, all that simply disappeared. The uprisings were all crushed by the cops and the mood became bleak. The whole sense of the counterculture rebellion seemed finished (qtd. in Pountney 67).

This sense of desperation and humiliation found expression in the Murakamian literary world. The over-discipline, boredom, and politeness of corporate culture influenced Japanese life enormously. His works revolve around the theme of missing "something" inside human minds and this has widely influenced the young generation of Japan. Murakami has become the spokesperson of Japanese youth from the beginning of his writing career and it has not changed even at the age of seventy. His

characters are all suffering souls under consumerism which is the motto of a capitalist system. The contrasting notions of idealism and materialism suffocate the life of people. The character list contains different types of people ranging from individuals who fight against the system and establishments, victims of advanced capitalism who never identify their condition, villains, and hypocrites who work for the capitalist powers, and also those who struggle to attain identity but fail pathetically.

Murakami's works persuade the readers to look into the fact that the majority of people find the solution of immersing themselves more in materialism to become oblivious to disillusionment and existential crisis. Some identify their loss and return to religion and spirituality. The author is well aware of the change that happened to his nation and he addresses both these sections. He becomes a mentor to the current generation who is not concerned about the emptiness inside and this becomes a contributing factor to the "Murakami Phenomenon". He addresses their indifference to history, past or bygone values and unfolds a world where people are unable to identify their loss by living in a simulation. As there is no sense of loss, there are no thoughts of a solution. The young generation does not recognise the reasons for their desperation and alienation and is surrounded by images that have no connection with their realities. Loss of reality and thereby the loss of connection with one's self are the challenges presented by the writer through the lives of his characters. Beneath the peripheral level of affluence and infrastructural development, there lies another Japan that Murakami identifies.

The French writer Jean Baudrillard's theory of "Simulacra and Simulation" has been chosen as the theoretical framework for the analysis of the disappearance and degradation of "reality" creating a spiritual vacuum in postmodern societies in the light of selected novels. The thesis aims to interrogate the existing notions

surrounding the so-called “reality” from various perspectives. It tries to highlight Murakami’s approach to the concept of “reality” and his differing views as depicted in the novels concerned. The dilemma of characters living in false consciousness will be exposed. They are made to recognise their realities and it leads to their spiritual liberation or self-actualisation.

Murakami has specific views on religion and spirituality. Shintoism and Buddhism with their various subdivisions are the major religions in Japan. The former was considered the state religion before World War II and was given special status. Emperor was regarded as the direct representative of “kami” of a higher position and the Japanese believed themselves as inhabited by “kami” and they are a purer section than any other people in the world. The word, “kami” stands for any object which is different from the ordinary and is considered divine. But the situation changed after World War II when General MacArthur brought an end to the superior position of Shinto as a state religion. It was the end of the “divinity” of the emperor. Along with signing the treaty of peace and the withdrawal of the military after the War, the autocracy of the monarch ended. In the postwar constitution, the special power of the Shinto religion was eliminated to prevent its foul play in all fields, especially governance, and military.

Religious beliefs in Japan faced a setback after the Sarin gas attack was plotted and executed by the popular religious cult, Aum Shinrikyo in 1995. Two of the cult followers dropped sarin gas in plastic bags on the Chiyoda Line in Tokyo and two people got killed, many were injured seriously, and caused several casualties and damages. The main culprit, Ikuo Hayashi was a medical practitioner who belonged to the super-elite class and he considered his deed as part of a holy war. Even though the Japanese were used to many natural calamities like the Kobe earthquake, they were

shattered by the man-made cruelty organised by a religious cult. This created psychological scars and trauma like PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) in the injured and escaped victims. The domestic terrorism perpetrated in Tokyo Metro was a socio-cultural shock that brought forth many social issues like “...incompetent police work, irresponsible media activity, a loss of credibility of religious scholars, dubious ethical training in the education system, [and] an increased level of violence under the influence of comics and video games” (Gaitanidis 359). The Aum cruelty questioned the weak individual mindset of educated Japanese youth who are not hesitant to plunge into mass terrorism. It throws light on the evil side of the rapid growth of Japan’s economy unconcerned about humanitarian values and celebrates selfish and profit-oriented culture.

The Japanese, especially the youth, who were in search of alternatives, began to find a solution in spirituality separated from religion. Usually, people rely upon religion for salvation but when religion fails, they have to discern another way out which resulted in the emergence and growth of many spiritual healing facilities with the service of therapists. Even though there were spiritual centres in Japan before the Sarin gas attack, they gained prominence after the Aum cruelty. The Japanese began to bank on such places in large numbers to fill up their inner emptiness. Faith-based healing practices gained acceptance in Japan in the nineteenth century. The post-Aum Japanese society witnessed a spiritual boom giving birth to many therapist centres distancing religious dogmas. For many of the therapists, spiritual healing was a hobby; for some, it was a source of additional income; others considered it as a profession providing money and status in society. Murakami, in his fiction, employs the service of such divine practitioners and people with spiritual light for aiding the

self-realisation of his characters and it is being read in connection with these changed socio-cultural and religious conditions.

Capitalisation doesn't leave anything out of its grasp and later these spiritual healing centres were commercialised. The divination booths, which were covered places to maintain secrecy, began to find space in shopping malls. Like that of a beauty parlour, they kept a menu with an adequate rate for each type of healing. It is interesting to know that many such centres were directly or indirectly run by multinational corporations transforming spirituality into a commodity. There are healing salons and institutions in Japan and it has become a profitable business in a well-advanced system. Now, Japanese spirituality has developed into a profession demanding academic qualifications. Rocky Mountain Mystery School and Theta Healing Japan are the popular schools that provide diploma courses in spiritual healing (Gaitanidis 369). The capitalised spirituality reached the peak of simulation and its purpose went astray as it is conquered by those with vested interests. The late 20th century witnessed a decline in the spiritual boom as it proved itself a simulacrum gradually. The healing centres failed in their attempts to provide consolation to people and over-commercialisation distanced their clients. People began to understand the hollowness behind such centres which could never help in resolving the growing void within them. Present-day Japanese either do not believe in any religion or belong to several religions. It is said that among the Japanese, the birth ceremony of a child is conducted by a religious doctrine, while his marriage is based on another religion and the funeral according to some other religion.

Capitalist exploitation of religious beliefs is visible in the fetishism of products as observed by Karl Marx by giving them the halo of spirituality to entice consumers. Zen has become a brand name attracting business not only in Japan but in

western and Asian countries. Various products like soaps, bath salt, perfume, toilet seats, living room, and bathroom decorations like a meditating Buddha on the wall have commercialised the concept of Zen Buddhism. Jorn Borup, an academician and a scholar of Buddhism, in his article on Zen Buddhism says, “Zen as a brand in contemporary Japan signifies another story, which is also why Toyota calls their car “Yaris Zen” and uses commercials invoking Zen in the West, not in Japan” (85). The late American business magnate, Steve Job’s connection with the Zen spiritual centre in San Francisco fascinated many and increased their interest in Zen religion. It is said that this development has paved way for the rediscovery of Zen Buddhism in the 21st century. Borup in his article on the commercialisation of religious beliefs, observes that several write-ups and books are being written on the relationship between Steve Jobs and his Zen connections encouraging the publication business. Both spirituality and religion are being marketed in the contemporary world and Japan becomes an example.

Murakami is never against the social institution called religion but he doubts its ability to lead to spiritual liberation. His grandfather was a Buddhist priest and his father too served as a priest for some years in Kyoto. In an interview with Reuters in 2009, Murakami calls religious cults a “mini-system within the system of a nation” (Kubota) and believes that they are important for the existence of society and have some pivotal functions to perform. According to him, the duty of both the novelists and the cult people is the same- to explore values different from those that exist. But he identifies its inability in providing peace, happiness, and values to people, and as a result, many end up in the wrong direction and degeneration as criminal groups like Aum Shinrikyo. He doesn’t cut down the significance of domestic terrorism hidden behind religion as the problem of a particular cult, group, or specific sections of

society but as affecting the whole Japanese mind. His readers are urged to think of the 1995 incident seriously rather than driving it to the category of collective amnesia.

Murakami guides Japanese society to recognise the dark realm of the human minds behind the gas attack and understand its origin and aftereffects. When people's belief in religion and religious cults fail, they become more panicky, embarrassed, and desperate. T.S Eliot addresses the spiritual barrenness of 20th century England in *The Waste Land*, and Murakami is concerned with the spiritual emptiness of contemporary Japan. New dangers are detected and he says in his non-fiction work *Underground*, "The most important thing for Japan at this point is to pursue a new spiritual wholeness" (Birnbaum and Gabriel 42). Jay Rubin, the Murakamian translator, in a BBC documentary, says that "Murakami's down-to-earth spirituality" is his solution for corporate conformity and the absence of reality (qtd. in Pountney 73). He explains it by analysing that his fiction is "...dealing with religious themes without the remotest appeal to established religion. He's getting into those things that you can call spiritual without any spiritual nonsense. It's down-to-earth spirituality" (73). This can be achieved by each material being without following any prescribed pattern or predetermined path. The thesis tries to explore this aspect of Murakamian spirituality by focusing on its hidden and complex characteristics.

The spiritual liberation that the writer depicts is entirely different from the clutches of religion and capitalism. It is a fact that religion limits the wider aspects of spirituality by trying to confine it within some borders. According to religious beliefs, spirituality is attained by someone free from the tangles of "karma". The man who yearns for it must liberate himself from all worldly pleasures and responsibilities as a material being. It is rejection and renunciation and belief in the ultimate power that controls everything and the goal of a human being is finally to reach the proposed

destination. But Murakami tries to make it clear that spirituality has an independent existence beyond the framework of any religion. It is the liberation of the soul from hyperreality to make people live productively and positively in a simulated society. According to him, spiritual liberation doesn't need the conditions preached by religious texts and hardly pays attention to its dogmas. Religious experience is different from spiritual experience because the former is institutionalised and organised based on written codes, traditions, and customs while the latter is beyond all such restrictions. Denial of the physical world makes human beings close to spirituality in the traditional outlook, but for the author, it is not rejection but acceptance and association after recognising the flaws of the conscious realm.

Self-realisation is considered as the inevitable element of spiritual awakening and it is not an easy task as explicated by the author through the inner journey of the characters. The theme demands a deep enquiry into the inner consciousness of the characters. The existence of double worlds— the unreal and the real encourages the thesis to travel from the conscious simulated realm to the unconscious spiritual realm. The psychoanalytical perspectives of both Carl Jung and Erich Fromm will be used in the study to understand the working of the inner realms of the characters. Analytical psychoanalysis is the Jungian model focused on concepts like the personal and collective unconscious, archetypes, shadows, anima and animus, transcendence, and individuation. The selected works contain these features and the study tries to bring out them as they contribute to the development of the total theme. Jung in his "Foreword" to *Introduction to Zen Buddhism* states, "The unconscious is the matrix of all metaphysical statements, of all mythology, of all philosophy...and of all expressions of life that are based on psychological premises" (Suzuki 152). He

emphasises the power of the unconscious realm to carry answers to all the dilemmas of the conscious world and provide illumination and revelation to disoriented minds.

The thesis also aims to incorporate the German Neo-Freudian, Erich Fromm's ideas on humanistic psychoanalysis as they are more focused on the love-hate relationship between individuals and society. Fromm's findings are based on observations made about people's behaviour, inner abilities, and complex relationship with society. Born to a Jewish family in 1900, Fromm began to cast his influence in 1930 in the field of humanistic psychoanalysis and it continued till 1980, the year of his death. Despite the biological studies on human personality, he gave importance to the social, cultural, economic, and historical factors in the development of man's consciousness. For him, spiritual liberation is the recognition, realisation, and understanding of the transcendent states of consciousness. He objected to Freud in his overemphasis on sexuality by rejecting other aspects of human minds. Fromm emphasised the reality of human existence and the need to get liberated from the illusions of capitalism. His notions of spirituality are related to the inner abilities of human beings of which they are less aware due to the pressure and influence of outside factors. Even though he relates his psychoanalytical approach to Zen Buddhism, prophetic Judaism, and Christian Mysticism, he is far away from confining his views to the conventional framework of these religions.

By focusing on human beings' inner potentials, productive nature, and other abilities, the humanistic approach highlights the idea that self-actualisation is the inherent objective of every single individual. It is based on the idea that human beings are invested with plenty of abilities and energies which are to be awakened in the attainment of self-realisation and it leads to spiritual liberation. Fromm believes that psychoanalysis is a therapy for spiritual well-being by arousing the inner instincts of

human beings. The thesis intends to study the psycho-spiritual development of the characters by concentrating on their existential dilemma, the need for awakening, journey through unexplored regions, the process of individuation, and eventually the recognition of inner realities.

Murakamian fictional and non-fictional works are nowadays studied and analysed worldwide as they present universal themes like postmodern dilemmas of lack of connection with society, existential crisis, sense of loss, and spiritual emptiness. There are Murakamian critics like Matthew C. Strecher, the Professor of Modern Japanese Literature at Sophia University in Tokyo, Jay Rubin, an American translator who works on Murakamian literature, and Michael Seats who studies various aspects of the “Murakami Phenomenon”. Several articles, research papers, dissertations, and PhD theses on his literary world are also done by students and researchers from Asian, American, and European nations. Many have studied the themes of compassion, commitment, identity crisis, mythical and political aspects, solitude, memory, narrative strategies, imagery, women characters, Japanese culture, western culture, and the like based on his works. Some critics have discerned the influence of the Baudrillardian notion of reality and simulation in his literary domain. Writers like Michael Seats, Matthew Strecher, and Chiyoko Kawakami have found out the author’s affinity with the ideas of the French sociologist, Jean Baudrillard even though Seats among them examined this aspect elaborately.

Michael Seats’ book, *Haruki Murakami: The Simulacrum in Contemporary Japanese Culture* (2006) finds a connection between Murakamian depiction of themes with the concept of simulation popularised by Baudrillard. Ten large chapters of the book examine the term simulation concerning the early works of the author ranging from *Hear the Wind Sing* to *Wind up Bird*. He considers the term “Murakami

Phenomenon” as a simulacrum as it gives predetermined ideas to readers through various sources and they are previously informed about the major characteristics of his works even before reading them. The book focuses on the style, language, and narrative aspects of his works rather than the themes and contents. Seats points out that the writer has used parody and allegory as tools of simulation as seen in *A Wild Sheep Chase* and *Pinball, 1973*. Murakami’s treatment of Japanese modernity through the structure of simulacrum is analysed deeply in the book. He considers pastiche, parody, meta-fiction, landscape, the sublime, and history as the tools of simulacral representation. Seats’ idea is that Murakami finds simulation as a rhetorical device to present the Japanese self and appreciates the author for utilising it in fantastic ways.

Matthew C Strecher’s book, *The Forbidden Worlds of Haruki Murakami* (2014) gives importance to the “other worlds” of the Murakamian literary landscape as the title suggests. He appreciates the author’s use of magic realism in bringing out the metaphysical realm of characters and finds that the “over there” of characters shows the inner mind of Murakami himself. Referring to Roland Barthes’ and Joseph Campbell’s ideas on myths, he brings out the mythological background of the selected works and finds that Murakami’s works are a combination of ancient Japanese and Greek mythology. The metaphysical quests of the protagonists are connected to the mythological quests and their instinctual journeys are related to divinity and religion. According to Strecher, the spiritual awakening of the characters happens because of the interference of divine grace and he observes its occurrence from the short story “All God’s Children can Dance” to *IQ84*.

Jay Rubin’s book *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words* (2012) provides a wonderful tour through the life of the author both as a person and writer. He finds Murakami’s works like the songs of his soul and the music of his heart. The word

“music” is used metaphorically to indicate that all his writings are songs with varying or sometimes similar notations. Music works as the opening door to the inner world of characters. He appreciates the therapeutic effect of his works and the characters’ storytelling process and listening mechanism. The book can be read as a biography of the author and it helps to understand Murakami as a person since a major share of it is spent on his thoughts, interests, and beliefs. Rubin doesn’t adopt a critical attitude in the book rather it is all praise for the writer.

The critical work *Haruki Murakami: Challenging Authors* (2016) edited by Matthew C. Strecher and Paul L. Thomas constitutes articles written on various aspects of his fictional world and its reception by popular critics. The chapter titled “Haruki Phenomenon and Everyday Cosmopolitanism” of this book written by Tomoki Wakatsuki highlights the writer’s cosmopolitan identity as a citizen of the world. It further upholds the new “Japaneseness” projected by Murakami that nurtures the sense of belonging beyond national and cultural borders. Jonathan Dil’s book, *Haruki Murakami and the Search for Self Therapy: Stories from the Second Basement* explores the writer’s fourteen novels in five chapters. It discusses the trauma of both the writer and the characters and the therapeutic threads interwoven. The healing power of the Murakamian literary world by emphasising the idea of self-renewal is the characteristic feature of the well-written book.

Strecher’s doctoral thesis *Hidden Texts and Nostalgic Themes: The Serious Social Critique of Murakami* studies the author’s contribution to Japanese literature in augmenting it to the global platform. Chiyoko Kawakami’s article titled “The Unfinished Cartography: Murakami Haruki and the Postmodern Cognitive Map” focuses on the narrative aspects of his works from the postwar and postmodern perspectives. She considers his fictional world dealing with the problematic

relationship between individuals and society in changed circumstances instead of the high aestheticism preached by the “pure/high literature” of Japan. Jonathan Dil’s article “Writing as Self Therapy: Competing Therapeutic Paradigms in Murakami Haruki’s Rat Trilogy” analyses the psychological blocks in the characters and their inner journey leading to individual growth. Baik Jiwoon’s article, “Murakami Haruki and the Historical Memory of East Asia” discusses the essence of the Haruki phenomenon in connection with the historical memory of East Asian nations.

“Mapping the Subterranean of Haruki Murakami’s Literary World”, the research article by Akiyoshi Suzuki, a professor at Nagasaki University, navigates through the inner world of the characters by finding its connection with the modern and ancient geographical space of Japan. Maps of Tokyo city are included in the article for this purpose. Tomoki Wakatsuki in her doctoral thesis, *Beyond Cultural Nationalism: Murakami Haruki and an Emergent Japanese Cosmopolitan Identity* views the Murakamian literary world from the perspective of cultural studies by refuting the idea of cultural nationalism and embracing a cosmopolitan identity. The post-colonial aspects of Japanese culture and oppressed individuality in Murakami’s works are studied by Chiaki Tagaki in her doctoral dissertation *From Postmodern to Post Bildungsroman from the Ashes: An Alternative Reading of Murakami Haruki and Postwar Japanese Culture*.

Many have studied and analysed the suffocating condition of Japanese society and the inner dilemmas of the characters as picturised through Murakami’s works. But the thesis would like to claim a unique position in its treatment of these aspects in novel ways and reach a different conclusion. It has selected the theory of simulation for an appropriate analysis of the theme of the disappearance of reality but differs from that of Michael Seats’ interpretations. Social criticism is the link that connects

both Murakami and Baudrillard. The study is akin to Baudrillard's original idea of exposing the unfair world of simulation. The conception of simulation and simulacra dealt with by the study will be different from that of earlier analyses. Generally, simulation is considered a second-order system that is away from reality. But here, simulation is intended to be treated as an evil presence that not only causes the loss of reality but the inability of human beings to understand the loss. Baudrillard has stated that simulation drives people to the condition of being forgetful about the disappearance of truth and reality. Several characters presented in the selected novels are representatives of those pathetic beings who are unable to recognise the erosion of reality and the reign of objects, images, and signs. The thesis has in view to emphasise the loss of reality leading to loss of self in postmodern societies.

While many resent the major themes of self-search and identity crisis as clichéd postmodern ideas characterised by repetition, the thesis desires to focus on these from a different perspective. Dejection takes place in advanced capitalist societies due to the result of loss of reality by various factors and the recognition of the presence of one's real self is the path to spiritual liberation. The way the thesis wants to connect the theme of the loss of reality with spiritual transformation makes it unique and different from all other studies on Murakami. The process of self-realisation becomes the major concern of the study and the treatment of the "other worlds" hopes to associate the achievement of self with these forbidden regimes. The spiritual growth of the characters is one of the vital concerns of the thesis. Instead of perceiving spirituality on religious and mythical background, it desires to equate it with the recognition of one's inner mind. Murakami's notion of having a balance between both the realms and the perspective that the metaphysical zone is as important as the physical is expected to be the principal focus of the study. The thesis

has in view to analyse this theme broadly by examining both the conscious and unconscious realms and understanding the mechanism of the hidden domains.

The book *Simulacra and Simulation* is originally published in French in 1994 and translated into English (1981) by Sheila Faria Glaser and the thesis focuses on the theory that comes under the chapter “The Precession of Simulacra”. The writer is concerned about the disappearance and distortion of reality by a procession of infinite images. Baudrillardian ideas are deeply connected with various socio-cultural contexts of human life and this helped in the founding of the *International Journal of Baudrillard Studies* by Dr. Gerry Coulter in 2004. It underlines the significance of the theorist and his observations on contemporary societies.

There are various interpretations given to the term “simulation” and “simulacra” by many writers. “Simulation” is a Latin-originated term and its equivalent is “phantasmata” in Greek and simulacra as “phantasm” which are used in Plato’s dialogues. Several writers and thinkers discussed the notion of simulation before Baudrillard popularised it through his writings on 20th century society and culture. From Platonic time itself, simulation stands in a battle between the essence and appearance, the original and copy. Plato in his works like *Sophist*, *Statesman*, and *Phaedrus* tried to distinguish between the true candidate and the false rival and for him, simulacra or phantasms were false images away from the original idea. According to Giles Deleuze, Plato considered simulacra as degraded copies creating negative impressions and wanted to expel them in favour of the original and real. Nietzsche in his inverted Platonism dismissed Plato’s preference for the original over the copy and questioned the difference between the two. Both Nietzsche and Deleuze wanted to identify the concept of simulacrum and affirm its place in positive terms. Deleuze doesn’t consider this concept as something to be denied because of its falsity,

rather argues that the power of falsity can be used in the art for the exhilaration of truth.

While Deleuze in *Difference and Repetition* (1968) states that the difference between the original and simulacra is internal with external similarity, Baudrillard eliminates any such difference. For him, it is not a matter of difference but implosion. Simulation can't be distinguished from reality and he is concerned about its power to cause deception in a world dominated by signs and images. He views its effects on contemporary societies as causing the substitution of "reality" and leading to the death of the "real". Its dominance over the lives of people transforms them into mere robots and makes them live in a hyperreal world. Baudrillard's views on hyperreality are similar to Umberto Eco who describes his experiences when he travelled through hyperreal cities like Las Vegas and Disney World in his popular book *Faith in Fakes* (1973). Eco explains how such fantasy stations question reality and entice people by providing hyperreal situations. The merit of the Baudrillardian notion of hyperreality is that he has found its threatening dominance, not only in such wonder worlds but in the day-to-day lives of people.

The thesis intends to do a detailed study of various aspects of Japanese society as it is found to be necessary to have an accurate understanding of the Murakamian literary world. Joe Hendry's *Understanding Japanese Society* (1987) by Peter Dale, provides a thorough knowledge of Japanese history, myths, religion, land, economics, education, ideology and practices, and their way of living. The books like *An Introduction to Japanese Society* (1997) by the Japanese sociologist Yoshio Sugimoto, Peter N. Dale's *Myth of Japanese Uniqueness* (2012), and *The Japanese Mind: Understanding Contemporary Japanese Culture* (2002) written by Roger J. Davies and Osamu Ikeno help in understanding various aspects of Japanese social

life, culture, religion, and myths. Discussions on Japan's role in World War II, its relationship with nations like China and Korea, revisionism on history, the danger of acute nationalism, and the trauma of the Japanese will be brought to attention in the thesis enabling it to analyse the novels from contextual perspectives. Kenzaburo Oe's article, "Japan's Dual Identity: A Writer's Dilemma" which is published in the book *Postmodernism and Japan* (1989) provides thoughts on the nation's past, present, and future from the perspective of a responsible writer. It reminds Japanese cruelties towards third world nations like China and Korea during the Second World War. Oe openly criticises the nation's present friendship with America which can make it more dangerous by spreading the nuclear- deterrence myth.

The works like *Japanese Mythology* (2007) by Judith Levin and *Japanese Spirituality* (1944) by Daisetz Suzuki and some articles like "Encountering Japanese Spirituality" by Michael Ipgrave help the task of understanding the spiritual aspects of the novels from different standpoints. The book, *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis* which is a combination of lectures by Suzuki, Erich Fromm, and Richard D Martino provides the connection between spirituality and psychoanalysis. Even though the Zen element is not much noticeable in Murakami, it is clear that the chosen novels are connected with the Frommian reading of human minds. While Jung's ideas help to probe into the inner consciousness of the characters, Fromm's notions analyse their role as real social beings by connecting them with immediate society.

Fromm's important works like *Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud* (1962), *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973), *The Art of Loving* (1956), *Escape from Freedom* (1942), *To Have or to Be* (1976), *The Sane Society* (1955), *Man for Himself* (1947), and *The Art of Being* (1989) provide a detailed idea of the characteristics of human and societal natures. His observations

about society, individual freedom, escapism, authoritarianism, destructiveness, spontaneity, the truth of human need, alienation, productive and non-productive living, love, the strife between individual and society, the conscious and the unconscious, and enlightenment will be examined and employed in the thesis.

Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916) translated into English by Beatrice M. Hinkle contains important observations like libido, Oedipus complex, inner phantasies, dreams, two kinds of thinking, the unconscious, the hero image, rebirth, and mother and father symbolism. Different volumes of *The Collected Works of C. J. Jung* are selected to aid the study. *The Symbolic Works: Miscellaneous Writings Volume 18* (1957) translated by R. F. C. Hull contains several lectures and discussions between Jung and his audience, the nature of the unconscious, spiritualism, psychology, spirituality, archetypes, the collective unconscious, inner reality, adaptation, and individuation. *Two Essays in Analytical Psychology Volume 7* (1953) translated and edited by Gerhard Adler and R. F. C. Hull and other collections like *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious Volume 9* (1969) and *Symbols of Transformation Volume 5* (1952) are selected as secondary sources.

The concept of the labyrinth is another important tool that the thesis wishes to engage in for analysing the inner journey of the characters. The popular psychotherapist Lauren Artress, the founder of *Veriditas the Worldwide Labyrinth Project*, in her 1995 book *Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Tool* uses the ancient concept of the labyrinth as a device to sort out the problems of modern life. She had made a forty-foot canvas labyrinth and made people walk through it to record their spiritual experience. In her book, she says that a labyrinth can lead one to an unrecognised world, self-knowledge, healing of inner wounds, and exhilarating creativity. Penelope Reed Doob's *The Idea of the Labyrinth*

from Classical Antiquity through the Middle Ages (1990) describes the history of labyrinths, the difference between maze and labyrinth, and also their depiction in literature. *Labyrinth's from the Outside in: Walking to the Spiritual Light: A Beginner's Guide* (2013) written by Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper and Rev. Dr. Carole Ann Camp gives instructions about the labyrinthine walk along with its history and significance and also about finding such labyrinths and using them creatively.

The selected five novels are written between the years 1985- 2002 since Murakami's works began to attain a clear form and purpose and when the writer began to consider himself socially committed. All these novels will be studied in detail based on the concepts of simulation and spiritual liberation. Based on the various aspects of the theory of simulation, the thesis intends to provide serious criticism of contemporary societies with Japan as the model. It further tries to explore the double world mechanism and the switching of the conscious and unconscious realms by analysing the labyrinthine journey of the characters leading to their spiritual transformation.

The study will be materialised in five chapters including an introduction and conclusion and the sixth chapter holds recommendations. The second chapter "Haruki Murakami and his Literary World— Beyond Borders" attempts to provide a detailed analysis of the literary realm of Haruki Murakami. The mental process of the author while writing and the socio-cultural conditions of Japan in bringing out the writer and the human being in him will be given attention. It intends to provide an elaborate background to the study by concentrating on the various aspects of his unique fictional world. By focusing on the aspects of characterisation and major themes, the chapter would like to establish a necessary connection with the succeeding chapters.

The critical appreciation of selected novels can give a proper understanding of the themes, motifs, and characters in general.

“Interrogating “Reality”: The Working of Simulation and Inner Dilemma” will give an accurate picture of the lives of the characters who deal with various phases of simulation. It is the application of Baudrillard’s theory of “simulacra and simulation” and its effects on different walks of life. It intends to focus on the theme of loss of reality, its reasons, and the spiritual vacuum present in the characters. The term “reality” within double inverted commas intends to highlight the loss or deceiving presence of a single “reality”. Existential crises, different types of dilemmas, and the traumatic experiences of characters will be the major focus. By the deconstruction of popular thoughts and accepted beliefs, the chapter will showcase the ways through which simulation governs the characters and their world in all the selected novels.

The theme of spiritual liberation will be brought home through the fourth chapter, “Transformation within: Decoding Murakamian Spirituality”. It will give importance to the concepts of self-renewal or self-realisation. By clubbing the psychoanalytical perspectives of Jung and Fromm, the chapter attempts to probe into the inner consciousness of the characters. The bridge between the conscious and unconscious realms will be analysed by focusing on the labyrinths of the characters. The labyrinthine journey of the protagonists and their transformation, in the end, will be explored. Murakamian idea of self-actualisation and liberation from all fetters of life while living in the filth of consumer culture will be focused on. Fighting against the powers of simulation and establishing identities in differing ways constitutes the core theme of the chapter.

The fifth and concluding chapter “From Alienation to Association” sums up the findings of the thesis. It sums up the ideas derived from the previous chapters fulfilling the purpose of the study. Limitations and scope for further studies based on this thesis are included in the sixth chapter “Recommendations”. The term “reality” employed by the research covers only the ideas of Baudrillard and Murakami. It does not deal with other vast areas of knowledge related to the term. All the primary texts selected for the study are translated works from the Japanese language to English. The thesis entirely relies on the translated versions without any reference to the original texts.

Chapter 2

Haruki Murakami and his Literary World — Beyond Borders

There are three types of emotional wounds: those that heal quickly, those that take a long time to heal, and those that remain with you until you die. I think one of the major roles of fiction is to explore as deeply and in as much detail as possible the wounds that remain. Because those are the scars that for better or for worse, define and shape a person's life. And stories-effective stories, that is- can pinpoint where a wound lies, define its boundaries (often, the wounded person isn't actually aware that it exists), and work to heal it (qtd. in Treisman, *The New Yorker*).

Murakami makes this remark in an interview in which he is asked to comment on the emotional trauma and haunting memories of his characters as evident in his novel, *Killing Commendatore*. These words reveal the writer's concerns about the human psyche and the role of fiction in unveiling deep inner wounds. Haruki Murakami is a representative of those writers who understand the dilemmas and challenges of contemporary human minds. Beyond all criticisms, he stands high in the present-day world literature scenario because of his innovative ways of expressing Japanese society. He understands the nature of pretentious societies and their spiritual barrenness. Concerned with a sense of loss, the quest for realities, spiritual emptiness, advanced capitalism, the power of memory, and history, his works become his manifesto. As a writer of social commitment, he believes that he must investigate and improve the condition of contemporary societies. The novels, short stories, travelogues, speeches, and interviews respond to the prevailing socio-cultural conditions of Japan. A remarkable skill is exhibited in recognising the evils of society

and presenting them in his literary world in a surrealistic manner. The mystery of humans' inner consciousness had always captured his interest and also his belief in its ability to understand the hyperreal nature of society. The lives of the characters in the selected novels of the thesis are examples.

Murakami stayed away from corporate influences and he has stated that it was difficult to prefer such a life in Japan. The Japanese judge people based on the company or system they work for. He says, "In that sense, I've been an outsider all the time. It's been kind of hard, but I like that way of living" (qtd. in Nihei 71). He chose his life courageously and this attitude is shared by many of his protagonists who leave their job because they find the meaninglessness behind working in a valueless and profit-oriented system. Writing occurred to him as a revelation while watching a baseball game along with his wife in 1978. It was the opening game of the season in the Jingu baseball stadium near his jazz bar. The thought of writing a novel happened to him suddenly and he calls that an epiphanic moment reminding James Joyce's Stephen Daedalus. At the age of 29, Murakami wrote his debut novel, *Hear the Wind Sing*, which he calls "kitchen-table fiction", in English and translated it into Japanese. He worked all day in his jazz club and wrote the novel at night. It was sent to a literary contest and surprisingly bagged the prize. He continued his business until 1982 when he became a full-time writer.

Murakami wished to live according to his individuality by rejecting society's expectations. He searched for a "gap" in a society where people like him can go and live peacefully. By sticking to his own decisions the writer asserted his freedom and this finds expression in the lives of his characters. His father, a teacher of Japanese literature tried to instill the genes of traditional literary taste in his son. He used to make him read books by Japanese authors. But Murakami, from childhood itself,

showed a special liking for western literature. He admired western writers like F. Scott Fitzgerald, Kurt Vonnegut, Raymond Chandler, Franz Kafka, Richard Brautigan, and Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Many argue that the influence of these authors is visible in his writing. As Mukesh Williams, the author, and professor at Soka University in Japan finds, “Murakami combines the surreal comedy of Kafka, the Fitzgeraldian angst of the lost generation, the surreal dystopia of Vonnegut, the poetic intensity of Carver, and the racy denouements of Chandler’s detective pulp” (36).

The narrative tools used by the writer are different from those of traditional Japanese fiction. Magic realism, the story within story method, epiphany, the use of memory, history, and labyrinth, and the experiment with language makes the writer unique in the literary domain of Japan. Employment of pop culture, brand names, western cuisine, and boundless music like jazz, classical, folk, and rock increased the popularity of his fictional world across the borders of Japan. He is celebrated both in English speaking world and in other Asian nations more than any other Japanese writer. Originally written in the Japanese language, his works, including fiction and non-fiction, are translated into English by Jay Rubin, Philip Gabriel, and Alfred Birnbaum. Murakami himself goes through the translated versions before getting them published. He believes that if he can enjoy the translated version, the English-reading people also will. In an interview with Alfred Knopf, Philip Gabriel, the translator of *Kafka*, said that it is a distinct pleasure to work closely with an author who is a noted translator himself. He understands the difficulties involved in translating and is willing to make constructive suggestions.

Writing is an unplanned process for Murakami. He writes down whatever comes to his mind, which includes coincidences and contradictions. He believes that life is full of imperfections and unexpected happenings. In an interview given to *The*

Guardian at Edinburgh International Book Festival with John Mullan, he speaks of his affinity towards writing in first-person narrative. It gives him a feeling of equality among his characters and he wants to stand on the same level as his characters which is democratic. (Bausells, *The Guardian*). “Boku” and “Watashi” are the usual names given to the nameless first-person protagonists in Japanese literature. The name “Boku” is used for male protagonists while “Watashi” stands for both male and female. The thesis applies the term “Boku” to the nameless heroes in the coming sections. Like his protagonists, Murakami is also a person with strange dreams. In an interview, he says of his dream of sitting isolated in the depth of a well like Toru Okada in *Wind up Bird*. His protagonists are parts of his self even though the plots do not hold too many autobiographical elements. But there are some as Jay Rubin had noticed. Murakami’s father’s wartime experience influenced his writing and the result can be seen in novels like *Wind up Bird* and short stories like “A Slow Boat to China”. The dormitory where Toru Watanabe lives in *Wood* is a direct replica of his dormitory at Waseda University. Rubin finds autobiographical connections like Midori in *Wood* as modelled on the author’s wife, Yoko. He opines that after the publication and the worldwide acceptance of the novel *Wood*, the writer has shifted his position from author to phenomenon.

The literary style of Murakami is a combination of both orient and occident. He employs western metaphors, images, pop music, jazz, and classical, and characters are modernised in their attire, mannerisms, and attitudes. The cuisine is a mixture of western with McDonald's, Pizza, KFC, and Japanese with spaghetti, sushi, tofu, rice balls, and noodles. Representation of cosmopolitan culture with Tokyo as its centre is a major characteristic feature of his works. About his innovative narrative style he puts it simply that if a writer wants to talk about something new, he/she has to make

up a new kind of language. He presents Japan with a loss of memory, meaning, empathy, and collective purpose which always succumbs to violence. The recognition of the fake notion of nostalgia and nationalism spread by ultra-consumerism and hopes for a revival of Japan by identifying the nation's integrity and spiritual strength is seen in his works.

The author is associated with globally oriented postmodern literature and he finds his works different from other Japanese writers. He says,

Stylistically speaking, my writing certainly does not follow Japanese literary style. My writing does not involve parts that are emotionally connected or intertwined with the Japanese language in the way that can be seen in the works of writers such as Yasunari Kawabata and Yukio Mishima, for example. In some ways, I aim at neutrality. Nonetheless, I am interested in that certain residue or remnant of "Japaneseness" that one cannot quite avoid leaving intact. I don't stick to it like glue or anything; it's just something I can't fully escape, no matter how much I consciously attempt to separate from it (qtd. in Muto 286).

Compared to the decorative and pompous narrative methods of other Japanese writers like Mishima and Kawabata, the Murakamian writing style is straightforward, precise, and natural. His idea of "Japaneseness" which is as natural as an inseparable element in blood, is different from theirs. For others, "Japaneseness" is something cultivated and going back or showing responsibility towards tradition. In Japan, there is a particular genre called *Nihonjinron* that consists of literary texts celebrating the uniqueness of the nation based on its socio-cultural identity. Murakami liberates himself from all such sorts of literary barriers and never attempts to engage in

particular genres. According to him, “Japaneseness” is not a matter of external identification but is the presence of something fixed in the inner consciousness of each Japanese citizen about which the person may or may not be aware.

The author’s point of view, themes, and narrative style made him a rebel and an outcast in Japanese literary tradition. His use of the Japanese language invited criticisms but it suits well the transnational elements of his works. By utilising the *katakana* syllabary which is used in the Japanese language for transcribing foreign words, loan, and onomatopoeic words he renders a new reading experience. A study on intercultural communication in Murakami’s works done by Kuryleva and Boeva analyses the presence of many *gairaigo* words in his works. *Gairaigo* in Japanese means lexical borrowings from European languages into Japanese, written with the help of the syllabary *katakana*. He uses them mainly with things like furniture, home appliances, food, music, people, and their occupation. The lack of proper names for many of his characters and the frequent use of numbers show his universal approach.

There is a general opinion that the Japanese words, grammar, syntax, and imagery which Murakami uses lack traditional colour and cultural identity. He is often blamed for not embracing Japanese life and culture and for sticking to Western notions. His writing doesn’t belong to the category of the so-called Japanese pure or high literature. With the wish for an expression of his natural voice and a free movement, he distances himself from the water-tight compartmentalisation of the nation’s literature. He travels in a unique way which makes him widely read all over the world. But this has been considered by critics as the writer’s non-Japaneseness and likeness towards the occident.

Murakami has been criticised by writers like Kuroko Kazuo, Komori Yōichi, Fujii Shozo, and Nathaniel Rich for being western in his approach to Japanese society and writing. He has been charged with a lack of *junbungaku* which means Japanese pure literature. A writer is read all over the world due to the universality of his themes and the ability of his narrative to conquer the minds of different cultures. This is true in the case of Murakami. The selection of themes is ubiquitous and Japan becomes a suitable land for its representation. In his 2015 book *Novelist as a Vocation*, a collection of essays, Murakami emphasises that wide reading and grave observation are the prerequisites of a responsible novelist. He has a clear purpose for writing. By understanding the plight of a common man he wishes to see his works as a part of popular literature, not pure literature. According to him, the most important thing for a writer is his qualification as an individual. Considering himself first and foremost as a Japanese individual, he says,

The opinion that my books are not really Japanese seems to me to be very shallow. I certainly think of myself as being a Japanese writer. I write with a different style and maybe with different materials, but I write in Japanese and I'm writing for Japanese society and Japanese people... I wanted to change Japanese literature from the inside, not the outside. So I basically made up my own rules" (qtd. in Li 79).

Even though he has been living in America for many years since the publication of his second novel, his primary concern is always Japan. He is worried about the nation's simulated history, its uncontrolled urge towards materialism, the hidden threats behind the unimaginable growth of science and technology, the loss of "reality", and urban terrorism.

A closer analysis shows that Murakami's works are both Japanese and western at the same time. His novels like *Wind up Bird* and *Kafka* show some influences of medieval Japanese literature. Before entering into writing seriously, he revisited classical Japanese texts. In a short essay "A Hut in August", the author says about the classical books his father introduced him some years ago, and that changed something inside him (Cucinelli, *The Literary Sources of Ancient Japan* 49). There are interesting connections in the plots and characters of *Kafka* and *IQ84* with *Tales of Moonlight and Rain* and *The Tale of Heike* respectively written by the classical Japanese writer, Ueda Akinari. *Wind up Bird* shares some features of *Record of Ancient Matters* by Moto-Ori Norigana. It is clear that Murakami is influenced by traditional Japanese literature. The reason for his international readership lies in applying this influence in the contemporary world context. In his award acceptance speech in Barcelona when he was honoured with the 23rd Premi Internacional Catalunya in 2011, the author clarified, "I am writing my own stories. Not East, Not West" (qtd. in Yama 93). Ascending from the bottom of his inner mind, the Murakamian literary world is both individualised and collective at the same time. In Jay Rubin's words, Murakami becomes a "one-man revolution" (*The Music of Words* 61) in this way in Japanese literature.

Christopher Smith argues Murakami's similarity of plot structure with the Japanese *Mukogawa* (Otherside) literary tradition. In the *Mukogawa* narrative structure, young protagonists, highly individualised, find themselves indifferent to society, travel to distant places, and a woman is provided to guide them spiritually and sexually. The Suma portion in Murasaki's classic, *The Tale of Genji*, Ueda Akinari's *The Reed-Choked House*, Kawabata Yasunari's *Snow Country*, and Abe Kobo's *Woman in the Dunes* are examples of *Mukogawa* tradition (14). Many Murakamian

works like *Dance*, *Wonderland*, and *Wind up Bird* share this storytelling structure of both regression and progression of protagonists. The symbols and images in his novels, like animal imagery, *kami* in Shintoism, living spirits, and nature are influenced by traditional Japanese beliefs and culture.

The symbolic use of animal imagery, especially cats is an important aspect of Murakami's writing. The Japanese people are cat lovers and there is an island for cats named Aoshima in the Ehime Prefecture in Japan. From the 6th century itself, they retained some beliefs about these feline creatures and considered them as representatives of both good and evil. Cats belonging to different classes like wild cats and turtle cats have carried different symbolisms and are found expression in fables and folklores which later appeared in their literature. The presence of feline animals can be seen in classical works like *The Tale of Genji* and *The Pillow Book*.

Almost all novels and short stories of the author show an affinity towards cats. The married couple in his works always keeps cats as substitutes for children. In *Kafka*, Nakata, one of the protagonists, is a cat finder, who can communicate with them. Not only cats but unicorns and sheep have been assigned various purposes by Murakami. The unicorns which are termed beasts in *Wonderland* have both historical and spiritual significance. The sheep image in *A Wild Sheep Chase* signifies the meaninglessness and the dilemma of the existential crisis of the characters. The sacred stone in *Kafka* and the supernatural power of water in *The Wind up Bird* are some examples showing the writer's making use of the belief of *kami*. Living spirits in his novels like Kiki in *Dance* and Miss Saeki in *Kafka* pilot the confused protagonists as is seen in traditional Japanese literature. It is apparent that the author combines both traditional and western elements in his literary world for meeting the demands of contemporary culture.

For Murakami, writing is a self-discovery and by transforming his mind and thoughts into letters he tries to find out his own self. Perfection in writing never bothered him as he knows clearly that there is nothing called perfection in an imperfect world. The same idea recurs in the selected novels. The amalgamation of the human body and mind always entices him and he values the connection between both. His characters are often seen to be away from their suffocating shell called body but at the same time recognise its unavailability. Body and mind are both separable and inseparable for him. Murakami's special concern for the flexibility of his own body and its significance in freewriting is worth noticing. He smoothens his writing process by doing physical exercises like running or swimming. His affinity towards running is well-known and even covers 10 kilometers daily. Physical fitness strengthens his inner mind as writing is a task of inner consciousness for him and he considers running in connection with writing. He is fond of running till he gets exhausted and with the feeling that he can run more the next day. Likewise, he stops writing each night with the recognition that he has more to write the next day. He always wishes to be with the rhythm of life and fascination with its continuing nature by overcoming all sorts of hindrances. This aspect of "being with the flow" or "dancing to the music" is the lessons his protagonists learn in their journey of self-search. The writer recognises the presence of a void within him and runs to acquire it. All his thoughts and emotions circle this void but it remains unaffected and difficult to grasp. For Murakami, the activity of running is going into his inner consciousness and the mysterious nature of this other domain always excites him.

After the publication of some early works, Murakami began to emphasise the importance of commitment towards society and from there happens a change in his writing. His earlier novels celebrated the detachment of protagonists from society and

their attempts to remain as real beings. In his words, “First, there was detachment and aphorism, then the storytelling, and eventually I realized that that wasn’t enough either ... I think that’s probably when I came to realize the importance of commitment” (qtd. in Yama 90). This he considers as his second step as a novelist and it results in his later works like *Underground*. This non-fiction work contains various interviews he carried out with the survivors and domestic terrorists of the Sarin gas attack in the Tokyo subway in March 1995. The tragedy made Haruki return to his homeland. Attack from a spiritual group was the most unexpected thing in society and the reason for it needed to be found out and exposed. The alienation of educated middle-class youth from society paved way for its manipulation and was brainwashed to act according to the instructions of the cult leader.

The Japanese psychoanalyst Miyamoto Masao’s assessment is important here, “Japan has gone downhill in the last few years and young people just don’t know what to believe. ... At school they feel alone and unprotected... When they leave school, they join cults because the cults give them a sense of belonging” (qtd. in Welch 57). Murakami addresses this cultural vacuum which is more intensified in the present Japanese society. The responsibility for the sarin gas tragedy does not belong to the minority group but the whole society as the cult is a representation of society. The writer’s compassion towards the Japanese psyche made him go through the minds of each victim and understand their uncanny experience. For him, experience is the most valuable thing in life, and the interview he carried out with sixty- three ordinary people and the cult members transformed him deeply. In *Underground*, he has written,

What were the people at the time? What did they see? What did they feel?

What did they think? If I could, I’d have included details on each individual

passenger, right down to their heartbeat and breathing, as graphically represented as possible. The question was, what would happen to any ordinary Japanese citizen—such as me or any of my readers—if they were suddenly caught up in an attack of this kind? (Birnbaum 196).

In the same year of the sarin gas tragedy, the Japanese were also shuddered by a massive earthquake called The Great Hanshin or Kobe Earthquake causing the death of over six thousand people. Murakami's short story collection, *After the Quake*, contains the emotional aftershocks of the earthquake on urban people and their trauma. They suffer its aftereffect in one or another way and it makes their lives pointless. The emotional wounds which remain unhealed always disturb them. In his work, he urges the sleeping society to wake up from material conformity and look into the nothingness and untouched pathos of their inner mind. Jay Rubin writes that the earthquake can be seen as "...a wake-up call to the emptiness of their lives in a society in which most people have ... more money ... than they knew how to spend" (qtd. in Welch 58).

Recognising the inner emptiness is an important step toward one's self-search. Breaking away from the advanced capitalist system and identifying one's worthiness as an individual is a recurring theme of Murakami. Attaining identity is a complicated process in an absurd world and the writer analyses the factors contributing to such a complex process. The author is well aware of the role of a nation's history in defining the identity of its citizen. The historical amnesia of Japanese society worries him as it urges the leaders of a nation to hide shameful historical events from official records and academic textbooks to attain selfish political motives. The historical reality is Murakami's prime concern and he revisits, revises, and relocates the past. He

courageously deals with the truth of Japanese aggression on other nations during World War II despite all the criticisms from other Japanese writers.

Japanese occupation and wartime happenings have found a place in other writer's works as well; the colonisation of Korea by the Japanese army in Richard E. Kim's *Lost Names: Scenes from a Korean Boyhood* (1970); Japanese entering Shanghai in arm with the British in Kazuo Ishiguro's *When we were Orphans* (2000); the withdrawal of the troop from Korea in Ha Jin's *War Trash* (2004) are examples. The uniqueness of Murakami lies in the fact that he dares to question his own nation's wrongdoings during wartime in his novels and the best example is *Wind up Bird*. The novel revolves around the theme of memory and history, affecting individuals in various ways both directly and indirectly. He has been criticised by Kenzaburo Oe for his self-conscious representation of the culture of the nation. But by studying the author it becomes clear that his writings are the results of his thinking which is based on facts and experiences not only imagination. In his 1997 interview, he made his point clear,

Fascism is not the right word -- nationalism and revisionism. They're saying there was no Nanking Massacre and no trouble with comfort women...They're remaking history. That's very dangerous. I went to Manchuria a couple of years ago and visited some villages. The villagers told me, Japanese soldiers massacred four or five dozen people here. They showed me the mass grave -- it's still there. It's shocking and nobody can deny the fact, but they are doing it. We can go forward, but we have to remember the past. We don't have to be tied by the past, but we have to remember it -- that's different (qtd. in Miller 46).

The writer is afraid of the so-called nationalists who hid real history and propagated a polished past thereby deceiving a large society. They are shallow people without inner substance and he considers them dangerous. Past is an ignored domain for them and they intentionally forget the real tragic incidents like Nanking Massacre and the attack on Manchuria. Murakami is a visionary writer who can see realities hidden beneath the capitalist system and this makes him different from other writers. He makes his characters dig such realities from underground, empty wells, deserts, hidden buildings, and dark subways which represent their ignored inner consciousness. Such literature provides a truthful and coherent view of the past to the young generation than the feeling they get by visiting war memorials and museums on bombardments in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Museums present history as it was remade and are far away from the original. Even academic textbooks which deal with history are partial and are guided towards particular objectives of those who are in power. But writers like Murakami explore the concealed truth and show responsibility to their nation and its people.

The writer's empathetic involvement with society makes him a fighter who strives to make people acknowledge the need to regain individuality. His works present the relocation of history from an objective presence to a subjective influence in ordinary lives. The popular use of the imagery of doughnuts in some of his short stories symbolises Japan's inner emptiness indicating its spiritual vacuum. According to him the imperial history of Japan is presented as a black hole like the holes at the centre of doughnuts. He questions the historical amnesia of the nation and the distortion of historical reality in academic texts. The twisting of facts surely leads people to disorientation and later to desperation. Revisiting the past is necessary for a responsible future. The experience of ancestors should get counted as they form the

collective memory which is active inside every human being's core consciousness. The war and its experiences form a part of the nation's collective memory which can teach and guide the succeeding generations. The noteworthy role of memory can't be separated from gaining one's identity. Murakami doesn't want to remain tied to the past but it is necessary to remember the past. Truthful representation of history and accepting historical reality are important for the people's peace of mind who need to feel that they are not the "other" to the past but a part of it.

Murakami's novels are revolutionary in spirit as they address the history that has been subsided, exiled, excluded, or separated. The historical explorations he makes are analogues to the memory of the characters. The way the characters restore order to their lives with the help of memory and history and the intertwining of both is worth noticing. Being focused on the social transformation of individuals, he believes in the empowerment of people from within by understanding socio-political realities. The inability to recognise such realities lead them to depression as seen after the failure of Zenkyoto students' protests in the 1960s. The revolts spread in almost all the educational institutions and many youths proudly participated in them against the system with the hope of bringing positive changes. The protests were against the extension of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security (Anpo Treaty) between Japan and the United States as it would be a continuation of subservience to the U. S. A. The government, by using the police force suppressed all demonstrations. The young activists got depressed and dejected when the treaty was renewed despite the massive outcry. Later, they learned to live according to the orders of the system by forgetting their genuine demands.

The Right-Wing Japanese critic, Keigo Okonogi describes the rebelled youth of the time as "moratorium people", the generation that agreed to a moratorium on

demands and protests for political and social autonomy, in exchange for consumer luxuries and greater security (Byron 55). The post-students movement generation was detached and apolitical. Murakami's two characters in the Rat Trilogy, Boku and Rat show the shift that happened to the youth after the suppression of revolutions. Boku leads a comfortable life in the consumer society forgetting revolts, while Rat lives in reminiscence showing nonconformity and resistance to the system. Boku is rich by birth but is contemptuous towards the attitudes of wealthy people who are unaware of the important things in life and immersed in materialism. But he is extremely passive even though he perceives the real nature of the system and is disinterested in making any transformation to society. Rat, on the other hand, thinks of his role as a true citizen and becomes a part of the revolution. But he withdraws himself from society and protestations when he understands an individual's inability to bring changes to the system. The attitude of the youth resulting in desperation and detachment are visible in these characters and the writer captures this predicament.

The spiritual problems of a generation trapped in advanced capitalism are directly addressed by his fictional world. Kawamoto Saburo, the Japanese literary critic argues that Murakami is not just a writer of stylish city novels or cool youth novels. Rather, he is a writer who fights against the void. He says that the writer sees a giant void within his generation including himself. Murakami appreciates this view and says that his generation is different when compared to its predecessors. The older generation had experiences of war and could understand life. But those who belong to his time are getting richer and unable to identify the essence of life. He says,

... But we had to express ourselves somehow, in some form... I didn't know yet what it was, but I knew if I looked for it and went deeper, I'd be able to find something important to express ... It could be said it is a struggle with a

void; it looks like a void, but beyond that void there is something important (qtd. in Dil 45).

Nineteen-sixty was the era of civil rights movements and anti-war protests around the world. It was the time of student movements and Murakami in his college days was attracted to such revolutions. Even though he was not an active participant he made his presence by fighting against the system. The movement later changed its colour according to the demands of power. It transformed into a riot and one student who did not have any relation to such upheavals got killed and this incident finds a place in *Kafka*. The movements were a failure and only disappointment and depression remained. It affected the author badly who understood the spiritual and moral barrenness behind beautiful slogans and promises. The Japanese youth of the time was attracted towards Marxian ideologies as a result of the success of the Chinese cultural revolution and the French civil unrest movements of 1968. *Wood* holds the socio-political condition of 1969 and shows how the life of human beings gets affected by false promises of such outcries. Faith in revolutionary ideologies like Marxism proves to be worthless when they fall into wrong hands.

In 1991, Murakami and his wife left Japan and moved to Princeton University in America where he spent his life as a visiting researcher. While living in a foreign nation he became more Japanese and was disappointed at the change in Japanese society with its only concentration on economic progress. He was observing Japan from another perspective which enabled him to have a proper understanding of the nation leading to his novel, *Wind up Bird*. Murakami stated in one of his speeches that earlier he thought that his job was only to write and not to speak but later he identifies the need of speaking his mind. He says, "I have come to feel more strongly that I want

the people of America—the people of the world—to know what I, as one Japanese writer, am thinking” (qtd. in Li 40).

To say that the more he lived in America the more Japanese he became is a fact. The writer made extensive research into the historical records of the nation focusing on the events during World War II. He has beautifully rendered a historical tapestry in *Wind up Bird* that contains the depiction of the Battle of Nomonhan which took place in 1939. The lives of the characters are entangled in the sinuous lineaments of wartime violence, bloodshed, and trauma. While he was working on the novel in 1994, Murakami made a trip to China and Nomonhan between Mongolia and China. He claims that while visiting there he had a “revelation” that changed his life: “I felt as though I had experienced the battle myself... I wondered what I would have done if I had been a Japanese living in 1939” (qtd. in Li 57). This sense of empathetic attachment is the greatest gift of Murakami as a writer.

Murakami has shared his concerns about the seen and unseen walls in postmodern societies. He believes that there are walls not only between countries, but the poor and the rich, the lower class and the higher class, the capitalists and their victims, between individuals, and a human being and his self. He doesn't mean the existence of a physical barrier but the inner walls which everyone builds and sustains within them. While receiving the Danish Award in 2016, he expresses his concern over the anti-refugee sentiment in Europe, “No matter how high a wall we build to keep intruders out, no matter how strictly we exclude outsiders, no matter how much we rewrite history to suit us, we just end up damaging and hurting ourselves” (Accepting Danish Award, *The Japan Times*). He emphasises that walls of hostility and simulated records of history can only harm a nation.

The Storytelling World of Murakami

Murakami's storytelling world is both familiar and absurd, ridiculous and marvellous, real and unreal, and conscious and unconscious. He is obsessed with the idea of the existence of double worlds within individuals. His writings are conversations between his conscious and inner conscious mind which find expression in various ways. The writer travels into the core of his consciousness and presents it in words, images, and symbols of the conscious world. Both the worlds; the unreal and the real exist within the conscious and unconscious levels of his protagonists. He journeys through their inner landscapes and makes them courageous to meet the challenges of the simulated world. His interest in the mysterious working of the unknown area of human minds leads him to meet Kawai, the Japanese psychoanalyst. The book *Haruki Murakami Goes to See Hayao Kawai* (1996), is about the two long conversations that the writer held with the Japanese Jungian psychoanalyst, Hayao Kawai (Yama 91). The inner consciousness makes its appearance in his novels in the form of passing through the wall, descending to the bottom of the well, encountering empty spaces, or battling with dense forests. The transformation from the personal level to the collective is a common feature of his literary world. Beginning from the personal lives of protagonists, his novels traverse through the truth of history, the wartime memories, violence, empathy, and humanity within Japanese minds which are both personal and collective. The incongruity with time and switching between past and present provide a strong edifice to his works. By carefully selecting raw materials, he adds imagination, surrealism, and mystic elements to have an accurate representation.

Murakami believes in the "other" realm that lies along with the busy-working material world. For him, this "other" world is the real domain where many things are

happening without the knowledge of the conscious region. This thought makes him structure most of his novels balancing between dual spheres— the known and the unknown. The unknown world is situated within the people in a muted state. Sometimes, it comes out and makes its appearance in the form of urban terrorism like the sarin gas attack. But it is not only the domain of blood, violence, and hatred but of humanity, empathy, understanding, and boundless love. Matthew Strecher uses the term magic realism to explain the mysteries of Murakamian writing. Through this mode of representation, he “...shows his readers two ‘worlds’-one conscious, the other unconscious- and permits seamless crossover between them by characters who have become only memories, and by memories that re-emerge from the mind to become new characters again” (qtd. in Soonng 72).

Murakami has a strong belief in the power of imagination. According to him, a nation without imagination is an empty land. One of his characters named Oshima, in *Kafka*, says that in imagination begins responsibility. A generation without imagination doesn't hold any responsibility and it is the curse of a nation. Violence, loss of values, consumerism, and oblivion to commitment lead societies to nothingness. He expresses the hope of reviving the lost values by making individuals strong from within. His literary world not only captures the disillusionment, desperation, and disconnection of Japanese society but also encounters the reasons for such situations, their origin, routes, and after-effects. The disturbing fact that, beyond the economic growth, postwar Japan is a utopian paradise is highlighted by the author.

The so-called rational world is filled with hyperreality, false images, and figures while the “other” world is with dreams, truth, and realities. The characters are perplexed in the first world where they feel alone and lack a sense of belongingness. They travel to the parallel zone with the help of their mentors and find answers to

their dilemmas. The second world is their inner consciousness which is closed for those who do not recognise the loss of reality. The opening of their inner realm leads them to have a profound understanding of the meaning of life and makes them able to live in the simulated world as individuals with identities. In their journey to their inner consciousness, the characters encounter various challenges— they travel through history and time, recognise the importance of memories, and learn about the mystery of life and the art of living. To attain such an elevated state, they cultivate a mindset that can think beyond postmodern simulacra. They proceed from the first world to the second with the help of dreams, fantasies, and hallucinations. The conflict between these internal and external worlds matures the protagonists thereby reaching their destination.

Murakami's novels question the nature of "reality" human beings are in. He always doubts its presence lurking around human lives enabling him to go after hidden realities and truths. Human beings live in different types of simulation like simulation produced by media, capitalist powers, consumer culture, revolution, politics, sex, mental health centres, law and order, information technology, and by each simple things like a sofa, car, food, television, and so on. All objects carry some hidden image or idea inside them. Their real nature is concealed and people are encouraged to act according to the demands of objects and their generators. The role of objects and subjects gets shifted in postmodern societies. Things and images undertake superior roles by stupifying and perplexing the consumers. This affects the identity of individuals leading them to misconceptions and to live a fictitious life. The world becomes absurd and individuals fall into a deep existential crisis. Murakami presents characters who suffer from the loss of their selves and seek ways for spiritual liberation. They identify the malicious power of objects and revolt against their

pernicious nature. There is no presumption as to where the story will move and where it will end. His novels are not a series of logically connected incidents but diversions and digressions from the “real” to the fantastic and vice versa. As the author himself has stated, his attempt is not to give any permanent solution to present-day dilemmas but to present human life as it is. But he shares some way-outs that can help the depressed and alienated minds to have a positive attitude to deal with the challenges of life.

The protagonists who depart from the system return to it at the end with the knowledge and power to fight back. They finally become a part of the system not as objects without voice, but by establishing and maintaining their individuality which differentiates them from others. By offering a contrast to the Japanese youth who are affluent and expect more from society forgetting their duties, the protagonists in the selected novels fight against simulation and succeed. Public opinion polls in the country indicate that the youth of Japan ranks highest in the advanced world in dissatisfaction with the way their society functions (Hedgepeth 34). Most of the Japanese youth belong to wealthy families. They have not experienced war or the past difficult conditions of their nation and are born into the industrialist hyper-capitalistic Japan. This thought is articulated in *Wood* when the unconcerned and selfish behaviour of the young generation is described by a minor mother character in the novel by pointing out her only son’s attitude towards his parents.

The changing nature of human relationships and disappearing warmth in families are treated seriously along with the growth of materialism and spiritual emptiness. The love relationship between man and woman, husband and wife, parents and children, and the warmth of friendship find genuine expression in his fiction. Even though his protagonists are scarcely connected to their parents and relatives, the

novels do not lack family sentiments. The relationship between Yuki and her parents in *Dance* can be taken as an example. The absence of empathy and commitment in the young generation, the endless amassment of wealth among the middle-aged group, and a sense of resentment and desperation among old people are verbalised in his fictional world.

The amalgamation of natural and supernatural is another towering feature in the selected novels. Several supernatural occurrences are brought forth with the help of magic realism. Many of his characters can separate their body and mind and can travel to wherever they want by knocking down all sorts of physical barriers. They are both dead and alive and possess powerful souls. Spirit projection, a well-known feature of ancient Japanese literature, is a frequent phenomenon in his novels. In *Klings*, the underground beings in *Wonderland*, the Sheep Man in *Dance*, the talking animals, Nakata's magical abilities, and the "spirit walk" of Miss Saeki in *Kafka*, the vanishing border between the conscious and unconscious worlds that can be seen in *Wind up Bird* and *Wood* impart a mystic touch to the Murakamian literary world. Irrational, imaginary, and magical worlds are clubbed with "real" worlds which makes reading Murakami a wonderful experience.

The protagonists work flat out to assimilate the mystical happenings and they connect these odd episodes with their growth process. Such abstract and magical elements help his people attain self-renewal. Murakami exhibits absolute skill in arriving at realities through paranormal situations. His protagonists, with philosophical notions and indifference to material culture, travel from outside consumer constraints to inner spiritual realms. They use their knowledge, memories, dreams, imagination, and hallucinations to dig out the truth of their existence. It can be said that almost all his novels are patterned similarly— beginning with a loss (of

self, wife, mother, a friend, or a lover), identifying the loss and emptiness created by it as the second step, yearning to fill the gap that leads to several undecided journeys and destinations, confronting the challenges courageously and ultimately reaching the truth of existence. Each protagonist goes through the process of anagnorisis and eventually gets to his destination. They travel to the core of their consciousness where they untangle the answers to the existential questions of life. Murakami highlights the fact that an individual can regain his lost identity, commitment, and connection by descending into the deep chasms of his mind. The characters are representatives of contemporary men and women, who fail to understand the purpose of living, struggle to get connected with society, and suffer alienation and despair. They are unhappy about the way of the world and always worry about their loss. Traditional heroic concepts with a well-formed physique, great valour, pleasing behaviour, and confidence may not suit his protagonists. Instead, they are newfangled heroes who rise according to the situations and act appropriately and this makes them real-life spokespersons.

Murakamian heroes are blessed with the support of men and women with special powers who help their journey to truth and liberation. The situations and circumstances of the protagonists and the nature of the people whom they meet differ from one novel to another. But they share some common characteristics; honesty, commitment to society, patience, unsuccessful personal life, a divorced wife without children, no regular job, alienation from society, loneliness, sexual affairs, courage to face challenges, empathy towards the suffering, and most significantly indifference to hyper-materialism. They keep their minds safe from the temptations of capitalism and are nearer to realities than others. Loss of mind leads to loss of identity and they

are eager to keep their minds strong. In the process of finding their true selves, they also help others to lead meaningful lives in the simulated world.

Minor characters presented in the novels provide a variety of purposes. They need not be fully-fledged and appear only once or twice but have specific tasks to perform. Almost all the supporting figures, both men and women are carefully developed and they provide an enormous contribution to the protagonist's self-search. They include mentors, villains, and victims who go hand in hand in developing the plot. The mentors have understood the mystery of life and are there to guide the protagonists. The villains identify themselves with the capitalist system and are involved in atrocious deeds for their success. The victims are those who suffer under high consumerism devoid of the strength to protest and too weak to claim their identity. The position of the heroes is in between the mentors and victims who believe in the ability of human beings to rise above adverse situations.

Some characters represent capitalism, autocracy, and selfishness like Noboru Wataya and Boris the man skinner in *Wind up Bird*, Johnnie Walker in *Kafka*, and the Professor in *Wonderland*. Some are mentally imprisoned like Kumiko, and Mamiya (*Wind up Bird*), Gotanda (*Dance*), Nakata (*Kafka*), Naoko, and Kizuki (*Wood*). Spiritual boomers are there like the Kano sisters, Nutmeg, Cinnamon, Mr. Honda (*Wind up Bird*), and the Sheep Man (*Dance*). There are fighters like Kafka (*Kafka*), Midori, Reiko, Toru Watanabe (*Wood*) Toru Okada (*Wind up Bird*), and other nameless protagonists (*Dance*, *Wonderland*). Some characters like Miss Saeki and Oshima have understood the meaning of life and play their roles beautifully. This wide range of people belonging to different mindsets and living through various challenges is incredibly interwoven by the mastermind. Some of them fight against the "image" that the system renders on them, some others go well in tune with the

system, many suffer under the burden of images till the end of their lives and some exploit the suffering souls. This new way of interacting with the present-day world gains unbelievable readership to Murakami all over the world.

Even though Haruki's protagonists are all men, his novels deal with various types of female characters. There are powerful women in his literary world without whom the plot will be sterile. In almost all cases, the protagonist's self-search begins when he is motivated by a woman. Women are not passive or side-lined characters, but the protagonist's life circles around them emphasizing their undeniable presence. Love is a common motif in all the selected novels and the women lovers are both strong and weak. They react to similar life situations differently as seen in Midori's and Naoko's attitudes to the challenges of society in *Wood*. Women with spiritual power heal the wounds of inner minds. Spiritual healers like the Kano sisters and the veterinarian's daughter Nutmeg accelerate the thematic structure of the novel, *Wind up Bird*. The female characters who are only associated with sexual acts are treated differently by Murakami by giving them individual characteristics. Sex is presented as a spiritual need apart from physical momentary pleasure. It purifies both the mind and body of the characters and provides them with fuel to continue their journey. For the writer, the physical body is as important as the inner mind and the union of both is essential to attain the desired destination.

Murakami stuns the readers with a detailed description of the sexual acts, a feature that is distinct from familiar Japanese texts. This has attracted several criticisms that even led to the degrading of his novel, *Killing Commendatore* in Hong Kong calling it indecent. He believes that it is necessary to give a special status to sexual relationships in a world where sex is a business and women are commodities. His dignified treatment of women's bodies is highly applaudable. The female body is

not objectified and Murakami shares postmodern feminist and gender theorists' conceptions of women's bodies. This elevates the detailed picturisation of sexual acts from the material level to the spiritual level. The prostitutes speaking about Greek classics and expressing their wish to listen to philosophical debates receive a feeling of association from readers.

Murakami's peculiarity in writing lies in enabling the readers to reach conclusions by interrogating themselves. There are no ready-made answers but truthful depictions of life which are highly relevant in a hyperreal society. The selected novels are all open-ended and readers are free to provide any conclusion according to their reading experience. This phenomenological connection between the author and the reader works as the kernel of his fictional world. As Miss Saeki, in *Kafka*, says that she is not bothered about the didactic purpose of writing and a work of art doesn't need to provide reasonable conclusions. For her, the process of writing is important. This is the writer's own thought, who believes in the purgation of his soul during the act of writing. Murakami doesn't believe in the didactic purpose of literature and for him, writing is the tool for expressing the hidden domains of his inner realm. Understanding his literary world is a purgatory process for the readers. After reading him, one feels to close his eyes and ponder over his fictional world. Murakami believes in swallowing a situation that is accepting it instead of running away. He says that by the act of swallowing, "reality" can be defamiliarised which gives opportunities to understand the true nature of "reality" and to live according to it meaningfully (Nihei, 74). It is straightforward acceptance of the absurd and taking up responsibilities.

The author believes that the first step to realities is to understand and accept the "real" nature of situations. He chose the theme of "growing up" as a reflection of

the characteristics of the present century. The thought process of youth in an affluent society like Japan falls in line with his theme of loss. He understands the presence of nihilism in the young generation as a result of the loss of one's reality. The tremendous growth of capitalist ideas and powers, consumer culture, lack of knowledge of historical truth, spiritual emptiness, and ignorance of one's self hasten the loss. The tools he makes use of in the selected novels like memory, history, dreams, and metaphors help in his characters' journey to realities.

As a music lover, it is his habit to listen to music while writing, and the result is evident in various references to different genres of music in his works. It contributes to the spiritual growth of the characters. He had learned piano and his regular contact with jazz made him realise the connection between music and literature. Applying the lessons of music enhances his writing as he says in the essay, "Jazz Messenger", "Whether in music or in fiction, the most basic thing is rhythm...Next comes melody-which in literature, means the appropriate arrangement of the words to match the rhythm...next is harmony- the internal mental sounds that support the words" (qtd. in Rubin, *The New York Times*). All these create a flow of stories with free improvisation. Not only the writer but the readers also raise to a meaningful domain and experience a sense of elevation. He didn't go for anybody's advice on how to write a novel but wished to write like playing an instrument. According to him, unique music is the result of the same keys with talented innovative notes, likewise writing is a result of discovering new lands with the help of the same dictionary.

There is no work, whether it is a novel or short story without reference to music. Titles of some of his novels *Norwegian Wood*, *Dance Dance Dance*, and *South of the Border*, *West of the Sun* are derived from songs. Many musical compositions

are sold hot only because they have found their place in his novels. The “Sinfonietta” that appeared in *IQ84* is an example. Beate’s popular composition “Norwegian Wood” which celebrates love and separation suits well with the theme of the novel. The characters, Toru, Naoko, and Reiko frequently wish to listen and contemplate on it. The song Boku hears in *Dance* while he travels, Ray Charles's “Born to lose...and now I am losing you”, shows his mental pain at the loss of his lover, Kiki. The reference to the opera “The Magic Flute- Papagena” in *Wind up Bird* in which a captive princess is being saved from a castle, connects the protagonist’s situation to his mission of saving Kumiko from Noboru Wataya. Some compositions like J.S. Bach’s “Musical Offering” calm down Toru Okada’s mind to reach an appropriate decision in the novel. Music is used as a tool to evoke the hidden realms of the inner consciousness of his characters. In *Wonderland*, the accordion, that Boku happens to see at the End of the World and its music pave way for the rekindling of his memories.

For an author who gives importance to music and stories narrated by different characters, ears are a crucial medium. Murakami’s passion for beautiful ears finds expression in his novels like *Dance* with Kiki, the mysterious ear model with exquisite ears that Boku admires. The ears have spiritual significance in Japanese mythology and Buddhist notions. The large and elongated earlobes in the statues of Buddha which once hold heavy jewellery when he was a prince indicate the rejection of materialism for spiritual upliftment. In Japanese religious myths, there are gods with big ears like *Schichifukujin* (seven gods of good luck), and also ears have great relevance in listening to the god’s voice. The admiration for beautiful and good-shaped ears in the selected novels can replace god’s voice with one’s inner voice.

Listening to others' stories thereby achieving a connection with them is a significant feature of the selected novels and this explains the relevance of ears further.

Despite having a linear and straightforward narration, Murakami presents different storytelling worlds inside his novels. *Wind up Bird* advances through the stories of Lt. Mamiya, Creta Kano, and Kumiko. When other characters become storytellers, the protagonists are transformed into active listeners making others' experiences their own. For Murakami, listening to others, mind-traveling to their experiences, and writing about them with great enthusiasm constitute a sort of self-therapy. In his conversation with the psychologist Hayao Kawai, he says, "Listening to a lot of other people's stories is very healing for me" to which Kawai replies, "...that's what we do. We heal and are ourselves healed" (qtd. in Rubin, *The Music of Words* 6). Murakami's writings are attempts to transform this healing process into the reading world.

Critical Analyses of Selected Novels

Hard Boiled Wonderland and The End of the World (1985)

The combination of the realistic and fantastic mode of narration is the basic characteristic of *Wonderland*. This futuristic novel portrays the condition of the characters caught in Infowars in a scientifically advanced society and the subsequent loss of self and individuality. It is translated into English by Alfred Birnbaum in 1991. As the title of the novel suggests, it runs through parallel narratives in alternate chapters; the odd-numbered chapters picture the Hard Boiled Wonderland and the even-numbered contains the End of the World. Both contain the characteristic features of advanced capitalist societies; one is a technologically developed city, Tokyo and the other is an archaic "Town". The nameless protagonists of both these domains are

representatives of Japanese youth. The novel provides strong social criticism of ruthless mottos of capitalism and exposes the spiritual vacuum present in them. The *Hard Boiled Wonderland* deals with the greediness of autocratic powers who control the lives of human beings making them puppets without identities. Murakami questions the increasing filth of consumer culture where individuals have no value compared to scientific and technological achievements. On the other hand, the *End of the World* presents the utopian notion of social conformity where human beings are expected to shed their individuality and can “live happily” forever. The novel depicts two extreme sides— when the characters suffer under the autocratic hands of so-called developments on one side, they are choked by the idealism of perfection on the other side. Both are the predicaments of a postmodern being who transforms into a simulacrum without originality.

The protagonist of *Hard Boiled Wonderland* is a calcutec, a human data processor who is a divorcee and altered a portion of his brain to save the most valuable data for the “System Central”, the organisation for which he works. In return for a good salary, material comforts, and suitable working conditions, he gives up a part of his brain and joins Infowar. His unconscious mind is used for storing information and is protected by the password, “End of the World”. Boku himself doesn’t know about the stored data as unconscious realms are always unknown and mysterious to human beings. He becomes a target in the Infowar between the “System Central” and the “System Factory” or Semiotecs. Semiotecs is a data mafia whose job is to steal whatever data is created and protected by System Central. The *Hard Boiled Wonderland* is also shared by the underground filthy creatures called InKlings who create their world parallel to the outside society. They too take part in the Infowar and

join hands with the Semiotecs to steal data, the most precious thing. While the System has the support of the government, the Semiotecs works like a mafia, an illegal zone.

Even though the protagonist worked for the System for more than three years, he comes to know more about its hidden aims from the Professor. The old Professor, who introduces himself as a biologist studying “mammalian palate” is a retired faculty from System Central. He is the genius behind the invention of storing data safely in the human brain and the method of data laundering and shuffling. His ominous place of living contains shelves of the skulls of various animals and also of human beings of different races like Asian and Negroid. According to him, bones have their language and the information or memories stored in them can be taken out after killing the object and cleaning the skull. Surprisingly this appears to be the task of the Gatekeeper at the End of the World. The Professor and the Gatekeeper act as the propagators of selfish motives and exploitation.

The Professor owns a wonder world in the middle of Tokyo city, exactly under the sewage of the Tokyo tower which is hidden from the outer society. In the Hard Boiled Wonderland, not only the professor but many such mysterious but wealthy people are powerful enough to have such hidden dwellings with security guards. Boku has been tricked and hired by the Professor for handling data for his research on human brains. Later he understands that the Professor and the System are enemies and he is manipulated by the old man to work for his personal gains against his own agency. The shocking revelation that Boku receives is that without his knowledge he has become the specimen of the Professor’s study and is going to receive a brain death within one and a half days. He has been selected by the scientist due to the special power of his “emotional shell” which works more accurately than in any other selected calcutec specimen. The Professor’s laboratory is destroyed by the sudden

attack of InKlings putting Boku's life in jeopardy. Not only the protagonist's wish to have a comfortable life but his basic right to live is destroyed because of the greediness and meaningless strife for supremacy over data and information. As a result, he loses his life in the Hard Boiled Wonderland and enters the End of the World, the other domain. Even though the two worlds of the novel with its narrators can be read as separate novels, the readers can find the interconnection between the two towards the end. The second domain can be seen as a continuation of the first. Murakami questions the degradation of technocratic societies where human beings are mere phantoms without identities. This theme of identity dilemma is dealt with in another manner at the End of the World.

The Town is the centre of the End of the World which is kept protected by a huge wall thirty feet high. There is a big gate guarded by a masculine Gatekeeper which is the only entrance to and exit from the Town. The gate is opened twice a day, in the morning and in the evening for the "beasts" (the unicorns) to go out and return. The beasts obey the Gatekeeper and respond to his timely calls made by blowing a horn. There is a large clock tower and several buildings made of bricks which consist of the Workers' and, Bureaucratic quarters, and official residences but with no sign of human beings. The protagonist who reaches this new domain becomes embarrassed as he loses all sorts of knowledge of the previous happenings of his life. He is like a newborn baby who struggles to understand the brand-new realm to which he is overthrown. The condition of a human being who has forgotten his past is emphasised by Murakami who always believes that the present is guided by the past. Boku is made to stay at the official residence with the Colonel as his cohabitant. He feels some déjà vu connection to the Town, but can't figure out anything as he is deprived of his memory. Those who enter this domain, leave their connections with the Hard

Boiled land and live as newborns. Boku's efforts to regain his memory and thereby attain his self constitute the major theme of the End of the World.

The second realm works on a peculiar system where people are deprived of their identities and live thoughtless life. It is a postmodern utopia and Murakami questions the idealism and perfection preached by the authority represented by the sturdy Gatekeeper. The identities of those who master such a system are hidden intentionally in the novel as they represent capitalist powers as a whole. The protagonist at the End of the World is a Dreamreader, whose job is to read and liberate old dreams stored in the skulls of the unicorns. His workplace is the library with a lady library assistant to help him. The library looks like a grain warehouse and instead of books, it contains shelves of unicorn skulls waiting for Dreamreaders. The presentation of the characters in this domain is highly symbolic. The weakest section of the Town society, the beasts signify the unheard and voiceless victims of the capitalised system. The "idealistic" system chokes them and they are destined to live and die in bondage. Many beasts die in the winter season as they can't protect themselves from the severe cold conditions and nobody cares for them. After their death, the Gatekeeper cuts off their head, removes their horn, and cleans their skulls thoroughly. He fills their skulls with old dreams and they are carried to library shelves. These dreams are the memories, thoughts, emotions, feelings, and all the elements of the inner minds of the Townmates who lose their shadow and identity.

Boku understands that he is not the only Dreamreader but many others who reached the Town earlier, have been assigned the same job. Each Dreamreader is provided with different library assistants who explain the process of dream reading. The dreams stand for the minds of the inmates which are seized by the Town and stored in the skulls of the beasts. The whole activity provides the feeling of the

presence of some paranormal elements and the process is necessary for the sustainment of the Town. Once his job is finished, another Dreamreader and assistant take the place and the task continues.

The shadows of the inmates of the Town have great significance in the novel. Murakami considers an individual into two parts— the physical body and the inner mind represented by shadows. The shadows are depicted as beings with more wisdom and insight than their masters. This is the reason why the Town banishes all the shadows of the inmates from its territory. The Gatekeeper cut off Boku's shadow before giving him permission to the Town. All the inmates are living there without their shadows which are kept in a particular place called the "shadow ground". Later the shadows become weak without seeing their masters and die in adverse climatic conditions. The system of the Town offers all sorts of facilitated living without any worries only if the inmates are ready to abandon their shadows. It is the technique used by the system to eradicate the glimpses of self-knowledge and the need for self-realisation from its people.

The protagonist feels uneasy at the loss of his shadow and his agony gets increases when he sees it working for the Gatekeeper as a slave. It doesn't want to lose its body and says to its master to find out another exit from the Town which might be hidden. The Gatekeeper, the lady assistant, and the Colonel warn Boku against going deep into the details of the Town. Those who obey it can live there peacefully and those who think much will suffer. The Colonel and the lady assistant had lost their shadows years before and are used to living without them. They tell him that it is the end of the world and there is nothing beyond it. The feeling of the people that they are happy in their place and there is no heaven outside is created intentionally by the system. Manipulation of thoughts is an unavoidable crime of

making society submissive and the novel points out that this is much worse than the “thought crime” of Orwell’s *1984*. The characters were aware of their submissive status in Orwell’s novel, but here the inmates of the Town are ignorant of their pathetic state. They seem to practice the notorious slogan “Ignorance is strength”.

What makes Boku different from other inmates of the Town is that he is still with his feelings and emotions. Others have lost them and are living in a state of numbness, neither happy nor sad. The protagonist wants to escape from the Town along with his shadow. He finds out the exit in the dangerous Southern Pool with “cursed” water where the river escapes. But gradually he develops some connection with the domain and begins to like the company of the inmates. Even though he feels responsible for his Shadow and wants to save him, he finds some attachment to the End of the World. The presence of the library girl and each and everything in the domain seems to be a part of him even though he is unable to figure out the proper connection. This leads him to find out the mystery behind the existence of this second domain.

The musical instrument that he finds in the dusty storeroom of the Town helps Boku to regain memories. He understands that the End of the World is within him and he is the creator and his Shadow knew this already. Boku decides not to leave the world as he feels a responsibility for his creation. He lets his Shadow escape through the pool to the former world and he decides to remain in the Town in the company of the lady assistant. After his brain death, Boku in *Hard Boiled Wonderland* reaches the End of the World and it is his inner consciousness. Everything in the inner realm is created by himself and he needs to solve the puzzle. The novel ends with Boku’s decision to correct the wrongdoings. He believes that the reason behind the degradation of the inmates in the Town as human phantoms is the result of his selfish

actions in the Hard Boiled Wonderland. It is to consider that the protagonist is not trapped in that domain but achieves self-awareness. He is left with the possibility to transform the Town which is a representation of his unconscious mind by making use of his abilities.

Norwegian Wood (1987)

Norwegian Wood is a psychological romance with political and socio-cultural undertones. Murakami's readership reached millions with its publication in 1987. It is translated into English by Jay Rubin in the year 2000. This novel is considered the most direct and realistic one in the author's career. With its themes of love and identity problems, the novel takes its journey through the memory of the protagonist Toru Watanabe. It has a simple and continuous structure without digressions except for its frequent shifts to memories. Written in the form of a first-person narrative the novel has mainly three male and four female characters. All of them are delineated through the eyes of the protagonist whose life is closely linked to them. The conflict between individual and society, a recurring theme of the Murakamian literary world finds expression in *Wood* also. The characters struggle between individual identity and collective identity. The search for love is related to the identity crisis of the characters created by the prevalent socio-cultural scenario. At the same time, the novel exposes the hypocrisy of a well-advanced capitalist society and how it affects the lives of people in different ways. It throws light on the 1960 students' movements in Japan, their failure, and the effect on youth.

Like Murakami's other heroes, Toru Watanabe, a drama student at Tokyo University, finds himself indifferent to the outside society and lives in detachment. His thoughts and ideas are more serious and truthful compared to an ordinary 19-year-

old boy. The memory of a tragic friendship haunts him always. Watanabe, Naoko, and Kizuki shared a rare and intense friendship during their school time. Kizuki's unexpected suicide shattered their friendship. Naoko and Kizuki had a special love relationship from their early childhood itself which may seem abnormal to society. They were always together and shared everything including their sexual feelings. They didn't know how to live without one another. This relationship was both a blessing and a curse to Kizuki who was smart, able, and confident by nature, but found himself alienated outside this love relationship. His inability to meet the expectations of society and to be sociable outside the love circle led him to suicide creating a massive shock to both Watanabe and Naoko. Watanabe was the last person who talked to him in the swimming pool before he took his life in the garage of his house. The mental shock, doubtful staring of others, Naoko's grief, and police interrogation worsened the protagonist's life.

Naoko too had a problem of social alienation like her lover. After Kizuki's death, Watanabe knew her predicament well and developed love and empathy toward her. They enjoyed each other's company even though the wound created by Kizuki's death remained unhealed. Watanabe felt a sort of responsibility towards Naoko and wanted to share his life with her. But Naoko was in a mental dilemma and her mind was her enemy. Kizuki's death added to Naoko's mental alienation which she had experienced at the suicide of her elder sister whom she loved very much. For her, love becomes a painful experience and she bears it until her death. She didn't know how to find a place in society and Watanabe was her only connection with the outside world. Even though she liked him she was unable to replace him with Kizuki. Watanabe was worried as well because he lost his best friend and was away from Naoko's love whose problems were too deep for him to get resolved. Murakami addresses the

spiritual wounds caused by different situations in the lives of the characters. All the characters like Toru Watanabe, Naoko, Kizuki, and Reiko are carriers of spiritual wounds. Naoko's agony leads her to Amy Hostel, a mental sanatorium in the rural area, and she tries her best to come back to life. Reiko, a mature woman in the asylum gives her mental strength and a positive attitude. But nothing proves beneficial and she chooses Kizuki by hanging herself in the wood.

Besides the poetic depiction of love, the novel offers serious socio-political criticisms. The effect of capitalist ideologies on the lives of common people is a major concern of the novel. When Naoko becomes a victim of social alienation, the character of Midori, Watanabe's college mate, fights against the social taboos and establishes her place. She criticises society for its pretentious and hypocritical nature. Her complex family conditions, make her strong enough to face the obstacles of life. She can recognise the true nature of things and Murakami uses her as a tool to criticise the simulated nature of students' politics. The writer also teases many orthodox institutions like marriage, death ceremonies, family sentiments, and gender issues through Midori. She is bold enough to admit her love to Watanabe and wants him as her life partner. Reiko, the survivor of social alienation helps Watanabe in his difficult condition of choosing between Naoko and Midori. She serves as a spiritual guide to both Naoko and Watanabe. The novel ends with the protagonist's decision to live with Midori who can help him to find belongingness with society.

Other characters in the novel also contribute to the development of themes. Murakami presents a representative of the cunning capitalist society in the character of Nagasawa, Watanabe's dorm-mate who only thinks about going forward through unscrupulous ways. He is a man of paradoxical qualities- honest, and open-minded, but at the same time heartless and malicious. With his leadership qualities, he can

dominate and attract people, and create respect among them, thereby guiding and inspiring them. He has clear aims for his future and selects law as his subject for making his journey easy toward the attainment of political power. When Watanabe becomes a silent witness to the pretentious nature of society, Nagasawa studies its nature carefully and sharpens his abilities to reach heights. Interestingly they become friends as he was attracted to Watanabe's personality. His merciless attitude towards Hatsumi, his only "steady" girlfriend wipes out Toru's friendship with him. Hatsumi is cruelly abandoned by him in search of his higher aims and she dies of a broken heart. Detachment from society can be read in two ways through the characters of Watanabe and Nagasawa. Both of them admit that society is unfair. Watanabe keeps himself away from insincere beings and always nourishes genuine relationships. He is detached but socially responsible as is clear from his empathetic behaviour toward Midori's father. In the case of Nagasawa, he uses his knowledge about society to deceive people and becomes victorious at the cost of others without social responsibility. The novel clearly shows that true love, empathy, positive detachment, social commitment, and knowledge about one's self are necessary to live as a real human being.

Dance Dance Dance (1988)

Dance is an anti-capitalist novel with serious criticisms of political corruption and wasteful consumerism. It is a sequel to Murakami's 1982 novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase*. It can be read as an independent novel even though some characters like the Sheep Man and the mysterious girl Kiki reappear from the earlier work. The novel is translated into English by Alfred Birnbaum in 1994. It befalls forty-four chapters with eight major characters; the nameless protagonist, his lost love Kiki, his friend Gotanda, Yumiyoshi the receptionist at the new Dolphin Hotel, Yuki the twelve-year-

old girl, her parents, and the one-armed artist Dick. It runs as a single storyline narrated through literary devices, memories, illusions, dreams, and magical realism. The novel finds its way in the nameless protagonist (Boku), a divorcee, who is dejected from his routine day-to-day activities. He has sufficient reasons for his self-imprisonment in his apartment avoiding all types of contacts and even newspapers and television. He was not completely relieved from the gap created by the death of his friend, Rat, the loss of his girlfriend Kiki, and the desertation of his wife. By putting an end to the self-imposed isolation he tries to be in tune with society by living “systematically” as a writer for a magazine. But he fails in the attempt as he always carries the feeling of loss within him and recognises the meaningless nature of his work. The incessant dreams of the old Dolphin Hotel with the cry of Kiki for help provide sleepless nights to Boku and he decides to travel back to his past. The old Dolphin Hotel in Sapporo is the destination where he had stayed with Kiki and from there she had disappeared some years back. He begins to stay there with the hope of meeting her somewhere near that area.

The novel presents a double-world mechanism. Parallel to the outside world, there is another world that is hidden inside the new Dolphin Hotel. From the outside, the hotel looks like a luxurious one with all neo-modern facilities like a gymnasium, play area, club, pool, well-mannered and highly disciplined staff. But at the inner level, there are the remains of the earlier hotel under the same name which was grabbed by a land mafia from its poor owner. Yumiyoshi, the lady receptionist undergoes some paranormal experiences on some particular floors in the Hotel. She identifies the presence of somebody with “heavy footsteps” hiding in one of the rooms. The hotel is the dwelling place of the old Sheep Man who acts as the spiritual mentor of Boku and waits for his arrival. He tells Boku that Kiki has disappeared

from there and the only way to find her is to keep on “dancing” to the rhythm of his inner mind.

The novel is a genuine critique of the powers of advanced capitalism in the lives of common people. It goes through the ways by which capitalism works and its unavoidable influence on ordinary human beings. Murakami emphasizes the fact that the surrounding world is one where people are unable to make choices and are expected to live up to the demands of some power structure. Boku’s schoolmate, the popular film star, Gotanda is a real victim of advanced capitalism. He contacts Gotanda when he learns that Kiki has acted in a single scene in one of his films. Gotanda is a tragic figure, who calls himself an “image”. He says to Boku that he has lost his self by living in the image of a celebrity.

Gotanda’s marriage with his co-actress became disastrous and ended in divorce. He was left penniless by his wife’s family, who had been handling his financial matters. To pay the liabilities, he began to work for a production company as a hired actor who is expected to act at their demands. He wishes to lead the life of a common man, but he is tied by his image and other factors social status, and prestige. He holds two types of characters within him— one is a skilled actor and the other is a person with a hidden urge for destruction. In his school days, he was very popular as a multi-talented boy among his friends and teachers. His violent behaviour was hidden within him. He had hurt some of his schoolmates without any reason and was involved in other destructive activities. Gotanda himself is unaware of the reason behind these cruel deeds. Something from his inner mind compels him to do it giving him a feeling of “reality”. Later it is revealed that this inner impulse makes him murder Kiki in a hallucinatory state of mind. He falls in great agony when Boku reveals the cruel deed of his inner mind. Gotanda himself was not sure whether his

murder of Kiki was a dream or reality. He had hidden this incident from Boku as he was afraid of losing his friendship. In intense dilemma and remorse, he ends his life by driving his car into the sea.

The novel further highlights the status of family relationships in a busy world. The twelve-year-old girl, Yuki whom Boku meets at the Hotel, unexpectedly becomes his responsibility as her photographer mother leaves her alone and goes to Kathmandu because she got suddenly inspired by the mountainous beauty of the place. She values her passion for photography more than anything else in the world and it makes her leave her daughter in an isolated state at the hotel. Yuki is an emotionally insecure child and a victim of the unhappy relationship between her mother and her writer father, Hiraku Makimura. She doesn't know how to behave in society and has neither social contacts nor friends. Boku is introduced to her by Yumiyoshi who asked him the favour of taking her along with him to Tokyo. Later Yuki and Boku become friends and she begins to consider him as her mentor. Yuki's parents like Boku's straightforward nature and request him to be her guide and teacher for some days. Yuki has a special ability to foresee things and she has tried it in school where she became a butt of ridicule. It was the reason to end her school life. She has a third eye that opens up at particular moments and reveals the truth. This ability helps Boku to identify Gotanda, the killer of Kiki.

The death of both Kiki and Gotanda adds salt to the protagonist's wounds. Still, he feels relieved at the revelation of the truth. He says that he has come to a full circle by dancing to the tune and preparing himself to start a new life with Yumiyoshi. Spiritual emptiness and the power of memories in curing inner wounds, the favourite themes of Murakami, can be seen in the novel. The writer shows commendable ability in linking the supernatural with the natural in the so-called "real" world. By the title

Dance, the novel means that one has to get connected with one's "self" and with society to live meaningfully. The message of social commitment is stressed by the Sheep Man. Complete detachment from society is no longer beneficial as Boku had tried earlier. The possible way is to get detached from the simulated ways of society and find out the hidden realities. The novel ends with the positive note of embracing one's reality by encountering the forces of simulation.

The Wind up Bird Chronicle (1994)

Wind up Bird has a special place in Murakami's list of novels as it explicitly deals with Japanese war history. Even though almost all his works contain references to the first and second World Wars, this novel can be read as a historiographic metafiction. The book was first published in three volumes in the Japanese language in 1994 and 1995. It was translated into English by Jay Rubin and published in 1998. It is divided into three parts; the first part, "Book One: The Thieving Magpie June and July 1984" runs through thirteen chapters with different titles; "Book Two: Bird as Prophet July to October 1984" includes sixteen chapters, and the third part "Book Three: The Bird Catcher October 1984 to December 1985" carries thirty-nine chapters. In the simplest sense, the novel deals with the happenings of a period of one and a half years in the life of the protagonist, Toru Okada. The narrative tone of the novel shifts from the first person to the third person frequently and the structure jumps from present to past and vice versa. There are twelve prominent characters in the novel; five female and seven male. Each character is delineated through the eyes of Toru Okada followed by their personal stories. It is important to notice that even amid several diversions, the author is able to connect every incident to the crux of the main theme without disturbing the unity of the plot.

Toru Okada is a jobless person, freshly resigned from his position as a lawyer's assistant as "...it wasn't thrilling" (Rubin 9). He decides to live on his wife's salary temporarily, who works as an editor for a health magazine. He is comfortable with household activities and finds time to think of other jobs. May Kasahara, the neighbourhood teenage girl finds Okada's behaviour and attitude quite interesting and calls him "Mr. Wind up Bird". May is different from an ordinary teenage girl who quits her studies because of her inability to get along with the educational system and the institutional environment. Later, she engages herself in conducting surveys of the bald people of the town for a wig-making company and moves to a remote village to work in their factory.

With the disappearance of his wife, Kumiko, the protagonist's life takes another direction that he never expects. His search for her and the reason for abandonment leads to his self-realisation. Like other Murakamian protagonists, Okada is also haunted by the presence of another world running parallel to the existing one. His dreams, the strange people he meets, and uncanny experiences puzzle him with many questions. May guides Okada to the abandoned well near their neighbourhood, which later acts as the connector between his two worlds. In search of Kumiko, he lands on several paranormal situations which guide him to the true nature of things. He strives to discover the reason for her disappearance directing him to the mysterious world of Noboru Wataya, Kumiko's elder brother. Okada gives a detailed picture of the wile nature of the Wataya family behind their prestigious image.

Kumiko, at the age of three, had been sent to her paternal grandmother as part of the agreement made between her mother and grandmother. She spent her childhood till she reached primary school along with her grandmother who was in the habit of exhaling poisonous words about her mother. When she was brought back to her

parents' care, she felt detached from them. Only her elder sister was able to understand her loneliness and isolation. Her sister was a bright child, more mature than her age, pretty, thoughtful, and with an adorable character. The parents were proud of the abilities of their elder daughter. But she died at the age of eleven leaving Kumiko in an intense shock. Her death was caused by Wataya who defiled her body and mind leading to her mental breakdown and subsequent suicide. She was always afraid of her sister's warning of being cautious of Wataya Wataya.

Kumiko's marriage with Okada, disliked by Wataya was an escape from her family. She knew well about his powers and was careful of preventing them from affecting her family. Despite all her attempts, she was caught by his evil intentions which ended in making her a prostitute and finally leaving her husband. As Wataya expected, Kumiko was unable to continue her relationship with Okada and was fallen into the guilty feeling of cheating on her husband. She left him with the hope of a pleasant life for him away from the influence of her family. The genuine love between the couple is the base for Okada's journey to his reality.

Murakami shows his remarkable ability in making the supernatural, natural through dreams, intuitions, and illusions. The employment of spiritual healers to aid the protagonist adds more significance to the theme of handling spiritual emptiness. Okada's journey progresses through the Kano sisters, Lieutenant Mamiya, Nutmeg, and Cinnamon. Malta Kano who studies the elements of the body and the power of water introduces her sister Creta Kano to him. Creta who has gone through various physical pain and emotional struggles impersonates Kumiko in Okada's dreams. She had been raped and defiled by Wataya. He thought that it would lead her to death as happened with his sister. But Creta was different and she could bear the desecration as she was accustomed to all types of suffering. Later she was appointed as a spiritual

medium by Malta and assigned the job of allowing people's minds to pass through her and this helps Okada's journey.

Dreams play a significant role in revealing truths to the protagonist. Each dream leaves him with some clues to unlock the mysteries. In his dreams, inside the well, he goes to room number 208 to meet the mysterious lady. He perceives that the lady sitting in the darkness of the room is either Kumiko or Creta. There he recognises the presence of the villain and understands that the lady in the hotel room is afraid of some evil power. He fights against the villain in the "other" domain to save Kumiko and receives a large blue and black mark on his right cheek while passing through the hot wall between the two worlds. This blue and black mark later helps Nutmeg to find out a suitable person to assist in her job as a spiritual healer. At the end of the novel, he manages to beat the faceless enemy in the unconscious realm, providing a way for the spiritual liberation of his wife.

In his journey to the recovery of his wife, Okada delves deep into the hidden parts of Japanese history. He is introduced to the Battle of Nomonhan in 1939 and the experience of its survivors through Lieutenant Mamiya whose narrative works as a subplot to the novel. It doesn't hinder the flow of the main plot, instead intensifies the theme by paving way for Okada's transformation. Murakami fictionalises history without the aid of any magical elements. He presents the relationship between Japan, China, and Russia during wartime, their animosity, and its result on soldiers and common people. Mamiya's experience in the dried-up well in the desert of Mongolia, to which he was thrown by the Russian enemies, stimulates Okada's inner consciousness. Mamiya's account of the brutal act of skinning the Japanese officer, Yamamoto, the hours he spent at the bottom of the well, his escape, and his failure in his encounter with the cruel Russian officer, Boris plays a significant role in the

protagonist's life. It highlights the role of collective experience and memory in human life. Mamiya's inability to win over the evil makes Okada more cautious while fighting against Wataya in the other world. The attack that happened in the inner realm of Okada affects his conscious domain of Wataya leading to his sudden collapse at a public function and his coma stage in the hospital bed.

Wataya grabs the souls of human beings, destructs their lives, makes them act according to his wishes, and finally leads them to death. Kumiko and Creta Kano reached the brim of suicide but got saved with help of their loved ones. He had some secret real estate business with the mysterious "Hanging House" situated in Okada's neighbourhood. The house got its name after the several deaths of its owners caused by hanging themselves. The protagonist had an attraction to this vacant house because of the presence of the empty well which let him find solutions to his inner dilemmas by leading him to the "other" world. He became its de facto owner with the help of Nutmeg. Wataya tries, by all means, to recover the land from him but doesn't succeed.

Other notable characters who add intensity to the plot of the novel are Nutmeg Akasaka and her son Cinnamon. The spiritual mother and her son who appears in Book III of the novel open doors of new riddles to Okada. By profession, Nutmeg is a fashion designer who runs her business successfully with the support of her son. But her real job is "fitting" the lonely suffering women's minds. She has the spiritual power of going through the minds of others by putting her hand on their forehead which reminds the dream reading in *Wonderland*. According to her, Okada's blue and black mark on his cheek which is a visible sign of inner transformation shows his ability to cure human minds by driving away anxieties and fears. She seeks his help in her spiritual healing as she recognises the decline of her ability. Nutmeg is a person

with childhood memories of World War II. She lost her father, the poor veterinarian during wartime and her life changed unexpectedly. Nutmeg's narration of the Hsin Ching days inspired Cinnamon, who had stopped talking at the age of six, to write stories about his grandfather, the zoo where he worked, the soldiers, and the war. He wrote sixteen stories and saved them under the title "The Wind up Bird Chronicle" on his computer which acts as his creative world.

Later, Okada gets an opportunity to go through one of the stories, titled "The Wind up Bird Chronicle No. 8" which described the brutality of war. Cinnamon is an example of showing how an ordinary man's life is transformed by past incidents. History is an indispensable element in the lives of human beings. Later Okada gets access to "The Wind up Bird Chronicle No.17" stored in the computer which contains Kumiko's letter. Cinnamon already knows about the protagonist's problems and helps him silently in his way. He becomes Toru's lifesaver when he was about to die in the well's resurrected water. The novel ends with Kumiko killing Noboru Wataya in his coma stage in the hospital thus saving her soul and society. She is imprisoned and Okada waits for her release hoping for a life together someday. The images and symbols like the Wind up Bird, the blue and black mark, the hotel room, and the well do their role in connecting past and present. The Wind up Bird is both real and unreal as it is invisible and only recognised by its shrieking. This image suits Okada's journey from the unreal world to the real and vice versa. The word "chronicle" in the title is significant as the novel contains an account of historical events saved in man's memory which are more reliable than the ones written under the supervision of ruling powers.

Kafka on the Shore (2002)

Haruki Murakami's psychological thriller, *Kafka*, was translated into English by Philip Gabriel and published in 2005. The novel runs through two storylines that may seem unrelated at the outset but later joins harmoniously to bring forth the purpose of the novel. There are two protagonists; one is the fifteen years old Kafka Tamura and the other is the sixty years old Satoru Nakata. The novel deals with the lives of these protagonists in alternate chapters. Identity search, the presence of a parallel world, the questions of truth and reality, the challenges of living in a hyperreal society, love, death, war, and violence are the main themes of the novel. The story is delineated through forty-nine chapters apart from two unnumbered ones. The narrative voice is the first person in Kafka's story, but it shifts into the third person in Nakata's. The protagonist names himself "Kafka" whose original name is not given in the novel. This can be considered as a reminder of the characteristic features of Franz Kafka's men who are alienated, anxious, and involved in absurd life situations. Kafka in the novel is also a lonely boy away from his friends or any other serious relationships except with his own self whom he calls "the boy named Crow". He talks to Crow, asks for opinions, and receives advice and criticisms. The Crow calls him, "the world's toughest 15-year-old boy" (Gabriel 4). The toughest situation is Oedipus destiny. He is cursed by his father that he would kill him and sleep with his mother and sister.

Kafka is tired of living with his sculptor father, Koichi Tamura, to whom he was only another work of art. His mother had left him along with his adopted sister when he was four years old. He neither knows their names nor the reason for leaving him in the custody of his inhuman father. Kafka flees from his house in search of answers to the question of his alienation and abandonment. He is doubtful of himself and believes that there is something inside him that he doesn't like and wishes to

escape. He wants to transform himself by cleansing all the impurities and wishes that the journey will be helpful. Kafka's arrival at the Komura Memorial Library, far away from his hometown, about which he came to know from a magazine, becomes a turning point. Oshima, the caretaker of the library becomes his mentor and helps to solve his riddles. Even though he is in his twenties, he speaks like a mature forty-year-old man. He doesn't have any academic education and his wisdom is the result of his reading habit and observation of the world. Oshima himself is being trapped in the wrong body which is physically female but he is never worried about his condition.

Kafka receives the job of a secretary with Oshima's recommendation to Miss Saeki, the owner of the library. The honest and open-minded nature of Oshima made the protagonist reveal his problems. He says to Oshima about the Oedipus prophecy and that his father might have wanted to take revenge on his mother and sister who had left him forever. Koichi Tamura is both a creator and a destructor and Kafka's mother might have fallen for him for his creative side. She left him due to his evil side and he handed over those evil genes to his son. Kafka finds himself polluted due to the violent genes in him and he doubts it is the reason why his mother abandoned him. When Miss Saeki proves to be his mother, Sakura, the young woman with whom he gets acquainted on his journey to the Library takes the role of his sister. Dreams and reality are intermingled in the novel and Kafka dreams of having a sexual relationship with Sakura. Later both of them are seen to be involved in sexual activity which can be considered more as a psychological need than a physical thing. Kafka might be speculated as to her younger brother whom she had lost years back even though the novel doesn't give any evidence to consider it as true.

The other protagonist Nakata is a mentally disabled old man whose life is connected to the war history of Japan. He spent his childhood during World War II and is a survivor of the “Rice Bowl Hill Accident” which occurred in 1944. He was a bright child of good manners and discipline being brought up by educated parents. The unexpected violence from his favourite teacher for his innocent deed during a picnic at Rice Bowl Hill shocked him leading to his coma stage. Not only Nakata, but all the other children except the teacher also collapsed at the same time. This incident is linked to the war history of Japan. During the time of World War II, people always expected a chemical or biological attack from the enemies and the mass collapse of the children substantiates this. When all his friends got recovered from the unrecognised attack after some time, Nakata remained in a coma state. Besides the enemy attack, his condition was doubled up by the inhuman beating of the teacher.

When he woke up, his memories, skills, and abilities were lost. Physically he was alright, but his mind was empty. He became a child without memory who even forgot his name. He had to discontinue his education and became a burden to the family. His parents were disappointed at the fate of their son and he showed no sign of improvement even after several years of treatment. Little Nakata was sent to his grandparents in the village and there he attended the agricultural school for a short time. He couldn't continue his study due to the bullying of other students. But his stay with his grandparents in the company of nature and animals gifted him the special ability to communicate with cats. He began to talk more to cats than to human beings. Until the age of fifty, he worked for a furniture company. When he lost his job, his younger brother did all the official formalities to get a monthly allowance for mentally challenged people from the government and arranged one of his apartments

for Nakata in Tokyo. Finding the lost cats became his hobby which made him a cat finder and even earned some additional income.

Readers can find the connection between the two stories from the event in which Nakata kills Johnnie Walker, the cat catcher, who is involved in killing and grabbing the souls of cats. He provokes Nakata by killing three cats and eating their hearts in front of him. It is clear from the course of the events in the novel that both Johnnie Walker and Kafka's father, Koichi Tamura are the same. There are reasons for such an assumption that both live in the same place in Nakano ward and both get killed on the same night in the same manner. Kafka, by seeing blood on his body and dress and lying in an open ground away from the library concludes that he might have killed his father in his dream and feels responsible for the crime. The real murderer, Nakata is left without any sign of violence and this makes the police free him from any criminal charge. It shows that Nakata is Kafka's alter ego. Towards the end of the novel, Koichi Tamura appears as Johnnie Walker before Kafka's inner mind (Crow) leading to his murder by the sharp beak of the Crow, thereby fulfilling the Oedipus prophecy.

Both Kafka and Nakata are two parts of the same coin. They are interconnected even though Murakami doesn't provide an opportunity for them to meet each other. After killing Johnnie Walker, Nakata finds the changes that happen to his mind. He begins to hear an inner voice that assigns him some tasks, the meanings of which are unknown to him. He receives some kind of supernatural abilities like making leeches and fishes fall from the sky and predicting things. After the revelation of a serious mission that he has to accomplish before his life ends, Nakata starts his journey. With the help of Hoshino, a lorry driver, he continues his long journey until he reaches the Komura Memorial Library.

Miss Saeki is a fifty-year-old elegant lady who spends her life running the library and living in the memories of her dead lover. Kafka finds something mysterious about her. While talking to her, Kafka always gets the feeling that her soul is not present in her body. It is in some other place leaving her body in the present world. While she speaks to someone, she seems to be looking somewhere beyond them, maybe into their souls. Miss Saeki's teenage days recall the blissful life of Naoko and Kizuki of *Wood*. Her lover, whose name never gets mentioned in the novel, was a member of the rich Komura family in Takamatsu, and Miss Saeki also belonged to one of the affluent families in the neighbourhood. She had great talent in music and writing poems. The song which she wrote and composed became popular all over Japan and it was titled "Kafka on the Shore". Her happiness suddenly came to an end with the tragic death of her soul mate in a violent strike at the college during the students' riots in 1960. This unfortunate incident shattered her mind and made her flee Takamatsu without leaving a note for her family. She returned after twenty-five years and these years of her life remained unknown to all. This period covers her relationship with Koichi Tamura and the birth of Kafka. After her return, she founded The Komura Memorial Library in memory of her lost lover and with the support of the Komura family.

The relevance of the title, "Kafka on the Shore" increases when Kafka notices an oil painting hanging on the wall in a room in the library where he manages to stay. The name of the painting is "Kafka on the Shore" and it pictures a young boy sitting on a deck chair wearing a sun hat near the shore. He is looking into the sea, but it is difficult to understand his feelings as his face shows both happiness and sadness. The room belonged to Miss Saeki's dead lover and she visits it every night in the figure of the fifteen-year-old girl Saeki. She is an old woman in the conscious world but a

teenager in her other realm. She appears as a “living spirit” and sits on the chair for hours meditating on the painting. Kafka gradually falls in love with her teenage image and their sexual acts fill his mind with more dilemmas. He is surprised to know that the old Saeki doesn't remember a thing of the previous night of love-making. Her body is of old Saeki's but her mind belongs to young Saeki. The ability to separate body and mind and to act according to one's inner realm is a significant feature of Japanese traditional literature. Murakami employs this aspect for an accurate presentation of the inner dilemmas of the characters.

Kafka, by some circumstantial evidence, concludes that Miss Saeki is his mother. She has told him about the research she conducted years ago on the survivors of lightning strikes. Kafka knew that in the same incident, Koichi Tamura had got hit by a rock and became unconscious. It was said that the incident speeded up his career as a sculptor and intensified his talent. He sums up that Miss Saeki might have interviewed Tamura and they might have fallen in love leading to a serious relationship. She calls his theory speculative and dismisses all the conclusions. But later, after her death, when she joins Kafka's “other” world she agrees that she is his mother.

The interconnection between the journeys of both protagonists is revealed when Nakata's actions trigger Kafka's transformation. When Kafka was on his inner journey, Nakata reaches the Library and meets Miss Saeki. She was waiting for Nakata to hand over her autobiographical notes and told him to burn them up. The transformed Nakata knew well about Miss Saeki, Kafka, and their lives. He obeys her, finds his mission over, and dies in his long slumber. Miss Saeki too ends her life and meets her son in the other world. She asks for his forgiveness for abandoning him. Kafka goes through his inner labyrinth and returns as a transformed soul. All his

questions got answered and he felt relieved. The whole world seems to be in love with him and he decides to go back to Tokyo to continue his education and live as a free soul.

The Murakami Phenomenon (*Murakami Gensho*)

The influence of Murakami goes to the extent of affecting the sensitivity of people all over the world especially in East Asia, imitating his characters in their dress, behaviours, ideas, and expressions. The author has been translated into forty-three languages and his fans, Japanese and non-Japanese call themselves, “Harukists” expressing their rapport with the writer. According to a research paper on the influence of Murakami in China, the Chinese youth asks the question “Are you Haruki?” instead of “Have you read Haruki?” (Jiwoon 64) They find some association with his characters, themes, and the situations with their own lives. The so-called “Murakami fanatics” not only imitate the writer’s attitude as expressed in his works but adopt the habits of his characters like eating spaghetti, drinking beer, and listening to pop and jazz (Li 7). Fujii Shozo, a Japanese Chinese literature scholar, explained the impact of *Wood* in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Shanghai, and Beijing as a “clockwise expansion of modern East Asian common culture” (Jiwoon 65).

Murakami’s literary world addresses the common problems of people crossing national boundaries. The postwar societies, contented with high economic growth recognise the spiritual emptiness lurking within them. This sense of loss makes people associate with the Murakamian characters. Readers feel a connection to his works even though the characters are Japanese with national sentiments. This connection transforms Murakami’s position both as a writer and as a human being from national to universal. His worldwide acceptance also shows the positive transition of Japanese

literature from its traditional didactic purpose to an innovative and empathetic manner of representing human lives.

Murakami has become the spiritual mentor of many young artists. His admirers are both men and women, belonging to different age groups who eagerly wait for new information on their favourite author. They seek and find guidance on the art of living through his fictional and non-fictional worlds. They feel satisfied with the Murakami way of doing things. “Murakami manuals” and books like *An Illustrated Handbook to Murakami Haruki’s Music*, *A Tour of Murakami Haruki’s World*, and *Cunshang Recipe* began to get circulated among “Murakami fanatics”. Following his novels’ descriptions, people made “Murakami” recipes, uploaded classical music which the author loves to listen to, and “Dolphin Hotels” were opened near the seaside in Sapporo, Japan. A South Korean company organized the “Kafka on the Shore” Kansai tour group (Li 21). The universal readership of the author becomes the reason for the popularity of his personal website in Japanese, *Murakami-san no Tokoro* (Mr. Murakami’s Place), and the official website, www.harukimurakami.com. The huge popularity of the author has also led to the publication of online websites like “The Murakami Pilgrimage” which is about the tourist destinations, shopping centres, restaurants, and the streets that appear in his novels. The website states it acts as a Japan travel guide utilising the worldwide reception of the author. There are online reading groups on Murakami that provide opportunities to read his works, make analyses, and conduct discussions. The writer has become the young generation’s common desire who wants to live in a liberated, carefree, and cool manner like his protagonists.

Murakami knows that writing is the only way to express his self and also to heal the wounds of society. The search for the meaning of one’s existence is the

mission of the writer whether it is a novel or a short story. His novels demonstrate the shifts from unreality to reality, materialism to spirituality, fact to memory, and the mundane to the fantastic. In his interview with the Japanese writer Chiaki Kawamata, Murakami says,

A narrative is a story ... And in these stories you have two faces. You are the object and the subject at the same time. You are all, and you are one part. You are real and a phantom. You are a storyteller and also a character in the book. It is through this multi-level role in our story that we can heal the loneliness of the individual as a lonely person in this world (qtd. in Li 8).

In his book, *Novelist as a Vocation*, the writer says that the awards, the number of sold copies, popularity, or praise of critics do not matter to an author. He should be able to reach the standard line set by the writer within him. It means that a writer always competes with himself. Writing novels and participating in some sports are similar to him as both demand the best of the person. This explains well to his admirers that missing Nobel Prize is not something to get worried about.

The fictional world of the writer pierces the false consciousness and artificial comforts of people who live in advanced capitalism. Lin Shaohua the Chinese author and translator opines that Murakami's works evoke questions that one needs to ask oneself like "...is your mind free? Is your ego the true self?" (qtd. in Li 64). All the pretentious and unreal notions celebrated in society get deconstructed in Murakami. By freeing himself from the exotic and exclusive "Japaneseness" he asserts his identity as an everyday cosmopolitan. The collectivism that he presents is different from the traditional concept. It is clubbed with self-identity and the factors that the

Japanese consider obscene. The openness and realities depicted in his works without being concerned about the image of Japan make him a unique writer.

One of Murakami's characters in *IQ84* speaks about the necessity of accepting changes as time flies. According to him, to address the problems of contemporary people, a writer needs to adopt new methods and tools. Such thoughts make him different from other writers providing a way for intercultural communication. The incorporation of music, history, literature, and philosophy of other nations makes his work attain this aim. When he speaks about the forgotten history of Japan, he also speaks about the history of China, Russia, and Mongolia. This inevitable association with humanity is one of the major reasons for his reception all over the world. A foreign reader finds it easy to relate to his themes and images as they cross national borders. Amidst the Western influences, the writer is Japanese to the core. In an interview with John Wray of *The Paris Review*, Murakami talks about this rootedness emphasizing the fact that his writings are his own and about his people. The style may be accessible to westerners but the stories are not westernised.

By putting aside the criticisms of other Japanese writers and critics Murakami goes along with the Japanese minds. He doesn't wish to fall into the simulation of being responsible for tradition but likes to present the Japanese society that he perceives. His characters present the idea that each human being has his/her reality to retrieve and the growing void within is the obstacle. One needs to fight against it and see things beyond. Murakami says that he likes to "observe people" and not "judge" them or draw "conclusions" but "leave everything wide open to all the possibilities of the world" (qtd. in Williams 36). The writer offers the possibilities of transformation through the lives of his characters.

Chapter 3

Interrogating “Reality”: The Working of

Simulation and Inner Dilemma

Reality is created out of confusion and contradiction, and if you exclude those elements, you're no longer talking about reality. You might think that—by following language and a logic that appears consistent—you're able to exclude that aspect of reality, but it will always be lying in wait for you, ready to take its revenge (qtd. in Welch 58).

Murakami's idea about the nature of reality which is something unexplained, contradictory, denatured, and lying concealed or disappeared in contemporary societies is clear from the above words. He believes that chaos and confusion are inevitable parts of human life and it finds expression in his literary world. The advanced security system hides the truth that there are no pandemonium and contradictions. The system is eager to provide false images and notions proclaiming that everything is controlled, and “reality” is free of all perplexities and uncertainties. The selected novels bring out the idea that the so-called “reality” no longer exists, and this is cleverly hidden from people living in capitalised systems. There is no single “reality” or right or wrong as in earlier times, but realities that differ from person to person. Living in a hyperreal society the characters try to connect their lives with made-up images resulting in a sense of loss and nothingness and this leads to various mental agonies.

Writers like Murakami and Baudrillard are bothered about the conflict between individuals and society based on the false depiction of “reality”. Murakamian literary world explores and interrogates the hyperreal nature of Japanese society in pioneering ways. The substitution of reality or simulation is used as a tool by the system to misguide people by providing various sorts of images and calling them “real”. As a keen observer of society, Murakami always doubts the social construction of “reality”. He acknowledges the truth that reality and unreality coexist in all cultural scenarios and the mission of a writer is to address this perplexing situation and provide ways of spiritual liberation. Capitalist powers, politics, science, law, educational institutions, religious beliefs, social conditions, and finally characters themselves are depicted as carriers of simulation. When one begins to question the nature of “reality” surrounding one’s social conditions, he/she falls into the dilemma of placing himself/herself against society. This problematic relationship between individuals and society is an important concern of the writer.

In the changing socio-cultural conditions, the individual is caught in many unseen webs created by power structures. The controlling methods of power have changed from earlier times and individuals find their selves disintegrated in the simulated societies. The false notions of capitalism have dangerous impacts on the lives of the characters. The author places them in various situations questioning the nature of celebrated “reality”. The simulation theory explains the disappearance of reality or its defective presence in all fields of life including science, politics, power, ethnology, media, history, and religion. For an accurate analysis, the chapter is divided into subtitles based on how simulation makes its appearance and affects people in various spheres of society as portrayed in the novels.

Simulacra and Simulation

Baudrillardian critic Douglas Kellner has called the theory of “Simulacra and Simulation” a science fiction social theory as it is based on scientific and mathematical concepts along with sociology, anthropology, literature, and mass media. Postmodernism has opened a new era of simulation where the loss of meaning leads to the loss of reality and the dominance of images. Objects have moved from their passive position of being commodities to the level of working on their course. Baudrillard’s essay, “The Precession of Simulacra” depicts the disappearance of reality and the dominance of signs and images in the world of hi-technology and mass media. His theory is based on the various ways through which false images are distributed in societies leading people to disillusionment, indifference, alienation, and hysteria. In Baudrillard’s words, simulation “...is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality: a hyperreal” (Glaser 1). It is not simply the pretension of reality, but a situation ruled by models and images which have no connection with reality at all and he calls them “simulacra”. Simulacra are images, signs, objects, models, and concepts that materialise the working of simulation.

Baudrillard’s theory is based on the idea that there was the presence of reality in earlier times as in the primitive period. People of those times were in contact with the real nature of the world and could identify both the darkness inside and outside. But later the single reality which people firmly believed in began to disappear without giving them the chance to find an alternative. Later centuries with high-speed developments as a result of industrialisation and overproduction provided models in the place of the real. This situation further reaches an ultimate level of total disintegration- the era of simulation. Simulation is not imitation or duplication but substitution of real by the signs of real itself. The difference between the real and imaginary is lost; the charm of representation disappears as the image very minutely

captures all the mannerisms of the real and presents it as more real than real - a hyperreal. The real lose all chance to produce itself in the hyperreal scenario where the images, signs, and models circulate endlessly and wind up all questions about the distinction between the real and the unreal. Baudrillard describes the world as a gigantic simulacrum that produces and reproduces copies giving the false notion of “reality”.

Simulation proves its power through images and Baudrillard explains the four stages of an image. In the first stage, images are the reflection of a profound reality in which an image has a positive role in representing reality truthfully. It is the age of Platonism and ideology. In the second stage, the image masks and denatures a profound reality. Its evil nature begins to appear by distorting reality and inaugurating the era of simulacra and simulation. This indicates the after-effects of the industrial revolution where material production increased. In the third stage, images mask the absence of profound reality where simulation becomes stronger. Reality is cleverly hidden as in the case of the images of God. In the fourth stage, the image has no relation to reality at all. It has become a pure simulacrum making itself suitable to the world of hi-technology, excess material production, and loads of information. Postmodern society is in this final stage where images guide the social order, the needs, and the desires of man.

In the essay, “The Orders of Simulacra” collected in *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard describes three orders of simulacra. In the feudal era, signs were real, clear, and transparent. The class, caste, and creed of people were clear from their appearance and way of living. In the modern era, which marked the beginning of the simulation, reality became vague and imitations and representations began to dominate. The second-order simulation is a result of the industrial revolution which

accelerated the production of objects and their copies. Due to technological advancement, typical copies were produced. Baudrillard illustrates the difference between first-order and second-order simulacra with the help of an automaton and a robot. An automaton is a mechanical imitation of humans used in early French theatrical and social games. The role of the automaton was forgotten with the invention of robots. In an automaton, imitation was clear but a robot was made to equal human abilities and skills. Technology produces and reproduces everything by instilling the notion of equivalence to rule the market and thereby society. In the third order, simulation reaches its final stage by eradicating reality forever and models reign the world.

As language contains its own codes and human genetic cells contain DNA as its structure, society also has its special codes and models of social organisation which work as the basis of human life. According to Baudrillard, this social structure is controlled by simulation masking the loss of reality. People are influenced by simulated models and images which provide them numerous choices and options by hiding their predetermined and pre-coded nature. Advanced capitalism fosters simulation in all possible ways by making people believe that “reality” is no longer lost, and they can experience it by embracing the models. It works against truth by instilling people with false thoughts and driving them into hyperreal conditions where they surrender their identities.

Simulation and Simulacra — Tools Used by Advanced Capitalism

Japan, the technologically advanced and financially unbeaten Asian nation is a massive playground of capitalism. People go after branded products, and artificial culture and are immersed in westernised living. They work like ants and do not find

time to think of anything else. Capitalism demands hard work and is ready to give all sorts of comforts reassuring its unavoidable dominance. Material pleasures, status, and success guide people from the time of their birth to their deathbeds. Pre-decided misconceptions about life follow them in families, schools, colleges, workplaces, and graveyards. The strife between social “reality” and personal realities and social conformity and individual subjectivism confuses Murakami’s protagonists. They are against the system by living within it and refuting it from the inside. This lands them in a state of flux between individuation and association.

The novel *Dance* is a critique of the working of the capitalist system. The protagonist in the novel criticises the selfish capitalist motives which drove away reality and filled society with signs and images. When Boku finds him unable to fit into its systematic borders, he comes out and criticises himself for being a part of the profit-oriented culture which demeans him to an image. He is neither satisfied with his own life nor with the ways of society. His alienation from society by imposing self-imprisonment for six months doesn’t cure his inner wounds. When isolation proves worthless, he decides to get immersed in the surrounding society as other people do. By keeping aside his tragic past, Boku joins the “giant anthill of an advanced capitalist society” (Birnbaum, *DDD* 11). He works systematically for a magazine by conducting worthless interviews and giving information about the best restaurants and scenic beauty spots in Japan. Without spending a single moment out of his job he hopes that being engrossed in the capitalist system like others may bring him happiness. He works mechanically as a freelance writer for newsletters and company brochures and gains a reputation and money. The system makes him toil hard day and night and even write about things that he has never seen. Boku “systematises” his life and writes for regular magazines and interviews many people

including celebrities. He prepares well before every interview and formulates unique questions to ask only to get altered when he is ordered to present them before the managers of the celebrities. They edit his hard work. But he doesn't feel bad as he says sarcastically that these are all part of a system of "social rehabilitation". Such interviews are only "show business" as they are based on predecided models and stock replies.

Neither interested nor bored in his work, Boku learns that to live every moment as a social being one needs to make several sacrifices. He has to follow the predefined ways of living which include sleeping with women, driving a second-hand Subaru Leone, and shifting to a new apartment as part of "normal living". Thinking about his life as something that contributes to the wastage of lots of ink and pulp he says,

We live in an advanced capitalist society, after all. Waste is the name of the game, its greatest virtue. Politicians call it "refinements in domestic consumption." I call it meaningless waste. A difference of opinion. Which doesn't change the way we live. If I don't like it, I can move to Bangladesh or Sudan (12).

It is the survival of the fittest. He says about his connection to the "real" world, "Through some clever juggling I'd managed to forge a connection to reality, to build a life based on token values" (6). The sarcasm is clear in his words, and he describes his job assignment of visiting restaurants, taking photographs, and writing about them as worthless like doing something for its sake. It is compared to collecting garbage or shovelling snow because how much one removes the garbage or the snow, the gap is

filled fast proving the futility of the process. The meaningless ways by which one relates to society by shovelling “cultural snow” is indicated by the protagonist.

Later, Boku’s attempts to be “normal” become ineffective and he recognises the loss of “something” from his soul. The dreams about the Dolphin hotel and the crying of Kiki for help haunt him and lead him to solve the mystery behind both. Boku in the novel becomes a typical Murakamian protagonist who wants to break the shell of so-called “reality” and to listen to his inner reality. The woman with whom he spent some days and nights during his busy schedule doesn’t touch his feelings because his mind can’t find a connection with her. Boku realises the need to search for his soulmate represented by Kiki and without her, his life will be meaningless. He says that the old Dolphin Hotel is tragic unlike other hotels, and it lacks *normalness*. The italicisation of the word indicates the difference between the place from the accepted notions of being “normal”.

The novel contains several situations where other characters share their views on the capitalist system deforming reality or concealing its loss. In his train journey to Hokkaido to the Dolphin Hotel, the protagonist meets an old man who speaks of Japan’s obsession with the waste of energy in fighter planes. He expresses his doubt about the nation’s unwillingness to produce low-cost fighter planes to save money that otherwise can be used for the benefit of people. Boku opines that waste is the motto of the capitalist system. The actions of developed nations affect the global economy as a whole. Japan buying jets from America and wasting a large quantity of fuel, receives special recognition all over the world adding to its supremacy over other nations. It elevates the nation’s prestige and raises capitalism to a higher level. Waste has a peculiar function to perform in activating the economy and it produces more waste. Murakami criticises the false notions of capitalist countries for maintaining

their position among the list of powerful nations. Such deeds may appear to the public coloured with hyper-nationalism. The fact that money is utilised for running the wheels of capitalism faster, remains hidden and denatured. The system is always eager to put forward the idea that the nation's attitude towards self-defence is commendable and manipulates its citizens to accept it.

Later in his conversation with Yuki, Boku despises his job of writing useless things which people call information. Information has become a simulacrum because people are unable to realise what is genuine and what is bogus and what is relevant and what is trivial as they are tricked by the halo behind "information". The distinction has faded away and excess information and meaning are like opium to society. People call whatever nonsense Boku writes "information" and when he describes things minutely, they call it "enhanced information". He writes articles about ordinary tourist places, shops, restaurants, and malls in a hyper-realistic manner which makes people pay a visit after reading them. The image created in their minds makes them consider those spots wonderful and enjoyable. As a result, many places and shops become popular, and their business improves. He thus becomes an agent of capitalism by celebrating the hyperreality of information.

The novel presents characters who go after images and attempt to polish their deeds as natural. They try to grab the outer reality in all ways by forgetting the fact that society will be satisfied only with the hyperreal. Yuki's father, the less talented writer who tries hard to retain his privilege and status quo is an example. Yuki tells Boku that he is a good man but not really talented. At the beginning of his career, her father Hiraku Makimura, an inversion of the name Haruki Murakami, wrote some readable novels which showed his talent. His relationship with Ame, the most popular woman photographer in Japan, and their unhappy married life took away "something"

from him. He felt like his ability to write was lost after the marriage and whatever he wrote didn't receive much attention from the book-loving society. Even though disappointed he was not ready to give up the reputation and pride of a celebrity. He diverted his attention to other genres like travel writing which is believed to contain the colour of "reality". He made adventurous trips to exotic and forbidden destinations and tried to evoke readers' interest by staying with Eskimos, pygmies, and guerrilla camps. When these attempts were proved futile, he went a step forward with the help of media by rendering "reality" to the public in a hyperreal manner. He carried a crew along with him including cameramen and editors who did appropriate changes to the captured "reality" and presented it to deceive people. The public seemed satisfied with this new attempt.

When his readers got bored with his original adventurous stories, Hiraku rendered them hyper-realistic visuals with the help of his team. He managed to grab the vibe of society by exploiting their thirst for "real" experiences. The distinction between real, hyperreal, and imaginary fades away. According to Baudrillard, "A hyperreal henceforth sheltered from the imaginary, and from any distinction between the real and the imaginary, leaving room only for the orbital recurrence of models and for the simulated generation of differences" (Glaser 3). People who fall for models of reality are deprived of the chance of imagining the real. Production and reproduction of "reality" are the characteristic hysterias of contemporary society and however much they try to restore reality, it escapes leaving the hyperreal in a hallucinatory state of resemblance.

Natural and simulated talents are difficult to get distinguished as seen in Yuki's father. In *Kafka*, Oshima speaks about the natural talent that lies in Miss Saeki's popular poem, "Kafka on the Shore" while there are other poems of simulated

nature. The models simulate the qualities of good poems, but in essence, they are hollow. Such works make use of symbolism to have a metaphorical layer of meaning which will give the readers the feeling that they contain some stuff beyond physical existence. But that only hides the loss of the original and those poets have no natural talent. They exist only to mask the distinction between real and unreal thereby giving the message that their poems have “real” substance.

The difference between the appearance of the old and new Dolphin Hotel presents the concept of “reality” accurately. Murakami does not doubt presenting the old Hotel as a place of confusion which is opposite to the judgments of a simulated society. Its description shatters all the accepted notions of a hotel with extra-cleaned corridors, perfumed ambience, and well-behaved employees. Boku compares the place to an old museum that is dusty with dark pathways, faded furniture, dilapidated floorboards, and altogether an ominous existence. On his second visit, the protagonist is surprised at the development of the hotel from an ordinary building to a most modern object with shiny brass revolving doors, a gymnasium, tennis court, pools, health club, luxurious designer sofas, and a crowded lobby. But he prefers the dusty old place to the hyperreal one that has “grown” into a simulacrum. The new Dolphin Hotel has welcomed capitalism at the expense of its old warmth. The room rates have increased according to the facilities. It is not only a hotel, but an amusement park, health club, conference halls, and game centre behind the image of the hotel. It absorbs all other purposes brilliantly by contributing well to the increasing needs of a capitalist society. A hotel is not only a hotel but needs to perform multiple functions to be a part of the system. The real Dolphin Hotel was missing but later finds its existence behind the new capitalist image.

The employees in the Dolphin Hotel also have succumbed to the system. The multi-purpose building provides an always pleasant attractive woman at the front desk and hoteliers with fixed smiles who can show at least “twenty-four different smiles” on varying occasions. Later he was happy to see an “individual smile” on Yumiyoshi instead of the “professional variety”. Boku understands the air of artificiality surrounding the building by masking the reality that he was searching for. Not only the hotel, but its nearby areas have also undergone several changes and he calls it the “Dolphin Hotel capitalization” (30). The price of the land has gone high, new shops have appeared and the place has attained a special status.

Boku understands that the ownership of the Dolphin hotel has shifted from the poor man, whom he knows already, to some other power with an anonymous identity. He searches for the name of the new owner in its brochures but finds nothing. His investigation leads to a newspaper article about the mysterious land dealings in the province of Sapporo including the Dolphin Hotel. According to the article, the lands are bought by some paper companies which have no offices or employees but are legally registered. They buy properties for a small amount by using threats, money, and power from common people and sell and resell them for higher prices. By using their political influence, they manage to buy lands at significant locations and can shift government offices to those areas. They build subways and provide infrastructural facilities on the pretext of the advancement of society. Political parties, leaders, and bureaucrats work hand in hand in fulfilling their mission. The visible changes in the city direct the flow of people by making it crowded resulting in a hike in the land price. Thus, a powerful, manipulative, and anonymous system is created challenging everything old.

The novel emphasises the fact that under a capitalist system, everything is preplanned and there are no roles for justice and humanity. Even the police, and law support this “web of capitalism”. With their non-human power, they drag anything into their calculations and this is how the system works under the guise of development. The words, “progress” and “development” are signs of simulation that allow capitalism to do any unethical deed. Manipulation of reality is celebrated by capitalist culture, and it affects ordinary lives without their knowledge. Development becomes degeneration for many people with the Dolphin Hotel capitalization. In the words of the protagonist, “The new mysticism. People worship capital, adore its aura, genuflect before Porsches and Tokyo land values. Worshipping everything their shiny Porsches symbolize. It’s the only stuff of myth that’s left in the world” (55). They mistake these facilities as “real” while their realities are hidden and waiting to be recognised.

Various types of bifurcations have become meaningless in a powerful system and Boku notices that the standard of right and wrong has been subdivided and made sophisticated. Good is divided into “fashionable good” and “unfashionable good” and the same happens with bad too. “Fashionable good” is again divided into formal, casual, hip and cool, trendy and snobbish. He thinks, “Everything is rigged, tied into that massive capital web, and beyond this web there’s another web. Nobody’s going anywhere. You throw a rock and it’ll come right back at you” (55). It is like the image of a spiralling mobius used by Baudrillard. According to him, capitalism is a mobius strip. It circulates and makes people move in a circular path along with its speed by hiding its true nature under the guise of progress. It fills the world with artificial images of happiness, comfort, and satisfaction which have no connection with one’s reality.

Boku understands what happened to the old owner of the Dolphin Hotel. The poor man has become a victim of “development” who has been forced to sell his land and leave the place forever. His only request of retaining the building’s name was agreed to by the new owners which helped Boku to find the hotel despite its new appearance. The system can curb all the voices speaking against it thereby preventing the truth from reaching people. The victory of the capitalist system is that people fail to understand its concealed nature or take its power for granted as it is normal. This normalisation makes society numb without recognising the sand running out under its feet and people are no longer standing where they once stood. Boku can’t find any follow-up in the magazine about the mysterious land dealings of Sapporo, which gave him some idea of what happened to the hotel and its surroundings. Real happenings are concealed, and facts are hidden by manipulating media that wipe the news out of the world. Boku is advised by his friend not to involve in matters dealing with the land mafia as it will lead him to trouble.

The protagonist understands that people are perplexed by the overlapping of images over their realities. The dilemma of differentiating between image and one’s reality is visible in the life of Gotanda. His acting as a doctor on the screen is only an image, but it is more realistic than an original doctor. He acts as a dentist and even treats patients along with a real doctor for a reality show. It is difficult to understand whether he has studied medicine or not. People fall for this figure because what he presents is hyperrealism, an area of interest when society is bored with “reality”. He expresses more trust and dependability than society receives from an original doctor. Society’s weariness with mundane “reality” is exploited by various means resulting in hyperrealism. This can be connected with the disintegration of the Louds family the first victim of an American television reality show as analysed by Baudrillard. What

people enjoyed was excessive transparency and excess of meaning which culminated in the tragedy of the family as they fell into the dilemma of differentiating between truth and false. The on-screen and off-screen lives of the family intermingle, and they fall into the agony of distinguishing between the two.

The same happens with Gotanda when he is unable to discrepate his personality from the role of a doctor in the reality show. It is hyperreal sociality where one's reality is confused with the model. Both the spectacle and the audience are dominated by the image created by the media. The method of capitalism is not of persuasion as it was in earlier times, but of deterrence where the distinction between the passive and active is abolished. It shifts its objects which may be things or people from mere "submission to models" to "you are the model" thereby to a system of deterrence. The line of separation between subject and object fades and they exchange their places where the latter dominates and both become agents of simulation. Baudrillard calls the collapse of these traditional poles "implosion", "...an implosion of meaning. *That is where simulation begins*" (Glaser 31).

This implosion is clear from the characters' inability to distinguish between the real need and simulated "need". The system's smart play behind the conception of "need" which is another simulacrum is criticised in the novel. Boku tells Gotanda to think over the truth hidden behind "need" which is no more genuine but manufactured. The real needs are unknown to characters like Gotanda who are conquered by models and images. The house in which he lives, the vehicle he drives, the dress he puts on, and the food he takes are not based on his requirement. What he needs is a small roof over his head, an old Subaru, and a simple life with his wife and children. But what he gets is ridiculous things — a sophisticated place to live among highly cultured people, a splendid Maserati, high-class call girls, and luxury food

from grand restaurants. He has never asked for such pleasures but is provided by the agency to maintain his celebrity status and to have control over him. They can use him as a brand name for their profit. Gotanda calls them people with “zero imagination”. He says to Boku, “...the worst thing is – boy, this must be getting boring- as long as I keep living like this, I can’t get what I really want” (290). Such artificially manufactured requirements hide his real needs making the concept of “need” a pure simulacrum.

Characters who live according to the predefined models of the capitalist system forget their real needs and pursue manipulated needs that alter their identities. Gotanda is able to get the costliest girl in the world when his real need is his wife. His life is suitable to Baudrillard’s metaphor of “mobius”, spiralling around Azabu, BMW, and Rolex. This never-ending circle twists and turns continuously without any change. Gotanda is a good instance of exemplifying the condition of people who live without a choice. He becomes a representative of those who suffers under manipulation and says to Boku, “It’s hard for you to understand, but in this debauched world of mine, you can’t survive with good taste” (293). He says that a person with identity and genuine tastes can’t live easily in a capitalist society as he won’t get any recognition or appreciation and will be considered worthless.

Advanced capitalism retains its supremacy through the distortion of images and concepts. Women are treated as objects not as human beings with identities. Sex is a profitable business in the capitalist system. The identifying factors like original names, family, and other details are taken away from the call girls and their identities are hidden from their customers. The girls do not know the name or details of those who are in their own group. They are given pet names by the industry like Kiki, Mei, Mami, and so on establishing the fact that they belong to a section of society without

identity. As Mei says, “But it’s not really us. We don’t actually know each other. Mei, Kiki. These names don’t have real lives. We’re all image. Signs tacked up in empty air” (156). They are beings without essence to please their customers. Women are degraded to the position of objects to be couriered from one place to another like sending parcels through speed post. They are driven from the position of subjects to objects and then to mere images. At the peripheral level, they are objects but not actual objects because even objects maintain their typical nature. They are degraded to images and are driven into passivity.

The word “sex” has lost its earlier meaning and secretive nature. In the contemporary world, the term implies money and business while at the surface level, it stands for enjoyment and physical need. Sex is a simulacrum that conceals the aspect of business and the filthy nature of capitalism. The world has developed beyond geographical frontiers where people can send prostitutes from any distance with the help of agencies supplying call girls. Hiraku Makimura, by using such an agency sends June, a call girl to Boku in Hawaii, miles away from Japan. He makes the whole payment and she refuses the money given by Boku. The protagonist wonders about the working of the evil system called capitalism which calls the service, “worldwide sex-o-grams” (280). In Boku’s words, it is like international flower delivery. One can simply make arrangements with the organisation which provides “sex service”. Only people with status, money, glamour, and power are eligible for their service, and is strictly confidential.

An organisation in Tokyo contacts its branch in Hawaii and the customer can select the woman of his choice and can fix the date and time. It is a very simple process using technology without the intermittence of traditional pimps. The branches of the agency both in Tokyo and Hawaii take their commission and the rest is given to

the girl. Everything is capitalised and globalised and is made available in the market. Capitalism has transformed everything systematised, sophisticated, efficient, and perfect to its convenience. The protagonist severely criticises the system, “Whether prostitution or discrimination or personal attacks or displaced sex drive, give it a pretty name, a pretty package, and you could sell it. Before too long they’ll have a call girl catalogue order service at the Seibu department store. *You can rely on us*” (282).

Capitalism depends on the principle of manipulation, and it is foolish to expect any virtue from it which is involved in the task of hiding reality. Baudrillard highlights the fact that those who refute the true nature of capitalism by expecting humanity from it also become agents of simulation as the journalists of *The Washington Post* did in the Watergate scandal. The scandal created hyperrealism that the system works against corruption and maintains ethics in politics by masking the truth that the system is fundamentally scandalous, corrupted, immoral, and unscrupulous. Capitalism masks the fact that such moral principles no longer exist and, in this way, it protects its twisted ideals.

Worlds of “Perfection” under the Capitalist System

“Wabi-Sabi” is a Japanese concept that places transience and imperfection as the basis of unity and harmony (Orgad 52). Murakami’s novels celebrate this concept of imperfection while the whole world runs after perfection. In Japanese aesthetics, “Wabi-Sabi” is a potential source for mental transformation and growth. It is derived from the Buddhist concepts of three marks of existence; impermanence, suffering, and emptiness. Modesty, asymmetry, simplicity, and attachment are some of its ideals. It propagates three simple realities: nothing lasts, nothing is finished, and nothing is perfect. Murakami believes in this idea of imperfection when he says, “There is no

silence without a cry of grief, no forgiveness without bloodshed, no acceptance without a passage through acute loss. That is what lies at the root of true harmony” (qtd. in Orgad 52). The capitalist system feeding society with false notions of perfection finds expression in his novels. When the characters recognise its hollowness, they get disappointed and alienated.

Perfection is a simulated situation as it conceals the existence of imperfection thereby the real nature of society. Toru Watanabe in *Wood* says that his “...imperfect vessel of writing are imperfect memories and imperfect thoughts” (Rubin 10). He believes that too much clarity and sharpness will destroy the reality of things just like a map becomes useless when it contains too much information. Baudrillard indicates the map in Jorge Louis Borges, the Argentine writer’s single-paragraph short story, “On Exactitude in Science” published in 1946. In the story, the emperor of the kingdom orders the cartographers to make a large map of the empire showing every geographic detail minutely. It exceeds the limit of an ordinary map and becomes a model of the real empire. The cartographers fail to understand the art of cartography. They pay too much attention to catching reality by losing the charm of representation and the map is transformed into a hyperreal image. To grab reality, the map loses its function and significance. The future generation, according to the story, throws the map into the desert to disintegrate itself as it creates confusion, questioning the boundaries of the territory. The charm between the real place (the territory) and the work of art (map) has vanished. Murakami agrees with Baudrillard by criticising people’s run after perfection and presenting it as “real”.

Murakami’s protagonists often fall into confusion as to whether people around them are genuinely happy or pretend to be happy. They recognise that they are not pretending but are simulated by models of “reality” among which they live.

Pretension implies the presence of something, while simulation its absence. In pretension, the reality principle is intact while simulation erases the difference between the real and the imaginary. It is not pretension, but simulation as people can't understand the true nature of happiness and believe that they are "really" happy and lead a perfect life. Oshima's views on the nature of imperfection in *Kafka* become relevant here. On a ride in his sports car, he plays the CD of Schubert's *D Major Sonata* and proceeds to explain the vitality of its imperfection:

...works that have a certain imperfection have an appeal for that very reason...There's something in it that draws you in...the work discovers you...But listening to the D major, I can feel the limits of what humans are capable of—that a certain type of perfection can only be realised through a limitless accumulation of the imperfect (Gabriel, *KOS* 119-120).

Imperfection is not something to be ashamed of. It is a source of growth. In *Dance*, Boku speaks of an imperfect world that is not on the list of advanced capitalism. The capitalist system plans everything to be perfect without any flaws and is careful to prevent any sort of mistake. It makes people believe in the existence of a perfect society where everything is at their demand. It despises an imperfect world and offers an ideal life which later leads to disappointment when something happens against the expected flawless system. Boku's perfect wife in the novel was unable to understand her imperfect husband. For him, love is an imperfect thing with unexpected twists and turns. He believes that love has the power to guide and connect people through its imperfect nature. His wife on the other hand with the dream of perfect love leaves him for another man. The relationship between Kumiko and Toru Okada in *Wind up Bird* who try to maintain a perfect married life by becoming new individuals and putting aside their real nature turns out to be a failed attempt. They

dare not express their selves in the run to keep the “happily married ever” concept safe and it crumbles their married life leading to Kumiko’s sudden disappearance.

Perfection is based on logic and reason and in *Wind up Bird*, May Kasahara criticises the tendency of people to fix everything within its bars. Humans need everything in their life to happen logically and consistently. She takes the example of her parents who, “...believe that the world is as consistent and explainable as the floor plan of a new house in high-priced development, so if you do everything in a logical, consistent way, everything will turn out right in the end” (Rubin, *TWBC* 461). This is the reason why they become restless with the “illogical” deeds of their daughter. The characters fail to understand that life is a tale of illogicalities and inconsistencies and that perfection is only a simulacrum. May writes in her letter to Toru Okada about people’s eagerness to find that everything is in order and expected.

I bet if those tree frog parents of mine put rice pudding mix in the microwave and got macaroni cheese when the bell rang, they’d just tell themselves, “Oh, we must have put in macaroni cheese mix by mistake”, or they’d take the macaroni cheese and try to convince themselves, “This looks like macaroni cheese, but actually it’s rice pudding (462).

She states that people are unable to accept imperfection whether it is connected with their realities or not. They are happy at the “perfection” brought forth by various simulacra. Nobody is ready to live with the status of unreasonable and inconsistent life because the very thought of it makes them alienated. Perfection is not only limited to human beings but to objects which they deal with. There are hypermarkets offering vegetables that can stay fresher than their normal counterparts even though the price will be high. Boku in *Dance* buys some lettuce that lasts longer than normal lettuce

challenging its original nature. Baudrillard says that objects have achieved the status to interrogate and confuse people and are no longer commodities or signs that they can easily decipher (75). The world doesn't seem to be surprised at this advance of the capitalist system. People are eager to make society believe that they are leading a faultless and perfect life.

The micro world presented in *Wood* is a utopia with the halo of perfection. The mental asylum named Ami Hostel, where Naoko stays to balance her mind offers perfect peace and comfort to its inmates. But the suicide of Naoko in the nearby wood of the Hostel proves its futility and simulated nature. Ami Hostel, by keeping itself far away from outside influences hides the nature of outer society from its inmates. The asylum, with only seventy inmates, creates a world of Eden with a quiet and green ambience separated from the busy Tokyo city. The people there are engaged in several activities like farming, knitting, playing games, reading books, and listening to music. For some earlier months of her stay at the place, Naoko feels comfort as it protects its people from the pressure of outside society. She wants to heal her inner wounds and thinks that she needs a calm place cut off from the world. The attitudes of the doctors and treatment are different from ordinary sanatoriums. Along with accepting their deformities, the inmates are fed with the idea that the outside society is a perfect domain consisting of people with a normal mindset. This creates uneasiness in them and they worry about their inferior mental status.

In the novel, both the sanatorium and the outside world are simulacra. The sanatorium is there to give the impression that those who live outside it are all sane and normal. It is as in the case of Disneyland, Baudrillard's model for all orders of simulacra.

Disneyland is represented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation. It is no longer a question of false representation of reality (ideology) but of concealing the fact that the real is no longer real, and thus of saving the reality principle (Glaser 13).

Disneyland celebrates childishness in adults by giving the false notion that they are unable to be so as there is no childishness in the “real” world. The wonderland is there to give a feeling that the outside American society is “real” by concealing the fact that it is only a simulacrum. Likewise, the presentation of Ami Hostel makes it clear that everything outside the sanatorium is perfect and real. The fact is that the inmates are worried about the so-called perfection that prevents them from returning to society.

The outer society was always unbearable for Naoko, and she likes the company of the “abnormal” people in the Ami Hostel. In her letter to Toru Watanabe, she says that the most important thing about the place is that its inmates know well about their deformities, unlike the outside domain. According to her, deformities are a precondition of all human beings, but society doesn’t recognise them. She merits the place more than the society where she lived which gives space only to those who live in social conformity. At the same time, she is aware of the sanatorium’s drawbacks. It is a simulacrum, a temporary world where one can’t live forever, and its inmates are fed by a false sense of “reality”. They think that their deformities are accepted in the small world and that they can live with them. As long as one is there, one wishes not to leave the place and falls into the illusion that he/she is recovered and peaceful without facing any challenges. But they are not sure of how to present themselves in

the “normal” world and lack the courage to face it. They are not ready to shift from the small simulacrum to the giant simulacrum.

The inmates are protected from the “real” world and this protection is only an illusion as it doesn’t provide them any opportunity and the courage to face the wide society. Hiding from disturbing facts never helps as it doesn’t provide them the ability to look into themselves despite all their defects. Naoko’s suicide proves it well. After a few days of initial happiness, her thoughts begin to change as she understands the simulation involved in the place. She is haunted by the negative thought that there are no solutions to her mental dilemmas in both societies and doesn’t want to be a burden to Toru Watanabe. In her letter she writes, “We think we’ve recovered. But we can never be sure that the outside world will accept us in the same way” (Rubin, *NW* 115). She is afraid of the “normal people in the normal world”. Everyone in the sanatorium, the doctors, and the patients blindly believe in the normalcy and the originality of the outside society. They fail to understand its simulative nature and it affects the inmates badly. It leads them to the thought that they are the ones with problems and imperfections and that others are superior to them. They are oblivious to the deformities of society and also to the fact that perfection is only an illusion. The idea that outer society is a sort of big sanatorium with people living in false “reality” is hidden from them. The fact remains that the boundaries between the concepts of normal and abnormal are already disappeared and what remains is only an implosion.

Human beings in general, are subjected to many strange behaviours, spiritual emptiness, and idiosyncrasies. The characters hide such eccentric behaviours to be a part of the system where they live. Murakami presents those who behave indifferently when they feel the loss of “reality” around them. They do strange things for having a sense of “reality” and to satisfy their inner mind. The coming out of such inner

impulses is visible in Gotanda and Kafka who are worried about their hidden violence. Reiko Ishida's depressed life in *Wood* due to the abnormal and wicked nature of a teenage girl, who was a mythomaniac, shows the existence of such people in the celebrated "normal" world. The mature Reiko who becomes a mentor to Naoko understands the true nature of imperfection in both worlds. She writes to Watanabe,

All of us (by which I mean *all* of us, both normal and not-so-normal) are imperfect human beings living in an imperfect world. We don't live with the mechanical precision of a bank account or by measuring all our lines and angles with rulers and protractors (355).

Hard experiences strengthen her to accept the presence of imperfection everywhere without falling into the false notion of an impeccable world. Her truthful understanding of society gives her the mental strength to step into it courageously by breaking the protective shell of the sanatorium. The Ami Hostel is neither true nor false, and as Baudrillard says, "...it is a deterrence machine set up in order to rejuvenate the fiction of the real in the opposite camp" (13).

Toru Watanabe's view of Ami Hostel is entirely utopian, a perfect and peaceful world. The unbelievably good-natured people with soft words and calm manners only give the shreds of evidence of hyperrealism that he doesn't recognise. Even though he feels the construction of the houses in the same shape and colour with similar patterns and curious perfection is unreal, he fails to breathe the air of simulation involved in the place. He admires the place and feels free in the company of both Naoko and Reiko. Reiko gives hints about the utopian nature of the sanatorium by saying that everyone in the place including doctors and patients is equal and they are expected to help each other. Watanabe, despite all hyper realities,

likes the place which he feels is natural and different from the crowded society. He fails to recognise that such a fake system will do no good for Naoko. But his visit confirms his perception that the outside society which everyone thinks is “normal” and “real” is only a simulacrum. His attraction to the sanatorium indicates people’s eagerness to find an alternative to the suffocating system of hyperreality.

Watanabe understands the loss of reality in the outer society, and he doesn’t feel anything abnormal in the inmates of the sanatorium. When Naoko asks about his attraction to the twisted people like herself, Kizuki, and Reiko he says, “I don’t see you or Kizuki or Reiko as ‘twisted’ in any way. The guys I think of as twisted are out there running around” (186). The simulated society dissociates him and allows him to appreciate the cultivated vibrancy of the sanatorium. The freshness he feels in the asylum’s environment melts away when he returns to Tokyo. Two days’ stay at Ami Hostel makes the crowded world more bizarre to him. It takes considerable time for him to understand the actions of people in the busy world. Amid the chaotic society at his workplace, Watanabe feels like he has fallen from Eden to hell. He compares both worlds; one is filled with confusion and chaos; the other with love, compassion, beauty, and harmony. The people he sees in the street; the families, couples, drunkards, gangsters, hippies, girls in short skirts, bar hostesses, and the adult-toy seller make him sick. He is confused and finds everything unreal and says to Midori, “I probably still haven’t completely adapted to the world...I don’t know, I feel like this isn’t the real world. The people, the scene: they just don’t seem real to me” (223). The presence of the Ami Hostel emphasises his belief that the society where he lives is defective. But he fails to recognise the sanatorium’s hyperreal nature. When the inmates are incapable to realise both worlds, Watanabe is aware of the giant

simulacrum, the outer society. The illusion of the perfect social microcosm of the sanatorium intensifies his isolation from society.

Just like there are no perfect love, perfect marriages, and perfect worlds, there are no perfect relationships. The trio of *Wood*; Toru, Naoko, and Kizuki led a happy friendship and were comfortable in their inner circle until it breaks after the suicide of Kizuki. The relationship between Naoko and Kizuki which started in their early childhood days also ends. In *Kafka*, the divine love of Miss Saeki becomes tragic with the murder of her lover. The sudden fall of every form of perfection seems to be one of the favourite themes of Murakami and also the message that he gives to the world. This includes the unexpected disappearance of talent as in Reiko's loss of the ability to play the piano. Murakami wants to show that human life is made of coincidences, imperfections, idiosyncrasies, and irregularities.

The Town in *Wonderland* represents the capitalist system that claims to be perfect. Its utopian idea of perfection is built upon the loss of individuality of its inhabitants. The Town is a simulacrum where everything is controlled, manipulated, and refined demonstrating unbelievable obedience and correctness. It is like a mobius spiralling negativity with no death, life, joy, or sorrow - an endless world of eternity. To show the process of repetition the Professor uses the word "tautology" which can be compared to the working of a mobius. He says, "Once you set up a closed circuit, you just keep spinni' 'round and' round in there. That's the nature of tautologies. No interruptions like with dreams" (Birnbbaum, *HBWEW* 284). The difference between the two concepts is that while tautology is used in positive terms in philosophy, mobius is used in negative terms by Baudrillard.

The Town is surrounded by a huge stone wall of thirty feet in height which can be cleared only by birds representing the imprisoned state of its beings under the autocratic system. The Gatekeeper says that there is no escape from the Town as it is the End of the World. He is in charge of the unicorns which are kept behind the gate and are permitted to go out every morning and return in the evening. The beasts can't live in the extremely cold season and they become weak and die. There are no precautions to prevent them from dying as it is all predecided. Their number always remains the same and the number of dead unicorns will be maintained by the newborn in the spring season retaining the principle of perfection intact. The beasts' skulls are kept in the library of the Town which looks like a grain warehouse. The library is a simulacrum as it is in contrast with the original characteristics of a library- the storage of ideas that inspires people to think of their inner truths. The Town library works as a murderer of realities and offers the negative by dissipating the identities of its inmates into thin air through the process of dream reading.

Boku loses his individuality in the "all is well" concept of the Town. The habitants are taught to forget their shadows and obey the system. The Gatekeeper says to Boku, "You have to endure. If you endure, everything will be fine. No worry, no suffering. It all disappears. Forget about the shadow. This is the End of the World. This is where the world ends. Nowhere further to go" (109). The nature of the system is depicted by its abolition of people's identities. The Wall surrounding the Town is powerful and omniscient. It is a symbol of bondage as walls create nothing but enmity and hatred. The Gatekeeper admires the perfection of the Wall. "This Wall has no mortar. There is no need. The bricks fit perfect; not a hair- space between them. Nobody can put a dent in the Wall. And nobody can climb. Because this Wall is perfect. So forget any ideas you have. Nobody leaves here" (109). The protagonist

and his Shadow understand the simulation behind the Wall. The perfection in the wall is only a trick to stupefy the inmates who look at it with admiration. It becomes a symbol of all the rules and customs created by the system to control the inmates. The Wall is inside each being of the Town and it remains undefeated as they have lost their shadows and minds to fight back. Their identities are simulated and the system holds the responsibility for it.

The residents are connected to the Town by the false idea of perfection. The Colonel has spent his life protecting the Town and he can't separate himself because of the peace offered by it and he has surrendered his shadow. He calls Boku "unformed" and that is why he has doubts and regressions. The girl Librarian has no memory of her shadow as she lost it when she was four and witnessed its death when she was seventeen. She has never experienced the presence of a mind within her and has neither feelings nor emotions. The protagonist's soft feelings towards her remain unbosomed at the beginning as she is unresponsive to the feeling of love. Love, which is the mantra of connecting people has disappeared from the Town. She is kind towards Boku because showing kindness is a part of the manners of the system. The Colonel says that death of shadow means the death of all sense of loss, despair, and sorrow, and what remains is only living (liv-ing) which is an "undisturbed and peaceful living" (170). This false promise of happy living is a great lie fostered by the Town as its edifice is their lost identities.

Murakami makes Boku's Shadow reflect on the truth hidden behind the Town unmasking the working of simulation. The shadow has neither permission inside the Town nor can leave the place. It is the only being that can think of the hyperreality of the place and the world outside the giant Wall. He is smart and thinks brilliantly and says to the protagonist, "The Town seems to contain everything it needs to sustain in

perpetual peace and security. The order of things remains perfectly constant, no matter what happens. But a world of perpetual motion is theoretically impossible. There has to be a trick” (248). For him, the End of the World is a giant simulacrum and understands that the Town which is sealed like a circle is entirely wrong. He warns Boku of the danger involved by saying that the more he lives there the more he will begin to doubt his judgement. The shadow understands the ability of the system to manipulate people’s thoughts by normalising all the wrongs. The people once reaching the Town begin to think that they are wrong, and that the system is right. It can swallow the identity of people very easily in this manner.

The Colonel says that every object within the Town is only a resemblance and holds no connection with reality, “What resembles meat is not. What resembles eggs is not. What resembles coffee only resembles coffee. Everything is made in the image of something” (224). The reality of each thing is replaced by models and images. Even human beings are images without the power of individuality and the warmth of the mind. It is a place of neither victory nor defeat. People do their work like dream reading or digging holes for no special reason. They don’t lose or gain anything. Reality is lost and what remains is manipulation by the models of the real the inmates mistake them for the original and try to connect their lives with them. Even Boku, for a short period, falls for the beauty of perfection maintained by the Town. Against his shadow’s expectations, Boku begins to like the End of the World. He says to his Shadow,

No one hurts each other here, no one fights. Life is uneventful, but full enough in its way. Everyone is equal. No one speaks ill of anyone else, no one steals. They work, but they enjoy their work. It’s purely for the sake of work, not

forced labour. No one is jealous of anyone. There are no complaints, no worries (333).

Above all, he says that there are no conflicts, no fear of growing old or of death and he finds it a suitable place to live. He likes watching beasts and enjoys the company of the Colonel and the girl at the library. Boku is caught in the Town simulacrum and fails to understand its hidden nature. His shadow finds that the reason for such a peaceful atmosphere is that the people in the Town have no minds. They have surrendered everything including their emotions, feelings, and thoughts to the Town. In return, they are given protection, artificial peace of mind, and an extra comfortable living. Their satisfaction and peace are a result of the removal of their individualities. In the Shadow's words,

But the absence of fighting or hatred or desire also means the opposites do not exist either. No joy, no communion, no love. Only where there is disillusionment and depression and sorrow does happiness arise; without the despair of loss, there is no hope (334).

The versatile nature of life which is a combination of the positive and the negative is emphasised here.

The truth behind the "perfection" of the Town is pathetic as it is the result of the suffering of many "imperfect" beings including the beasts, shadows, and Wood folk. The beasts are made to carry the townspeople's minds and they wander around by suffering the weight and a residue remains with them even after unloading the whole luggage. Their death is not because of cold, or lack of food as believed by the Town folk. They suffer due to the power of others' selves within them, and they die because of the pressure. After their death, the Gatekeeper cleans off their skulls and

buries them for a whole year to diminish the heat of their selves. The cleaned skulls are transported to the library shelves where they wait till the arrival of the new Dreamreader. The Gatekeeper knows that the shadows are powerful and can have a hold on the people who are new to the Town. So, he always keeps an eye on them and never paves way for the inmates to meet them without his permission. He behaves rudely with the shadows by giving them tough labour, filthy conditions to live in, and not enough food or clothing.

Another section of people called the Wood folk, whose shadows have escaped the Town with an incomplete death are also suffering souls. According to the Town's rule, shadows must die in the Town itself and the Gatekeeper will bury them near the apple grove. The Wood folk is a banished group because their shadows denied death under its protocol. They are considered outcasts. The man at the power station in the Woods is such a person. The library girl senses the presence of his shadow along with him. Her mother was also banished from the Town years back for the incomplete death of her shadow. These people are to be considered revolutionaries and martyrs who voiced against the system. The Town has expelled them which is the unanimous nature of curbing the dissenting voices by all power centres. The Town folk feel only sympathy and a dubious attitude towards them rather than a sense of appreciation for their courage. The inmates are comfortable living like objects and are unable to feel the other way. They live a life of complete slavery. The perfection of the Town utopia is built on the lives of the imperfect beasts, shadows, Wood folk, and Town folk.

No one thinks from the perspective of the victims or the imperfect beings. Sympathies of the majority are always with the powerful and the fittest. As the shadow says, "This is how it's possible for the Town to maintain its perfection. All imperfections are forced upon the imperfect, so the 'perfect' can live content and

oblivious” (336). The Town gives its people the false image that it is flawless in its special way and as the beings of the Town, they also share a part of its “perfection”. Murakami aims at the Japanese society which hates the idea of imperfection and is unable to identify the hollowness behind the concept of “perfection”. The depiction of the futuristic Town analogues to Japanese society reaches the pinnacle of simulation.

Simulated Educational Systems, Ideologies, History, Wars, and Revolutions

Murakami criticises the artificial system of social microcosms like educational institutions which work on predecided models. The novels portray their existence with the specific aim of injecting desired information into students and making them go through similar tests and experiments to reach their goals without recognising each child’s inborn potential and abilities. Ideals like self-reflection, self-evaluation, and commiseration are absent in such microworlds. Educational institutions are intended to bring overall development for a child and to make him/her a better citizen to contribute his abilities for social well-being. Even though they claim that they exist for making children socially responsible, what they do is curtail their freedom and limit them within predetermined boundaries. In this way, the real nature of such centres is masked by false images and ideas created for attaining public support. The truth is that they control the children by fitting them into some old moulds. Schools presented in the novels are based on predefined models and all children are considered alike without taking the pain of differentiating their abilities. All are judged by the academic grades they get in examinations. Their individual peculiarities and abilities are destroyed at a young age itself as seen in the characters. Instead of becoming a place of positivity and energy, educational institutions teach students to adapt to the system silently. A place that is expected to benefit society harms its people first and society second.

The characters criticise, abandon and revolt against the worthless system of education and expose its hyperreal nature. The seventeen-year-old chubby “pink” granddaughter of the old professor in *Wonderland* never worries about her loss of school days. She received home education from her grandfather who taught her every subject including music and horse riding. She knows four foreign languages, has read tons of books, studied navigation, tightrope walking, and also cooking and sewing from the housemaid. In her grandfather’s opinion, a school is a place where one is forced to waste one’s precious sixteen years. The protagonist who had wasted his years in school too agrees with it as he finds himself inferior to the girl’s knowledge, courage, and abilities.

Nakata’s school days in *Kafka* show how an institution for the growth of children can be cruel to a differently abled child. Children who do not show any sympathy for a mentally challenged mate will never be responsible citizens in society. The school doesn’t try to change its’ students’ manners by teaching them the value of kindness and empathy. What happens is Nakata is forced to stop his education because of the unbearable bullying of his schoolmates. He liked his school and spent time in the company of birds and nursing the garden. Being a quiet and obedient child, he was never a burden to his teachers or other children. Still, he was forced to quit his education. Another example is Yuki, Boku’s teenage friend in *Dance* who keeps herself away from the educational system. Due to her eccentric nature, which according to Makimura inherited from her mother, she becomes a butt of ridicule in the school. Her predictions about unfortunate things which happen within no time make other students call her a “spook”. When Ame shares the traditional notion that “...the idea of not going to school is socially wrong” (Birnbaum, *DDD* 277), Boku strikes at the root of this remark by hitting at the notion of right and wrong. He rejects

the accepted ideas about socially good and socially bad as the distinction between both has faded away under the spell of simulation. Simulated educational institutions can't benefit the real growth of children but can only give the false notion to parents that everything is going on as expected and will turn out well.

The examples of those who discontinue education by recognising its worthlessness can be counted. May in *Wind up Bird* quits her school education as she finds it an inappropriate place for her. She fights against her parents' decision of being part of a traditional system of education and leaves her home to join a wig-making company. She works in their factory in the countryside fixing hair carefully. May, who never found a place among the elite-class children in her school, goes well with the countryside girls who are less ambitious and are contented with what they have. The hypocritical nature of educational institutions is exposed by Murakami in *Wood*. All the revolts and the expected positive changes are meaningless in establishments that stand for the well-being of the authorities instead of students and society. The college where Toru Watanabe studies is an example of using an educational institution as the system's mouthpiece. Watanabe doesn't like the political smell of the dorm which supports the ruling power and has stood against students' movements on campus. He feels something "fishy" about the dorm while they preach education for the fundamental development of the nation before the public and practice the opposite. Such institutions become the best option for the rich to invest money got by swindling to escape from taxes. These places with the idea of equality and protection of values perform the opposite. The dorm contains an elite group of students who are privileged and with assured jobs after their graduation despite their academic performance. It becomes a place of domination by the powerful and the affluent where others are marginalised.

Midori in *Wood* criticises school education from various aspects. She did her early education in an average country school and was good at her studies. Her academic merits and the teachers' advice forced her parents to send her to a city convent school where she lost all pleasures of education. She calls it "a fancy place" and could not find a real friendship there. The affluent society in the school paid high tuition fees and conducted expensive school trips suffocating her. Midori felt isolated in her class as she belonged to a middle-class family. She always suffered financial problems while studying in such a prestigious school among wealthy students and had to tackle several tough situations where she was at the edge of revealing her poverty. In those days, she was always haunted by the threat of exposing her penury. Watanabe also, in the novel, finds himself uncomfortable in the company of a convent-educated sophisticated girl. The artificial air surrounding her suffocates him and he keeps a safe distance from her.

In the selected novels, educational institutions do not contribute to the self-search of the protagonists, and they prefer to have practical lessons from society. Kafka stops his schooling temporarily at the age of fifteen and leaves home in search of the mystery of his abandonment. He understands that to solve the mental agony he needs to seek other ways than continuing with the worthless system. The simulated nature of educational institutions becomes clearer in the character analysis of the villains who go in tune with it. Education does not render any help in molding their character and making them responsible citizens. Noboru Wataya, in *Wind up Bird*, moves along with the system and becomes a nasty capitalist icon. His academic brilliance only helps him bully his sisters and poison the whole society. With the help of the prestigious status of his uncle, he manages to get a top position in government service. Gotanda's experience with school in *Dance* is not at all different. School, as a

second home, does not give any concern to his hidden side and it never brings any change in his violent nature which ended in making him a murderer. After one's education what a person attains is only a highly-paid job and not the ability to be real a human being.

Murakami believes that if a society has positive aspects, it has its negative sides too. The growth of a society begins with the recognition and identification of such negative aspects. His criticisms of Japanese society are based on this idea. According to him, shadows represent the identity of a person and he affirms that if there is no shadow, there is no individuality. Shadows are limited not only to individuals but to every society and nation. A nation's history is its shadow. If history is simulated the identity of a nation falls into a state of confusion. *Wind up Bird* depicts the role of Japan in increasing the horror of war. He deconstructs the "reality" behind the Battle of Nomonhan which is a forgotten chapter in the pages of Japanese history. History, instead of becoming the true record of past events has transformed into a strong source of manipulation of the truth. By concealing and erasing the truth it becomes a simulacrum.

History is the collective memory of a nation and to manipulate or forget this memory is unpardonable as it affects the minds of its people as seen in the novel. Wars, battles, and revolutions are forms of simulacra where people are unaware of the political dramas of leaders and believe in the replay of images celebrated by the media. Those who are in power decide on wars and ordinary people face the consequences. The authority put forward some "genuine" reasons for waging wars when the real fascist reason is hidden behind them. The role of Japan in World War II as recorded in the historical and academic texts of the nation misleads the succeeding

generation by giving them wrong ideas about their nation. People fail to recognise that the reality behind historical events has been lost and they live in false consciousness.

Toru Okada who is unexpectedly thrown into the collective unconscious of the nation hears about the war from the first-hand experience of Lieutenant Mamiya, a war victim, who was forced to join the army by the authorities. Many soldiers in the Japanese army are presented as against waging wars, but they are forced to obey the government. Sergeant Hamano's words are relevant here. "I'm telling you Lieutenant, this is one war that doesn't have any Righteous cause. It's just two sides killing each other" (143). He is worried about the innocent people like farmers and fishermen who lose their lives as the enemies hide in villages, taking off their uniforms and mixing with civilians. Being difficult to identify the enemies from the mob the Japanese army involves in mass killing. There are people like Hamano who believe that war for no reason will not benefit any nation and Baudrillard goes a step further by listing all wars and revolutions as simulacra that can only destroy nations and their people. Murakami depicts the theme of war as the tension between the will of the individual and the power of the state where the former is annihilated.

The dilemma of people and soldiers who become a part of war directly or indirectly is highlighted by the author. Lieutenant Mamiya was in charge of the Military Survey Corps specialized in map-making at the time of the Nomonhan battle. Both Mamiya and Mr. Honda, the spiritual face of the Wataya family, were together on the mission to investigate the Mongolians who lived in Manchukuo. Manchukuo was a puppet state formed by Japan in the war with China in 1938. The place had borders shared with the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia. During World War II, the Mongolian troupe under the Mongolian People's Republic and the Soviet Union supported China in its war against Japan. The Japanese authorities appointed a four

men army to carry out some secret mission on the border which is under Soviet surveillance. The Soviet army was powerful and vigilant about border violations. Mamiya and Honda were included in that group along with Yamamoto and Hamano. Yamamoto was the only person to know about the real mission while the others were only to carry out his commands. He managed to get the secret document from the enemy troop but the group was caught by the Mongolian army.

Mamiya, in his letter to Okada, gives a detailed description of how they suffered at the hands of the Mongolian and Soviet enemies. Hamano, who was at the sentry at the time of the attack, was killed by them. Yamamoto, the ringleader, was skinned alive by a Mongolian soldier in front of Mamiya. He refused to surrender the secret document and got killed by them brutally. They were devils in military uniform headed by a cruel Russian officer named Boris. The honest declaration of the inhumanity of the Mongols as explained by Boris shows the change that war creates in human beings. "They love to kill people in ways that involve great difficulty and imagination. They are, shall we say, aficionados. Since the days of Genghis Khan, the Mongols have enjoyed devising particularly cruel ways of killing people" (157). Even though many years have passed since the battle, Mamiya still hears screaming of Yamamoto when each part of his body got skinned by the Mongolian soldier. He hadn't experienced anything that horrible and it shatters the rest of his life.

This incident and the following experience at the bottom of the dried-up well where he is put to death by the enemy changed Mamiya's life. He tells Okada, "...what I wanted to convey to you was my feeling that real life may have ended for me deep in that well in the desert of outer Mongolia" (170). He became stoic and passive in everything. Completely alienated from the society he began to think that his life was meaningless. The zeal for life came to an end and it was his rebirth as a new

being who can endure everything with detachment. The fear of death that he had before joining the military came to end and he wanted to die at any moment as he was desperate for life. His heart was completely blank and a kind of numbness surrounded him. He believed that something inside him had dried up in the well. War brought him only miseries that he lost his left hand, parents, sisters, beloved, and precious twelve years from his life. After the war, he spent his life as a social studies teacher in a village school. The screaming of Yamamoto always haunts him in his dreams. The trauma of war follows him throughout his life and Mamiya becomes a representative of those who is forced into violence under the guise of patriotism.

The original nature of wars is hidden and soldiers are unable to find a sense of belongingness to what they are doing. They are guided by hyper-nationalism which becomes a hegemonic tool of the ruling government. When they understand that the celebrated nationalism was only a false ideal, the soldiers get dejected leading to suicide or complete withdrawal from society. In Nakata's meeting with Johnnie Walker in *Kafka*, the latter says that human history is about killing and being killed,

When a war starts people are forced to become soldiers. They carry guns and go to the front lines and have to kill soldiers on the other side. As many as they possibly can. Nobody cares whether you like killing other people or not. It's just something you have to do. Otherwise *you're* the one who gets killed (Gabriel, *KOS* 153).

Murakami has personal experience from his father who had served the imperial army and was reluctant to speak about his wartime days which only made him sick.

Kafka, in his encounter with the forest, meets the soldiers who went missing during the mock battles with the Russian army considering the forest as Siberian

forests. They do not understand the meaning of killing or being killed, “Over there it was kill or to be killed...Neither one of us wants to kill anybody. And being killed’s even worse” (433). There is no real enmity among soldiers whether they are Russian, Japanese, or American which is clear from the actions of the Japanese soldiers while dealing with the Chinese prisoners witnessed by the Veterinarian in *Wind up Bird*. The soldiers face a big dilemma as they are forced to kill the prisoners obeying the authority. They wage wars by recognising it as a meaningless affair. The novel shows that when wars are believed to be fought for strengthening and protecting a nation, in effect, it questions humanity and destroys the peace of the world. But some involve immensely in violence and killing like Boris for their selfish motives considering war as a suitable opportunity to do any crime and corruption. War proves to be a simulation when its participants question and doubt the “reality” it presents before the public.

The psychological effect of war on common people is unexplainable. Nakata’s loss of memory is a result of the sudden outburst of his teacher, Setsuko Okamochi, who led an isolated life since her father and husband were sent to the war front by the government. They could not escape from compulsory military service. People who are not directly on the war front severely suffer its consequences as seen in Okamochi. She suffers mentally by living in isolation and despair. Unfulfilled and intense wish for love and lust from her husband drove her to uncontrollable anger which got showered on the nine-year-old Nakata and led to his unconscious state. During the time of war, people are always afraid of sudden bombings or chemical attacks from enemies. The Rice Bowl Hill accident which can be considered a silent attack got concealed from the public like many other incidents during the war. The intelligence agencies were unable to find out the real reasons for the temporary comma state of the

children and they only reached some speculations. More than that it didn't receive media attention because nobody got killed and the children returned to a normal state after some time.

War doesn't leave anybody to go outside its circle and its presence continues through generations giving value to Murakami's claim for recognising the manipulated depiction of history. Nutmeg and her family in *Wind up Bird* became refugees after the defeat of Japan in 1945. The wartime dilemmas experienced by her father narrated by Nutmeg and heard by Cinnamon are harmoniously connected to the protagonist's search for truth. Nutmeg's father was a teacher at a veterinary college and was the chief veterinary surgeon. During the time of war, he was sent to Hsin-ching to take charge of the new zoo there. The family moved to the new place when Nutmeg was three. Even though Japan got defeated, the veterinarian's dedication to his work didn't let him leave the zoo and escape to Japan. But he ensured the safety of his family and Nutmeg couldn't see him after their return from Hsin-Ching.

The poor vet was a man of kindness who was happy in the company of his lovable animals. Their liquidation created a vacuum in his mind that he was unable to fill. The cruelties shown to the war prisoners and the mental ill-health of the Japanese soldiers made him numb. He could do nothing but obey the orders of those in power. He was so attached to his family and their separation left him alone amid blood and hatred. The transformation of the world within hours startled him; the world in which tigers, bears, and leopards lived was no longer there. There emerged a new world without his loved ones. He could not find the separating line between these two worlds which puzzled him, "May be the world was like a revolving door...There were tigers in one section, but no tigers in another...And there was no logical continuity

from one section to another” (Rubin, *TWBC* 411). His words emphasise the uncertainties and illogical happenings of life.

All these personal events do not find a place in history as it deals with the profile of leaders, conquered territories, and the number of deaths. Murakami recognises the need for the subjectivity of history as its objective status is simulated. There is not a single history but histories with the experiences of common people which are more dependable than the recorded ones. History has lost its value due to its overexposure to create a hyperreal atmosphere. Baudrillard says that history has been fetishised and has become a passive presence to make people curious and inspired. The reality of history is lost but people are eager to accept it as “real”. The term “historical” has undergone a serious setback by using it everywhere and every time without any reference to its value. The reinjection of history is a valueless process only to market the nostalgia of people. The death of reality fills people with nostalgia for old times. They immerse themselves in bringing back the lost referential which is futile. Attempts to regain the zeal of history and myths through cinemas and other visual zones are examples of it. To quote Baudrillard, “...that all previous history is resurrected in bulk...only nostalgia endlessly accumulates...” (44).

Historically considered, the Battle of Nomonhan was the biggest defeat. It was a magnificent battle fought without enough arms on the Japanese side to challenge the Russian troops. The soldiers lacked necessary things like water and food. They controlled their thirst by looking helplessly at the river flowing near them on the Russian border. Many tried to reach the river in desperation but got killed. Several soldiers lost their lives and some committed suicide obeying commands from their superior officers. The battle was one of shame to the imperial army, so it never paid attention to the surviving soldiers. The incident didn't find significance in the

historical texts of Japan as it displayed many flaws on the side of the imperial army. The historical amnesia of the postwar generation deliberately caused by the state is clear when Toru Okada says that he hasn't heard anything of the battle of Nomonhan even though it was a notable encounter. The state concealed it from the history books and Honda adds to it,

Nomonhan was a great embarrassment for the Imperial Army, so they sent the survivors where they were most likely to be killed. The commanding officers who made such a mess of Nomonhan went on to have distinguished careers in central command. Some of the bastards even became politicians after the war. But the guys who fought their hearts out for them were almost snuffed out (53).

Japan's autocratic nature during the time of World War II was strategically hidden from history and thereby from its people's minds. It helped in creating a false image of the nation hiding its cruelty towards its own people and other Asian nations including China, Singapore, Malaysia, and Korea. Murakami breaks the shell of this simulation and speaks about the importance of accepting the truth even after several years of the incident as he is well aware of the unavoidable connection between the collective and personal unconscious. He knows the fact that Japanese youth is no longer interested in the historical happenings of the nation. Hoshino, the twenty-three-year-old young man in *Kafka* expresses his doubt at Nakata's statement about the American invasion and attack on Japan. Hoshino bluntly says that Japan has never been occupied by America and that he is not interested in long stories. Murakami questions this type of historical amnesia which is the curse of every nation.

It is a fact that even in this 21st century, the atrocities of Japan on other Asian nations like Singapore are well explained by its tourist guides adding shame to the nation. The cruelties faced by women like the rape of Nanking in China executed by the Japanese army always remain a scar in the history of the nation. The Imperial army of Japan had held sexual slaves who were called “comfort women”. Between 1932 and 1945 women and girl children from China, Korea, and other occupied nations were forced to become military prostitutes. Ninety percent of them didn’t survive the war and the rest were considered social outcasts. After the war, documents on them got destroyed by the Japanese officials to wipe the shame from the face of the rebuilt Japan. The authorities after several protests finally acknowledged their brutality but were not ready to have a sincere apology.

In 2015, when South Korea asked for a stronger apology, the Japanese government dismissed it as a mere past. Murakami emphasises the truth that the past is powerful and it can rebuild the present and future. Wounds are not healed yet and a sincere apology from Japan can bring changes in the mentality of the exploited nations. Feeling responsible for what one’s nation has done is an important thing. This can be connected to what Shashi Tharoor, the Indian writer, and parliamentarian have said about the need for Britain to apologise for the cruel deeds it has done to India during its colonial rule. The merciless attitude of governments drives their people away from truth and reality. Hiding or manipulating reality will never do any good neither to the nation nor to its people. It is a question of taking responsibility which is an important duty of every individual and society.

Japan tried hard to become an autonomous power by winning the western forces in World War II. It demanded the submission of other Asian nations to resist the west, but all proved futile with the Battle of Nomonhan in 1939 and the

subsequent atomic tragedies. It was apparent that the soldiers were struggling due to the lack of supplies like wool, food, water, and ammunition even before starting the war. But the officers didn't pay any attention to such practical difficulties instead they believed that

...the proper "way" "his majesty's warriors" was to fight with bold self-abandonment no matter how ill-equipped they might be; that true martial glory lay in conquering a mighty foe when outnumbered and poorly armed. Strike the enemy and advance "too swiftly for supplies to keep up": that was the path to honour" (496).

The novel shows that such ridiculous ideas on the part of authorities were responsible for the death of many soldiers in different battles. The selfish motives of the leaders which created dishonour to Japan got hidden in the simulation of hyper-nationalism. The Veterinarian, Nutmeg's father calls it "megalomaniac nationalism" which drove the poor farmers' sons into the military for the cause of their nation while the greediness for power remains hidden behind. Unquestionable adherence to authority silences their reason and he thinks, "They would follow without a second thought the orders of a superior, no matter how outlandish. Commanded in the name of the emperor to dig a hole through the earth to Brazil, they would grab a shovel and set to work" (508). He says that some people may call this attitude "purity" but it is in fact slavery. The soldiers have become simulacra losing their identity and the power to think.

Murakami concentrates on the disappearance of original history which challenges citizens' knowledge about their nation. Historical reality becomes a subjective experience in the selected novels but it is not devoid of truth and reality.

On the one hand, Murakami criticises the manipulation of history and on the other hand, he celebrates its subjectiveness. This is seen through the ways his characters are connected with historical happenings. There is no single reality as something called true history because, in a world of simulation, it is impossible to portray its objectivity. But there are personal realities that can expose the hidden and manipulated versions of historical happenings.

The writer has experienced pointless riots and revolutions in university campuses in Japan and has understood that all revolutions are modelled on earlier revolutions and the results are predecided. In *Wood*, Toru Watanabe studies at Tokyo University College in the years 1968- 1970, during the time of the Zenkyoto movements. Many protests occurred and several students were put into jail. The university was closed for several days. But the government suppressed all revolutions and everything dissipated into the air. On a fine day, Watanabe could see the revolutionaries attending classes on the campus as if nothing had happened. The slogan “dismantle the university” only proves to be a simulacrum as he says that universities are places of huge investments which can’t be dismantled easily by aimless revolutions. He says, “All they had really wanted to do was shift the balance of power within the university structure...” (Rubin, *NW* 61). Revolutions without the base of real ideologies can only bring the transformation of power from one capitalist to another. The revolutionaries are manipulators who make themselves and others believe that they are “really” changing the system while the fact remains that there are no chances of “real” revolutions in a simulated world. The youth of Japan viewed the years 1969 and 70 as great transformations but they got disappointed when the barrenness that worked behind the ideologies got revealed.

Watanabe is a person who cannot accept the fake nature of things, people, or society. He is doubtful about the real aims of the campus revolution and doesn't believe in the so-called revolutionaries. He is not a supporter of the state either and contemptuously looks at the ritual of flag hoisting in the morning and its lowering in the evening in the dorm where he stays. He says,

I didn't know why the flag had to be taken down at night. The nation continued to exist while it was dark, and plenty of people worked all night—railway construction crews and taxi drivers and bar hostesses and firemen and night watchmen: it seemed unfair to me that such people were denied the protection of the flag (14).

The failure of students' revolutions, he feels, is because of the absence of substance in them. He is wonderstruck at the sudden end of all the riots and seeing the lions of the revolution transforming into cats and listening to the lectures patiently. Students who aim for higher positions and highly paid jobs are clever enough to think not to do anything against the authority. His cleanliness freak and highly disciplined roommate who is called a "Nazi" or "stormtrooper" is an example. The stormtrooper is a staunch admirer of state rules and an uncompromising right-wing student. He listens to radio calisthenics every day and exercises with the rest of the nation without knowing whether he is jumping or jogging. It is pathetic to see the loss of the ability of people to recognise the difference between forced and genuine ideals where simulation marks its presence. When Watanabe considers the ritual of flag hoisting as an example of hyper-nationalism and blind obedience, others take it as natural, unavoidable, and admirable.

Midori Kobayashi in her conversation with Watanabe speaks about her experience with the fake revolutionaries in the college. The folk-music club which she joined insisted its members read *Das Capital* as there is a close relationship between folk songs and society. Midori tried to read it but didn't understand its content. The topic, the group discussed on imperialism and the big words they used were "greek to her". When she asked doubts, she was treated like an idiot and a social cripple. All the other members pretended that they knew everything and she became a butt of ridicule. She didn't understand if the book was written for the empowerment of the working class, then why it was done in a very difficult manner. Midori herself belongs to the working class which helps in social progress but is being cheated and exploited by the powerful. She opines to Watanabe that if anything is written on them, it should be understandable to them not only to the elite group of society. People's terrible behaviour when their ignorance is about to get exposed and their pretension as encyclopaedia seem hypocritical to her. The group members are attracted by the halo behind Marxist ideals and they are ignorant about the life of the working class. They just want to pass time with hollow dialogues and ideologies to impress girls. They simulate themselves to be revolutionaries who try hard to change society. But they are insincere in their actions and after graduation, they will surely go to some multinational companies to lick their shoes. They preach Marxism but practice horrible things echoing Orwell's idea of "double-speak" in *1984*.

Midori tells Watanabe about an incident that shows the gender discrimination and hidden cruelty rooted in such a revolutionary group. In a political meeting of the club, each girl was asked to make twenty rice balls. Midori was against this order as it showed gender disparity but she kept quiet and obeyed them. While all the other girls decorated their rice balls with some costly foodstuff, Midori made simple traditional

rice balls. The members of the club harassed her for her simple cooking and she left the group forever. She says that the “revolution-mongers” don’t know the value of food and the taste of hunger and wonders how such people can bring real revolution in society. The hollowness of revolution and revolutionaries is exposed and the dilemma that brings innocent people who believe in these ideals by thinking of them as “real” is brought forth in the novel.

Like Watanabe, Midori doesn’t believe in the miracle of the students’ movement in the university and says, “Revolution or not, the working class will just keep on scraping a living in the same old shitholes. And what is a revolution?” (236). The fake revolutionaries and hollow ideas have made the revolution a simulacrum. It has become a tool for political parties to reach power. The dissolution of ideologies is well presented by Murakami and treated as one of the major reasons for the alienation of the postwar generations. Miss Saeki in *Kafka* loses her soul mate in the students’ movement at the University of Tokyo. The raging rioters killed him by mistaking him for somebody else. He became a victim of mob violence. The incident shows the disappearance of real revolutionary spirit and revolution has been degraded as an alternate term for violence.

Oshima speaks to Kafka about the emptiness behind ideologies. The young women who visit the Komura Memorial Library to survey the public facilities for women question Oshima and complain about the lack of concern for women. They find sexual inequality in cataloguing male authors before female authors and insist on the need for a ladies' toilet when there is a common one for all genders. This shows that the use of the term “feminism” in unnecessary situations makes women’s cause inferior and a simulacrum. The genuineness of a great ideology is lost by using it in a hyperrealistic manner. Oshima informs them that the toilet facilities are shared by

both men and women since theirs is not a big library. The women become speechless when he mentions the shared toilets in airplanes. They use feminism as a fancy ideology without understanding its real value. The impractical application of the term in every nook and corner has manipulated and evaporated the term of its essence by leaving the doctrine a simulacrum. The same happens in the case of revolutionary ideologies. In Oshima's opinion, hollow people make the ideologies hollow, "Intolerance, theories cut off from reality, empty terminology, usurped ideals, inflexible systems..." (Gabriel, *KOS* 196) are the products of people lacking in imagination.

Even the concept of freedom is simulated and has lost its essence. People feel that they are free beings, who think and live freely, but Oshima says to Kafka that the idea of freedom is an illusion and people do not want to make themselves uncomfortable by being really free. They are satisfied with the objects which give them the feeling of freedom and belongingness. Civilization is a simulacrum as it is built upon the freedom of its people by controlling them with their permission. By quoting Rousseau, Oshima says that civilization is all about building fences. Those who build the highest fence are the most dangerous group and they will survive and dominate. The fences indicate a lack of freedom. Oshima gives the example of Australian Aborigines whose fenceless civilization was destroyed by the British.

The tragedy of the Tasadays who became the victims of simulation pointed out by Baudrillard can be read along with this. Tasadays was a group of tribal people discovered in the dense rainforest of the Philippines who had been brought to modern civilization in 1971. Ethnology, after bringing out the Tasadays to the filthiness of modern culture destroyed their fenceless civilization. It made a false sacrifice of protecting them from destruction by letting them live in the jungle again. The reality

of the tribe in which they were living got disturbed by the intervention of the outer world. The paradox is that ethnology has killed their peace and culture by studying them. They are finally left as neither modern nor tribal.

Simulation in ideology is depicted in *Wind up Bird* through the episodes with Mamiya as a captive labourer working in the Siberian mines which were under Communist Russia during World War II. The condition of prisoners who were forced to work in the mines was pathetic beyond explanation. It was the living hell of Japanese, Chinese, and even Russian soldiers who found plotted against the government. Mamiya had an interest in communist ideologies and had read some books on it. But later he is seen as criticising the cruelty done by a government based on communist ideology under Stalin to both its people and others. The oppression of Mongolia, the persecution of many Lamaist priests, and the cruelties in concentration camps showed a remarkable distinction between preaching and practising. In Mamiya's words, "Even if I could have believed in the communist ideology, I could no longer believe in the people or the system that was responsible for putting that ideology and those principles into practice" (Rubin, *TWBC* 539). Ideologies lose their meaning and are put aside in wars and revolutions and what dominate are autocracy, greed, and capitalism. Mamiya's wartime experiences shattered all his beliefs in politics and ideologies. He criticises the Japanese cruelty to the war prisoners and the civilians of Hailar, a province of inner Mongolia under China. Several Chinese labourers got killed to protect the secrecy of the construction of the Japanese base during the end of World War II. These instances show how the system uses the tool of power over the powerless by putting aside all the questions of justice upon which a society is believed to exist.

Politics is a wide playground of simulacra. Hoshino, while crossing the bridge to Shikoku along with Nakata in *Kafka* satirises the game of politicians in winning elections under the mask of development. The politicians have worked it out into three bridges to connect Shikoku, Awaji Island, Tokushima, Sakaide, Onomochi, and Imabari where a single bridge would have been enough according to the geographical location of the places. He calls them, “Your typical vote winning projects...” (Gabriel, *KOS* 224) and manipulation of people’s minds. According to Baudrillard, there is no wonder that the whole world is simulated because even God, the creator is a simulated figure. God is the highest simulacrum as human beings are taught to identify the power of God through images, symbols, and signs. The murderous power of images kills people’s desire to go after their genuine thoughts, feelings, and personal experiences. They are prevented from thinking beyond the images and are forced to believe and live according to their demands. Murakami agrees with this idea when he makes Colonel Sanders in *Kafka* say that God is in a state of flux. When Hoshino is afraid of stealing the sacred stone from a Shinto shrine, Sanders asks whether there exists a God or not. He says that God is not a football referee to believe that he is everywhere. He exists in people’s minds, “God’s no longer God. A very postmodern kind of thing. If you think God’s there, He is. If you don’t, He isn’t. And if that’s what God’s like, I wouldn’t worry about it” (308). People are far away from this fact, and they fight over God-images which are only social constructs.

Degradation of Self under Simulated Science and Technology

Science and technology which is believed to be for the wellness of human beings do harm in the guise of progress and achievements. In *Wonderland* information is the most valuable thing than the lives of human beings. In the age of Infowars, people are transformed into experimental objects whose brains are used to

store data. The government also becomes part of Infowars and it has its agencies to collect data. The novel reveals the degeneration of individuals as mere objects, images, and information. Objects take supremacy over subjects leading to the latter's complete subordination. Information is the object and the human brain is subject. As Faustus sells his soul to Mephistopheles in return for all the knowledge of the world in Marlow's play *Dr. Faustus*, Boku in the novel loses himself in exchange for a good job and an attractive income. Being a calcutec costs one his own life without his knowledge as he has to surrender his body and brain to the System. The System with the help of efficient scientists creates boxes in the inner consciousness of the calcutecs and stores data protected by a password. The individual is denied entry into that special box and it remains unaffected by outside influences.

Modern science has found that the inner consciousness of a human being is the most secure place to hide information. It is based on the idea that a person has no chance to know the working of his unconscious mind. Scientific experiments in the novel make use of the ignorance of people of their unconscious domain and exploit them under the guise of "pure" motives. The question asked by the System to the protagonist is, "Properly speaking, *should any individual ever have exact, clear knowledge of his core consciousness?*" (Birnbau, *HBWEW* 114). The System has put extra rinds over the watermelon to hinder the temptation of sticking fingers into the pulp making brain simulation a successful process. Boku carries this artificial system and is ignorant of its contents.

The calcutec is only a vessel for the process of shuffling data. Boku lives as a programmed machine, a mere simulacrum of an individual. The System gives him the false notion of freedom and he believes in it- freedom as a calcutec. He permitted them to have a life under their surveillance as happened in the life of Om and his

family in Manjula Padmanabhan's drama *Harvest*. The System is able enough to render its calcutecs a false impression of liberty while they are in chains. The real experience of freedom has been lost and their ignorance of this fact leads to their degradation as simulacra. The failure to identify the disappearance of true freedom makes Boku a victim of simulation. This is the way through which capitalist powers gain supremacy over individuals without their knowledge. In such a simulated situation a person is not allowed to recognise his original state. Boku is controlled by rules and regulations and is not allowed to work for anyone or any agency without the written approval of the System. After he works for the old Professor in his underground laboratory he falls into a dangerous situation.

The protagonist is not completely aware of the changes that happened to his inner consciousness. Twenty-six young men, in the beginning, went through brain surgery and training to become calcutecs. At the beginning of their profession, they were happy and comfortable. But later, they began to face emotional breakdowns and brain malfunctions and twenty-five of them died within one and a half years after their training. The only one left is the protagonist. The Pink girl, the granddaughter of the Professor, finds Boku extraordinary with natural antibodies and a special "emotional shell" to protect his core of consciousness and that may be the reason for his survival. The paradox is that his strong emotional shell doesn't help in his degeneration as a mere information holder.

The protagonist is the key to the old Professor's research on the human unconscious. Neuroscience needs human beings as experimental objects and animals can't replace them. The Professor uses Boku as a guinea pig in his laboratory. The description of his research on the human brain shows the inhumanity of science towards its consumers. He has his justifications, "...I only wanted t'say that the purity

of science often hurts many people, just like pure natural phenomena do” (253). He calls the science like brain simulation which causes the death of human beings and concentrates on personal gains as “pure” making it hyperreal and glorifying its supremacy. The Professor says that brain manipulation is “A total simulation” (261). Brains are insured and brain reading is done with the help of computers. The professor says to Boku that the System had rendered a computer visualization from his black box. What happens is the reproduction of one’s core consciousness in the System vault. It is not a mere reproduction, but the insertion of an artificial box that can destroy the original black box. The artificial box can be controlled by scientists who can transform it, fill it, or erase it. They gain absolute freedom over Boku’s core consciousness. Whether Boku is an original individual or a simulated one is answered when he dies in his conscious world and is thrown to the End of the World.

The human brain can no longer be called by the name “brain” as it stops its original function and begins to act as a tool for aiding the Infowar. It is degraded to an image of the brain which loses its connection with the original. The person who carries this simulated brain becomes a whole simulacrum. The Professor simplifies the manipulation as “The best musicians transpose consciousness into sound; painters do the same for colour and shape. Mental phenomenon are the stuff writers make into novels. It’s the same basic logic” (263). It is dangerous to see how a famous scientist normalises the loss of one’s core and calls the process logical where the lives of humans are devalued. His justification for adding a separate circuit to Boku’s brain is his mere curiosity and he is “just” modifying the brain which already contains two circuits. The Professor proudly states that it is the privilege of scientists to go to any extent to reach the result. By giving his curiosity a positive colour, he asserts that science and scientists are getting smarter and more productive. He distorts the fact by

shifting the negative into positive and logical. People believe this distortion and consider it “real” while the reality of science is already lost.

In this futuristic world of Infowars, data and information have replaced human beings. As there is no real war or revolution but only their hyperreal images, there is no real competition in Infowars as everybody believes. What remains is only monopolisation which is explained by the two men, who attack Boku to steal the stored data, “Very democratic...It’s survival of the sharpest...Is Japan a total monopoly state or what? The system monopolizes everything under the info sun, the factory monopolizes everything in the shadows. They don’t know the meaning of competition” (137). The men satirise the hollowness which lies in the concept of democracy. They state that they are neither related to the factory nor the System, but are independent data stealers. Japan, being a state giving importance to democratic values, provides chances to its entire people to show their ability in achieving monopoly as the capitalist powers do. The notion of democracy is used out of context indicating the degradation of ideologies. There is no competition between the System and the Factory, but only the images of competition. Democracy has been replaced by monopoly, the monopoly of those who have more information stored safely.

The violence and destruction unleashed by the men in Boku’s apartment are of a different type with no shouting or words of aggression. Murakami agrees with Baudrillard when he presents the changed nature of violence as it loses its reality. The oxymoron, “peaceful violence” will be suitable to the situation. The attackers destroy all the valuables in the house in a very calm manner, artistically, and without any haste. They make a wound below Boku’s navel as if they are doing surgery after sterilising the blade of the compact knife. The junior one of the two even brings a towel to wipe out blood and they suggest that he may need seven stitches to cure the

wound. It was violence for the sake of violence as the big boy among the two commented that destruction was for the sake of destruction.

Information is no longer used for the benefit of human beings instead people live and die for protecting information- a reversal of the situation. The irresponsible nature of science and technology can transform the world into nothingness as the Professor can mute the world around him. He can silence both nature (the fountain) and human beings (the pink girl). Boku thinks of a world without sound, with silent bombings and attacks, and a new generation finding refinements in mass slaughter. The Professor proudly speaks of a sound-free future world, and he calls the process the pet name “evolution” which may be at the beginning, painful and unacceptable to society. The word “evolution” appears as a simulacrum as it hides the true nature of evolution.

Productivity and smartness become synonyms for inhumanity and selfishness. The terms like development, freedom, and democracy are used to hide the authority’s original intentions, thus becoming the agents of simulation. The Professor tactically hides the fact that he did all the experiments, especially the formulation of the third circuit, without the permission of Boku. He remarks, “I was only addin’ a third widget where there already was two, slightly alterin’ the current of circuits already in the brain. What could be the harm of usin’ the same alphabet flashcards t’spell an extra word?” (264) By this simplifying technique he hides the danger involved in his actions. Boku is ignorant of the real nature of trouble until he reaches the mouth of death. The circuit which was installed for a short time as an experiment gets mixed up with the contents of his original brain. The borderline between reality and simulation is unidentifiable and one can be replaced by the other. Human life reaches a state where there is no difference between simulation and reality and everything is in flux.

The Professor simulates Boku's core consciousness but it falls into reality when his original black box gets connected with the artificial circuit. The desperation and emotional dilemma of the protagonist are clear from his words to the Professor.

You started it, you developed it, you dragged me into it. Wiring quack circuitry into people's heads, faking request forms to get me to do your phony shuffling job, making me cross the system, putting the Semiotics on my tail, luring me down into this hell hole, and now you're snuffing my world! (274).

Even though the Professor apologises, he is not affected by Boku's pathetic condition. He leaves for Finland to start a new laboratory and to continue his research indicating that there is no end to experiments that devalue human beings.

Boku is not free of enthusiasm for science even after his death. The Professor says that his dead body will be studied in detail by the scientists to understand the nature of his strong emotional shell that resisted brain simulation. He can't escape from the clutches of science and imagines his skull on one of the shelves in the Professor's laboratory along with those of other animals and thinks that he will never rest in peace. Science destroys the realities of human beings under the guise of preserving them and neither living nor dead is free from its manipulation. Boku, by giving himself to the hands of the scientists of the System was least bothered about the changes that may happen to his inner consciousness. He was ready to get monitored and manipulated. Both the System and the professor exploited the chance by utilising his extra strong "emotional shell". As a result, when he wakes up to his real situation, he finds himself trapped at the End of the World. Running after material pleasures leads people to their degeneration. Unknowingly they fall prey to a

simulated world and soon find themselves sharing a utopia with a common identity after completely surrendering their selves.

Consequences of Simulation

According to Murakami, being true to one's self is the most important requirement of a human being. People who are immersed in the made-up reality and are trapped in the web of images, forget to follow their realities. When they understand the emptiness in the so-called "reality" they become desperate and lose the meaning of life. Existential crises and loss of identity leading people to mental dilemmas like alienation, depression, anxiety, and lack of meaningful progression are the results of the simulation. Due to the disappearance of reality and the tyranny of simulated images, symbols, and signs, people have moved away from their real selves. Being alienated from oneself, fellow beings, society, and nature one's life becomes meaningless. The identities of individuals are inseparable from the society in which they live. When these identities get manipulated by outside forces, they become desperate losing the ability to fight back. By becoming simulacra, they do not recognise the meaning of their existence. All the protagonists in the selected novels go through this existential dilemma.

Kafka feels a large void within him because of the rejection of love. Denial of motherly affection and rejection from his father makes him isolated at a younger age. He feels disconnected from society because of the restless self within him. It affects his existence as a societal being and recognises that he needs all his questions to be answered for being a productive person. The second protagonist of the novel, Nakata doesn't know the purpose of life that connects him to the lives of cats, and with his feline friends, he shares everything. He lives an isolated life, and his alienation is

forced on him by society because of his difference. Nakata's dumbness curtails his ability to understand his existential crisis and the pain of dissociation, but he recognises it later. Toru Okada in *Wind up Bird* always carries a feeling that he doesn't belong to the society in which he lives. His sudden resignation from his job and approach to life shows his disinterestedness as a human being. He falls into a deeper crisis when his wife Kumiko leaves him remaining the question of true understanding between husband and wife. The simulated world around him toughens up the process of finding the truth.

Boku in *Dance* tries to cure his mental dilemma and isolation in two ways: one is by shutting himself in his house from outside contacts; the other is by trying to involve in the simulated society as an automaton. Both these prove to be futile fastening his journey to self-realisation. The protagonist in *Wonderland* tries to find comfort in his favourite job, amassing wealth and living a thoughtless life. He never cares about his self which ultimately costs his life in the Hard Boiled Wonderland. Rejection of the inner mind in the first world and loss of memory of the conscious mind in the second domain make him struggle. Toru Watanabe in *Wood* spends his college life in an alienated state. He feels that he doesn't belong to the institution or the students there. Social constraints which curb individual peculiarities hold the responsibility for the hard situation created by the death of his intimate friends.

Many characters in the selected novels fall into the dilemma between the real self and the simulated one and struggle to live according to the demands of their image. Gotanda is an example of the deterioration of a human being to an image by leading a life modelled for him by somebody else. There are some preconditions for living the life of a celebrity. He is expected to drive a Mercedes even though he prefers a second-hand Subaru, to live in a stylish apartment against his wish of being

in some middle-class house in a serene atmosphere, and to dine at some particular elite places where people are too busy to give attention to his celebrity status. In his school and college days, Gotanda was a perfect son and an excellent student. From the beginning of his life, he was caught in images, as he says, the image of “the eternal golden boy”. As the pet of teachers and parents, he was good at whatever he touched and gained admiration from everybody. He didn’t dare to fight against the image and always worked hard to meet the expectations of teachers, parents, and friends. He never got an opportunity to decide for himself. Compelled by a friend he joined a theatre group and discovered the ability to act within himself. Some minor roles inaugurated his entry into the film industry and later trapped in the heroic image and began acting type roles. Being bored by playing the repeated roles as a handsome doctor or a teacher he feels that he was happier with the theatre group than in the limelight of a superstar.

The events that lead to Gotanda’s marriage to a popular actress project the way by which people’s decisions are manipulated by society. They acted in some films together and went for some outings which were caught by the media and became a talk among the public. Rumours began to spread about their “romance” both inside and outside the industry. Everybody thought that they would be a nice couple and it drove them to the decision of having a serious relationship, forced on them in a particular way. Whether he really wished to marry her or fallen into a simulated situation created by society is an unanswered question.

Gotanda recognises that he wants something else which he never gets and a sense of disappointment and desperation develops inside him paving the way for his hidden violent self to make its appearance. There is a real Gotanda inside the image and he doesn’t show justice to it. He says to Boku that he wishes to be free of his

celebrity status to live a simple life somewhere in a small house with his wife. He yearns for an ordinary life — going to an office every morning, returning home to the company of his loving wife and children, buying a Subaru in instalments, and enjoying small things of life. But it remains a dream as everything in his life is decided by somebody else. Gotanda's wife is also a victim of the celebrity image created by society. Even though she loves him she can't live with him because she is a puppet of the celebrity status system who disagrees with Gotanda's dream of having a simple life.

After their divorce, the couple meets in the “love hotels” in Tokyo. Celebrities, love hotels with a secretive nature and claustrophobic environment which become appropriate for them. Gotanda recognises the meaninglessness involved in such places and calls them artificial as there is no need for a particular place for making love. A dark room with covered-up windows is not a suitable place for lovemaking even though the name means the reverse. The love hotel is a simulacrum that hides the difference between love and lust. It is there only to give the feeling of “really doing it” and has nothing to do with one's real feeling of love. He suppresses his wish to quit film acting and join his old theatrical group because of the fear that his ex-wife may leave him forever. As an actress, she was brought up under the “star system pressure” and she needs the company of those who suffer the same pressure around her. The couple is a true example of souls caught up in images and social status who fail to recognise the existence of a self within them.

Being confused between his acting self and his real self Gotanda feels like he has lost his soul. He says to Boku, “I don't know whether I trust myself. Everybody else trusts me, sure, but, really, I'm nothing but this image...I mean it's like which is me and which is the role? Where is the line between me and my shadow?” (Birnbbaum,

DDD 144). He fails to recognise the distinction between his identity and the image of a celebrity stamped on him. His real self and identity are hidden and whatever he speaks or does is received based on his celebrity status not as an individual. It is the dilemma about which Baudrillard says that everything is imploded into each other and there is no difference between reality and images and one considers the lifeless models as his reality. Gotanda feels deserted and thinks that his life is a role play. He is jealous of Boku who is involved in the process of self-liberation. The murder of Kiki exposes the real character behind the image. The urge for destruction and violence is concealed when he is in a group but makes its appearance when he is getting connected with his self. He says that this might be the only difference between Gotanda the actor and Gotanda the person. It was like something from his inner mind which forced him to do terrible things to have a feeling of reality.

Gotanda lies to Boku about his jail days during the students' riot. He cheated the union to escape from the police and is haunted by his guilty feeling throughout his life. Both his personal and public lives are acting. Gotanda becomes a victim of the giant void within his core created by the simulated system. Kizuki and Naoko in *Wood* also belong to the category of victims. They end their lives when they are no longer able to meet societal expectations. The couple lacks the power to use their inner potential to fight against the simulated society. The feeling of inferiority and the dilemma of hiding their original selves lead to their death. The thought that they lack something inside which can be filled by some outside agencies, through secondary bonds paves way for their alienation. Both of them are concerned about the presence of another individual residing within them suffering and struggling to come out. They hold the manipulated thought that their real selves have some deformations, and it is the reason for their isolation while the truth is different.

The characters' misunderstanding of society as "real" and their inner minds as inferior and complicated lead to their downfall. The genuine relationship between Kizuki and Naoko comes to an end with the intervention of society. Their limited world and non-belongingness with the system choke them hard. Kizuki ends his life when he understands his inability to be a part of it. Within the trio — Kumiko, Kizuki, and Watanabe, he was the most cheerful, talkative, and vibrant. But he was unable to find a place in society. He takes the simulated society for "real" and falls a victim to it. His inability to recognise the light of self and blind belief in social taboos lead to his doom. Naoko and Kizuki supported each other both mentally and physically. They were like Eve and Adam until society destroyed their Eden like Satan with its predecided conditions. Naoko says to Watanabe at the Ami Hostel, "The pain of growing up. We didn't pay when we should have, so now the bills are due. Which is why Kizuki did what he did and why I'm here" (Rubin, *NW* 169).

In the novel, Naoko and Midori represent two different ways of dealing with the hypocritical nature of society. A comparison between both can add more to the nature of the existential dilemma that Naoko underwent. When Naoko fails in life, even though it is clubbed with her mental problems, Midori overcomes the problems courageously. Like Naoko, Midori too has experienced death in a closer manner. The death of her mother drives her family into darkness. But she is confident and upholds her attitudes and opinions against popular notions. Midori learns to fight against the hypocrisies and the artificialities of the world around her. She suspends all the perceptions about the expected behaviour of a beautiful teenage girl and never considers herself as "chic" or as a soft and elegant girl with refined manners. Her views on love, life, and death are different. In her words, "...the whole world is a donkey shit..." (224) where people live happily by judging and forcing stuff on each

other. She likes Toru Watanabe because he neither forces her to do what she doesn't like nor irritates her with advice. They watch porn movies together and she enjoys it, especially the "gulp" sounds made by the actors. Watanabe thinks of the images generated by such movies with overexpression and sounds hyperreal that do not have any connection with real-life sex. Midori enjoys them as unreal by understanding their hyperreality.

Midori's criticisms of the fake nature of society are applaudable. She says to Watanabe about how one of her relatives wonders about her appetite when her father is on death bed. She mocks the attitude of her relatives who shed false sympathies at her condition. She questions society's accepted notion of correctness and falsities and has only contempt towards her neighbours who wonder at the daughters' tearless faces at the time of their father's funeral. While Naoko approaches society with fear and doubt, Midori finds her place through confidence and courage. Naoko can't understand the make-believe nature of the world and blames herself for her agonies. Midori, on the other hand, criticises society without hesitation, understands its fictitious nature, and learns to be a part of it by maintaining her identity.

Hoshino the young follower of Nakata in *Kafka* is a captive of simulation from which he hopes to escape after meeting his "Buddha" (Nakata). He had a shabby childhood, notorious teenage, and an uneventful youth. The things which connect him to the world are his love for his grandfather and his admiration for the baseball team named Chunichi Dragons. He tries to identify his self with the team by always wearing their cap, applauding their success, and weeping at their loss. He fails to understand that the sports team and his identity are never related and that wearing their emblem can't transform anything. From his contact with Nakata, Hoshino understands the foolishness behind his attempt to connect himself with society by

forgetting his individuality. He is a representative of the Japanese youth who leads an empty life.

The inmates of the Town in *Wonderland* are people without shadows or identities. The Town people are devoid of mind and individuality because their shadows are dead forever. The primary step to the death of a shadow is its separation from the individual. Boku's shadow is cut off from him by the Gatekeeper and it warns him of the dangerous world where they have reached, "There's something wrong with this place. People can't live without their shadows, and shadows can't live without people. Yet they're splitting us apart" (Birnbbaum, *HBWEW* 63). The shadows can't overcome the bone-piercing chilled climate and they die soon. The Town takes away the identity of the inmates by keeping them "comfortable" in the utopia. It stands for a capitalist society where people easily fall for simulation giving up their senses and selves. People in the Town involve in activities without any purpose. The Colonel says that it is a marvellous place where nobody hurts or gets hurt and no defeat or victory. The inmates are governed by the feeling that their needs are met by the system without understanding the fact that even their needs are simulated. They consider the needs of the capitalist system as their own as the Colonel says, "The things you need, the things you need to know, one by one the Town will set these before you. Hear me now: this Town is perfect. And by perfect, I mean complete. It has everything" (85). The inmates fall for this perfection which makes them forget about their shadows and lead a carefree life.

Boku's loss of eyesight as the first step of becoming a Dreamreader who can't bear sunlight anymore shows his surrender to the system. Even though his inner mind is active while dream reading, he can't figure out the speedy running of images and signs through his brain. He is reduced to a tool for achieving the hidden agenda of the

Town. His situation is not different from the Hard Boiled Wonderland, the simulated Tokyo where he is used as an experimental object to carry out the Infowar by the System. In the End of the World as well he faces a similar situation even though the nature of his job varies. He acts as a catalyst that remains unaffected during the whole cerebral process of dream reading reminding the passive presence of his inner consciousness in the Infowar. The total disappearance of the self happens when the Dreamreader reads out the memories, images, and thoughts from the skulls of beasts into the air.

Having a genuine mind and acting according to its needs are remarkable concerns of Murakami. The library girl says to Boku, "I remember Mother told me that if one has mind, nothing is ever lost, regardless where one goes" (351). Her mother was expatriated from the Town for keeping her mind and had been driven into the Woods. The Town punishes those who are against its system and manipulate it by letting others take it as normal and who breathe that the Town is "perfect". The pathetic situation is that the people do not understand the danger of losing their selves as they haven't recognised its power yet. The library girl feels sympathy for the caretaker of the powerhouse who lives in the Woods in exile for keeping his half-shadow. The paradox is that instead of feeling sad at her condition of living like a phantom, she considers herself lucky to be a part of the Town by surrendering her mind. The identity of the Town inhabitants is under simulation as they do not apprehend that their existence is based upon the curtailment of their freedom and individuality.

Some characters make use of the dominance of images and models in the place of realities and get benefitted from it. They do not think of human qualities like kindness, love, and empathy and identify themselves easily with the filthy ways of the

simulated system. The difference between the victims and the villains is that the former section is passive while the latter is active by making use of all opportunities provided by the system. Characters like Nagasava in *Wood* exploit the capitalist system to their advantage. He despises its ugliness but tries to reach its topmost position by showcasing all his inhuman abilities. According to him, “A gentleman is someone who does not what he wants to do but what he *should* do” (Murakami, *NW* 72). This statement can be interpreted as against the individuality of a person. It gives the message that the real needs or inner potentials of a person are not important but how he presents himself in a simulated society is important. Nagasava admires the principles of utilitarianism, the motto of modern man reminding the logical school of Thomas Gradgrind in Dickens’ *Hard Times*. He is selfish and is protected from emotions and has his own logic in whatever he does. Hatsumi, his girlfriend, suffers due to his heartless behaviour which leads to her suicide.

In Nagasava’s opinion, there is a gap between his self and others. By mentioning the importance of self what he means is being selfish. Nagasava is a human simulacrum that can confuse and destroy others’ realities. Even though he perceives his self he fails to understand that it is simulated. Watanabe says, “Sometimes, when I’m talking to him, I feel as if I’m going around and around in circles. The same process that takes him higher and higher leaves me going around in circles. It makes me feel so empty!” (283) A close analysis can show that Nagasava’s notion of the real self has got manipulated by the system. Manipulation is an effective tool of simulation that can hide the difference between truth and false and in which both positivity and negativity are overlapped and engendered. Later, his practical nature gains recognition from society and he reaches a supreme governmental position after his graduation.

Noboru Wataya in *Wind up Bird* is a weird manipulator and shares some of the characteristics of Nagasava, but he is crueller and more dangerous than him. After learning from his parents about how to deal with the pretentious society, he exploits it to the maximum. His father advises him that all are not equal in this world even though people are taught so. He says, “Japan might have the political structure of a democratic nation, but it was at the same time a fiercely carnivorous class society in which the weak were devoured by the strong, and unless you became one of the elite, there was no point in living in this country” (Murakami, *TWBC* 73). From his childhood itself, Wataya was made to believe by his parents that suppressing the inferior was the way to success. They provided him with all the luxury and he was eager to maintain his position as topmost in whatever fields he was involved in. He had no feelings or humanity. By writing books on economics, he becomes a successful author and a frequent presence in television debates. Society values him as one of the topmost-ranking intellectuals and many articles are being written about him. Wataya is a simulacrum hiding his weird nature and creating acceptance among people through a deceptive image. He utilises power, money, politics, and people for the manipulated presentation of his real nature.

By understanding that the system is built upon deceiving idealism and that there is a wide gap between what is taught and what is real, Wataya decides to give a false image to society. Altering his individuality to be compatible with television debates, he transforms himself into a “successful” economist who can demolish his opponents with meaningful gestures. He creates the image of an intellectual tycoon by using media and inverting ideas. Okada’s observations about the thick book on economics authored by Wataya show the effect of simulation on common people. The book contains intellectual jargon and newly coined words that are hard for the public

to digest but it is widely accepted due to its mysterious nature. The common belief is that whatever is unexplainable but widely accepted has great quality in it and those who do not appreciate it are ignorant minds. The meaningless ideas produced by the book are taken as “real” by the public because of the celebrated image of Wataya. Okada is sure that nobody would have understood the stuff the book contained. The real Wataya whom Okada and Kumiko know well is hidden behind the television image. Okada thinks,

He had obviously been worked on by a professional...And even if he had been outfitted by the network, he wore the style with perfect ease, as if he had been dressed that way all life...Where was the real Noboru Wataya?...On the television screen, he looked far more intelligent and reliable than the real Noboru Wataya. (75)

Wataya gained public attention by outwitting people’s thoughts with technical jargon and with the “logic” which has no essence. Nobody notices his hypocritical nature of stating something in a week and its opposite in the next week. It proves impossible to counter his arguments as they are not real and will be like in Okada’s opinion boxing with a ghost and all the punches will be wasted in the air. It is not only about the loss of the real but the power of images to manipulate people’s thinking to swallow them as “real”. Wataya belongs to a world of simulation and Okada to the real. He despises people like Okada who are not “successful” and unable to catch up with life. Paradoxically, Wataya leading a simulated life philosophises about the challenges of dealing only with surface “reality” to the public. People like him not only become simulacra but agents of simulation with the ability to trick others.

People like Wataya try to create a world suitable for them eliminating those who do not fit it. Boris the man skinner in *Wind up Bird*, Johnnie Walker, and Tamura Koichi in *Kafka* are examples. Boris kills, exploits, and harasses many wartime captives and he is figured as an unbeaten enemy in the novel. Johnnie Walker and Tamura Koichi are presented as one soul in two bodies. Tamura Koichi, even though a sculptor destroys everything he touches including human minds. The paradox is that he is a creator exhibiting destructive nature. He wants to avenge his wife through his son, thus burdening him with the Oedipus curse. Johnnie Walker, the cat murderer, collects the souls of cats to create a flute that will make him superior to everything in the world. He can be considered a representative of all capitalist forces which capture human souls and manipulate their needs. These two characters yearn for supreme power to satisfy their selves. When they doubt failure, they undertake various means of destruction to prevent them from collapsing. They are sadistic and wish to see others suffering either mentally or physically.

The dissatisfaction with life makes people destructive and this situation is a serious aftereffect of simulation. As simulation feeds its people with unlimited and artificial needs they fail to find their real demands. The characters try to gain meaning, purpose, and happiness by controlling others which is the hidden motto of advanced capitalism. Identity becomes an illusion manipulated by consumerist culture, media, state, and capitalist powers. The dilemma between the attraction towards the “ideal” and one’s responsibility to one’s self, is the predicament of every being. The selected novels undoubtedly clarify that Murakami agrees with the Baudrillardian notion that reality is no longer present in an advanced capitalist society and people fail to recognise it. The substitution of reality affects both individuals and society in unexpected ways and what is now experienced is the desert of the real.

Chapter 4

Transformation within: Decoding Murakamian Spirituality

“Take a moment to think about this. Each of us possesses a tangible, living soul. The system has no such thing. We must not allow the system to exploit us” (qtd. in Flood, 16 Feb. *The Guardian*). While receiving Israel’s prestigious literary award, the Jerusalem Prize, Murakami made this remark. The author is innately concerned with the presence of a unique soul that every man possesses and he recognises it as the key to spiritual liberation amid various types of simulation. He equates spirituality with the attainment of reality and it engages his characters in war with simulation. The chapter analyses the different ways by which the characters undergo a spiritual transformation. Simulation results in the deprivation of one’s self and the characters make spiritual quests to resist the hyperreal forces which govern them. Personal and collective experiences create wounds in their minds which are difficult to get healed in a simulated world that causes emptiness, dejection, and resignation. They wish to run away from the unceasing pressure of the material world to some imaginary lands but learn the truth that one’s self is the only residing place of all solutions.

Murakami’s unorthodox views on spirituality are clear from what he said in an interview that he doesn’t believe in the existence of God but in the inner power of the human system. Spirituality has a unique and different existence beyond religion and it can be understood as the capacity of human beings to rise above their ego. It is the ability to recognise the manipulation and establish a transpersonal connection with the world. The self-realisation of a person begins from the acceptance of this fact and there happens the new harmony within oneself and with society. Disharmony between the conscious and unconscious worlds leads to psychological conflicts. Self-

actualisation is the recognition and unification with self by resolving these conflicts. When one is harmonised with one's self, he/she is spiritually liberated.

Murakamian spirituality is a combination of both connection and disconnection and attachment and detachment at the same time but the differentiating line between them is visible. In the novels, the inner world of characters takes the shapes of subterranean domains, hidden paths like subways, undergrounds, wells, or abandoned buildings, and those which give the feeling of the existence of another world beyond the conscious domain. Going into the other world is a kind of self-therapy that his protagonists undertake to overcome their spiritual voidness. Kawamoto Saburo, the Japanese critic considers Murakami a socially committed writer who fights against the void, and the author humbly agrees with Kawamoto's observation. According to him, human existence is like a two-storied house; the first floor is connected with family and society and the second floor is a private space with one's likes and dislikes. The basement is a frequently visited area, a place of memories. There is another space beneath the basement that many people never find out about. In his words,

If by some chance you do suddenly enter, however, what you find is darkness. This darkness, I believe, corresponds to the kind of darkness pre-modern people – because they did not have electricity - experienced physically. People enter in, grope around in this darkness, and experience things they cannot see in an ordinary house. This is linked to their own past, because it is also a journey into their own soul. (qtd. in Dil, *search for self-therapy* 50).

Murakami's conviction of spirituality and the process involved is apparent when his characters are made to open the secret door, encounter darkness, and return to the

conscious world as self-actualised beings. The dark space beneath is one's unconscious world. It is the journey from the simulated conscious world to the real unconscious and then back to the newly achieved conscious reality. As the unconscious realm remains unconquered, the characters do not claim that they have captured it, but the methods they adopt to reach it, their experience, and the truth they learn awake them spiritually. The unfolding of reality brings unexpected changes to their selves aiding their transformation as original beings. The newly gained reality is different from what they experienced before the beginning of the journey. The unconscious or inner consciousness, the term used by the author, is the educator where the realisation of truth and recognition of one's inner abilities takes place.

Making the Unconscious Conscious

Eric Fromm identifies the fact that discovering the unconscious is not an intellectual act, but an effective experience that is beyond explanation. It is a matter of total experience which includes spontaneity and suddenness. The world begins to appear to the person in a new light and he/she sees it from a different viewpoint. The anxiety experienced before the journey is substituted by a new feeling of strength and certainty. In his words, "The process of discovering the unconscious can be described as a series of ever-widening experiences, which are felt deeply and which transcend theoretical, intellectual knowledge" (Suzuki, *Psychoanalysis* 110-111). In psychoanalytical terms, it is the full awakening to their realities that make people productive and generates relatedness with the world in a creative way instead of being exploitative, possessive, and selfish. It is a state of highest objectivity where a thing is seen as not something against the person, but as it is, in its real essence. The person doesn't apply his sense of like or dislike to it. There is no borderline between me and not me. He/she can experience the object and can retain it as it is and both help each

other in bringing harmony and aliveness. The distinction between subject and object fades away. It is enlightenment psychologically and Fromm says,

If we would try to express enlightenment in psychological terms, I would say that it is a state in which the person is completely tuned to the reality outside and inside of him, a state in which he is fully aware of it and fully grasps it... He who awakes is open and responsive to the world...because he has given up holding on to himself as a thing, and thus has become empty and ready to receive. To be enlightened means "the full awakening of the total personality to reality (Suzuki, *Psychoanalysis* 115-116).

The chapter substitutes the term enlightenment with individuation, self-actualisation, or self-realisation. The new harmonious relatedness with the world is a repetition of the child's world of happiness, but the revived one is based on man's unique abilities and individuality. When a child experiences enlightenment before alienation, the grown-up man experiences it after alienation. The transformation changes one's approach to the world. One begins to feel the world from the ground of one's innate powers not by thoughts or intellect but with experiential knowledge. According to Fromm, self-awareness is seeing reality by overcoming repressiveness and shedding illusions and lies. "To make the conscious unconscious means to live in truth. Reality has ceased to be alienated; I am open to it; I let it be; hence my responses to it are "true" (Suzuki, *Psychoanalysis* 130).

The process of making the unconscious conscious demands training from both sides. The conscious part needs to reduce its dependence on simulated society and the unconscious needs to be trained to come out of its dark zone to light. It is the uncontaminated grasp of reality within oneself and connecting it with the outer world.

The arousal of inner abilities and their contribution to one's self-actualisation is the prime concern of Fromm. The protagonists in the selected novels, make use of their inner potential in the process. They feel the other world with the help of various tools like memory, history, music, dreams, fantasies, imagination, hallucination, visions, and coincidences. According to Jung, the aim of self-actualisation is individuation which is the harmony between both worlds and maintaining equilibrium among them. It is combining the personal with the collective by developing a sense of belongingness.

The Double Worlds and the Labyrinths

Murakami is carried on by the thought of dual worlds existing within a person—the conscious domain of outer reality and the unconscious domain of inner reality. Jung viewed both as important where one can't dominate the other. It is difficult for them to find out the gateway to enter the second domain and they need the help of their inner potential and guidance from outside. Both Jung and Fromm emphasise the point of equilibrium between both worlds, the productive zone that every individual needs to attain. The Murakamian protagonists reach this point after completing their process of self-actualisation.

Murakami makes use of the age-old concept of labyrinths along with the modern aspects of psychoanalysis to give expression to his characters' inner journeys. They travel through their inner labyrinths and reach their realities. "Labyrinth" is a circulatory pattern prevalent from ancient times, to bring out the ultimate connection between the unconscious and the conscious. It has a centre point where all the questions will get answered. Every human being has a labyrinth inside as Oshima says, "Things outside you are projections of what's inside you, and what's inside you

is a projection of what's outside. So when you step into the labyrinth outside you, at the same time you're stepping into the labyrinth *inside*" (Gabriel, *KOS* 379). The origin of the idea, as he says, comes from the ancient Mesopotamians who used and admired the complex animal and human intestines and related them with the outside labyrinths. A labyrinth leads man through a single path of twists and turns to wholeness. It is less complicated when compared to a maze. A person needs to go through a unique path to reach the centre. The single entrance also works as the exit and the journey into the centre signifies one's travelling into the core and the exit shows his return to the conscious world. There is no doubt that it is complex in structure but not unreachable.

When a man begins his journey to self-actualisation he feels the co-existence of both the inner and outer labyrinths. The inner labyrinth demands potential like patience, endurance, and courage to enter its spiritual path. The choice can be made only when one is outside of it. Once the journey to the centre is started, he/she has to complete the path and return safely. A labyrinth tests man's inner abilities and creative powers which become active in the journey. One may be blocked on the way or choose the wrong path which can lead to dead ends. There is no cutting across and one needs to complete walking through the pattern inward and outward. It is the pathway of man's inner transformation and it provides him with answers, listens to his intuitions, expands his inner vision, mobilizes his sensibilities, purifies his soul, and encourages him to take up challenges. It separates the body from the mind and at the end, both are combined to form a harmonious union which is the aim of every labyrinth. Man's return to the conscious world after his spiritual awakening is important otherwise he may get caught inside as some lose themselves in the unconscious realm as explained by Jung.

Each protagonist's inner labyrinth presented in the selected novels is unique. Kafka's inner labyrinth is connected to the wild forest and Boku in *Dance* recognises the old Dolphin Hotel as his core. When the End of the World is presented as the unconscious domain of the protagonist in *Wonderland*, the well and the hotel room take the role of *Wind up Bird*. Naoko's labyrinthine zone is different from all these and it is shown by her brisk walking through the busy streets of Tokyo which have historical significance. Murakami reminds the danger involved in this inner zone through the words of Oshima who makes it clear that if one goes beyond a limit, one will get trapped inside the labyrinth and forget the path to the exit. Jung's idea of keeping one leg in the conscious and the other in the unconscious as primitive men did is reflected here.

Subject/Object Dichotomy and Self-actualisation in *Kafka*

Kafka lives with the feeling that he is an incomplete being with half self as the other half is beyond his grasp. He recognises his wounded soul by the rejection of love from his mother. The memory of his mother leaving him without hesitating, consoling, hugging, or looking back haunts him always. It creates psychological complexes and dilemmas in him. His strong wish to find an answer to the abandonment which pulls him back from the conscious world is the reason for his journey to the truth. Kafka recognises the dark element hidden inside which often makes its presence in the form of violence. He considers the violent part as the "other" which visits him intimidatingly. His impulsive attack on a classmate as if directed by some inner force is an example. By identifying the inner darkness he admits, "I fly into rage, and it's as if I blow a fuse. As if somebody pushes a switch in my head and my body does its thing before my mind can catch up. It's as if i'm here, but in a way it's not me" (Gabriel, *KOS* 92). The violent act is instinctual and he

believes that he has inherited it from his father's evil blood and genes and wishes to have a complete purification of his body and soul. The journey from darkness into light leads him to the "mechanism buried deep inside". The Crow speaks about a sandstorm inside everyone which adjusts its direction according to the movement of the subject. The sandstorm is a metaphor for the unconscious realm and it has to be dealt with as the Crow says,

So all you can do is give into it, step right inside the storm, closing your eyes and plugging up your ears so the sand doesn't get in, and walk through it step by step. There's no sun there, no moon, no direction, no sense of time. Just fine white sand swirling up into the sky like pulverised bones (3).

These words underline the timeless and self-contented nature of the unconscious and anticipate the protagonist's journey through it.

Kafka's spiritual liberation is connected with Nakata's fulfilment of his mission. His entry into the forest and Nakata reaching Takamatsu and his visit to the library happen in parallel lines. The opening up of the entrance stone initiated by Nakata in the physical domain enables Kafka to go into the forest in the mountainous region of Kochi. Such journeys are not impulsive acts for Murakami's protagonists. They make preparations to face their unknown realities. By taking the rucksack containing a knife, compass, canteen, and some foodstuff Kafka gets into the dense forest which acts as his outer labyrinth and through which he reaches the inner domain. Nakata too begins his journey from Tokyo towards the west to his "centre" with all the necessary items like clothes, toiletries, snacks, and some money. Inside the forest, because of the fear of losing direction, Kafka sprays the trees for identifying the exit route. The dark green nature with deep silence invokes various

thoughts about his past, its meaning, and destiny. He thinks, “If there’s a curse in all this, I mean to grab it by the horns and fulfil the programme that’s been laid out for me. Lift the burden from my shoulders and live- not caught up in someone else’s but as *me*” (416).

The intermingling of positive and negative thoughts in Kafka is detailed by Murakami as a natural process of self-actualisation. A deep inner emptiness inside bewilders him and he feels some hindrances in the forward path as if touching a dead end of the labyrinth. By realising the inability of his ego called the “I/me” to fight with the inner void, he separates it and begins to move closer to his unconscious realm. Forgetting the false consciousness turns out to be a hard task but he becomes successful. He says, “I close my eyes and try to find my centre. The darkness that covers it is rough and jagged. There’s a break in the dark clouds, it’s like looking out of the window to see the leaves of the dogwood gleaming like a thousand blades in the moonlight” (417). Kafka’s abandoning of the rucksack symbolises his removal of connection with the conscious world. He is no more afraid of the strange pathways of the forest or worried about losing his way back to the cabin. The forest has its own patterns and he understands that he can continue with his journey by grasping this repetitive structure. Recognition of the fixed pattern of the labyrinth which recurs in every turning of the forest shows the beginning of the connection with his inner zone. The scenery of towering trees, thick ferns, gnarled roots, spiders’ webs, decayed leaves, and hidden and twisty branches get repeated. He understands the complex structure of both the inner and the outer labyrinths and it removes his fear. By finding a connection with the labyrinth he says, “The forest is essentially a part of me, isn’t it?... The journey I’m taking is *inside me*. Just as blood travels down veins, what I’m

seeing is my inner self, and what seems threatening is just the echo of the fear in my heart” (428).

Combining the personal and the collective elements is visible with the entry of two missing soldiers of the time of World War II. They live in that timeless zone by guarding the forest and are there to help Kafka when he reaches a dead end. The War and the events of the time appear in the role of the collective unconscious in the lives of both protagonists. Kafka in the conscious world neither thinks of any war nor the predicament of soldiers. But his inner consciousness contains this collective element and it finds expression in the journey. Murakami indicates that the terror of war and its dilemma is common to all human beings even though they have no direct experience with it. The journey into the centre is a tough task and Kafka is given the option to quit and go back to the real world by the soldiers. They tell him that it is not hard to come out of the world inside the labyrinth, but it is not easy either and the decision is strictly personal. The centre is situated at the very bottom part of the forest and the path to it is steep giving the message that the protagonist is going down deep into his inner realm. It is not the one infused with trees, flowers, or waterfalls as everyone expects it to be in the lap of the forest but is based on Kafka’s knowledge and experience as it is his special zone. Being a town boy, he can’t imagine a place without buildings, electricity, or other modern facilities. He is a stranger to nature and his other world has the semblance of the conscious realm of Tokyo city with many expressionless buildings of the same size and shape and twisted roadways. The small town inside the forest without any sign of human beings acts as the core of his inner consciousness.

Young Saeki, whom Kafka meets at the centre, advises him to consider the place as a part of his self, not as a different object. The idea of absorbing oneself into

the surroundings and their objects and thereby having a sense of belongingness with the world functions as an important factor in one's self-search. She says, "It's as if when you're in the forest, you become a seamless part of it. When you're in the rain, you're part of the rain. When you're in the morning, you're a seamless part of the morning. When you're with me, you become a part of me" (472). A shift between subject and object happens in Kafka's journey. It is not the disappearance of subject/object dichotomy causing simulation but a realisation of the difference between both and maintaining harmony without falling into preconceived notions.

Kafka's wounded self can be considered the subject and his mother is the object. The old Miss Saeki who joins Kafka's inner consciousness asks for forgiveness and admits her mistake that she abandoned him mercilessly but explains her mental state at that time. She loved her son but knew that she would leave him once because of the evil influence of his father. The rejection was an escape from that fearful anxiety and the decision to attack that feeling instead of being enslaved by it. Even though he questions his mother's wrongdoing, he understands the circumstances which led his mother to abandon him. By removing the garb of ego, he identifies the voice of the Crow who advises him to consider his dilemma of rejection from a different perspective. His condition as a child was indeed miserable but one can't undo the past and the possible thing is learning to accept it.

Man has to go through several such miseries like aggression, desperation, fear, isolation, and rejection but they provide him opportunities to become stronger by using his potential like acceptance and forgiveness. The Crow says, "Understand the overpowering fear and anger she experienced, and feel it as your own- the way you won't inherit it or repeat it. The main thing is this: you have to *forgive* her" (431). The inner potentials of empathy and forgiveness are aroused in Kafka and he understands

his mother's dilemma. It is not a question of right or wrong, but acceptance, and in this way, one's self will be saved from alienation. The power of the umbilical cord is brought out by giving the mother's blood to purify her son's polluted body which he is always worried about. By using a hairpin she makes a wound on her arm and Kafka sucks blood from it. He says, "Only now do I understand how much I've wanted that blood. My mind is some place far away, though my body is still right here- just like a living spirit" (477). He feels liberated after the cleansing done by his mother's blood.

The women, the young and old Saeki whom Kafka meets at the centre perform significant roles in pacifying the loss of anima in him. The young Saeki whom he meets in the forest house fulfils the purpose of the anima of "Helen as lover" in Jungian terms, symbolising sexuality. Jung has stated that no man is completely masculine and has concealed feminine traits in him and he calls such elements anima. "The anima, being of feminine gender, is exclusively a figure that compensates the feminine consciousness. In woman, the compensating figure is of a masculine character, and can therefore appropriately be termed the animus" (Adler, Vol. 9 328). The repressed traits of men find expression in women whom they are associated with like mother, sister, beloved, goddess, wife, and so on. Anima has four stages; Eve, Helen, Mary, and Sophia. Eve is a loving mother who is inseparable from her child. Helen carries the sexual image and Mary the religious feeling and capacity for lasting relationships. The last image, Sophia symbolises wisdom and is the guide to man's inner realm.

Kafka has a suffering anima abandoned by his mother without fulfilling the duty of Eve. Its presence was painful and inactive in his mind. In his journey, he captures the alienated anima which is represented by Miss Saeki. The feeling of rejection is taken off by the presence of his mother in his unconscious realm. She

takes up the role of Sophia as well by providing him with solutions and removing the darkness inside. This makes his self-realisation complete and is left with the strong presence of anima in his memory. Murakami points out that the recognition of one's anima/animus and its actualisation is essential for spiritual well-being. When Kafka was suffering from the loss of Anima, Miss Saeki was struggling with the gap created by the loss of animus caused by the death of her beloved. Animus is the repressed masculine qualities in women that find physical expression in a father figure, brother, lover, or husband. From her childhood itself, Miss Saeki's animus was her beloved, the young Komura, who was like another part of her self. Oshima says, "Anyone who falls in love is searching for the missing pieces of themselves" (319). The young Seaki seeks the missing part in Kafka considering that her dead lover's spirit has been transferred to him and this leads to their sexual relationship thereby the fulfilment of Oedipus prophecy. Tamura Koichi also suffers soul from the loss of anima as Miss Saeki has left him and created his loneliness. He takes revenge by showering the prophecy on his son and wife.

According to Jung, the encounter with the shadow is the "apprentice-piece" in a man's development, and coming to terms with the anima is the "masterpiece". In Kafka's journey, the anima has been transformed from a troublesome adversary into a creative agent. It provides answers to his worries and becomes the solace for all the bitterness he underwent till then. His question of the purpose of living without loved ones is answered by his mother who advises him to keep looking at the painting "Kafka on the Shore" which she gifts him. The painting is a representation of one's search for lost spirit and meaning. It was done by a travelling artist who had visited the Komuras years ago. It presents a boy, Saeki's dead lover, lying in a deck chair beside a seashore while young Saeki was standing beside him and commenting.

The painting was presented to Miss Saeki by her lover before he left for higher education and she began to find new meanings by looking at it and immersing in memories. She has been connected with her inner world by meditating on the painting which gave meaning to her life and the courage to live in her conscious world. It helped her live peacefully and wait patiently till the arrival of Kafka and Nakata. In Kafka's labyrinth, Miss Saeki tells him that the boy in the painting is Kafka himself. By closing his eyes and imagining himself in the position of the boy in the chair he feels like young Saeki's lover and could see the painter and Saeki gazing in his direction. He could feel the smell of the air and the sound of the waves. His love for the fifteen-year-old Saeki gets a renewed form in his memory. He is told to carry this memory of love as a stimulant to live meaningfully in the conscious world.

For Kafka, the painting symbolises his mother's love and it gives him the courage and positivity to face the challenges of life. Kafka's inferior feelings and alienation from society are cured by Miss Saeki's love. He achieved the lost motherly affection and it helped him to fill the spiritual void inside. She requests him to remember her and thus make her a part of his life. Kafka's painful memory of his mother leaving him as a child was replaced by the new memory of being one with her through the painting. The painting is the object and the difference between his self and the object disappears through the power of imagination. The subject and the object are united by making use of memory as a creative source. Fromm has advocated the creative use of memories in the "being" mode of living. It is not just remembering but connecting things and incidents, recalling words and images to provide positive energy. Miss Saeki wishes to burn out all her diaries and to be alive in Kafka's immortal memories, unlike various types of simulacra.

Miss Saeki worries about Kafka being trapped inside the labyrinth and wants him to go back before the entrance gets closed. The soldiers take him back from the centre and lead him through the twisting sloppy paths. The sight of spray-painted trees and the rucksack he had abandoned confirms the unanimous entrance and exit of the labyrinth. When he reaches the cabin in the conscious domain, he feels that something has drained from his body and mind, and is transformed into a lighter being. He says,

I stand in the clearing in front of the cabin and gaze up at the sky. The world around me is suddenly filled with brilliant sounds- birds chirping, water gurgling down the stream, wind rustling the leaves. All faint, but to me, it's as if corks had been pulled from my ears and now everything sounds so alive, so warm, so close. Everything is mixed together, but still I can make out each individual sound (480).

Kafka feels the different sounds of nature in a mixed way but can decipher each sound separately. This symbolises his ability to look at things both as a whole and as separate entities. He learns to become a part of society by belongingness and at the same time establishing his identity. Kafka's transformation is not only the recognition of his unique self but regaining the sense of belongingness with his surroundings. He recognises the need of being part of society as a productive individual. By understanding the truth that one can't run away from one's responsibility he decides to return to Tokyo. A shift from alienation to relatedness can be seen in his decision to continue his education. He compensates for the loss of his mother with her memory which he can save in his private room. As Oshima says, all the lost things or feelings are stored in a little room of the human mind and one can keep it lively with one's frequent visits.

Nakata's self-actualisation is of a different nature which is connected with the revival of his shadow. His empty state is indicated by the absence of his half-shadow. Recognition of one's shadow is an essential step of the inner journey and getting united with it means knowing the real self. Shadow is a collective archetype, the dissociative element between the individual and the collective psyche. Jung considers it as the dangerous and the dark half of self, but one needs to recognise and ward off its negativities to attain spiritual liberation. People in the simulated world do not accept the existence of their shadows. They are trained to abandon it from the very early stages of their lives and feel comfortable "living" like automatons.

Shadow is an imminent but suppressed part of a person that he/she fails to identify due to the pressures of material life. One of the cats named Otsuka tells Nakata that he carries only a part of his shadow and needs to find out the other part. At first, he doesn't recognise the need for a whole shadow and holds the idea that it never makes any difference to his life or death. But the cat hints about the necessity to think of his shadow by considering it as a separate existence. A shadow is not a passive presence and it contains things that are unknown to the conscious mind. Murakami considers shadows as the bridge between the two worlds and without identifying them one can't gain self-realisation.

Nakata lives in a state of flux between the conscious and the unconscious domains. Loss of connection with society drives him to the company of animals and plants and it shows his inability to be a part of the human world. The harmony between both worlds slips away from him. He lives neither as a social nor as a spiritual being. He is aware of the other world which is dark and different from the conscious one. It contains everything but at the same time a place of nothingness. That part in the darkness, he considers his friend but doesn't want to interact with it as

it may create disturbances to the other half. He led a life of “No dissatisfactions, no anger at anything. No feelings of loneliness, anxieties about the future, or worries that his life was difficult or inconvenient” (231). Kafka’s inner darkness takes a physical form in Nakata’s violent actions like the killing of Johnnie Walker. It opens the hidden doors of his inner mind and he begins to feel the presence of his inner domain.

Murakami makes it clear that the real seat of violence is not in the conscious realm but in the dark half of one’s inner consciousness which can be called the shadow. Nobody can escape violence however cautious one is because it is inside and takes its position in the underlying structure of society. There is hidden violence in both Nakata and Kafka. The mob violence on a young man that Nakata witnesses and the attack on Saeki’s beloved by a group of people show the psychological nature of violence hidden as a collective element. Johnnie Walker evokes the repressed elements including violence in Nakata. A union between his halves is instigated by the entry of Johnnie Walker who hurries the process of the recognition of his dark half. From a psychoanalytic point of view, Johnnie Walker symbolises the dark part of Nakata’s unconscious mind because his words and deeds are directed at the closed shelves of the old man. He is warned by his feline friends about the dark villain because of the belief that the unconscious is an evil zone and one needs to keep oneself away from it. But recognising the unconscious is the process of defeating this dark zone with the help of inner potential which can lead to transformation. Nakata enters the dark realm from a vacant plot of land and finds himself lying in the same place after killing Johnnie Walker. The vacant lands are of great significance in the Murakamian literary world as they symbolise the vast domain of the unconscious realm.

Johnnie Walker compels Nakata to action by brutally killing and savouring his favourite cats. When Nakata loses control of himself and begins to react, the villain says, “A person’s not being himself anymore. You’re no longer yourself. That’s the ticket, Mr. Nakata. Wonderful! The most important thing of all” (159). The presence of a hidden part within everyone that he/she hasn’t recognised is revealed by these words. The cats are his only friends who connect him to the physical world. The possible way to arouse Nakata’s repressed elements like anger, pity, empathy, and embarrassment is by torturing and killing these feline creatures. His concealed domain is exposed by Johnnie Walker’s cruelty towards the cats. As a result, he kills the cruel man and saves the cats. The cats’ suffering, the murder, and the filthy blood of Johnnie Walker smeared on his hands awakened the hidden areas of his inner consciousness.

The earlier violence in childhood had driven Nakata to an empty world and the later violence brings him back to his senses. The seeds of violence residing in his inner mind got released on the cat killer for a good purpose. It initiates his journey from a dump person to a new being. He recognises his shadow, the violent part personified by Johnnie Walker and defeats it. After this incident, he feels connected to the world in some way and begins his journey to reach self-realisation. By acting according to the demands of his inner consciousness he decides to fill his empty self.

Like Nakata, Miss Saeki is also a half spirit with half shadow. Half of her shadow got lost with the death of her lover and it went to the world of memories which takes the physical form of fifteen-year-old Saeki. She lives in two worlds— as the library owner in the conscious domain and the teenager in the unconscious level. Her connection with the latter which she experiences every night when she visits her lover’s room in the library gives meaning to her life. In the outer world, she waits to

fulfil her maternal obligation and the proper burial of her memories. While living in an in-between state, Miss Saeki anticipates self-actualisation. The union of her body and mind occurs with the fulfilment of her motherly obligation in the inner labyrinth of her son. In her conversation with Kafka, she says about the travelling she has made to find the other world, which is beyond the flow of time, to escape from the painful “reality”. Her search finally leads to the realisation that there is no such physical utopia. This helps her to continue to live in the simulated world to carry out her responsibility as a spiritual being in the other world. According to Oshima, there is an invisible wall between her conscious and unconscious worlds and it protects her from outer influences.

The theme of the separate existence of body and soul is motivated by the age-old mythical belief hidden in the collective unconscious of the Japanese psyche. Murakami makes use of the concept of spirit projection as seen in the popular mythical text of Japan, *The Tale of Genji*. Miss Saeki, like Lady Rokujo, one of Prince Genji’s lovers, travels a distance without her knowledge and executes things that suffice her inner consciousness. In Jungian terms, mythology is a part of the collective unconscious and Murakami links the personal with the collective through the spirit projection of Miss Saeki. She has already gone through her labyrinth by opening the entrance and is caught on the wrong path. She waits for events to turn upright to have a harmonious union of the conscious and the unconscious. While Nakata is disconnected from both worlds before his transformation, Miss Saeki is connected with both in separate ways. Both of them live in limbo and hope to get united with the other half of the shadow.

Murakami employs different images and objects to connect the conscious with the unconscious and vice versa. The entrance stone in the novel is the connector

between both worlds. It links Nakata to Miss Saeki and gives hints about the Komura Memorial library which is the destination of his journey. Nakata tells Hoshino that the entrance stone is everywhere and it needn't be in the form of a stone. The mysterious stone symbolises the borderline between the conscious and the unconscious and that one needs to open it for self-actualisation. By the opening of the stone, Kafka receives indications of his journey to the unconscious realm. He dreams of being inside a cave in search of something in the darkness and hears somebody crying out his name at the entrance of the cave. But before reaching the hidden thing he wakes up. The cave symbolises his physical world and the call is from Nakata his alter ego, to enter into the metaphysical domain. There is no inherent meaning to the entrance stone but it can help in restoring things. Colonel Sanders says that it achieves meaning when it is put in proper situations otherwise it is a mere object without any peculiarity.

Nakata believes that his quest is to put distorted things in order. To put it literally, he identifies the dislocated bones of Hoshino and places them in the proper position for preparing him to deal with the mighty entrance stone. His search for the other half of the shadow is the journey through the busy roads of Japan which act as his outer labyrinth with the Komura Memorial Library as its centre. While travelling with Hoshino he goes through his inner labyrinth by remembering his past. For the first time in his life, Nakata thinks of his self seriously. He compares himself to a library without a single book and is worried about its emptiness. His memory of the time when he was like other people makes him feel the need to get connected with the world. He says to Hoshino that he was always acting according to other people's wishes. Now he wants to be a real individual with meaning and identity.

The unconscious realm sends messages to Nakata in the form of revelations, insights, predictions, and other magical deeds. The ignorant Nakata doesn't know any place on earth other than the Nakano ward where he has lived for years. His incomprehension of the upcoming ways and destination connect well with the labyrinthine concept. He is illiterate and can't recognise places by reading their name boards and continues his journey by seeking help from those whom he meets on the way. His inability to answer their question about his destination shows that the path of the labyrinth is unknown to the traveller and he may come across several unexpected twists and turns. Nakata's journey is entirely based upon impulsive and spontaneous revelations. By travelling through the Tomei highway along with Hoshino, he reaches some junctions like Kohoku, Fugigava, and finally Takamatsu. While going through the highway Nakata says that he needs to cross a big bridge and Hoshino guesses it as the route to Shikoku where the library is situated.

Colonel Sanders says to Hoshino that revelations happen in everyone's life, and one needs to develop the ability to understand them. It is the ability to see the truth beyond the physical nature of the world. One has to stop looking at objects from his point of view and see them as independent entities which can bring his/her reality. Nakata begins to recognise the revelations with the defeat of the darkness within him. If there are no revelations, he will keep calm and wait patiently until things turn out. Even though he doesn't know the exact place to reach and roams around a lot in Takamatsu, he never gives up and is stubborn in his decision to reach the centre to fulfil his mission. His abnormal sleep which lasts for thirty-four hours or two days is the waiting time for things to turn out by themselves. This period of hibernation gives time to Kafka to connect the disconnected links.

Burning up Miss Saeki's memories is the final act of Nakata's labyrinthine process. He feels relieved and never wakes up from the long sleep afterward. But his spiritual liberation gets completed with the murder of the evil, the white slimy thing that comes out of his mouth after his death. Hoshino chops the object into pieces before it finds its way to the entrance stone. This paranormal incident symbolises the evacuation of all the evils from Nakata's mind which include his childhood trauma, the tragic incident that grabbed his memory, rejection from society, meaninglessness, and the vile influence of Johnnie Walker. The white object can also be considered as the evil soul of Kafka's father who was reluctant to leave the world at the hands of the Crow. The Oedipus prophecy of fratricide is fulfilled in this way. At the end of the novel, all evils have been expelled and what remains is the hope for a renewed life for Kafka and Hoshino.

Nakata represents every empty-minded being who can be manipulated and used by evil forces like Johnnie Walker/ Tamura Koichi. Murakami tries to point out that an individual has to recognise this poisonous element, defeat it, and strive for self-liberation. His life shows how a person's self-realisation is connected with the psychic reality of others. The self-renewal of Kafka, the salvation of Miss Saeki, and the transformation of Hoshino are based on the journey of Nakata. Hoshino considers him as his mentor who made him think about his identity and the meaning of life. He admires the old man and decides to live according to the lessons he learned from him. Following the old man creates positive changes in his basic attitudes toward life. It can be read along with what Oshima said about the sudden and unexpected change that can happen to a person which can transform him at any time. Hoshino considers Nakata as his Buddha and himself as his obedient disciple who wishes to spend his entire life as his follower. The old man's presence unfolds the closed shelves of his

mind by inspiring him to think of the presence of a self within. The longer he lived the emptier he has become, and he finds his past days crazy without essence and feels relieved by the sense of belongingness with Nakata. He says, “When I am with Mr. Nakata I can’t be bothered with all this *who-am-I?* stuff. Maybe this is going overboard, but I bet Buddha’s followers and Jesus’ apostles felt the same way. *When I’m with Buddha, I always feel I’m where I belong...*” (349). Hoshino is transformed from a hollow man to a real being who decides to live according to the needs of his self. After Nakata’s death, he assures himself that he will always keep him in his memories and it seems to be the greatest homage he can do. He decides to live Nakata-like and is invested in the old man’s ability to talk to cats. Symbolically, it can be seen as the presence of the old man’s spirit in Hoshino.

The novel makes it clear that self-actualisation is possible through the harmonious union of body and spirit. Oshima reminds Kafka of the importance of recognising the dualities of body and spirit and the necessity of their union. Murakami includes Hegel’s philosophy as uttered by the prostitute who was brought by Colonel Sanders. “Hegel believed that a person is not merely conscious of self and object as separate entities, but through the projection of the self via the mediation of the object is volitionally able to gain a deeper understanding of the self. All of which constitutes self-consciousness” (295). One can break the shell called the body and get united with spirit by erasing the subject/object dichotomy. It is a way of looking at the object from its standpoint by reducing the involvement as the subject. The spirit and body are subjects to themselves and objects to each other and a union of both is needed for self-realisation.

Physical and Metaphysical Realms in *Wind up Bird*

Loss of love and feeling of alienation necessitates Toru Okada's self-realisation in *Wind up Bird*. He searches for the other world to eradicate his inner darkness and to reach the truth behind Kumiko's disappearance which is hidden from his conscious domain. The journey which is characterised by fantasies, hallucinations, coincidences, dreams, and revelations provides him with new insights. The personal and collective unconscious are combined to recognise the truth. Okada understands that the conscious domain fails to provide answers to his inner dilemmas and he recognises Honda's advice of being with the "flow". The "flow" symbolises the flow of one's inner consciousness that one needs to identify to establish his/her self and to find belongingness with the physical world. Honda says, "If you resist the flow, everything dries up. If everything dries up, the world is darkness. 'I am he and/ He is me:/ Spring nightfall.' Abandon the self, and there you are" (Rubin, *TWBC* 51). These words picture the general condition of human beings who do not recognise their inner flow. They fall into the subject/ object dilemma since they fail to understand the real need of the self.

The disappearance of his wife worsens Okada's inner emptiness and it affects his anima. The Discovery of the lost half leads him to the mission of unveiling the hidden self of Kumiko. It is after her disappearance that the protagonist recognises that his understanding of her is only superficial and her mental dilemmas are unrevealed even though they had shared six years of marital life. He knows all about her loveless childhood and that she was left to suffer the idiosyncrasies of her paternal grandmother. Her parents didn't really care for her and were happy with their other two bright children. The feeling of abandonment created a vacuum inside Kumiko and it got intensified by the sudden death of her loving sister who was her only companion. She tells Okada of the difference she feels between the outer "reality" and

the inner reality, “I get this feeling like some kind of little something-or-other is there, somewhere inside me...like a burglar is in the house, hiding in a wardrobe...and it comes out every once in a while and messes up whatever order or logic I’ve established for myself” (236). This “something” is her real self which suffers and is indifferent to whatever order she has created in the physical domain. She leads a troublesome life with the dilemma of having double selves and the suffocating gap between both. The existence of the metaphysical world which is in contradiction with the physical haunts her continuously. She could judge the presence of another Kumiko living inside with strange thoughts who obeys the commands of her evil brother. Noboru Wataya transforms her into a puppet in his hands by controlling her inner mind. His evil influence invokes her libido destructively causing unbearable sexual desire and leading her to other men. She acts like a machine controlled by him but inside experiences the pain of guilt, desperation, and sorrow. This leads her to leave Okada and find a solution to her degraded situation.

Okada’s metaphysical journey is materialised by Lieutenant Mamiya’s advice and his experience in Mongolia during World War II. His spiritual experience inside the empty well in the vast desert is a sort of aborted enlightenment. The unexpected and scary attack by the enemies, the cruelty of man skinning, physical torture, mental agony, the reality of death, acute darkness, and the sudden flood of sunlight inside the well open up his inner consciousness. Inside the well, the outer darkness mingles with his inner darkness as it was with the primitive people. Mamiya was stark naked in the company of sand, pebbles, and animal bones. Severe pain, indescribable loneliness, and deep disappointment carried him to the other world beyond the conscious one. Thinking of him as the most isolated being, he empties his mind without the hope of escape or survival. A man, who is abandoned to die in darkness and utterly helpless

without food and water with an injured body and broken mind is put in a situation to look into his own self. The intense and direct sunlight brightens the well for a short time and its sudden disappearance brings out both hope and despair to him. When the sun is at its peak, its rays reach the bottom of the well only for a fraction of the day. At that moment, he senses a soothing unity with the “other” world.

...I spread open both my hands and received the sun in my arms...In the light tears poured out of me. I felt as if all the fluids of my body might turn into tears and come streaming from my eyes, that my body itself might melt away... Indeed, I felt I wanted to die. I experienced a wonderful sense of oneness, an overwhelming sense of unity. Yes that was it: the true meaning of life resided in that light... (166).

The intense light remains only for ten or fifteen seconds and it flares up the core of his consciousness. When Mamiya was in the flood of light he could see “something” taking its shape but dissolving before making itself clear. This happens in the same manner on both days which he spent inside the well. His intimate concentration enables him to see the shape like a shadow coming near to him but it changes its mind and turns back. Before he tries to figure it out, the sunlight recedes and the thing vanishes. It melts away into the light pushing him to great desperation. Instead of thirst, hunger, and pain, he suffers from his inability to have a full view of the “something” in the overwhelming light.

The “something” Mamiya describes is a part of his real self with which he is unable to communicate. The heavenly bliss fades fast before he could reach it and is destined to carry the feeling of desperation for the coming years. His failure to catch the other world and to bring that unique experience into his conscious realm haunts

his life afterward. His journey into the unconscious becomes momentary without giving him the chance to communicate with his self. This incident changes Mamiya's life and transforms him into an empty shell. His materialistic concerns and worries about the conscious world are dried up and he is not connected with the other world as well. He lives in an in-between state- between the physical and the metaphysical and intensely wishes to die on the battlefield because, "When the revelation and the grace were lost, my life was lost. Those living things that had once been there inside me, that had been for that reason of some value, were dead now...They all had been burned to ashes in that fierce light" (209). "Those living things" are the vibrant inner capacities hidden within every individual. Mamiya feels that his chance to have such an experience again is completely lost. This unfulfilled enlightenment gets reflected in his failure to kill Boris, the man skinner, by missing an appropriate opportunity.

The empty Mamiya feels relieved after sharing his experience with Okada and reaches a kind of salvation. The articulation of the past events in minute details enables him to view the events from a different perspective. The visionary man, Honda deliberately sent him to Okada to pave the way for the self-renewal of both. Mamiya acts as a mentor to the protagonist. He advises him about the short span of life and the relevance of such revelations which will never get repeated even if one intensely wishes for it. Okada receives the message of the importance of one's inner realm in solving mental dilemmas from Mamiya. His awareness of the simulated nature of the conscious world makes him prefer a suitable place to ruminate on his life. He recognises that the most appropriate way to think about reality is to get away from its simulated form as far as one can. Like a monk who chooses a peaceful place to meditate for awakening his unconscious mind, the protagonist goes willingly to the darkness of the well for finding the key to his dilemmas. Having a suitable

atmosphere to reach the other world is significant and the empty well appears recurringly in his dreams anticipating his connection with it. Mamiya's experience leads Okada to the bottom of the abandoned well in his neighbourhood and it acts as the bridge to his other world.

The neighbourhood house with its dark and gloomy presence provides a suitable atmosphere for Okada's journey. The well which is situated at the back of the "jinxed" vacant house acts as his outer labyrinth. The hallucinatory hotel room 208 which he reaches by passing through the wall of the well is the centre of his inner labyrinth. The world inside the well is entirely different from the outside zone. Even though it is situated in the middle of Tokyo city, the well is dead to its hustle and bustle. It is a domain of stillness with unchanging characteristics preserving originality to evoke one's inner consciousness. Mamiya was unexpectedly thrown into an encounter with his core consciousness, so he couldn't make it productive. In the case of Okada, he willingly decides to meet his hidden reality and makes necessary preparations by arranging a long rope and ladder, some water, a torch, and a wristwatch. His careful descending into it step by step questions his physical might is the descent into his labyrinth. The repeated circular structure inside the well as he goes down shows the repeated pattern of a labyrinth.

Even though Okada himself chooses to enter the "other" realm, he is afraid of losing connection with the outer world. His difficulty to get separated from the physical world is shown by his frequent checking to see if the ladder is still in the same position as he is afraid of somebody taking it away. The unconscious world demands the separation of the mind from the physical domain and one can apply different methods for concentration to achieve it. Inside the well, Okada imagines himself involved in swimming, his favourite pastime. Then it is changed into flying

symbolising the shift from the physical to the metaphysical. He says, "... I'm floating on the wind like a bird in the sky, looking down at the earth below. I see distant towns and tiny people and flowing rivers. A sense of calm envelops me, a feeling close to rapture" (550). He could identify the other world by the difference in air, temperature, and level of darkness. Memories are clearer and more vivid inside the well than they are in the outside world. His childhood days, school, teachers, people, things, and everything flowed to him in minute detail. The first meeting with Kumiko, their love and marriage, objection from her family, the indifference of Wataya Wataya, and their life after marriage come to him once again as on a big screen. The events which he has forgotten and are only fragmentary in the physical world could be seen as fresh and live and he is surprised at the power of his memory. The feelings like guilt, anger, and disappointment that he felt on different occasions revisit him in the labyrinth through memories and allow him to wash them away forever. The dark elements which sleep in the unconscious domain are being awakened and liberated permanently.

The magic of mingling the outer and the inner darkness enables him to forget the existence of his body and gives the feeling that he is only an abstract self. His spirit gets separated from the body allowing him to travel through the wall of the well into the other world. In his words,

I try to get out of this clumsy flesh of mine, which is crouching here in the dark. Now, I am nothing but a vacant house, an abandoned well. I try to go outside, to change vehicles, to leap from one reality to another that moves at a different speed... (393).

Murakami employs the existence of a metaphysical wall in the border between the conscious and the unconscious realms. The blue and black mark he receives while passing through the wall acts as a symbol of spiritual light to heal the suffering souls. The mark which remains intact in the physical world shows that what Okada experienced is not a dull dream but is strong enough to change his conscious domain.

Okada's labyrinthine experience is different from that of Kafka. Unlike Kafka, he visits the other realm two times and both these visits contribute to making the unconscious elements conscious. After returning from the first journey, he begins to understand more about Kumiko, his surroundings especially the vacant house, and also about Wataya. He opens up his mind to all coincidences and revelations and succeeds in connecting things and people with his life. Surprisingly Okada comes to know of the connection between one's personal life and history. He learns about historical events like Sino Japanese war and its effect on generations. His relationship with Nutmeg and Cinnamon leads him to the thought that he is connected with history symbolising the collective unconscious.

Kumiko's inner dilemma becomes clearer to him after listening to Creta Kano's experiences and the defilement she suffered from Wataya. It makes him think of the importance of self and one's agony in its contaminated state. He recognises the reason for his utmost hatred for Wataya which has been suppressed within him for years. This dark element gets liberated with his fight against the enemy who represents Wataya in the other world. The mysterious woman whom he meets and communicates with in room number 208 can be considered as his anima who takes the role of Sophia. Her face is concealed throughout the novel as she sits in the darkness. Her identity is unrevealed but Okada considers her Kumiko. His love marriage with

Kumiko filled the role of Helen and Mary but her disappearance puts his anima in trouble.

The search for Kumiko is also the search for his vacant anima in the unconscious realm and his inner mind takes up the guise of a mysterious woman. When he says that he wants to know about her identity the voice replies, "I know you well. You know me well. But *I* don't know me" (245). The voice knows Okada's inner consciousness and his real self knows her. But the "*I*" doesn't know the inner realm. The slandering "*I*" means the ego or the persona which acts as a mask. It does not know about the inner realm as it is immersed in false consciousness. The female voice tells him to find out her name which he knows already but has forgotten. The voice is a part of Okada's self and it emphasises the importance of recognising this fact, "If you can find my name, then I can get out of here. I can help you find your wife: help you find Kumiko Okada. If you want to find your wife, try hard to discover my name. That is the lever you want" (246).

The voice differentiates itself from Kumiko by mentioning her as another person who is in trouble. The timelessness and eternity of the other world are clear when the voice shows its ignorance about time. It is always present in the same place for years not merely after the disappearance of Kumiko. But Okada recognises the voice when he falls into a great puzzle. He wants the voice to be Kumiko's and needs all his doubts to be cleared. Without protesting, it takes the role of Kumiko and imitates her voice because he can connect with it only by thinking of it as his wife. From all the past events, Kumiko's letters, and communication through Cinnamon's computer, Okada has come to some conclusions and the voice just agree with them. Later, the protagonist finds that the voice is the signification of his inner

consciousness because it sounds like a record of his voice. He understands that he is talking to his inner self.

Okada uses his reason, imagination, and instinctual powers to connect the links and find answers as the result of the harmony between both worlds. Defeating the inner darkness or shadow happens on his second visit in which he sees himself in the hotel lobby instead of room 208. While walking through the labyrinth, he is confused at a point and feels like circling the same place repeatedly without finding an exit to the next path to reach the centre. He follows the hotel waiter who whistles Rossini's "The Thieving Magpie", Okada's favourite composition. The unconscious safely records his intimate likings and interests. The marking on the walls with his ballpoint pen while following the waiter reminds him of Kafka marking the trees on his way inside the dense forest. Both are trying to keep themselves safe in the other world to make sure of their return. But such attempts prove to be futile as the unconscious domain doesn't contain any predefined pathways. Whatever happens there is purely instinctual and impulsive. Okada follows the twists and turns of the waiter who walks leisurely through the hotel corridor. He acts as a tool to lead him to the crowded hotel lobby where he sees the breaking news on television about Wataya being attacked by a man with a baseball bat.

Surprisingly the attacker carries all the physical traits of Okada including the mark on his cheek. He gets into trouble when the crowd begins to recognise him and shouts at him. He tries to escape and sees the faceless Hollow man who leads him to the exit to save him from the crowd. In his first journey from the well to the centre, the faceless man had warned him that it was not the right time to fix the problem. He didn't understand it then but later recognises that it is true as he needs to untangle other knots before facing the enemy. Before his second visit, Okada had changed his

conscious domain with the knowledge he gained from the unconscious. He understood that he could not avoid the presence of Wataya in his life and needed to resist his evil aims. His rejection of Wataya's bargaining of giving back Kumiko in return for the "jinxed" land shows his bold decision to fight against the enemy. He makes his mind strong enough to face the villain and this helps him in the unconscious realm.

The Hollow man takes him through the darkness, passing corners, corridors, staircases, secret doors, and hidden passages—the ways of the labyrinth. Okada is led to his special room which the Hollow man can't enter. He is advised to complete his task and to leave the place quickly because it is a "dangerous" zone. The word "dangerous" stands for the fears and negativities residing in the inner consciousness of the protagonist. These dark elements take the form of the faceless enemy whom Okada defeats. The anima or the unidentified female voice takes its role by presenting him with the baseball bat to beat the enemy. The baseball bat with which he smashes Wataya has a historical significance as it played the role of a weapon in the hands of the Chinese prisoner who crushed the skull of the war captives during World War II. It connects Okada's personal unconscious with history, the collective unconscious. With the bat, he beats and defeats the inner darkness. He is placed in the situation to fight against the footsteps in darkness without seeing the figure. Okada remembers Mamiya's fate and it makes him all the stronger to conquer the enemy. The dark power retaliates with a sharp knife and creates injuries on his body. Even though it is a hard fight, Okada succeeds in crushing the enemy's skull.

The fight between Okada and Wataya has deeper connotations. Okada's recognition of the real reason behind Kumiko's sufferings prepares him to meet the villain. He fills the blank space by joining the bits and pieces he received from both

the conscious and the unconscious realms. The extent of defilement done by Wataya to his sisters and Creta Kano is revealed to him by the journey to his reality. It is not only a physical violation but the capturing of their souls by drawing them out of their bodies. Like Johnnie Walker in *Kafka*, Wataya is also a soul eater who pushes others to a deteriorated position and makes them slaves. Kumiko explains this as the reason for her dilemma in her letter to Okada,

He may have opened some kind of drawer inside me, taken out some kind of incomprehensible something, and made me give myself to one man after another. My brother had that kind of power, and as much as I hate to acknowledge it, the two of us were surely tied together in some dark place (602).

He has the power to draw “something”, from others, and the “something” stands for one’s soul and inner potential. Okada senses the inherited violence in the Wataya family’s blood and it is the reason for Kumiko’s abortion who doesn’t want to give birth to a child with evil blood. She is always worried about the dark element within her and it makes her socially inferior.

The enemy whom Okada defeats is the personification of the dark side of his inner consciousness. The darkness representing violence is visible in him in the physical world when he attacks the man with the guitar. He says, “But I couldn’t stop. There were two of me now, I realized. I had split in two, but this *me* had lost the power to stop the other me” (336). The “other me” represents his unconscious domain which contains the negative and repressed elements. The self-actualisation of Okada is the recognition of this evil and beating it with the help of his inner abilities. The villain who appears in the hotel room substantiates the finding that it is his inner

darkness. His victory over the hidden figure is the eradication of the negative energy. Once the fighting is over the female voice suddenly disappears by urging him to leave the place before losing connection with the conscious domain. The fight in the other world affects the “something” inside Wataya leading him to the brim of death. The psychic reality and the physical reality are connected and the happenings of one world alter the other world.

Kumiko’s inner darkness is exhibited through her intense sexual desire through the manipulation of her sexual energy. She finds the solution or attains consolation after killing her brother in his vegetative state by pulling out the plug of his life-supporting system. Wataya’s violence can be read not only on a personal level but reaches a collective state when Okada says,

Now he is trying to bring out something that the great mass of people keep hidden in the darkness of their unconscious. He wants to use it for his own political advantage. It’s a tremendously dangerous thing, this thing he is trying to draw out: it’s fatally smeared with violence and blood, and it has a direct connection with the darkest depths of history, because its final effect is to destroy and obliterate people on a massive scale (579).

He is a representative of greedy politicians who manipulate people for their personal and political gains. The mass, living in a state of numbness is unable to recognise simulation and easily falls prey to their tricks. This has historical roots as the same can be seen in Boris, the man skinner who admires the cruelty of Genghisgha, worships darkness, and destroys the lives of many for his selfish motives. His curse on the lieutenant that he won’t be happy wherever he lives shows his evil nature and it is a sort of domination on the interim self of Mamiya. Wataya can be taken as the

spiritual incarnation of Boris and both exhibit the same cruelty against the weak. They are the voices of state authority on the one side and the articulators of evil on the other side. Wataya is connected to history by the influence of his late uncle Yoshitaka Wataya, a member of the Diet. Yoshitaka had intimate connections with those in central command who were the brains in the war against China and profited from it. Wataya follows his uncle's footsteps to reach power and exhorts the authority of the state over its people.

The violence which is both physical and psychological mingles together in the novel. Underlying historical violence is intertwined with psychological violence. Okada's incongruity with Wataya is the fight between the individual self and state power on one level and between the unconscious constructive realm with the unconscious destructive realm. The horror of war gives expression to physical violence while metaphysical violence occurs in the inner consciousness causing dilemmas for the victims. What Wataya does is psychological violence. It is connected with his defective psychic energy and is clear from the destructive aspects of his libido. Sexual energy or libido is an important element of psychic energy. According to Jung, it is not specific to sexual instincts as believed by Freud but is generalised which can evoke a wide range of behaviours. Unfulfilled sexual needs cause erotic complexes which can dominate other psychic elements. In Wataya, the erotic complex is a result of his impotency and is exhibited by destroying the inner power of others. He employs his libido to achieve power, authority, and satisfaction. Creta calls it the defilement of the soul which kills one's positive energy and inner potential.

Libido can be articulated in both destructive and constructive ways. While Wataya's destructive approach grabs the souls of his sisters, Okada's libido aids the

resurrection of souls as in the case of Creta. His spiritual healing is based on his sexual energy which enhances his psychic elements. Kumiko's uncontrollable sexual desire shows the destructive nature of the libido released on her by Wataya. She knows that he has destroyed the flow between the physical and metaphysical realms of her elder sister through sexual violence leading to her suicide. His libido awakes Creta's sexual desire in a destructive way affecting her total psychic energy. When she was violated she was in her interim self, the one she received after the disappearance of her painful self. It was made up of numbness without feelings or emotions and Wataya took it out as Johnnie Walker did to Nakata. The defilement caused a renewal of self who found herself in a new container. There happens her rebirth as Creta Kano, the name given by her sister.

Wataya's violence can be compared to Johnnie Walker's attack on the poor cats in *Kafka*. Creta can be compared to a cat who can't move from the condition of defilement. She tells Okada that Wataya had pulled something out of her and she was throbbing with pain. This can be read along with the Japanese belief that souls reside in the mid-torso, that is in the belly. They consider the stomach as the container of emotions and thoughts and stomach-related medications are popular in Japan. The use of bayonets in the bellies during World War II by the Japanese soldiers on Chinese prisoners symbolises the easy way of killing without wasting precious bullets. The Japanese ritual called "seppuku" means committing suicide by slitting one's stomach and it is popular among samurai warriors. The belief is that by doing so they are liberating their spirit to heaven before meeting with physical death (Shoji, *The Japan Times*). In *Kafka*, the soldiers of the forest explain the killing of enemies using a bayonet into the stomach and the art of twisting it by destructing the intestines. This is the reason for the survival of Wataya in the paralysed state because he was attacked in

the skull and it didn't kill his soul. Nutmeg's father during wartime goes through the terrifying experience of pulling into death by a Chinese cadet who had been injured in his head by the baseball bat. His spirit doesn't leave the body soon and it tries to grab the veterinarian into death. Other prisoners who got killed by bayonets pushed into their stomachs died suddenly. May's recognition of "something" lurking inside her belly and Nutmeg's husband's dead body devoid of internal organs refer to the Japanese belief of one's stomach as the residing place of the soul.

Okada's journey to self-actualisation leads to the spiritual liberation of others and he becomes a soothing point to many characters in the novel in addition to Kumiko. Creta realises that her transformation has been caused by an evil force and its filthiness doesn't leave her. She wishes for an original self and finds the solution in Okada's productive libido. As Malta says, "Without a true self, though, a person cannot go on living. It is like the ground we stand on without the ground, we can build nothing" (306). In her sexual relationship with Okada, Creta regains her constructive libido and it leads to her salvation. She escapes from the defilement by re-establishing the flow of psychic energy between the conscious and the unconscious which was earlier obstructed by Wataya.

The protagonist is like a mentor to May Kasahara and she writes several letters to him. The relief she feels by disclosing the most personal thoughts and imagining that he is reading all the letters gives her peace and happiness. He is a fighter against evil and stands for the poor souls. As May says "...I can't help feeling that you *are* fighting for me Mr. Wind-up Bird- that, in a way, you are probably fighting for a lot of other people at the same time you're fighting for Kumiko" (325). The personal journey of the protagonist attains a collective aspect when he becomes the consolation point for many characters in the novel including his women clients.

The women who come for spiritual healing to Nutmeg and Okada suffer from the “something” inside. Spiritual healers make use of the collective unconscious while listening to their problems. They can empathise with them and give them the courage to be true to their selves. The women could feel the psychic energy that can revive the suspended flow inside them.

The inner darkness attains a collective aspect when it is connected with the darkness of the land where the “hanging” house is located. Okada’s buying of the land with the help of Nutmeg in return for his spiritual healing becomes a turning point in the revival of energy of the place which was already initiated by his encounter with the well. Wataya wanted to buy the land and make use of its negative energy to lead society to doom. By destroying his mission Okada achieves the status of the saviour of society. The protagonist develops a sense of belongingness with the land and society after recognising his reality. His individuation brings back the suspended psychic energy of the land resulting in the rejuvenation of the well. He connects the transformation of the well with his accomplishment in the other world, “Something might have loosened whatever it was that had been obstructing the vein of water” (588). The victory of the protagonist is the destruction of evil and the revival of the flow of the land.

The house and its surroundings are connected with violence and mental agonies of different types by those who lived there. The violence of war is brought to it by a Japanese Colonel who owned the house and played the role of an assassinator during World War II. His troops had done enough calamities to the innocent people in North China and he had been living there anticipating the trial for his wartime atrocities but commits suicide denying the chance to get punished by the authorities. A beautiful actress took the house after that and lived there with her maid. An

accident initiated her deterioration leading to physical deformities and it put an end to her career. Later, she committed suicide. The Miyawakis, the business family who took hold of the house courageously even after hearing the unpleasant stories too faced the same fate of disintegration and suicide. All these tragic happenings make it a place surrounded by evil and negativity. But its attractiveness doesn't diminish because of its land value and the vastness of the area with a pleasant neighbourhood. The alley next to the house is a closed path without an entrance and an exit symbolising the stagnation of psychic energy. The well is an antique object made in another age which is older than the house and the street and its energy is lost due to the influence of outside happenings. The rebirth of the well shows its revival from the dark spell and the commencement of the "flow" of nature. The negative energy which was accumulated over the property disappears with Okada's inner journey.

The "flow" is the psychic energy and its purpose is the awakening of the spiritual, intellectual, and creative aspects of human beings. The term "flow" is normally related to nature as showing the flow of water. Here it has shifted its meaning to the human world by indicating the flow of man's inner consciousness. This later helps in the revival of nature's flow through the rejuvenation of the well. The shifting of the term from general to particular and again to general shows the mingling of the collective and the personal. The distinction between subject and object ends and the human world is harmonised with nature elevating the process of self-realisation to the benefit of a wider circle. Okada's dream of Creta Kano and Mamiya growing vegetables in Hiroshima is also an example of the revival of nature. The writer intentionally selects Hiroshima, as the city is noted for its hardships caused by the atom bomb attack. The self-realisation of the protagonist brings back the energy that connects the personal unconscious with the collective and the individual

with society. Okada understands the meaning of the word “Corsica” which is the name given to Creta’s child in his dream. “No man is an island” is the meaning of the word, and Murakami borrowed the idea from John Donne. It emphasises the connection between individuals and society.

The wind up bird is the connector between the conscious and the unconscious domains. It is associated with history and is immortal because of its shrieking being heard by specific people in all generations. It connects the past, present, and future. Kumiko names the unseen bird, “the wind-up bird” as its shrieking resembled the winding of a spring to her. It indicates the harmony between both the physical and metaphysical domains. The bird is a spiritual presence symbolising the liberation of one’s self. Its sharp creek is the call from one’s unconscious realm and it is heard by Toru, Kumiko, the veterinarian, Cinnamon, and the Chinese soldier. The meaning of “winding the spring” in the novel is maintaining the connection between the conscious and the unconscious worlds. The bird’s shrieking is heard by those who seek a revival of their selves and not audible to those who lead a life of false consciousness. If there is no wind up bird the spring will go down to the point of destruction and the bird’s job is to wind it again as one does with an alarm clock. This explains the logic behind May’s nicknaming of Okada as “Mr. Wind up Bird” as his journey paves way for the revival of the well. The individuated protagonist accepts the way things have turned up, waits patiently for his wife’s return, and is satisfied at the fact that he has done whatever he could passionately. Jung observes that individuation demands the harmonious union of both domains as seen in Okada who bridges the gap between his physical and the metaphysical realms.

Dancing to the Tune and the “Other” World in *Dance*

Alienation is positive when one tries to overcome it and negative when one remains in the position of an automaton without questioning the idolatrous condition and turns down the needs of his/her self. According to Fromm, alienation is a constructive stimulus that unfolds human potentialities if the person has a productive reaction to his alienated state (Funk 76). In the novel *Dance* Boku's alienation is productive and it leads him to spiritual liberation. The protagonist is mature enough to understand the incongruity between the outer and inner domains, in other words, the conscious and the unconscious. His journey to self-actualisation is connected with the old Dolphin hotel where he had stayed with Kiki, the lady whom he loved and admired. Her sudden disappearance and loss of love create loneliness affecting his anima. When he was with his beloved years back he was not separated from his anima. For him, she constituted the three stages of the anima archetype. She was his Helen filling the gap of sexual image and Mary with whom Boku wished to have a lasting relationship. As his spiritual agent, Kiki also fulfills the role of Sophiya. But her disappearance, while they were staying at Sapporo, destroyed all these feelings and he was left with an inner emptiness.

Boku has a failed married life but he never considers it as a loss because his wife was unable to fill his anima. Instead of the presence of his wife, he longs for Kiki who can fill his inner emptiness. The hotel which frequently appears in his dreams and the cry of Kiki lead him to believe the presence of a world parallel to the conscious one. He has an intuition that he is being connected with the girl deeply and feels that she is inviting him to the hotel to solve the mystery behind her disappearance. Boku feels a sense of belongingness with the hotel through his dreams and that he is a part of it. He thinks, "The hotel envelops me. I can feel its pulse, its

heat. In dreams, I am part of the hotel” (Birnbbaum, *DDD* 1). Beyond its mineral state, the hotel acquires liveliness since it holds an inner hidden world secretly.

Boku finds that Kiki is the connecting link between his conscious and unconscious realms and the hotel is the key to his inner labyrinth. Going back to the hotel is like visiting a shrine to the protagonist. Years back Kiki had suggested staying in the old Dolphin hotel and Boku felt something mysterious in its age-old air. In his first acquaintance, he calls it, “The Land That Time Forgot” (3) due to its abnormal silence except for the dull sound of the elevator, and also faded furniture, dim light bulbs, and damaged water lines. They hadn’t seen any other customer in their one-week stay and he felt it a place in the guise of a hotel but carrying something else inside. He had identified the presence of Sheep Man living inside the hotel. It was Kiki’s duty to bring Boku to his unconscious realm to the hands of the Sheep Man and she disappears after that. Different from an ordinary call girl, she influences the minds of her customers by encouraging them to think of their inner realities. She represents spirituality from its opposite camp of materialism. She suits well with the image of Sophiya who provides wisdom and connects both worlds.

Boku knows that returning to the old Dolphin Hotel means encountering his shadow. He says, “The prospect alone depresses. It has been all I could do these four years to rid myself of that chill, dim shadow. To return to Dolphin Hotel is to give up all I’d quietly set aside during this time” (6). For the last four years, Boku had been discarding the shadow that represents his identity and realises that it is high time to recognise it and fight against its negativities. He liberates his mind from the surrounding simulation by giving up all fake affairs and practicalities of life. One can't resist one's thinking, imagination, memory, and dreams and insists on the journey to self-realisation.

The Sheep Man, a recurring figure in the Murakamian literary world acts as the mentor of the protagonist who advises him to dance to the tune continuously as Mr. Honda advised Okada to move according to the flow. Dancing to the tune is living by listening to the inner voice. Boku decides to dance to the tune and it leads to several unexpected incidents and revelations and finally to self-realisation. Yumiyoshi's experience with the old hotel with the Sheep Man living inside anticipates her connection with the protagonist. She sees another part of the place at the staff lounge on the sixteenth floor of the hotel. The piercing darkness in the corridor of the floor frightens her to the core and she recognises an entirely different ambiance instead of the perfumed new Dolphin Hotel. The carpet is rough and the air is mouldy resembling the smell of old closed buildings. She reaches the Sheep Man's room where she could see the faint candlelight. Her first experience with the man in thick clothing and his animal-like heavy steps frightens her and she runs away. This strange experience assigns her with the task of informing Boku about the strong presence of the other world inside the new hotel image and it makes him understand that he is connected to her.

Finding the Sheep Man inside the hotel is Boku's key to his reality. By walking through the hotel corridors, Boku lets his mind roam freely without the question of logic. He makes use of his imagination, one of the most important inner potentials, to liberate his mind from the conscious domain. Boku engages his mind with his thoughts about the Egyptian way of living and popular movies about the Pharaohs and princes. Scenes kept on coming to him one after the other as if he is engaged in the task of a psychologist to awaken the inner domain. He attempts to be oblivious to his immediate surroundings of the hotel and connected with his inner thoughts. He was not walking through the hotel corridors but his busy thoughts. The

Pharaoh in his imagination takes the form of the Sheep Man who was waiting for him on the fifteenth floor of the hotel. Boku recognises that he has crossed the conscious realm and the ambience and darkness around him give the feeling that he has entered the other domain.

Boku's dream-like walking is labyrinthine and he is searching for the centre. When he feels the presence of the Sheep Man, he thinks, "Something from another reality- reality that existed *here*" (78). The Sheep Man is a spiritual figure who is both sheep and a human speaking the human language in a peculiar way. This mysterious animal-human person has appeared in Murakami's other novel, *The Wild Sheep Chase* whom the protagonist meets in his search for his friend, Rat. It is described in the novel that he has adopted the sheep figure to avoid going to the war front during the Russo-Japanese war. He reappears in *Dance* and expresses his happiness in seeing Boku after years. Boku's personal unconscious is linked to the collective as the Sheep Man has a historical significance. Sheep farms and sheep raising in Hokkaido the northernmost island of Japan had gained prominence during the Russo-Japanese war. Wool was used as a wartime supply to the soldiers to fight the cold climate and it has reference in *Wind up Bird* as well. Sheep meat was also popular and wool was used for the production of military and naval uniforms. The Meiji government promoted the production of wool and the farmers were happy with the new interest of the authority. The happiness lasted till their sons got killed in the Russo- Japanese war. Research began to be conducted on more benefits of sheep farming and different breeds were produced on a commercial basis. Murakami's 1982 novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase* is located in Junitaki, a town in Hokkaido that is related to sheep farming from where the Sheep Man emerges. The Sheep Professor in the novel has conducted many kinds of research on sheep and is crazy about the animals even to find a spiritual

connection with them. The same character is mentioned in *Dance* as the father of the old Dolphin Hotel's owner.

The hotel first makes its arrival in the epilogue of *A Wild Sheep Chase* as a five-storied building with metaphysical traits. But the new Dolphin Hotel has more than twenty-five storeys. The Sheep Man's room in the Dolphin Hotel contains bulks of books on sheep and research. He hides from the military like the soldiers who were found missing in the mountainous region of Kochi in *Kafka*. Both of them represent man's innate fear of war and eagerness to protect themselves from the system. The conflict between individual and state gets reflected in their skulking. Boku's conversation with the Sheep Man is his interaction with the unconscious. Yumiyoshi never sees his physical body even though she has felt the presence of an invisible figure inside the room. Evaluating the past is an important feature of the process of self-renewal and Boku unfolds the previous years of his life, the time which he spent fruitlessly. He says to the Sheep Man, "I've lost and I'm lost and I'm confused. I'm not anchored to anything. Here's the only place I feel like I belong to" (85). The Sheep Man tells him that "they" had been waiting for him as it is his real world. They had managed to retain the old name of the hotel only to allow him to recognise the place despite all its new alterations. The use of the pronoun "they" indicates all the elements of the unconscious. It includes all that he had lost like his lover, his intimate friend, and things like memories, repressed contents, and his abilities.

The Sheep Man assures the protagonist "their" support in his journey to self-actualisation. "They" tried hard for his return to keep things joined together and to prevent them from falling. "Always have been, always will be. It all starts here, it all ends here. This is your place. It's the knot. It's tied to everything... things you lost. things you're gonna lose. Everything. Here's where it all ties together" (83). The special

way he speaks can be considered the language of the unconscious as felt by Boku. The Sheep Man says that the inner domain is different from the outer world and it has come to exist several years before, which is difficult to count. It is always there for humans to provide answers and it is waiting for them. The world which once humans lost at the early stages of childhood due to socio-cultural interventions can be retained if one is ready to revisit it.

Jung's notion of the unconscious realm as an independent entity is highlighted when Boku says that the Sheep Man is away "From war, civilization, the law, the system,...things that aren't Sheep Man-like" (389). The unconscious is a free domain existing in its own ways preserving genuineness and naturality. It is not a mere reflection of the conscious world, but a self-contained zone beyond the barriers of rational thinking. The Sheep Man personified as Boku's unconscious mind is his psychic element. He becomes a collective image as he is presented as taking care of the world not only for Boku but for the whole of humanity. The Sheep Professor has kept all the documents and files regarding sheep safe in his room indicating the preservation of people's inner minds filled with memories and repressed contents. Now the Sheep Man is in charge of guarding the things connected like a switchboard. He keeps them safe even though people do not come to read any stuff. Boku's inner world is also under his custody and he says that there are other real worlds and this renders the image of a storehouse to the inner consciousness.

According to the Sheep Man, Boku's connections in the physical domain are loosened creating his alienation and the inner world has to tie them together. The idea of tying the loosened knots signifies the need for reviving the connection with the unconscious and the union of both the physical and the metaphysical. By dancing to the tune Boku can keep in line with his inner consciousness. He has to open his mind

to revelations, listen to others' life and experiences and observe the surrounding happenings. Boku realises that he has to stay more vigilant in the physical world to understand its connection with the other world where the truth is hidden. The novel brings out the idea that recognising one's reality is not the complete denial of the simulated domain but delving deep into its hidden aspects guided by one's inner realm. He tells Yumiyoshi that he is immersed in the process of tying the loosened knots and many loose ends are hanging. Tying the loosened knots results in attaining a positive connection between one's self and society. Boku is made to connect the dots of his labyrinth and he calls it dancing as advised by the Sheep Man. Like other Murakamian protagonists, he too waits patiently by observing things turn out. In his words, "Make an effort to cast a fair eye on everything. If you do that, you just naturally know what to do. But everyone's always too busy. They're too talented, their schedules are too full" (254). He believes in the natural turn of events that can guide him to his reality.

Once the other world is opened and the process of self-actualisation begins, Boku feels connected with the surrounding society positively and this gives Yuki a good mentor. His relationship with Yuki and her parents shows his transformation from an isolated being to a social being who can understand others empathetically. Understanding the hidden meaning of coincidences is an important part of self-realisation. The connection between Gotanda and Kiki becomes clearer to Boku when he happens to watch the film, *Unrequited Love*. It starred Gotanda and he sees Kiki in a love-making scene. It reminds him of the scene that came to his mind unknowingly in his dream-like walking in which Kiki and Gotanda involve in a sexual relationship. Boku concludes that he, Kiki, and Gotanda are connected in a particular way and he decides to unveil the connection. An ordinary person may

dismiss the possibility of such an association as it lacks logic and he/she will not learn anything from it. When one begins to dance to the tune, one can set aside the rules of reason and act according to his instincts.

Boku understands that a part of his predicament is caused by Gotanda who kills Kiki in some hallucinatory state of mind. Gotanda is indifferent to his shadow and is unable to belong to his self. He is afraid of his hidden darkness and Kiki's inner light acts as the cross is to Satan. Living like a simulacrum for years the actor has lost his ability to look into his inner mind. When he begins to see the negativities of his inner domain he feels that his ties are loosening up and is afraid of losing the image. Unlike Boku, Gotanda considers alienation as a destructive stimulus. Even though he likes Kiki's company and admires her personality which is different from other club girls he avoids all the possibilities of being alone with her. His relationship with call girls is purely on a material basis and doesn't want an interrogation of his inner self. He was tempted by her to recognise the pathetic condition of his self from which he tries to escape. Her presence signifies the existence of an independent self in each being that one needs to identify.

Gotanda sees his shadow teasing and challenging him in Kiki's presence. The "other" world that he never wanted to visit is revealed to him. Considering her as his enemy, his own shadow, he unleashed his cruelty resulting in the murder. He says to Boku, "I strangled her. But I wasn't strangling her, I was strangling my shadow. I remember thinking, if only I could choke my shadow off, I'd get some health. Except it wasn't my shadow. It was Kiki" (356). Shadows not only represent darkness but one's way to spiritual liberation. After defeating the dark element present in it one can consider it a benefactor. Gotanda was seeing only darkness in his shadow and the fear of the dark side of his inner consciousness leads him to the murder. He admits to

Boku that he has the memory of killing the girl but was in confusion whether it happened in reality or a dream. He was in a dream-like state when he was silencing her. Boku is filled with pity towards the man who lives as a simulacrum and a stranger to himself. He thinks, “Gotanda never really got himself in tune with his inner impulses. He pushed himself as far as he could, to the furthest edge of his awareness- and then right across the line into that dark otherworld” (361). He was in contact with the dark elements of the other world but not with its positiveness.

Battle with one’s shadow is possible when one tries to rectify one’s weaknesses and negativities. Later Gotanda says to Boku that he was smothering his own inner consciousness. Kiki stands as a metaphor for his spiritual light, his creative and genuine self. Boku’s relationship with Kiki is spiritual and for him, the girl is the guiding light to his inner self. He travels from darkness to light when Gotanda moves from darkness to hell. Boku offers a contrast to him even though both are fed up with their lives. Disinterestedness in the profession failed marital relationships, and isolation is similar to them. But the difference is that when Boku tries to be in tune with his inner consciousness, Gotanda moves away from it. His outer persona is only a mask created by the collective psyche and he lives in a false “reality” that Jung calls secondary reality. He never goes through the ordeals to achieve his real self as Boku does and this leads to his self-destruction.

Kiki plays the role of both a source of physical pleasure and a spiritual presence in the lives of Boku and Gotanda. Her role varies from a seductress to a spiritual agent. She can be considered as the shadow, the anima, and a representative of one’s spiritual light. At the beginning of the novel itself, she says that her purpose was to lead Boku to the Dolphin Hotel which is the representation of his inner domain. Her words, “*This is where we’re staying*” (4), are italicised in the novel

symbolising the idea that she is a part of the protagonist's inner consciousness. Kiki is not her real name and she is presented as nameless and without any evidence of physical identity like a driving license, pan card or credit card, or anything that proves her connection to the conscious world. Nobody knows anything about her even her original name, place, age, or family. She remains a timeless and immortal image symbolising the nature of one's unconscious. Boku later recognises the truth that she resides inside him and she is crying for him. The girl is a figure representing the other world.

The unconscious contents are transferred into the conscious in the form of fantasies. They can't be judged by the scale of intellect as they have no rationality and are produced freely. Not only the perception of fantasy can bring the unconscious to the conscious but active participation in the fantasy element is also needed from the conscious realm. The Murakamians apply this aspect as their journeys are motivated by different types of fantasies and they involve in them completely to reach the psychic reality. Taking these fantasies literally is the wrong path but they can be used as signboards. The fantastic image is only an expression covering reality and one needs to go beyond it. One has to understand the hidden meaning as they are real and the manifestation of such images should be taken seriously. Boku's inner mind fantasises about meeting Kiki in the big empty "death chamber" of Honolulu.

In Honolulu, Boku sees Kiki among the crowd but she disappears into the busy street. By following her, he reaches an abandoned building complex where he searches everywhere including all rooms. He says, "All of a sudden, I was wandering through the labyrinthine viscera of a large organism. Longdead, cracked, eroded. By something beyond reality, beyond human rationality, I had slipped through a fault in time and entered this...thing" (269). He reaches a stairwell and goes up the storeys to

find a door to an attic. It contains the facilities of a small apartment with furniture, a cot, and a television and there he sees six skeletons. They stand for people who disappeared from his life and also who are going to die soon. The death chamber symbolises his unconscious realm where past, present, and future are mingled giving out new messages.

The Sheep Man is the torchbearer in the first experience and Kiki takes the role in the second. She says that the room and all its items belong to Boku himself. In her words, "This is your room. Everything here is you. Yourself. Everything" (371). He feels that she has been leading him there and on the journey, he has met various people and gone through many unexpected experiences. It confirms the conclusion that the cry for help that invited him to Sapporo was not from the hotel but from the unknown part of his inner consciousness. Kiki says that it was not she who invited him but his own mind. "It wasn't me. It was you who called yourself. I'm merely a projection. You guided yourself through me. I'm your phantom dance partner. I'm your shadow. I'm not anything more" (371).

Kiki acts as a tool or a living spirit created by Boku's unconscious mind. She sympathises with her murderer and confirms that she still lives there in Boku's inner consciousness in the form of memory. The truth remains that death is only a disappearance into another domain that runs parallel to the physical world because the memories of the dead person never die. In her words, "I move into another world, a different world. Like boarding a train running parallel. That's what disappearance is" (372). As Miss Saeki lives in the memory of Kafka, Kiki transforms into an eternal being in Boku's memory. This consoles Boku who can feel her presence through the power of his memory.

At the end of the novel, the meaning of the pronoun “we” used by the Sheep Man becomes clear as Kiki also addresses the concealed world in the same manner. “We” stands for the unconscious realm of Boku which is the storehouse of all his declined and hidden potentials, impulses, passions, worries, instincts, and disappointments. He gives ears to his inner cry and is courageous enough to take steps to find the reasons behind it. Kiki says, “We’re crying for all the things you can’t cry for...We shed tears for all the things you never let yourself shed tears, we weep for all the things you did not weep” (371). The old Dolphin hotel no more exists to other people but Boku could feel its presence within the new structure because it is his inner consciousness. He says, “Beneath this new intercontinental Dolphin, behind it, within it. I could close my eyes and go in... It was still here. No one knew, but it was here. This place was my nexus, where everything tied together. This place is here for me, I told myself” (376). He is able to go through this inner labyrinth and he is reconnected with it leading to his transformation in the simulated world.

Boku says to Yumiyoshi that he has made the circle complete and has returned where he has begun. It shows his walking through the labyrinth which constituted his unique experiences and meeting with people like the Sheep Man, Kiki, Yuki, Gotanda, Dick North, Ame, and Makimura. As the structure of the labyrinth demands, he has come back to the place where he has begun the journey. He says proudly, “You wouldn’t believe it if I told you. I’ve made it back to reality- that’s the important thing. I’ve come full circle. And I’m still on my feet, dancing” (380). Boku’s happiness is in the connection that he achieved between the physical and the metaphysical. He begins his journey from Sapporo, goes to Tokyo, then to Hawaii, and returns to Sapporo to live his life anew. Coming back to the conscious world is as important as going through the unconscious and the greatest thing is that Boku hasn’t

stopped dancing to the tune. He wishes to begin a new life with Yumiyoshi in Sapporo. Boku's final experience with the other world in his dream while he was trying to save Yumiyoshi marks the end of his journey of self-realisation. He is afraid of losing Yumiyoshi and dreams of her going through the wall to the world of death. Due to the fear of losing her, he follows her passing through the transparent pocket of air. He feels,

Time wavered, sequentiality twisted, gravity lost its force. Memories, old memories like vapour, wafted up. The degeneration of my flesh accelerated. I passed through the huge, complex knot of my own DNA. The earth expanded, then chilled and contracted. Sheep were submerging in the cave...My body decomposed, blew apart-and was whole again (391).

The process is destruction, deconstruction, and construction, the very postmodern phenomenon. It is the deconstruction of Boku's mind. His conscious world is deconstructed while connecting it with the inner consciousness, and finally, gets constructed through the transcendental process resulting in his transformation.

The End of the World and the Inner Consciousness

Deep in your consciousness there's this core that is imperceptible to yourself. In my case, the core is a town. A town with a river flowing through it and a high brick wall surrounding it. None of the people in the town can leave. Only unicorns can go in and out. The unicorns absorb the egos of the townspeople like blotter paper and carry them outside the wall. So the people in the town have no ego, no self. I live in the town- or so the story goes. I don't know any more than that, since I haven't actually seen any of this with my own eyes (Birnbaum, *HBWEW* 359).

The protagonist of *Wonderland* says the above words to his girlfriend. The world he talks about is his unconscious domain represented as the Town located at the End of the World. In his conscious world, Boku hasn't thought of his self and becomes aware of it when he hears the death bell at his doorstep. He looks back at his life to see that he hasn't gained anything either material or spiritual. His physical death opens up the inner consciousness which Murakami presents as an entirely different world with its own rules and regulations. Even though it proves to be a utopia, by all means, it invokes the need for individuation in the protagonist who is ignorant of it in the *Hard Boiled Wonderland*.

The End of the World, the map of this imaginary land added to the novel after the cover page was published by Vintage in 2003 is Boku's labyrinth. It provides a pictorial view of the world consisting of the Western hill, Eastern woods, official residencies, East bridge, the library, watchtower, shadow Grounds, the mysterious pool, the clock tower, and the beast enclosure. It is an enclosed area surrounded by a huge wall of thirty metres in height and the whole place is covered by hills and wilderness. The prime thing is that the inmates are ignorant of its entrance and exit. Boku says that the West Gate where the muscular Gatekeeper guards, is the only way out of the Town and it leads to the beast enclosure. The absence of entrance and exit for the place shows the stagnation of psychic energy and its destructive effects on its inmates. The place is circular reminding the mythical figure of labyrinths. The library is the centre of the Town thereby the core of Boku's labyrinth where he reads out dreams from sunset to midnight.

Unlike other protagonists of the selected novels, Boku is thrown into his unconscious realm and what he needs is to regain his memories and get connected with the conscious domain. He feels that he is driven away from his "real" world and

tries hard to return to it. Boku in his labyrinth attempts to find out the contents of the unconscious realm to understand the truth behind its existence. His walking through the Town to make a detailed map at the instruction of his Shadow can be considered as his walking through his labyrinth to get familiarised with his inner region which contains the woods, trees, birds, weeds, the stone gate, army barracks, fields, flowers, hills, bridges, river, and the pool. The woods is the part that gives him serenity, peace, and energy. Due to fear of losing direction, he always walks by keeping a parallel line along with the wall.

The scientists at the System misguide Boku by telling him that the happenings of the conscious realm can never affect the core consciousness. But in psychoanalytical terms, the events, deeds, and images in the conscious realm are stored in the unconscious safely. Unlike other scientists, the professor truly understands the nature of inner consciousness and he uses the metaphor “elephant graveyard” considering it as a land of repressed and dead memories. But he modifies the term to “elephant factory” to show the vibrant and creative nature of the unconscious which is a zone of knowledge and wisdom, and not a mere graveyard. He says, “...there’s where you sort through countless memories and bits of knowledge, arrange the sorted chips into complex lines, combine these lines into even more complex bundles, and make up a cognitive system” (256). He says that the layman’s word for the cognitive system is mind and human beings know only the tip of this huge iceberg.

The End of the World is a fragmented narrative that can be read by connecting the images of both worlds. It carries all the aspects of Hard Boiled Wonderland in one way or the other. This clarifies that the unconscious realm is greatly affected by one’s personal and collective psyche. Boku’s shuffling password, “End of the World”

anticipates his inevitable entry into the other domain which is the end of everything and nobody can go anywhere from it. The image of a world surrounded by a huge wall visits him in his dreams in the conscious realm as it is already waiting there to be in action. It is clear from Boku's identification with Julien Sorel, the protagonist of Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* who finds himself walled from a very young age. In the Hard Boiled Wonderland, Boku is controlled by the System which manages the lives of its calcutecs and manifests the power of sentencing them for their mistakes. The situation at the End of the World is not different as it is under the control of another unseen system that grabs the souls of its inmates. The difference is that in the conscious world, the protagonist is a passive being while in the unconscious realm, he rebels against its autocracy and fights for self-actualisation. The physical and imaginary borders of the conscious world correspond with the authoritative and autocratic huge wall of the Town. It symbolises the barrier Boku himself created around him in the conscious domain which achieves a physical form in the unconscious realm.

Boku is associated with the unicorn skull in the conscious world which is presented to him by the Professor who anticipates his journey into the other world with living unicorns (the beasts). The Northern and Southern plazas at the End of the World indicate his left brain and right brain respectively. Boku used both brains separately in the conscious world for laundering and shuffling. His calcutec task and the new job of dream reading are connected and carry some similarities. He is engaged in these jobs during nighttime and in both processes, he is thrown into a sea of chaos which makes him fatigued. Both activities are involved with core consciousness. In the other world, memories take up the place of valuable data. But the difference is that in the conscious realm, his inner mind is compromised, captured,

and manipulated by the System and the scientists. While in the other world, he recognises subordination and tries to save his individuality. It is the protagonist's journey from slavery to independence after fighting against adversities. The paper clips which appear in both worlds show the overlapping and interconnection between them.

The Professor says to Boku, “ It's a peaceful world. Your own world, a world of your own makin'. You can be your self there. You've got everythin' there. And at the same time, there is nothin'” (286). This is a paradoxical description because, on the one hand, the place is a utopia where people are only phantoms and are made to believe that they are happy. On the other hand, it is Boku's spiritual domain where he gets the opportunity to be true to his self. Murakami employs the mythical animal unicorn to lead the protagonist into the light. This links his personal unconscious with the collective as myths are collective archetypes. Unicorn is a rare creature and a connection between Boku and the animal is generated because he is also rare in the species of calcutec while all others lose their lives. In East Asian cultures, unicorns are good, and virtuous, and are considered perfect among all land creatures. There are two types of unicorns in Japanese mythology; “Kirin” and “Sin-You” one gentle and the other ferocious which punishes evil. Murakami selects “Kirin” which is poor, compassionate, sad-looking and shows great obedience. It is a horse-like beast with a single horn and is believed to have sprung from the centre of the Earth and attained the role of spiritual guide in human life (Clayton 53). Jay Rubin views unicorns are the “representations of the timeless core of the unconscious mind” (qtd. in Li 166). They are primordial images and their mythological origin makes them suitable to carry human minds in the End of the World.

In the novel, the connection of the unicorn skull with history makes it a part of collective memory. The Professor in the conscious world has gifted Boku a unicorn skull and his further study on it leads him to the time of World War I. In 1917, a unicorn skull has been discovered at the Russian front while digging a trench in the war between Russia and Germany. A young Russian soldier kept it and was later sent to the biology department of the University of Petrograd to identify the animal. It reaches its destination after many years in 1935 leading to the conclusion by Professor Petrov that the skull is of a unique animal with a missing horn at the centre of the forehead which never found a place in biology texts yet. Petrov tried to convince the authorities of the significance of the skull and the need to conduct further research. But all his attempts proved to be in vain in the heat of World War II and Leningrad University where he worked was destroyed by German shelling leading to the disappearance of the skull. This can be concluded that the same skull which witnessed the two World Wars has reached the hands of Boku in the Hard Boiled Wonderland. Later in the End of the World, he is surrounded by many such skulls to tell the stories of generations.

History proves that human beings are not the products of the present time and are connected with past events like wars and rebellions which they are unaware of in the commotion of material life. The personal unconscious gets connected with the collective which is essential for individuation. The collective element is further visible in the Town's connection with history and war. While Hard Boiled Wonderland is characterised by the Infowar, the End of the World is connected with "real" war through the character of the Colonel. The retired military also becomes a part of the Town society indicating the strong presence of war in man's unconscious world. It is

interesting to see that Boku who is not directly related to any wartime happenings carries the memory of war in his “other” world.

Murakami’s purpose in selecting the skull of a unique animal is to show the combination of male and female within it; “...the penis and vagina form a pair” (98) as read by the library girl from the book, *Archaeology of Animals*. Jung refers to the “ardhanareeswara” myth in the Hindu religion to show the amalgamation of anima and animus— woman and man. This peculiarity makes the unicorn a perfect creature to carry the minds of people irrespective of their gender at the End of the World. The anima/animus archetype is further visible in Boku’s feelings toward the library girl. In *Hard Boiled Wonderland*, he felt a connection with a girl who worked in the city library. She had helped him to go through the history of the unicorns. Her presence comforted him and he seeks the same feeling at the End of the World. The gap of the anima is being filled by his library assistant who guides him and provides consolation.

Boku’s self-realisation is the regaining of memories of the previous world and it happens through his dream reading. The Dreamreader is the only person with a mind at the End of the World. Unicorns are immortal as phoenixes and each skull is a carrier of human inner labyrinths which are kept on the library shelves. They contain the unconscious domain of the inmates of the Town. Boku’s dream reading is a journey through these labyrinths. His eyesight is taken away by the Gatekeeper indicating that inner light is essential to read dreams stored in the skull of the unicorns. He places his fingers on both sides of the skull with utmost concentration which in effect starts glowing and produces heat and his job is to trace the path of this light. It is a journey through the unconscious pathways but the Dreamreader remains unaffected by the process. He is unable to have a full view of the images due to their

speedy current. But the contents are liberated and dissipated into the air once they pass through the brain of the Dreamreader.

During the process of dream reading, Boku feels the tension at the centre of the skull's forehead which is of three diameter width. This is the place of the horn that is being cut off and it constitutes the centre of the skull's labyrinth, to which all the energy is concentrated. "My fingers nimbly trace out the labyrinthine seams of light as I grow able to invoke the images and echoes with increasing clarity" (120). The same light that he has experienced in the conscious world from the skull is felt in the process of dream reading. The labyrinths stored inside the skull confuse him as if he has reached dead ends. But the faith in the power of his mind enables him to concentrate more on the images. He believes in the ability of his mind to lead to spiritual light by following the traces of dream reading. The purpose of dream reading is clear when he answers the question of the library girl, "Where do they lead?" and he replies, "To oneself. That's what mind is. Without the mind nothing leads anywhere" (185). Boku in the conscious world was unable to understand this truth and couldn't figure out the meaning of the unicorn skull.

The novel presents the structure of double labyrinths— one inside the other. As a whole, the Town is Boku's labyrinth and at the library, he goes through the complicated labyrinths of various unicorn skulls. He travels from his outer labyrinth to the inner and comes back to repeat the process. Defeating the negative aspects of the shadow is articulated differently in the novel. Self-actualisation involves the recognition of one's shadow whether it is negative or positive. Boku's inner consciousness consists of people who lost their minds because of the death of their shadows. Boku's Shadow is a separate entity with its mind. It is a mixture of goodness and wisdom on one side while darkness and selfishness are on the other

side. In the conscious domain, he has never thought of the existence of his shadow which remained as the unrecognised dark half. In the End of the World, his Shadow warns him of the negativity of the place and tries hard to escape from the mysterious domain. It accuses the town, its worthless rules, and the cruelty of the sturdy Gatekeeper by concealing the truth that they are created by Boku's inner mind. He compels Boku to escape from the strange world as he grows weak and powerless day after day.

Even though Boku acts according to the wishes of his Shadow throughout, he takes an individual decision at the end. His shift from the thought of escaping the Town to becoming a part of it results in a conflict with his Shadow. The Shadow creates a simulation in Boku by keeping him away from the truth. But the awakening of hidden memories with the help of dream reading and the power of music enables him to see the truth. It shows his defeat of the darkness personified by his Shadow. It escapes from the place after this realisation and it makes Boku's mind free. He can live there with memories and keep his mind active as his shadow is liberated. Boku's self-realisation empowers him to discard negative elements and to have positive thoughts. His ability to take an individual decision, in the end, is the result of self-awareness and his independence from all the fetters of life. He attains a place higher than the other inmates by understanding his responsibility to his own world.

Boku feels an attachment and belongingness with the End of the World and begins to understand the reason for the existence of the Town, the beasts, the girl, the inmates, the woods, and the Wall. He is in the process of figuring out meaning from the things which are abandoned for ages. The protagonist has lost his mind in the conscious world and is given another opportunity at the End of the World to regain it and live in the light of self-actualisation. His individuation is bringing back the

conscious domain through memories and harmonising both worlds. His ardent admiration for music in the previous world returns to him in fragments. Boku was soothed by Bob Dylan's music at the time of leaving the conscious realm. He revives the musical instruments which are kept to ruin in the abandoned cupboards and storerooms of the Town. He comes to know of the musical instruments which are of no value in the Town as nobody knows about music and are kept by the caretaker by the beauty of it. The accordion that he manages to get acts as a connector to his previous world, helping him to figure out things.

The tiny accordion is the key to his hidden memories and also to the revival of the girl librarian's mind. Memory keeps everything unchanged and they reside silently in the elephant factory. He struggles to play the accordion and overcomes the earlier difficulty by trying different notes with the belief that it may bring back the connection. It is the moment of his spiritual liberation. He tries to invoke the lost memories by relating his experiences after reaching the Town, the places he visited, and each thing he felt and did. It is like digging out something which is buried deep under the soil. Memory is the weapon to fight against the completely oblivious state of the protagonist. The power of music lightens the skulls stored in the library together and leads him to go through the labyrinths of all the stored skulls indicating the liberation of all trapped minds. He understands that the skulls emitting light indicate the ancient fire symbolising the role of the collective unconscious in one's self-realisation.

Boku's intense concentration brings back the music he searches for. While playing the Danny Boy on the accordion, he feels that the whole Town is listening to his music. After playing it he recognises the truth. He says, "Everything here is a part of me- the Wall and Gate and River and Pool. It is all my self" (369). The music

restores his memories of the Hard Boiled Wonderland. Jay Rubin in *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words*, says that the music establishes resonances between the protagonist's self and the hero of the outer world (2). His futile life in the conscious domain and negation of self is being revisited. Boku says to his shadow that he has been reawakened by songs. He fights against his fear, false conceptions, and weaknesses which he was unable to do in the physical world. His journey to find the truth about the Town leads him to the recognition of his fault of lending his soul in return for material pleasures. The Gatekeeper, the Colonel, and the library girl who prevent him from reaching the truth are representations of his own doubts and fears. They stand for inhibitions and negativity preventing his inner potential. Boku recognises that the inmates, the library, and the dying beasts are inside himself and attains a sense of unity and belongingness with them. He believes that his self-realisation depends on the liberation of every being in the unconscious realm. He tells his Shadow, "I have responsibilities. I cannot forsake the people and places and things I have created...I must see out the consequences of my own doings. This is my world. The Wall is here to hold *me* in, the River flows through *me*, the smoke is *me* burning" (399). The beautiful union of subject and object by eradicating the differences are emphasised.

Boku bids farewell to his shadow and returns to the library girl who waits for him with the accordion. The bird that flies over the wall to the outer world symbolises his wish to return to the physical world after tying the loosened knots. The Shadow says to him of the conscious domain, "It's not the best of all worlds. I make no promises, but it is the world where we belong. There will be good and bad. There will be neither good nor bad. It is where you were born and where you will live and where you will die" (386). His journey to self-actualisation saves the library girl and the

novel ends with the hope of liberation for the entire inmates of the Town. Boku is not afraid of the Shadow's warning of being trapped in eternity. Instead, he sticks to his decision of recalling the previous world and untying the mystery of the End of the World. The protagonist, in the process, attains assimilation and socialisation, the two essential aspects of social living in Frommian analysis. Murakami makes it clear that he is not lost in his labyrinth but decides to live there as a responsible being.

Struggle for Self-actualisation in *Wood*

The Frog says in Murakami's short story "Super Frog Saves Tokyo" "What you see with your eyes is not necessarily real. My enemy is, among other things, the me inside me" (qtd. in Welch 59). This is true in the case of Murakami's characters and Naoko in the novel is not different. The title *Norwegian Wood* is an image with which Naoko identifies her aimless journey to understand the ways of society. There are no such woods present in the novel and originally it is the name given to a musical composition by the Beatles. The music which makes use of the Indian musical instrument sitar is an exquisite piece carrying the listeners into another world. Naoko identifies her soul with music and always loves to listen to it. She is so obsessed with its magic and considers herself wandering in the woods with nobody to help. It symbolises her mind searching for something which she never gets. "I don't know, I guess I imagine myself wandering in a deep wood. I'm all alone and it's cold and dark, and nobody comes to save me" (Rubin, *NW*, 143). Her feeling of loneliness and helplessness is clear from these words.

The disappointing fact is that she considers the wood in the song as real wood but the lyricist only mentioned the fake wood for making furniture. The song is about McCartney's affair with another woman and how he explains it to his wife. It has no

connection to Naoko's situation but her negative thoughts worsen her mental condition. Her subjective outlook towards the title of the composition and association with the feeling it evokes leads to her suicide in the woods near the Ami Hostel. She loses her mind in the inner labyrinth and fails pathetically. The novel can be viewed as the attempts of a poor girl, who is more sinned against than sinning, to hold her life tightly by desiring to achieve a connection between both worlds.

Naoko is unable to connect with her unconscious domain and fails in the process of individuation. She doesn't recognise her shadow as representing inner weaknesses and also fails to substitute the animus archetype. Disharmony with society never gets healed as she is not connected with her self. Naoko lives in a limbo state between the conscious and the unconscious. Like a soul divided against itself she says, "It's like I'm split in two and playing tag with myself. One half is chasing the other half around this big fat post. The *other* me has right words, but this me can't catch her" (25). "The other me" is her inner consciousness with its ability and "this me" is the conscious Naoko who suffers alienation. The incongruity between both realms constitutes her existential crisis. Unlike the other protagonists, he can't dance to the tune and her knots remain untied. Making the unconscious conscious demands courage, ability, patience, and invocation of potentials that are already present in every individual. But one needs to recognise it to get connected. She can't give expression even to her feelings and emotions and gets disappointed by finding the wrong words instead of real utterances. The "other" becomes a wild goose that can't be captured and runs away when she reaches it. Toru Watanabe says that she has been searching for words in a space to give voice to her inner mind.

The restless condition of Naoko's mind is clear from the account of incidents that she narrates to Watanabe. They are her real-life events but the narration confuses

him and he recognises that there is no interconnection between them. The way she presents them leaves him in an opaque state. He thinks, “Each tale has its own internal logic, but the link from one to the next was odd. Before you knew it, story A had stored into story B, which had been contained in A, and then came C from something in B, with no end in sight” (48). Tired of thinking of their connection, he begins to listen to musical records one after the other. She says about her childhood days, school, and family in minute detail and is so careful of avoiding those parts related to Kizuki and also all negative things like the death of her sister. Four hours of continuous talking ends with her intense crying that melts Watanabe’s mind. Her attempt to express her self in words and her inability to share the traumatic experiences are revealed.

Naoko is afraid of her own shadow, the dark side of her unconscious mind. Her continuous crying at the end symbolises her powerlessness and all the unrevealed emotions and feelings. She wants somebody to console her as Kizuki did. The hidden field well where the meadow ends and about which she speaks to Watanabe is a metaphor for her inner consciousness. The well is dark, deep, and covered with grass, and from her words, Naoko seems to be afraid of it. It symbolises the frightening darkness of her inner mind which doesn’t want to get exposed. The deep-rooted divine relationship between Kizuki and Naoko filled the gap between anima and animus. They contributed to each other by loving and understanding each other. This enabled them to keep the outside society at a safe distance. But the lack of connection with society creates psychological and physical weaknesses in Kizuki like failed sexuality as a result of his weak libido.

There are two selves in Kizuki; the real self which Naoko is familiar with and the simulated one made up of society. From Naoko’s description of his character,

years after his death, Toru Watanabe wonders at his ignorance of Kizuki's true nature. According to Watanabe, he was confident, cheerful, and talkative but didn't know that he had never expressed his true self. He allowed others only to see his best side and his fear of his own shadow made him end his life. It was Naoko who understood his weaknesses and negative sides. She says, "He tried hard, but it didn't do any good, and that would make him really angry and sad. There was so much about him that was fine and beautiful, but couldn't never find the confidence he needed" (167).

Kizuki's inability to recognise the value of his inner potential and the worth of his unconscious realm led to his death. He was in the dilemma of whether to follow his unconscious realm by becoming a stranger to the outside world or to discard it and be a victim of the simulated society. A harmonised situation where he can balance both never comes to his mind. Kizuki's tragic death shows the necessity of each human being to give value to his inner abilities. Bringing out the personal elements from the unconscious and connecting them with the outer world is an essential part of individuation. Jungian analysis shows that both Naoko and Kizuki fail in this aspect. They consider their personal elements weak and faulty as they do not grapple with the collective psyche in the conscious world. The recognition of the presence of a real self and the failure to appease it convert them into morally inferior and degraded beings.

With the death of Kizuki, Naoko loses the animus. He was the source of her inner strength and the mediator between the conscious and the unconscious. This makes her detachment from society complete. She is unable to face the outer world or the trials of life without her soulmate. Along with it, she has deep-rooted wounds like the suicide of her elder sister as a dark memory and its haunting experience remains strong in her inner consciousness. Naoko achieves a connection with death which grabbed all the beloved persons in her life. She submits her soul peacefully to it after

some feeble resistance. Watanabe, despite all his attempts to cure her mental dilemmas, fails because she is more connected with the world of the dead than with that of the living. She can't accept his love because she is guided by the love of Kizuki even after his death.

Naoko spends her life bearing the pain of alienation, depression, and the dilemma of seeing Watanabe replacing Kizuki. Her inner mind doesn't accept him and she says, "So after he died, I didn't know how to relate to other people. I didn't know what it meant to love another person" (148). She admires Watanabe's attitude toward life and his patience to wait to see things turning out naturally. Naoko's wounded spirit wanted solutions quickly because she fears that it may fail her by taking her away from the conscious world and cutting off the remaining links. She recognises that Ami Hostel can't help her because her inner realm is beyond healing. Fromm has observed that one can be saved by one's self even though there are many to help. This is true in Naoko's case. Neither Watanabe nor Reiko could help her and all their attempts fail.

Naoko likes to walk endlessly either alone or with Watanabe which is like going through the undiscovered regions of her self. Her walking symbolises the search for self and it can be analysed as walking through the inner consciousness. One day, both Watanabe and Naoko start their walking from the railway station at Yotsuya in Tokyo and end at Komagome. In the words of Watanabe,

This was no mere stroll for Naoko, though, judging from that walk. She turned right at Idabashi, came out at the moat, crossed the intersection at Jinbocho, climbed the hill at Ochanomizu and came out at Hongo. From there she followed the tram tracks to Komagome. It was a challenging route (23).

Naoko's ignorance of where they had reached after such a long walk shows the absence of connection with her conscious mind throughout the process. While walking she was searching for the hidden part as if looking for her own reality.

Naoko's walking is connected to the history and the collective unconsciousness of Japan which is analysed by Akiyoshi Suzuki in her research article titled, "Mapping the Subterranean of Haruki Murakami's Literary World". It studies the relationship of the novel with the ancient geography of Japan. Watanabe tells her that they had made a big arc from Yotsuya to Komagome. The places through which they travel are related to life, death, violence, myths, and spirits of the dead. The starting point, Yotsuya is known for the ghost story, "Yotsuya Kaidan", the story of a woman named Oiwa, killed by her husband and takes revenge on him after her death. The Japanese still believe that the place is infected with Oiwa's curse. Their next point is Lidabashi and they pass the Yatsuki shrine that has protected many people in wars. The top of the cape in the Kudan area where they reach is connected with the living and the dead world and it has special significance in ancient tradition. Their walk is characterised by the revisiting of places with historical significance like the ruins of the Jomon and Yayoi period, many cemeteries settlements, and the lives of legends that contributed to the building of Japan (Suzuki 27-28). These places and their significance show the presence of the collective unconscious along with the personal unconscious in Naoko. She leads Watanabe to troll through the places of death and violence in ancient times which is forgotten and hidden in the mind of people. Her mental state is affiliated with death and darkness and she fails to recognise the spiritual light within her. As the relationship between Watanabe and Naoko develops, their walking routes also change to places like hills, rivers, and railway lines. He says, "We forged straight ahead, as if our walking were a religious

ritual meant to heal our wounded spirits” (33). The shift from dark and violent places to calm and soothing shows his positive influence on Naoko.

Instead of trying to fight with her shadow, she admits her defeat defencelessly. Naoko’s attempts at self-actualisation fail due to her indifference to her shadow which represents the dark half of her inner consciousness. In his speech entitled “The Meaning of Shadows”, Murakami said,

You have to patiently learn to live together with your shadows. Sometimes, in a deep place you have to confront your own dark side. It is a necessary thing to do, because if you don’t, before long your shadow will grow ever stronger and will return, some night, to knock at the door of your house. ‘i’m back’, it’ll whisper to you (Accepting Danish award, *The Japan Times*).

Naoko doesn’t use her psychic energy to fight her shadow and accepts failure ending her life in the labyrinth of love and desperation. Her walking is triggered by the memory of Kizuki in which she lives and it is true as Watanabe says, “*Death exists, not as the opposite but as a part of life*” (30). He too has experienced it due to the shock he received after the suicide of Kizuki. The dead and their memories are powerful and they can affect the inner consciousness of the living. Watanabe also falls into the labyrinth of love between Naoko and Midori. Naoko means death and Midori represents life and he falls into the confusion in between. In Midori, he sees the future, and in Naoko's past and darkness.

Naoko circles around without finding the way out even though there are people to help her. Memory and submission to the past create a destructive effect on her life. This is the reason why Naoko burns all her memories before committing suicide. She burns all her diaries and letters sent by Watanabe which she used to

handle with utmost care and love. She thinks that by burning everything from the past, she can reborn as a free person who can find a connection between both the unconscious and conscious worlds. Naoko's failure is caused by the simulated system which never lets any individual go out of its control and also due to the ignorance of her psychic energy. She forgets about the reality of a productive spirit inside her that can transform the negative into the positive.

The term, "winding the spring" makes its appearance in the novel to show one's connection with his inner consciousness. Watanabe begins to "wind the spring" after visiting Naoko at the Ami hostel. The winding is done with the help of memories which connects him to the core of his consciousness. He says, "It's because I think of you when I'm in bed in the morning that I can wind my spring and tell myself I have to live another good day. I know I have to give it my best here as you are doing there" (260). His love for her gives meaning to his life. It is like charging oneself to positivity. The metaphor of "winding the spring" stands for the efforts taken by one's inner self to live as a real human being in a simulated society. Naoko lives in Watanabe's memory always and it makes him write the novel, *Norwegian Wood*.

Murakami picturises the inner realms of his characters and the steps taken by them to connect the unconscious with the conscious. The self-actualised protagonists achieve an equilibrium between both worlds. It is not the domination of one and the subordination of the other. By invoking memories, imagination, fantasies, dreams, and intuitions they achieve their aim. A fusion of the positive and negative and of noble and base elements is experienced in the process of self-liberation. Kafka's world inside the forest, Toru's hotel room, Boku's Town, and the Dolphin Hotel are the fantasies of their unconscious minds. Once they understand their realities inside

the fantastic elements, they come out of it by reducing the influence of the other world and emerge as new individuals.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

From Alienation to Association

“A story is not something of this world. A real story requires a kind of magical baptism to link the world on this side with the world on the other side” (Suzuki, Zen Buddhism 39). The great Japanese spiritualist Suzuki’s words about the ability of fiction in connecting both the known and unknown domains are well applicable to the Murakamian literary world. The thesis has conducted a detailed study of the five important novels of Haruki Murakami. The selected works have provided a double-layered way of reading; conscious and unconscious, and materialistic and spiritual. It is apt to call the research journey a labyrinthine one because it took the study from the physical to a metaphysical realm with the characters’ inner consciousness as its centre. The repeated themes, images, symbols, and sometimes even dialogues of the novels provide a labyrinthine pattern to the process.

Man who has been separated from nature during the early period of history found comfort in his attachment to the culture that provided a new sense of unity. Later, he was rendered powerless by the dominating culture and needed liberation from it. Contemporary man, who is away from both nature and culture needs to look into himself to have a meaningful existence. As the modern period is characterised by the dilemma of decentring and fragmentariness, many writers like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf adopted novel methods of presentation like the stream of consciousness technique. Here Murakami, while speaking from a world of

hyperrealities finds the detailed interpretation of human inner consciousness as a suitable medium to deal with the consequences of the loss of reality.

The research has attempted to study and analyse the underlying structure and pattern of the selected works of Murakami from a novel perspective. Several hidden layers of the selected novels are unearthed with the idea that the signifiers bring forth a variety of signifieds leading to multiple viewpoints. Postmodern man needs a different and unique spiritual approach to fight against simulation. He needs to re-emerge from fear, ostracism, and anxiety to fulfil the purpose of life. The spiritual experience of the characters is different from those depicted in religious texts and practiced by spiritual healers. They go through the unveiling of their real worlds which are hidden or disappeared because of several external factors. For this purpose, they make use of the power of their inner consciousness which relates them to their realities and then to society.

In the postwar world, reality is subjective and personal. There is no one reality but realities exist. The characters aim to find out their realities and to live according to them. They can only depend on their inner mind, the domain free from all sorts of simulation. Making use of one's inner consciousness is highly significant in contemporary cybernetic culture. When people are involved more in virtual realities without thinking about the existence of a self within them, their lives end in damnation. Accepting the fact that what one sees or experiences may not be real and one has the opportunity to look into one's self is emphasised in the thesis. According to Murakami, the domain of reality is one's inner consciousness which is free from the clutches of advanced capitalism. It is the most secret and personal space where one is free to engage in war with negativities and love with positivities.

The thesis has combined the ideas of four great writers to have a proper study of the dilemma of Japanese society and the ways to spiritual liberation. It has taken Murakamian literary world as the base and the ideas of the writers like Jean Baudrillard, Erich Fromm, and Carl Jung to have a proper analysis of the core theme. It can be seen that these four writers share similar views on the futile existence of postmodern societies and the loss of one's ability to realise his/her self. A common man who is immersed in material life and guided by images is unable to understand the loss of reality and the disappearance of individuality. The various ways by which the characters fall into the web of simulation and their struggles are revealed by the study. Spiritual liberation is the requirement of every suffering soul in the selected works. The thesis is centralised on this characteristic aspect contributing to the social relevance of the Murakamian literary landscape.

Murakami's aim of writing as a vehicle of social criticism is fulfilled by the analysis based on one of the most socially relevant theories, "simulacra and simulation". The characters realise the false consciousness in which they live and they deal with their desperate conditions in various ways. Living in a hyper-advanced society they knock themselves out to be a part of it due to the fear of alienation, ostracism, and the challenge of accepting their hidden realities. At the same time, they identify their simulated state but continue the role play to survive. Even though some try to fight against manipulation and simulated identities, they fail pathetically. Their alienation is imposed on them by the fake nature of the system and feels disappointed in a world where everything including God is a simulacrum. Some do not recognise their deterioration as images and believe in capitalist utopias. Others exploit the deceiving nature of society and get benefitted from it. The writer presents the journey of those who carry out their protestation by believing in the genuineness of their

selves. They accept the challenges of advanced capitalism and decide to combat it with the power of their inner consciousness. Their metaphysical journeys connect them with their selves and they return as individuated beings.

The thesis has examined the causes of the characters' inner dilemma and existential crisis and explores the ways of transformation. It takes up the challenge of exploring the "other worlds" depicted in the selected novels by the idea of self-realisation or individuation. The author is involved in the process of transforming the physical into the metaphysical and vice versa. Natural objects like wells, dark pavements, corridors, buildings, hotel rooms, and elevators become the playground of paranormal activities. All these symbolise the inner consciousness of the characters and their journey into other worlds. The unconscious is viewed as the domain of reality but its presence is blurred or ignored in the conscious region. Delving deep into the unconscious and returning as self-actualised beings lead to the spiritual liberation of the characters. The selected works share many similarities in characterisation, settings, and themes. But the brilliance of the writer lies in the fact that each of these demands different kinds of treatment to explore the dual world mechanism. While reading Murakami, it is easy for the reader to get stuck on the way or continue through the same route. But the journey will be completed only after reaching the centre and with the eventual return to the physical world as done by his characters. The study has understood this aspect well and has analysed each novel differently based on two significant concepts— simulation and spiritual liberation.

The author presents characters who restart their lives from the point of loss and mental degradation. They bring themselves out from their problems by listening to the "flow" of their inner minds. They interrogate the "reality" in which they are trapped; in *Wind up Bird*, Toru Okada encounters socio-historical "reality", in *Wood*,

the characters fight against various types of hyperrealities, *Wonderland* exposes the dark “reality” of science and technology in a futuristic world, the manipulated “reality” fed by capitalism leading to the disintegration of characters finds a place in *Dance* and the mental dilemma of the characters who find the emptiness involved in the seen “reality” constitute the world of *Kafka*.

The chapter “Japan through the Eyes of Murakami” has provided an ample introduction to the study by focusing on the major aspects of Japanese society based on the selected theme. It is focused on the writer’s concern about the spiritual barrenness of society amid all advanced facilities and material comforts. Murakami’s views on Japanese society are given special attention and presented the theories selected for the study - Baudrillard’s theory of “Simulacra and Simulation” and the psychoanalytical perspectives of Fromm and Jung. By differentiating the terms religion and spirituality, it gives an appropriate idea of the kind of spiritual liberation that the thesis presents. The detailed review of literature included in the chapter has given importance to the secondary works connected with the theme and various types of study aids used for an elaborate analysis of the Murakamian literary world.

The writer’s social commitment and his resolution of a truthful interpretation of the Japanese world are given special attention in the chapter “Haruki Murakami and his Literary World— Beyond Borders”. More than providing some biographical details of the author, the chapter concentrated on the detailed description of the various aspects of his writing like; narrative style, selection of themes, the purpose of writing, characterisation, and his position as a global writer. Murakami’s major concerns like identity dilemma, disillusionment, and transformation of individuals from alienation to attachment are being addressed. A detailed critical analysis of the selected novels shows an attempt to lessen the gap between the author’s ruminations

on society and his works. The writer's social responsibility resulting in the severe criticism of capitalist societies is being pinpointed. Historical amnesia, existential crisis, individuality, "Japaneseness", self-discovery, and surrealism act as the keywords of the chapter.

The mental conflicts of the characters living in a hyperreal world are analysed in "Interrogating "Reality": The Working of Simulation and Inner Dilemma". The concept of reality based on the views of both Murakami and Baudrillard is discussed in detail. The application of the theory of "Simulacra and Simulation" has helped to bring out the characters' existential crisis, alienation, hidden fears, and violence as a result of living in a hyperreal society where everything is reduced to objects and images. The ways by which reality is displaced and denatured are given attention. The so-called "reality" which guides the lives of the characters is interrogated and exposed. The aftereffects of being immersed in the depicted "reality" which causes the loss of one's self are given importance. The common factors causing simulation are studied and they act as the connecting thread between the selected works. The chapter shows the devastating power of simulation in all fields of life like politics, science and technology, history, wars, revolutions, ideologies, education, and personal relationships. It focuses on the loss of reality causing the loss of individuality and the inevitable disintegration of the characters. When Baudrillard analyses the working of the postmodern world based on his theory, Murakami practices it in his literary domain. From the outer reading of his novels, it is clear that the characters feel isolated due to the overpowering of advanced capitalism and they suffer an existential crisis. But the chapter goes deeper from this peripheral level by studying the innate reasons behind their problems with the help of Baudrillardian theory which mirrors the postwar societies truthfully. It has tried to approach the Murakamian literary

world from a new perspective and enhanced its relevance with the help of the selected theory.

The alienated status of the characters makes their lives meaningless and they look into way-outs. Liberation from the chains of simulation is their motto and they travel in search of their lost selves. What they need is spiritual liberation and the fourth chapter titled, “Transformation within: Decoding Murakamian Spirituality” deals with this aspect. The working of the inner consciousness of the characters is analysed with the help of the selected theories. The journey of the characters to self-realisation or individuation is being focused on. The human self is the centre of attraction and the transformation of the characters from the conscious to unconscious and vice-versa are studied in detail. The application of the psychoanalytical observations of Jung and Fromm has become helpful in resolving many dilemmas raised by the novels like the role of shadows, sexuality, fears, complexes, violence, inner darkness, and the like. The labyrinthine journey of the protagonists of each novel is analysed separately under different subtitles. The conflict between body and spirit and inner and outer worlds works as the major concern of the chapter. It is made clear that the spiritual liberation of each character is different from the other even though the angst and consequences of simulation are alike.

The selected novels depict contemporary themes of loss of individuality and spiritual emptiness in a narrative style deviating from Japanese pure literature and focusing on everyday “reality”. Baudrillard too has moved away from conventional theories to present postmodern dynamics. He has understood the inaccuracy of overused and outdated concepts in interpreting a fast-changing hyperreal world. Both Murakami and Baudrillard have keenly analysed and studied the nature of the postwar world leading to their conclusions. The confusion and irony behind the term “reality”

have fascinated them. While Baudrillard formulated his theory by direct observation of the nature of society, Murakami uses his literary world for the same purpose. The mission of both writers is the same- a truthful interpretation of the way of the world. The themes like the disappearance of reality, the hyperreal nature of society, and die-hard criticism of capitalist culture function as connecting factors between them.

The difference between both writers is that the method of dealing with the consequences of simulation are dissimilar for them. While Baudrillard laments over the loss of a single reality, Murakami understands that having a single reality in a fragmented world is an illusion. Baudrillard has pessimistic views about having a meaningful life and advocates nihilism. He negates all the prospects of revival under the rule of simulation. But Murakami portrays the possibilities of spiritual rejuvenation through the depiction of the inner world of realities. He has moved from the single concept of “reality” which is denatured, into realities that each being has to pursue. This shift from the general concept of “reality” to particular realities offers the thought of productive living. Murakami goes in tune with Baudrillard’s criticism of the meaningless ways of the world and people’s blind adherence to ideas, images, and objects which have no connection with reality. But he exhibits his belief in the power of human inner consciousness to fight against such adverse conditions. According to him, the solution to one’s dilemmas resides within one’s self.

While Murakami criticises the Japanese society, he also empathises with its people and encourages them to undertake inner journeys for self-renewal. This aspect of finding one’s self has led the thesis to the theme of spiritual liberation. In financially well-built and technologically advanced societies like Japan, people face a different sort of existential crisis which they are unable to comprehend. The writer has adopted the most suitable method of knowing one’s inner consciousness to deal with

this dilemma. He agrees with the psychoanalytical observations of Jung and Fromm which explain the role of one's unconscious mind in transforming the individual. The characters are made to battle against themselves to purify their selves. After the journey into the "other" world, the Murakamians come out as new individuals with the ability to fight against the powers of simulation and establish their identities.

The study has tried to review the concept of spiritual liberation by connecting it with recognising one's reality and believing in the inner ability as a human being for resolving dilemmas. After doing extensive research on various aspects of Japanese spirituality the thesis has finally reached the nature of spiritual liberation depicted in the concerned works. Murakami's affinity with shadows, the personal, and the collective unconscious has made it clear that the inner realms presented in his works are connected to the ideas of Jung. Both of them are concerned about the dual division- the conscious and the unconscious; the known and the unknown. He agrees with Fromm's psycho-spiritual discourses which aim at the transformation of individuals into a realm of humanity by invoking their inner potential. It is the journey from alienation to association.

The characters are open to the hidden darkness, passions, and inner powers. They understand the distorted "reality", recognise false consciousness, go through a variety of experiences even from the past, train the conscious to capture the unconscious, and then view the world based on a newly attained liberated state. The journey of the characters involves four major stages; realisation of their pathetic condition, recognition of the presence of the other world, exploration of the inner domain, and return as liberated beings. Understanding the disappearance of reality and the domination of hyperreal images and objects is the primary step to spiritual rejuvenation. The nature of "reality" is questioned by the characters and the novels

present the truth that there is no utopia or an ideal state. The search for one's reality leads to contradictions, disapprovals, denials, and conflicts between the individual and his own self and with society. It interrogates the artificially made-up social conformity that leads the characters to alienation and desperation. The outside society can only aggravate the dilemma and the solution lies in each person's core—the “elephant factory” as termed by the Professor in *Wonderland*.

Listening to the inner voice is the second step toward spiritual liberation. The simulated world is in disharmony with instincts and this is resolved by the transcendent function. Being connected with the unconscious and recognising its presence in form of dreams, fantasies, hallucinations, illusions, revelations, and memories create changes in the lives of the protagonists. When one is ready to receive revelations, one is getting connected with the core as seen in the case of the protagonists like Kafka, Nakata, Toru Okada, and Boku. The interesting fact is that the attainment of realities happens through fantasies and dreams. When material man dismisses the significance of such symbols as worthless, the characters advocate that the messages sent by the inner minds are to be taken seriously. They make use of their detachment from society and search for their inner labyrinths. It doesn't need renunciation of the material world or the atmosphere of isolated regions like mountains, calm and serene places, or any other unexplored locations. They find an abandoned well, a nearby forest, a multi-storied building, or a hotel room as suitable places to ponder over themselves and evoke their inner consciousness.

In the third step, in their journeys, the characters are made aware of their inner potential. The recognition of real needs, arousal of memory, generation of feelings like love, belongingness, empathy, and forgiveness, great observation, and the indomitable will constitute their inner abilities. “Being with the flow” or “dancing to

the music” are the mantras to be in connection with one’s core consciousness. Even though the characters are made to face several obstacles on the path to self-renewal, they overcome them with a strong belief in their inner realms. The nature of labyrinths varies from one character to another and the challenges they face on the way are different. This indicates that the reality of each person is different from others and there are realities and not a single “reality”. The mingling of the personal and the collective unconscious happens in their journeys and they are brought forth by referring to history and myths. Recognising the shadow is an important aspect that contains both negative and positive characteristics. Defeating the negative elements and embracing the positive factors is the task of each character engaged in the process of self-liberation. It is the transformation of a person from self-alienation to self-actualisation.

A union of dualities like body and soul, subject and object, and reality and fantasy happens in the journeys. After many struggles and confusions, the characters recognise their realities and it leads to their ultimate destination. The loose ends are tied up and questions get answered. The thesis has worked on the idea that one can be cured by one’s inner mind as the inner consciousness is one’s teacher, mentor, guide, and friend. Walking through the labyrinth and reaching the core is a process of purgation. All the selected novels are concentrated on the aspects of coming out and getting connected with the conscious world after spiritual rejuvenation. This is the final step involved in the characters’ journey. The connection achieved after their return is unique as it is based on their realities which makes their transformation productive. The conscious world is one’s real domain and one has to live in it by courageously facing all the challenges. Even though the unconscious is the educator one can’t sustain there because it is quite personal. Man as a social being has to get

connected with his society. Maintaining the balance between subjectivity and collectivism is important and it enables one's meaningful living. The connectedness gives the characters the feeling of belongingness – the thought that everything is a part of them and they are part of everything. But the sense of peace that the characters achieve at the end seems to be impermanent as fighting against simulation is an endless process. They are made to battle against the powers of simulation after gaining spiritual liberation. Self-actualised individuals are open to challenges even though they are connected with their inner minds.

The thesis has tried to make it clear that achieving one's reality is equalled with his/her spiritual liberation. The protagonists are freed from all sorts of restrictions and hesitations and begin to view things from a new perspective. This is the point of equilibrium when one can relate oneself with other things by forgetting the distinction between subject and object. If a person is able to see an object in its essence and his own self as a separate entity, he/she can achieve equilibrium. It is not considering one as inferior and the other as superior but understanding its original position and relation to human life. There is positive dissociation and belongingness at the same time. It is not the utopian ideology of perfection or equality but ascertaining one's identity by belonging to the society. One becomes selfless, empathetic, and receptive. Individuality and independence are clubbed with belongingness and collectivism in the process of self-realisation. The harmony the characters achieve with their inner and outer worlds transforms them from passivity into productivity.

Spiritual liberation is not presented as an unobtainable experience. It is there inside every living being and each individual has to actualise its power in their physical life. The characters understand that their existence becomes meaningless

without the actualisation of their inner powers and connection with their fellow beings. The selected novels revolve around the growth of the characters from the situation of desperation and alienation to the attainment of reality and association. Self-actualisation or knowing oneself is the basis of their growth. The writer agrees with the fact that social integration with the ability to meet the challenges of a simulated society leads human beings to happiness. The characters identify their connection with the outside world where they considered themselves as strangers earlier. One has to “wind up” one’s inner mind to prepare it to fight against the powers of simulation. Sustaining independence on the one hand and relating with humanity productively on the other hand, is the result of individuation. Murakami has made the Crow say to Kafka, “When you come out of the storm you won’t be the same person who walked in. That’s what this storm’s all about” (Gabriel, *KOS* 4). The storm is of course the storm of self-actualisation. Murakamian literary world has succeeded in presenting the ability of people to live in highly advanced capitalist societies as real individuals who might help societies from disintegration.

Chapter 6

Recommendations

The thesis conducted a detailed study on the nature of postmodern societies with Japan as an example. It analyses the simulated nature of a hyper-capitalist society and the predicament of human beings living in it. The characters of the selected novels are representatives of ordinary beings who find themselves perplexed by the domination of signs and images. As a consequence of the loss of reality and meaning, they are alienated not only from society but themselves. At the peak of desperation, they recognise the importance of self-discovery. The Murakamians understand realities by travelling to their inner realms. Labyrinthine journeys of the characters and the experience they gain in the process lead to their self-actualisation. It is a transformation from the physical to the metaphysical, the conscious to the unconscious, or a predetermined “reality” to personal realities. The thesis thus has tried to combine the various aspects of loss of reality and spiritual liberation innovatively.

Regarding the simulated nature of postmodern societies, the study is strictly confined only to the ideas of Jean Baudrillard. It has not incorporated the aspects of simulation as seen by writers like Plato, Deleuze, Umberto Eco, and Nietzsche. Baudrillard’s findings on the hyperreal working of postmodern societies offer scope for further studies based on this theory. It applies to various real-life situations in a hi-tech society. The relevance of the Murakamian literary landscape in the corporate world where people live like programmed machines is a topic that demands further attention. The utopian society offered by capitalism and the dystopian worlds of Murakami’s novels can be studied together. In the lives of people governed by

multinational companies, reading Murakami will be a purgatory process. The writer is pertinent whenever human beings feel that they are leading hollow lives and away from their selves. His fictional world proves that spiritual transformation is possible for anyone who sincerely wishes for it. This is most appropriate for those who spend their days in virtual reality.

All the selected novels for this study carry history as a base for present and future lives. It is affirmed that the past cannot be neglected and nations have to wake up from collective amnesia. A new historical reading of the selected works will provide new insights into the fictional world of Murakami. History is treated by the writer as a subjective presence and not an objective entity. Various characters in the novels go through different traumas, many of which are difficult for them to explain. The application of trauma studies can bring out all the aspects of mental dilemmas that the characters undergo. This will help to realise not only personal traumas but national traumas as well. Japan's guilty feeling for its responsibility in increasing the horrors of the Second World War is an example of national trauma. The sexual and spiritual traumas experienced by the characters can be well analysed in future studies.

The spiritual liberation that the study deals with is limited to psychoanalytical perspectives. It can be viewed from religious and mythological backgrounds. The elements of Zen Buddhism and Shintoism are visible in Murakami's literary world. There are references to religious beliefs in all the selected novels. The supernatural events that occurred in the novels like the rain of leeches and fishes, the talking cats, the "kami" stone, and the spirit projection can be studied further. The writer has made use of Japanese myths for the surrealistic depiction of various events. Future studies based on myths and religion will help to get more connected to Japanese soil and bring out the national element in Murakami.

Recognising the “other” is the basic idea of postcolonial studies. Japan is a good example of the postcolonial notions of hybridity and mimicry. Even though the nation regenerates quickly from the tragedies of the Second World War, it lost “something” in the process. The Japanese, imitating western culture, forgot their values and tradition but there are possibilities for rejuvenation. This aspect can be further developed by presenting the resistance of an Asian nation against western ideals. Several Japanese writers emphasise the upholding of the idea of “Japaneseness” against neo-colonialism. They negate the west completely.

Murakami is often criticised for his affinity toward using western cuisine, images, and lifestyle in his novels. But the writer has declared his idea of Japaneseness which is not complete alienation from the European world. Instead, it is understanding one’s culture by the truthful depiction of history and one’s self as an extension of this culture. For him, the “other” not only indicates Japan’s identity as an Asian nation but the “other” realm which is the only truthful domain one can depend on. The scope for further studies in Murakami doesn’t end here. The relevance of Haruki Murakami’s literary domain remains unscarred as he is a cosmopolitan writer with the ability to understand the predicament of postmodern beings. Like his open-ended novels, his literary oeuvre is an open landscape where one can seek ways for spiritual transformation.

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