The Other World in Murakami Literature and the Reception of Murakami Haruki in China

Lu Yu

Asian and African Studies

Master's Thesis in East Asian Studies

EAST4590 2013-VÅR

Abstract

Murakami Haruki is one of the most prestigious Japanese novelists alive who gains a phenomenal readership around the world. One of the major discourse handled in Murakami's oeuvre is 'the other world'—a world that is both co-existing with and beyond reality. In three decades the form, function and implication of 'the other world' in Murakami Literature has been developed, extended, alternated and transtextualized. The oeuvre of Murakami presents multidimensions and complexity of time, space and metaphor. The first part of this paper is aiming to discuss the representation of 'the other world' in Murakami's works in different periods—*Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World, The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore*—with interpretation of their implications respectively. The analysis will be contextualized. After the Tokyo subway sarin gas attack, Murakami Haruki initiated his interviews book *Underground* with the gas attack victims and further investigated the perpetrators— the cult *Aum Shinrikyo*—through his interviews with several former cult followers. Part I of the thesis will examine how such issues take on in Murakami's 'the other world' and how did they changed its connotations.

The second part of this paper deals with the reception of Murakami Haruki's works in China. Popular literature gains largest readership in post-Tiananmen era in China dues to the policy changing toward economy and culture. Three stages publications of Murakami literature shape a petty bourgeoisie image of Murakami's novels. Murakami becomes a popular culture icon among young readers in China. Chinese scholars employ Chinese philosophy to interpret Murakami literature, which give us a glimpse of how Chinese read Murakami into their local culture. Several motifs have been highlighted among Chinese in reading Murakami Literature such as the works take on of war history, traumatic memories, student movement, spirit searching.

Acknowledgement

I owe my sincere gratitude to Professor Reiko Abe Auestad and Professor Vladimir Tikonov for offering generous advice on this paper. I also would like to thank my family for not giving up upon me.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Part I: The Other World in Murakami Literature

Chapter 1: Theory Preliminaries

Chapter 2: Context : *Aum*

Chapter 3: No Place For the Lost:

Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World

Chapter 4: Seekers:

The Wind-up Bird Chronicle

Chapter 5: Reconstruction of Inner World:

Kafka on the Shore

Part II: Reception of Murakami Literature in China

Chapter 6: A Japanese Writer Conquered China

Chapter 7: Academic Reception

Conclusion

Bibliography

Introduction

In 1974, Haruki Murakami (born 12 January, 1949) became a coffeehouse and Jazz bar owner in Kokubunji, Tokyo, shortly before finishing his studies as a drama student in Waseda University. Years of assiduous labour work of running the bar, Peter Cat, has apparently paid him off. Murakami's business gradually went smoothly, which might partly due to the postwar economic booming, fearturing with the unprecedented rapid growth of GNP in 1970s. However such business success could hardly be satisfying to Murakami, who always preserves a restless heart for literature. His father was the son of a Buddhist priest whilst his mother the daughter of an Osaka merchant. It is interesting to mention that even though both of his parents taught Japanese classical literature, Murakami associated himself rather with Western music and fictions since childhood. Some of the current critics have drawn out a manifest of writers whom Murakami's fiction style may be influenced or affected by. The list of writers includes Raymond Carver, Truman Capote, J.D. Salinger, Richard Brautigan, Raymond Chandler, Kurt Vonnegut Jr., John Cheever and Paul Auster. To some extent this 'western taste' reads out from his fictions has explained why Murakami is often considered both as a postwar and a westernised writer.

Murakami's first fiction Hear The Wind Sing was written during the time he was still running the Peter Cat bar. This debut novel published in 1979 has rewarded him the prestigious Gunzō Literature Prize. Thus his trajectory of career has totally changed its direction: in the following decade Murakami has almost effortlessly established his literature as a major voice for the disaffected and political despondent Japanese youth after the utter defeat of Zenkyōtō movement — the most widely known student uprising against the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (also known as AMPO movement) during 1960s. *Pinball, 1973* and *A Wild Sheep Chase* following his debut novel formed the *Trilogy of Rat*. The publication of *Dance Dance Dance*, a sequel of this first trilogy, has drawn a closure to the Rat series. *A Wild Sheep Chase* among others became the first Murakami novel that has been introduced to the English reading world. This novel initially features

Murakami's magical realism style in Mattew Strecher's term. It is also the first time that the Other World setting merges in Murakami Literature. The Other World appears again in his next novel published in 1985. In *Hardboiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, the Other World has been widely developed. This novel employs alternating chapters to unfold two worlds which are parallel and intertwined. Thereafter, the Other World establishes its significance in each and every novel and thus becomes a characterastic in Murakami Literature. However, the Other World that appears in the novels published after 1995 should be treated differently from the one in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland.* One of the greatest shocks of the 1990s came on March 20th, 1995 when, during the morning commuter rush, members of the *Aum Shinrikyo* cult released deadly sarin gas on Tokyo's subways. This occurred just following a massive earthquake in the Kansai region on Jan. 17th that year, centred on Kobe and Awaji Island. The so-called Great Hanshin Earthquake killed over 6,000 people and injured many more. These two catastrophes have changed Murakami's insights upon the relations between an individual and the world where an individual associates himself with. It motivates Murakami to reconsider the connotation of being a Japanese and drives him to examine the violent and inexorable past among Japanese history to seek answer. Murakami even spent a lot of time on field work of interviewing the sarin gas victims and Aum members. His remarkable effort shows in two published works, *Underground* and *The Promised Place*. The novels thereafter reflect Murakami's insights and meditation toward those events. Conspicuous changes and reshaping of the Other Worlds are not surprising consequences considering such context.

The major task of this thesis is aiming to explain how in three decades the form, function and implications of the Other World in Murakami Literature have been developed, extended and alternated according to the dynamic of context. In the first part of this paper, I will examine the Other World in Murakami's mid and late creative periods by the analysis of three selected novels: *Hardboiled Wonderland and the End of the World , The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore,* in order to obtain a better understanding of the Other World in Murakami Literature with its changed connotations through these years. The

second part of the paper is a study of the reception of Murakami Literature in China.

Part I The Other World in Murakami Literature

Chapter 1 Theory Preliminaries

1.1 Relations between Primary Fabula and Embedded Text (mirror-text)

I would like to introduce Mieke Bal's theory of narratology by starting with his definition of fabula. In *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* Bal constructs his narrative theory based on three major terminologies: narrative text, story and fabula. A *narrative text* in Bal's term is a text in which a *story* as its content is conveyed in a particular medium such as language or sound. The story produces and presents a particular manifestation of a fabula. A *fabula*, according to Bal, is "a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors."[1] Several indispensable such as events, actors, time and location constitute the material of a fabula. These elements are arranged in a specific way into a story which produce certain effect desired in a fabula.

An embedded text may be considered as a narrative text that embedded inside a primary narrative. However, several criteria for narrativity must have been met. The most usual type is that narrative texts in which at the second or third level a complete story is told, the frame narratives in Bal's term. I assume the relations between the primary narrative (or a primary fabula) and the embedded text are varied only to strong or weak and the embedded text which has a strong relation to the former one contributes more to the abstraction and interpretation of the primary text. And according to Bal, the "embedded text will only be interpreted as mirror-text and 'give away' the outcome when the reader is able to capture the

[1] Bal, Mieke, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, third edition,[Universtiy of Torono Press,2009],5

partial resemblance through abstraction." [2] This abstraction of resemblance usually requires readers to be familiar with the mirror-text (embedded text which has close relation to the primary fabula in a story) and to finish reading the primary fabula.

Enormous embedded texts have merged in *Kafka on the Shore*, whilst not all of them have a strong relation to the primary narrative text. The texts such as *The Miner* and the Greek Tragedy *Oedipus Rex* among others contribute important dialogues with the story of the main character in this novel. This paper will address the mirror-texts of importance to show how they raise the narrative of specific discourse to a new level and to reveal their suggestions on how the primary text should be read.

1.2 Intertextuality

The definition of the term intertextuality has been developed by theorists in varied periods in history. Intertextuality as a modern literary conception has its origins in tewentieth-century linguistics. Saussurean linguistics promotes this notion to explain the relational word: the word possessing meaning belongs to a synchronic system of language, rather than the diachronic one. Word, or a sign of a word, is referential to the linguistic system exists at one moment of time. It is neither independent nor referential directly to the world. As Graham Allen points out in his book *Intertextuality*, "Signs are not 'positive terms'; they are not referential, they only possess what meaning they do possess because of their combinatory and associative relation to other signs. No sign has a meaning of its own."[3] Bakhtin developed the notion of intertextuality to be more concerned with the social contexts. For Bakhtin, the relational nature of the word stems from the word's existence within specific social sites, specific social registers and specific moments of utterance and reception.

Julia Kristeva in the school of poststructuralism is the inventor of the term intertextuality. Kristeva's term has taken on a variety of meanings inspired by models and theories of Bakhtin's and Saussure's. Graham Allen explains, "in

[2] Ibid., 62
[3] Allen, Graham, *Intertextuality 2nd edition*, [Routledge, London and New York, 2011], 10

‘The Bounded Text’ Kristeva is concerened with establishing the manner in which a text is constructed out of already existent discouse. Authors do not create their texts from their own original minds, but rather compile them from pre-existent text, so that, as Kristeva writes, a text is ‘a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text’, in which ‘several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another’ (Kristeva, 1980: 36).”[4] A literary text is a larger container of meaning relates to other texts than the layer of meaning in the text itself. Text always contains assumptions and implications of previous texts.

To examine how the primary text relies on other embedded texts can give us better and deeper understanding of the meaning of the primary text. The significance of embedded texts is addressed through its relation with the primary text. In an embedded text, readers usually will find both its resemblance and distinctives to the primary text. In one way or another, the embedded text, especially the mirror-text is in conversation with the primary text, which has enriched the dimension of reading and interpreting of priamry fabula.

In some cases, the mirror-text is a cannonical one such as the mirror-text of Greek tragedy *Oedipus Rex* in Murakami's novel Kafka on the Shore. In fact the priamry fabula of young Kafka's can be read as an alternative of the former text, if not a resemblance. Harald Bloom's intertextual theory reveals a concern for this kind of relation between a text and its former cannonical one. Bloom elaborates his theory in questioning the "belatedness" of Romantic poetry. He defines belatedness as the experience of coming after a event which makes all texts after it only remain as its successors. To understand Bloom's belatedness, Allen explains Bloom's opinion on Romantic poetry:

The reason the Romantic poets could not rid their poetry of explicit or implicit references and allusions to Milton was, it would appear, that they were late for an event. Bloom has no doubt that Milton's poetry is that event, and that Milton's poetry makes all poets after him, inluding the canonical male Romantics, belated. ... Bloom's vision of poetry is thus intertextual. It argues that poetry, and indeed literature in general, can only imitate previous texts.[5]

[4] Allen, 35
[5] Allen, 131

All the poets after the "event" are, according to Bloom, without an exception misreading and misinterpreting the poems of specific precursor poets. However, as Allen explains, "to be 'strong poets', to employ Bloom's combative terminology, new poets must do two things: they must rewrite the precursor's poems, and in that very act they must defend themselves against the knowledge that they are merely involved in the prosess of rewriting, or what Bloom calls misreading. "[6] For Bloom, the new poets or writers can not get rid of the influence by their precursor texts. But those belated are attempting to misread and misinterpret the former texts in a new way through transforming, redirecting, reinterpreting those already written texts, in order to distinguish (or at least attempt to distinguish) and defend themselves against the precursor texts. Their efforts benifit readers in a way that the clear link between primary text and its precursor texts (embedded mirror-texts) will influence readers in their reading of the story either retrospectively or instructively. And one of this paper's method is to examine the relation between primary texts and its embedded texts. To understand how they are linked and connected to each other will reveal the light of the story to readers.

Chapter 2 Context: *Aum*

Tokyo was embracing a beautiful clear spring on a Monday morning while the time was around seven o'clock. Tones of residents rushed into Tokyo subway station and were on their way to work. Those trains would pass through Kasumigaseki and Nagatacho, home to the Japanese government. For most passengers it seemed like a hectic working day as usual, until the man punctured plastic bags filled with sarin gas with umbrella in the train and turned the sunshine into a daymare for Tokyo. The sarin attack in Tokyo subway (also known as the *Chikatetsu Sarin Jiken*) was a domestic terrorism action perpetrated by members of *Aum Shinrikyo* on March 20,1995. In five coordinated attacks, the perpetrators have released poisonous sarin gas, killed thirteen people and severely injured fifty.

[6] Ibid. , 132

In addition, it has caused temorary vision and breathing problems for nearly a thousand. The catastrophic event is considered as the most significant attack and the worst disaster ever occurred in post-war Japan. Shortly after the attack, *Aum Shirikyo* lost its power as a religious organization and many of its assets has been seized. However, the Japanese parliament rejected a request from government officials to outlaw the group. Today the group reportedly still has about 2,100 members, and continues to recruit new members under the name "Aleph" same time with other names. Although the Aum group has renounced its violent past, it still continues to follow Asahara's spiritual teachings.

Aum Shinrikyo (currently known as Aleph) was founded by Shoko Asahara in 1984. In English "*Aum Shinrikyo*" is usually translated as "Supreme Truth" and now is listed as a terrorist organization by several countries. Aum started off as a yoga and meditation class and growed steadily during the following years. In 1995, the group claimed over 9,000 members in Japan as many as 40,000 worldwide. What made it special among other new new religious groups was probably that it has attracted a considerable number of young people in Japan's top universities which features Aum as a "religion for the elites." In the early 1990s, Aum purchased various chemicals and a large cache of parts for making weapons. Before too long, the Tokyo sarin gas attack revealed the group as the most famous deadly cult in Japanese history.

The New New Religions (*shinshinshukyo*), in which *Aum Shinrikyo* categorized, have emerged since the 1970 when Japan grew far more prosperous than the two former dacades. "This shift in direction reflects a change from the older demands on religion relief from suffering and povertyto the more spiritual and mystical desires of financially secure people who seek new answers to questions on the meaning of life or who are in need of self-awareness in a control-oriented society." *Aum Shinrikyo* attracted thousands of young Japanese who are seeking direction in life, as well as a group of brilliant young scientists and engineers who abandoned traditional career tracks to serve a cult leader. Pillip Gabriel puts that many members joined *Aum* share "a sense of estrangement from ordinary Japanese life" and seek a way to "raise their spiritual level".[7] At the time, numerous urban

[7] Daniel A. Metraux, Religious Terrorism in Japan: The Fatal Appeal of Aum Shinrikyo, Asian Survey, Vol. 35, No. 12 (Dec., 1995),p.1152 Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2645835 .

citizens join New Religious groups in a growing need of spiritual searching. Those who are disappointed with consumerism culture and tedious working are longing for a community beyond daily life to meet their spiritual needs. Daniel A. Metraux explains how Aum has adapted itself as an ideal socio-religious group for attracting more people to join:

Aum and other New Religions "form part of an ongoing historical process and what is new about them is not to be found in their content so much as in their emergence as socio-religious organizations with the aim of the reworking and revitalizing of traditional beliefs and practices for the purpose of ensuring their relevance to daily life at a time of unprecedented change in all spheres." These religious organizations have the main characteristics of revitalization movements in that they "rework and reshape traditional beliefs, rituals, and symbols in such a way as to make them relevant to the social, cultural and spiritual needs of the present."[8]

"Initially, its refusal to compromise with mainstream social values was passive, but after 1990 it became an active oppositionist sect" which fleeced millions of dollars from its followers and caused numerous casualties and injured nearly 6,000 innocent residents.[9] Hence Aum has changed into a terrorist group which use mechanical weapons to wage war upon Japanese society. It turned into a killing machine which destroyed thousands of families and trembled the earth. *Aum* reveals its cult nature by displaying " a considerable degree of totalism in dominating the lives of its membership." [10] Devout followers abandoned their secular life to join *Aum*-- a better and more compelling community other than Japanese society as they view. *Aum* supplements ideological construction with a communal life completely cut off from outside world. Metraux describes *Aum*'s inner construction as follows:

"limitation on the forms of participation with outsider, refusal to take part in common societal activities, peculiar habits of eating and abstinence, and…even peculiarities of dress." There is also the notion that sect members consist of an "elect" religious elite.

---

[8] Ibid., 1141
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid., 1142

Aum followers, most of whom are in their 20s and 30s, donate all of their assets to the cult and move into Aum communes…[11]

It does not take long time to discover the shut down community inside *Aum* is quite familiar and shares many resemblances with the outside world where its menbers are trying to escape.

Murakami Haruki wanted to probe deeper into the enclosed Aum community laying inside Japanese society, to figure out how ordinary people could perpetrate such violence and what unique about Aum that it kept so many people willingly trapped themselves into. Murakami notes that there was a dramatic change in the Japanese consciousness "before" and "after" these events. The weakness of Japanese society exposed completely to these unexpected disasters (the gas attack and the earthquake). The media accused the authorities of inadequate functioning, savaging the police for insufficient investigations of *Aum* before the gas attack occurred. In the post-*Aum* era individuals or groups that do not reflect social norms become potential media targets, and the "now-familiar frames used by the media to portray *Aum Shinrikyô*—complete with a mysterious leader, besotted followers, drugs, bizarre rituals, and horrific crimes—have been etched firmly in people's minds since the Tokyo gas attack."[12]

After the events, Murakami realised that to understand the reality of the Tokyo gas attack, views and critics only from the outside is inadequate. He started to form his journalistic literature book *Underground*, including interviews of gas attack victims and even *Aum* members, for Murakami insists that there is a similar need for a parallel analysis of "us" side. He concerns a protential danger exists if media simply use the rhetoric of "Us" versus "Them", and used it to prop up this "righteous" position of "ours". If we indulge this rhetoric, then "all we will see from now on are ever more exacting and minute analyses of the 'dirty' distortions in 'their' thinking."[13] Murakami continues to explain, "by failing to look for the

[11] Ibid.

[12] Benjamin Dorman, "Pana Wave The New Aum Shinrikyô or Another Moral Panic?", The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions, Vol. 8, No. 3 (March 2005),p.87 University of California PressStable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/nr.2005.8.3.83

[13] Murakami Haruki, *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum, Philip Gabriel, [1st Vintage International Ed edition 2001], 227

key buried under our own feet, where it might be visible to the naked eye, by holding the phenomenon at such a distance we are in danger of reducing its significance to a microscopic level."[14]

Murakami's deeper interrogations into Aum have provoked his self-contemplation as a novelist. He sees the potential violence lays in every ordinary individual and has witnessed how Aum's powerful narrative created a dangerous dream which drags out the monster sleeping inside one's body. As a novelist Murakami ponders if there is a narrative "potent enough to chase away Asahara's 'utter non-sense'"[15]. Murakami brings the big task into his post-Aum novels, such as *Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore.* The Other World setting in those post-Aum novels has also been developed and enlarged its scale in dealing with motifs such as memories, Self and Others, internal violence, history and alianated Aum-like system. To examine the Other World into the Aum context therefore become feasible and indispensable in this paper.

Chapter 3 No Place For the Lost:

Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World

"At the end of the 1980s, the Tokyo stockmarket was worth 40% of the world's market; land prices in Japan were ludicrously high."[16]Susan Napier argues after Japan's economic advances have grown legendary pollution problems for itself in 1970s, "however, Japan seemed to regain the Utopian high ground after scholars, politicians, and business professionals flocked to learn its secrets of industrial policy and social interaction."[17] The miraculous growth of the Japanese economy was resulting from a highly homogenizing imperatives of the system, in which

---

[14] Ibid.
[15] Ibid., 233
[16] Goto-Jones, Christopher, *Modern Japan: A Very Short Introduction*, [Oxford University Press, 2009], 116

[17] Napier, Susan J., *The fantastic in modern Japanese literature : the subversion of modernity*, [London : Routledge, 1996],181

individuals were expected to selflessly dedicate themselves to economic and technological developments. Susan Napier gives us general views from Westerners' perspective upon Japan's 1980s. Napier sees this period of Japan not as Utopia but a land where crisis is flowing beneath false utopia appearance:

In the 1980s this image of Japan as a technological and social Utopia came increasingly under attack from both inside and outside.The tensions made some Westerners demonize the country they had formerly lauded. Images of the Japanese as "robots"or "terminators" become common currency in the Western press. An infamous quote from a European Community diplomat described the Japanese as a nation of worker bees living in rabbit hutches.[18]

When describing the postwar (after 1970) historically , Matthew Strecher reveals that there "has been an inexorable shift toward a social ideology devoted solely (or nearly so) to economic concerns, in which identity formation, such as it exists at all, is grounded mainly in the extent and nature of one's participation in contemporary Japanese consumerism."[19] Whilst some Japanese intellectuals such as Yoshimoto Takaaki observes that Japanese society is shifting itself through modernity into a postmodern condition.[20] To put the term 'postmodern' aside temporarily, we still manage to observe a high-level development of modernity in Japan's 1980s. However, thoughts reveal only concern than optimism toward this period in Murakami's fiction *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the Word* (*HBW* hereafter). *HBW* depicts a futuristic and apocalyptic central Tokyo underground where the world is sinking into utter darkness. To put another way, the story foreshadows a modern society that is coming to its end. *HBW* views modernity as a self-devastating process that rationality thrives to its extreme whilst individuality is swallowed up by the highly mechanic and homogeneous system. The task in this section of this paper is to elaborate how *HBW* has employed a dual-world structure as an approach to manifest itself not merely as a rediscovery of an individual Self, but also as a calling on and a bemoaning of humanity in a place where the dilemma of human condition always remains.

[18] Napier, 181-182

[19] Stretcher, Matthew, *Dances With Sheep: The Quest for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki*, [University of Michigan Center 2002], 68

[20] Goto-Jones, 119

The Hard-Boiled Wonderland is a futuristic setting of Tokyo metropolis where exorbitant scientific and technological development have modified the society structure: two political factions and workers who serve them as foot soldiers. The two factions, known as the System and the Factory, compete each other through collecting/stealing shuffled data, which can divulge scientific experiment results or technological innovations after decoding it. The first-person narrator Watashi[21] is a thirty-five-year old Calcutecs who works for System to shuffle data. In order to protect data from leaking out, one of Watashi's employer, known as the professor, has figured out a way to keep data from divulging. In a trial the professor attempts to hide data in the brains of twenty-six selected Calcutecs through brain surgery. This brain operation will form a circuit in target's brain and hold information in the target's core subconscious mind. The operators in the research organisation can transfer out data whenever necessary by "shuffling". By installing a separate circuit into the junction boxes in the brains of those Calcutecs, namely the third circuit, the professor succeeded in visualising the core subconscious in this third circuit. However, all the other experimental targets failed to maintain their brain functions or died during the trial. Watashi is the only target who has survived the trial and runs the shuffling smoothly inside his brain.

The End of the World is both Watashi's shuffling code and visualised world shaped in his subconscious. In the plot a completely unexpected accident makes Watashi become a casualty of the professor's off-record experiment. As a result, Watashi's conscious mind is coming to an end whilst his subconscious mind will permanently stuck inside the third circuit created by himself: *The End of the World*.

In this novel, Watashi's story in *The Hard-Boiled Wonderland* is accompanied by the story in *The End of the World* narrated by one of Watashi's subconscious ego, Boku.[22] These two stories are inextricably linked and chronologically unfolding chapter by chapter. The Town locates in the centre of the End of the World is walled and governed by a gatekeeper. Readers will soon discover the Town in the End of the World is an inverted simulacrum of The Hard-Boiled Wonderland. Two worlds are associating each other through many commonalities: the unicorn

[21] *Watashi* is a formal personal pronoun for "I" in Japanese language.
[22] *Boku* is an informal personal pronoun for "I" in Japanese language.

skull, library girl, the colonel, holes, tower, and so forth. However, with the regard to the narrative time, the former story is meeting the later at its closure whilst the later story starts its life at the end of Watashi's narration. Although as readers we manage to get the visual angle of omniscience as both stories set in motion, two narrators Watashi and Boku unfortunately are never aware of the other side of the world. The exit of Watashi's world is opening up another entrance of subconscious world for Boku.

Lost in an apocalyptic wasteland

The beginning scene of this novel is Watashi's depiction of an elevator he takes to the professor's working place. The elevator which connects the surface and underground of centre Tokyo provides readers an inconceivable image of an industrial machine whose conventional concept has been replaced in the progress of technology development. Nevertheless, it analogizes a built environment around man in which his individual voice has been effaced. Thus the protagonist comes into a deconstructed world within mechanization in a futuristic modern society:

The elevator continued its impossibly slow ascent. Or at least I imagined it was ascent. There was no telling for sure: it was so slow that all sense of direction simply vanished. It could have been going down for all I knew, or maybe it wasn't moving at all. But let's just assume it was going up. Merely a guess. Maybe I'd gone up twelve stories, then down three. Maybe I'd circled the globe. How would I know?... First of all, consider the space. This elevator was so spacious it could have served as an office. Put in a desk, add a cabinet and locker, throw in a kitchenette, and you'd still have room to spare. You might even squeeze in three camels and a mid-range palm tree while you were at it. Second, there was the cleanliness. Antiseptic s a brand-new coffin. The walls and ceiling were absolutely spotless polished stainless steel, the floor immaculately carpeted in a handsome mossgreen. Third, it was dead silent. There wasn't a sound--literally not one sound--from the moment I stepped inside and the doors slid shut. ... Another thing, most of the gadgets an elevator is supposed to have were missing. ... All of which made me feel utterly defenseless. ... I stood in that

hermetically sealed vault for what seemed en eternity. The doors showed no sign of ever opening. Stationary in unending silence, a still life: Man in Elevator. [23]

The stainless steel wall seals the protagonist completely inside a place of nowhere. This *Man in Elevator* situation is a very good portrait of the postwar new generation's life style and the identity crisis they are dealing with since 1970. Unlike the 1950s generation who have gone through the destructive consequences of the war and the poverty in the early postwar time, this new generation is born to the economic booming society which has been compromised by Western modernity. For this new generation, Japan's wealth economy is taking for granted. They neither have a united national goal to dedicate themselves into hardworking, nor they hold a political ideal to fulfill after the utter defeat of the student movement in 1960s. In addition, they are trapped inside the system of consumerism, a modern mechanism built up upon high industrial and technological development. As Strecher singles out, "the dominant social ideology aims to relinquish individual desire, instead, introduces a new means of evaluating Japanese people's social participation level by the symbolic terms of consumption."[24] A strong sense of loss of purpose grows among young generation and nowhere in the society for them to express their selves, *all sense of direction simply vanished.* The consumerism system create a homogeneous standard which has induced the individuality. In other words, the echo of individual's self has been effaced in this power system. *Stationary in unending silence, a still life,* the man who is trapped in this soundless elevator of modern society feels *utterly defenseless.* This elevator creates a perfect wall to isolate one, not only from Others, but even from one's Self. One of the major issues this novel dealing with, as the opening scene suggests, are human relations with one's Self and with Others in a condition of self-isolation with the side effect of modernity.

When Watashi knows that his conscious mind is coming to an end causing by professor's experiment failure, he does not get furious and has finally accepted the fate. Watashi's reaction shows his impotence of his present situation and even detaches like an outsider of his present being. He spends the last few hours of his

[23] Murakami Haruki, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, 1985, translated by Alfred Birnbaum, [London : Vintage books, 2007], 1-3

[24] Strecher, 75

life drinking beer and listening to music. If there is any emotional response to the certainty of his conscious mind's death, it will rather be a sense of loss:

Loss was not a skill, not a measure of a life. And yet I still felt I had something to lose.

I closed my eyes, I felt a ripple run through my mind. The wave went beyond sadness or solitude; it was a great, deep moan that resonated in my bones. It would not subside. I braced myself, elbows against the backrest of the park bench. No one could help me, no more than I could help anyone else.[25]

Watashi's unwillingness to walk away from present world dues to a sense of loss, rather than sadness or fear.To examine this sense of loss and individual impotence into a certain context in which Murakmi's generation has indulged themselves into self-isolation and political impotence after the defeat of 1960s student movement. For the first postwar generation, the Zenkyoto movement provided an opportunity to obtain an idealistic goal or political pursuit to associate themselves with Japan's society in the comparatively affluent rapid growth era. For unlike the 1950s and 1960s generation who have established a clear national goal, the 1970s youth has not suffered the poverty as aftermath of war but is born to be affluent and lost. The Zenkyoto movement finds this lost generation a path to define themselves. However, as Strecher points out, the "emotional intensity of Zenkyoto, along with the undisciplined nature of its tactics, bespeaks the youth--and commensurate lack of experience--of its participants, and goes far to explain the movement's short life."[26] After the defeat, the society employed the economic machine directly to replace the student radicalism. A strong sense of lost in the consumerism society combined with the defeated aftermath of radical student movement yield the postwar generation's complete impotence. Murakami's generation continues struggling with their individual positions in society while senses they are utterly defeated and overwhelmed in the booming economy period. In HBW, Murakami expresses this defeated feeling by ultimately ending individual's connection to the surrounding world. In opposition to the high developed and turmoil wonderland,

[25] Murakami 1985, 391
[26] Strecher, 77

the protagonist slides back to his inner world of peace and nostalgia, whilst to some extent the impotence to the outside world helps him to make the decision.

The end of the Self

The professor told Watashi later, as a consequence of his scientific research achievement which is a device that can relinquish sound from the earth, the near future in Hard-Boiled Wonderland is about to be a world in silence. I assume it means a future world in which language plays no role as an effective element in understanding and communicating among individuals (Daseins). It also means the selfhood of an individual will be deprived as a consequence of the newly shaped abyss between self-as-a-being and the-world-around-the-being. To put another way, the individual will finally lose his Self in a world without sound. I will use the *Proust* scene in this novel as an instance to further explain the Dasein (being-in-the-world) in Martin Heidegger's term and the absence of Self in apocalypse of Hard-Boiled Wonderland.

"Long corridor, eh?" I tried to break the ice. ...

It was then that she said, "Proust".

Or more precisely, she didn't pronounce the word "Proust", but simply moved her lips to form what ought to have been "Proust". I had yet to hear a genuine peep out of her. It was as if she were talking to me from the far side of a thick sheet of glass.

Proust?

"Marcel Proust?" I asked her.

She gave me a look. Then she repeated, "Proust." I gave up on the effort and fell back in line behind her, trying for the life of me to come up with other lip movements that corresponded to "Proust". Truest?...Brew whist?...Blue is it?...One after the other, quietly to myself, I pronounced strings of meaningless syllables, but none seemed to match. I could only conclude that she had indeed said, "Proust". But what I couldn't figure was, what was the connection between this long corridor and Marcel Proust?

Perhaps she'd cited Marcel Proust as a metaphor for the length of the corridor. Yet, supposing that were the case, wasn't it a trifle flighty--not to say inconsiderate--as a choice of expression? Now if she'd cited this long corridor as a metaphor for the works of Marcel Proust, that much I could accept. But the reverse was bizarre.

A corridor as long as Marcel Proust?[27]

As a result of individual's voice being effaced, one has to rely on lip reading to try to communicate. However, as the scene shows this will not be quite efficient. First of all, one can hardly associate the meaning of corridor with Marcel Proust and still make any sense out of it. Secondly, the lip reading creates indefinite possible interpretations of the words that slip out of the girl's lips. The girl could have said and meant anything other than the interpretation Watashi could ever come up with. This scene gives us a glimpse of the relationship between self and Others in the future, which will end up with chaos. In a world in which voices are effaced, the language thus has been deconstructed and lost its function as a tool of engagement from an individual to the present world and to Others: a being can no longer subject itself through Others by means of language.

Dasein is Martin Heidegger's philosophical term for the being (entity) for whom its own Being (to be) is at issue. To put another way, Dasein's Being is Being-with and Being-in-the-world, and its individual states not only affect but are affected by its association to Others. Dasein is employed to describe the condition and status of individuality. As Stephen Mulhall puts, "Dasein must project itself onto one or other existentiell possibility; and this projection is the core of what Heidegger means by 'understanding'. ...then, understanding is a matter of comprehending the world as a context of assignments or references, a totalit in which any given object relates to other objects and ultimately to a possibility of Dasein's Being. "[28] Therefore, understanding and interpretation play significant roles in associating Dasein with its Being. For a being's subjectivity and intersubjectivity with Others (other objects and other beings) determine Dasein's

[27] Murakami 1985, 9-10

[28] Mulhall, Stephen, Routledge *Philosophy Guidebook to Heidegger and Being and Time*, [London : Routledge, 2005], 82

authentic individual and its belongings in Heidegger's philosophy. "For it entails that Dasein's capacity to lose or find itself as an individual always determines, and is determined by, the way in which Dasein understands and conducts its relations with Others."[29] Language is a medium for communication, interpretation, an "essentially common inheritance from the culture or society in which a given Dasein finds itself thrown."[30] Language is a practical tool for a being's engagement to the present world. It stands the most intimate relation into being. Language is the house of being. But in Hard-Boiled Wonderland, a place without individual voices, language becomes random, indefinite. And a being therefore has lost its capacity of engagement to its present world. In this newly deconstructed world, language is like a silent waterfall blocking and isolating a being from one another. This block makes Others not accessible for one. Under such circumstances, a Dasein loses its capacity for maintaining its authentic Self, its individuality. Sooner or later, the silent Hard-Boiled Wonderland will become the apocalypse end of Dasein. Individual's Self will be dismissed permanently in a silent world of desertification of humanity.

Landscape in End of the World

With the approach of autumn, a layer of long golden fur grows over their bodies. Golden in the purest sense of the word, with not the least intrusion of another hue. Theirs is a gold that comes into this world as gold and exists in this world as gold. Poised between all heaven and earth, they stand steeped in gold.[31]

The professor has sent Watashi a mysterious gift: a unicorn skull. The unicorn's image thus forms later in Boku's subconscious world. Watashi looks up the species through materials in library and finds out that not only unicorn did exist in history, but also existed an archaeologist team during two world wars in search of unicorns. Watashi also has learned that unicorn's inadequate traits caused its extinction in evolution process. One of the traits is that a unicorn has no armor. In other words, this kind of species has no intention of defence. The peaceful and harmless nature of a unicorn is the vital weakpoint which makes it impotent in the brutal war of evolution. Logically there is only one circumstance that could have

[29] Ibid., 67
[30] Ibid.
[31] Murakami 1985, 12

saved the unicorn from extinction: no natural predators, isolation and someplace "on a high plateau, like in Canan Doyle's *Lost World*. Or down deep, like a crater."[32] This ideal landscape is shaped in the End of the World so that the unicorn's irenical nature remains intact in Watashi's subconscious world.

The book's first page provides a map of The End of the World, which looks like the shape of a human brain. The centre is a walled town surrounded by forests and mountains. Only birds can shuttle freely between the Town and the outside. In day time, the unicorns are allowed stay inside the Town and are let outside at night by the gatekeeper, who has extraordinary power to open the heavy gate. The Town is perfectly peaceful, whilst the residents in Town consider the forests outside as dangerous, unknown and dissident. The townfolks spend their whole lives inside the wall and never walk out of the Town. The town has a medieval setting with abandoned factories, lapsed clocktower, residents digging holes for nothing and exchanging goods with woodsfolks. The clock has stopped permanently at 10.35. The entire setting seems like a desolate, post-nuclear ruin, or a regressive, primitive community where industrial characteristics are reduced to minimum.

The Town centers around a semicircular plaza directly north of the Old Bridge. The other semicircular fragment, that is, thelower half of the circle, lies across the river to the south. These two half-circles are known as the North and South Plazas respectively. Regarded as a pair, the two can impress one only as complete opposites, so unlike each other as they are. In the middle of the North Plaza stands a large Clocktower piercing skyward. To be precise, one should say it is less a clocktower than an object retaining the form of a clocktower. The clock has forfeited its original role as a timepiece. Several rings of stone and brick buildings fan out from the North Plaza. No edifice has any outstanding features, no decorationa or plaques. All doors are sealed tight; no one is seen entering or leaving. The resounding stillness gives the structures an impression of abandonment. The Library stands in one block of this quarter.[33]

[32] Ibid., 100
[33] Ibid., 38-39

Through the Town's landscape we can discover several geographic resemblances with remote, traditional Japanese village. Edmund Gilday summarises features of sacred geography of a traditional village as follows:

Settlements were generally established in relatively flat areas near sources of water and wood. The religious geography was a plane, with hills considered progressively more peripheral to the domestic heart of the community the higher they were. Waters, too, were considered ambiguous, and in spite of proximity were always separated from the settled area itself, often acting as a natural boundary for the community. Yet the relative elevation of land was hardly the singular criterion for defining the perimeters of cultural space. Rather, it was in the first instance forests, spaces unclaimed for agriculture or settlement, that assumed at once a bounteous and a sinister character in the minds of the early Japanese.[34]

This de-industrialized or pre-modern landscape in Town reveals a sense of rejection of industrialization or progress of modernity out in the Hard-Boiled Wonderland. It meditates us to the remote Japanese nature away from urban life and modern technology, a sacred and mystic lost world preserves a cultural space in old times. For Boku, who creates this imaginary space, is the way to keep the End of the World perfectly intact from outside world and make sure the unicorns and townfolks stay peaceful inside the wall. To understand Boku's rejection of modernity, we need to examine the novel in a historical context of postwar Japan's transformation.

The postwar Japan has been through a transformation in all directions. Due to MacArthur's plans to urge communist power, the re-militarization and economic stabilization in postwar Japan encouraged the majority of the Japanese threw themselves into industry to rebuild their desolated land. "In the early 1950s, the Japanese government sought to kick-start the process with its first 'rationalization' drive, targeted at the core industries of steel, iron, and coal mining."[35] By the end of 1950s, the amazing growth brought the ruined postwar steel industry back to

[34] Edmund T. Gilday, "Dancing with Spirits: Another View of the Other World in Japan," *History of Religions* Vol. 32, No. 3 (Feb., 1993): 277

[35] Goto-Jones, 101

life. With new technology supports from Europe and USA, Japan's industrial growth was prompt and since had surged to thrive other industries. The free technology transfer prospered Japanese manufacturers, especially in automobile industry. And by late 1960s, Japan's heavy industries rapid growth resulted in the birth of consumer Japan. By the end of 1970s, the consumerism has taken over the society and the new generation in postwar era indulged in the developed new consumerist subcultures. The urban landscape shifted and changed dramatically, filling up with high buildings with neon lights always on. The postwar Japan has experienced a modern progress whilst older generations grow fears for the moral and cultural collapse of their nation. This is however not the first time modern technology shows its destructive power toward a nation. In his defeated speech on radio, 14 August 1945, Emperor Hirohito indicated the overwhelming damages caused by atomic bombs as part of the reason for the final decision to his surrender. The USA bombed Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. The bomb created a mushroom cloud reached more than 20,000 feet into the air. And the city was literally burned to the ground. Then another bomb was pelted to Nagasaki on 9 August. This final blow sank the empire into utterly despair. Emperor Hirohito's speech suggests that imperial Japan's advantages were overpowered by modern technology. Christopher Goto-Jones singles out:

Hirohito's words warned that the use of this kind of technology risked bringing about the end of civilization itself. His meaning is contested, but the spirit of his speech suggests that... if modern technology is allowed to rule over everything, what is to become of the spirit that makes us human? Postwar Japan should return its spiritual wealth even in the face of saturation by modern technology.[36]

This Hard-Boiled Wonderland has depicted a urban landscape in which individuality has been destroyed and eliminated completely by homogenizing system and the miraculous progress of modernity. The never-perishing desire of chasing power features the apocalyptic self-devastating wonderland, where people live their lives meaninglessly. And thus the protagonist invites the readers into his subconscious world where pre-modern natural images conjure up a nostalgia

[36] Ibid., 88

landscape. The End of the World has preserved Japan's landscape of history and past, but maybe a missing one.

This novel's concerns over Japan's consumerism and self-devastating system are continuously echoing the earlier novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, which also sets an attack on Japan's modernity by employing a other-worldly natural landscape. The protagonist of *A Wild Sheep Chase* is a copywriter who received a picture of Hokkaido landscape from his missing friend Rat. The scenery in this picture shows some hints to protagonist to help him uncover Rat's secrets. Later in the narrative the protagonist is blackmailed by a right-wing anti-hero, known as the "Boss", to look for a sheep with star-shaped birthmark. This absurd occurrence drives him to go to Japan's remote northern island, Hokkaido. Michael Seats views the Hokkaido landscape in this novel as a representation of "Nature" in opposition to the "modernity" rhetoric:

Murakami's Hitsuji (A Wild Sheep Chase) entered mass circulation in Japan at a time when the "Discover Japan" travel advertising campaign of the 1970s had already conventionalized the quest for recuperation of lost 'history' and lost 'self' by embarking on nostalgic journeying,...and through this linkage of 'landscape' and 'self', we see an attempt at recovering something which was construed as an inevitable loss brought about by modernity, rather than by the repression of the signifier 'history' in the educational discourses of postwar Japan.[37]

The significance of Hokkaido landscape is not only to discover a lost link between nature "landscape" and "self", but also to create a sacred space with characteristics of traditional Japanese sacred geography--an other worldly space--where one can communicate with Other's spirit beyond physical boundary. The protagonist stays in a mountain cabin surrounded by woods where he encounters a sheep-like creature who lives in the woods, the Sheepman. After a few days he finds out that it was not the Sheepman but his dead friend Rat's soul he was talking with. The star-marked sheep has a demonic power to possess manipulate people like a parasite, and Rat was its last host. Rat committed suicide to kill the parasite and

[37] Seats, Michael, *Murakami Haruki: the Simulacrum in Contemporary Japanese Culture*, [Lexington Books, 2009], 217

hence prevent the sheep transfer its destructive power to another people. "it's like a blast furnace that smelts down everything it touches. Thing of such beauty, it drives you out of your mind. But it's hair-raising evil. Give your body over to it and everything goes. Consciousness, values, emotions, pain, everything. Gone. What it comes closest to is a dynamo manifesting the vital force at the root of all life in one solitary point of the universe."[38]

As Rat described, the sheep hopes to build a total conceptual realm which the sheep and his host at the centre of this world, whilst the human nature of the host will be resolved and the Self is eliminated. Murakami Fuminobu argues that the story can be interpreted as "a work which describes modernist ideology in Japan: its cult of the intellectual, its pursuit of knowledge and rationality; development of political and economic power; its suppression of the 'Other', its deep love and identification with ideological constructions of Japanese tradition, and its future unity."[39] When discuss the symbolic meaning of the sheep, I would like to borrow Fuminobu's argument and consider the sheep contains the idea of an evolutional current of time which "underlies the modernist way of thinking".[40] Fuminobu singles out that the sheep in this story "follows the trajectory of modern Japanese society- the unification and oppression of Asian people (Sheep Professor), the consolidation of Japanese people and defence of their culture (right-wing Boss)- and a vision of the future resulting in total conceptual unity (Japanese businessman's son, Rat)- as inevitable stages of evolution. "[41] And for those (Rat who killed the sheep and protagonist who has learned something from Rat in the mountain cabin) who are not willing to give up their freedom to serve the evolutionary society based on rationality, they have to go to somewhere else to seek survival of Self, a place such like the remote Hokkaido rural area, and hide in the woods.

---

[38] Murakami Haruki, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, 1982.trans. Alfred Birnbaum. [Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1992], 283

[39] Murakami Fuminobu*, Postmodern, Feminist and Postcolonial Currents in Contemporary Japanese Culture: A Reading of Murakami Haruki, Yoshimoto Banana, Yoshimoto Takaaki and Karatani Kojin*, Routledge 1 edition 2009,23

[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.

In *HBW* this natural landscape has developed to be a even more complex space hold in protagonist's inner world, where not only the unicorns who failed to adapt to evolution survived, but also keep one's Self in complete isolation.

The Town without Others

The first day Boku came to the Town, he has no memory of who he is or where he comes from. The Gatekeeper deprived Boku's shadow from his body and did an eye operation for him. The eye operation enables Boku to receive the light coming out from unicorn-skulls in the dark, so that he can read the old dreams of unicorns which take form of flashing images. This new job in the library makes him become Dreamreader in Town. Soon Dreamreader starts to accommodate himself as one of the Townfolks and enjoys the peaceful community life. He describes the Town as a homogeneous utopia world without conflict or violence:

"I am beginning to feel an attachment to this Town. I enjoy watching the beasts. I have grown fond of the Colonel and the girl at the Library. 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 work purely for the sake of work, not forced labour. No one is jealous of anyone. There are no complaints, no worries."[42]

As I mentioned before, this Town is an inverted version of the Hard-Boiled Wonderland. Watashi's urban life experience takes form of metaphor and symbolic representation. For instance, the hole diggers are alluding to Calcutec's assiduous, mindless working life style in Hard-Boiled Wonderland. "They dig holes from time to time, the Colenel explains. It is probably for them what chess is for me. It has no special meaning, does not transport them anywhere. All of us dig at our own pure holes. We have nothing to achieve by our activities, nowhere to get to. Is there not something marvelous about this? We hurt no one and no one gets hurt. No victory, no defeat."[43] In a homogeneous society skilled workers are like foot soldiers play parts in a huge system. The system itself provides rules and meanings to replace the meaning of individual's self. Time by time, those stay in this social chain blindly doing their works, in which they have nothing to achieve

[42] Murakami 1985, 333
[43] Ibid., 317

by their activities, "nowhere to get to". The Colonel tells Boku to surrender his mind and let go:

"You are fearful now of losing your mind, as I once feared myself. Let me say, however, that to relinquish your self carries no shame," the Colonel breaks off and searches the air for words. "Lay down your mind and peace will come. A peace deeper than anything you have known" [44]

The mind Townfolks relinqushed is not an entity of memory, but rather a representation of the human nature: emotions, desires, fears, violence, and internal conflicts. It is the irrational side of a human being. The Town is an impersonal place where human natures are dissolved. In other words, the mindlessness enables the Town to trap people in a situation where difference between Self and Others does not exist. By the same token, without capacity to love or to hate, Boku has no chance to maintain the Dasein and therefore he shall never find his Self in the absence of Others. Besides, without those irrational elements of human nature play parts, Boku has no chance to understand himself and Others. For each Dasein is an individual, a being to whom personal pronouns can be applied and to whom at least the possibility of genuine or authentic individuality belongs. And for Dasein's Being is always a Being-with, "Dasein establishes and maintains its relation to itself in and through its relations with Others, and *vice versa*."[45] In a way, the Town itself can be considered as inverted version of the super elevator in Hard-Boiled Wonderland which effaces individual's voice--another apocalypse dystopia. The Shadow points out,

It is by relinquishing their mind that the Townfolk lose time; their awareness becomes a clean slate of eternity. As I said, no one grows old or dies. All that's required is thta ou strip away the shadow that is the grounding of the self and watch it die. One your shadow dies, you haven't a problem in the world. You need only to skim off the discharges of mind that rise each day.[46]

[44] Ibid., 318
[45] Mulhall, 67
[46] Murakami 1985, 334

And by "skim off the discharges of mind" Shadow means the dream reading itself, the assiduous hard working which will dissolve the mind to the air. Shadow continues,

You tell me there is no fighting or hatred or desire in the Town. That is a beautiful dream, and I do want your happiness. 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, their is no hope.[47]

Timeless, mindless, Otherless and detachment construct the features of the place where Boku walled himself in. While the representatives of Others reside in the Woods on the other side of the wall are those who have yet given up their attachment to their shadows and their irrational part of human nature. In other words, the Woodfolks have their minds survived. However, the Townfolks fear the Woods for its dark side. Another reason Townfolks consider the Woods dangerous is because it is a limbo between immortal and death. The Shadow explains the nature of Woods to Boku when Boku decides to reside outside the Town in order to find his mind and his Self. " Shadows that don't die here can oly leave behind incomplete deaths. You'd live out all eternity in the embrace of what's left of your mind. In the Woods. Those with undead shadows are driven out of Town to wander through the Woods forever and ever, possessed by their thoughts."[48] Like Others, thoughts and minds are obstacles to maintain immortality, which shall be abandoned and walled outside of the Town. It seems that the protagonist is trapped by himself in a dilemma realising the danger of complete detachment and self-isolation as well as the danger of human thoughts, irrational mind and Others. The concept of Woods has later been developed and further discussed in *Kafka on the Shore,* in which novel the young protagonist Kafka was also terrified by his thoughts and experienced even stronger fear in limbo of Woods.

The self-splitting

[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 335

Inside the wall, the Townfolks have discarded their shadows. When newcomer Boku enter the Town, the Gatekeeper separates his shadow from him and waits the shadow to die after the split with Boku's body. Before the shadow gets weak enough, there is still a chance for the halved body (Boku without shadow) and the Shadow merge into one again. Those who have lost their shadows permanently settle down in Town with a peaceful mind. They gradually forget and forsake their past once they get use to the walled community life. The Shadow is the representation of memories and conscious mind which are deprived from Boku once the Shadow has been cut out from him. As dreamreader in Town, Boku does not possesses his past, nor does he have emotional feelings or affections. His Shadow warns Boku the detached Town is wrongly designed and persuades him to escape together and go back to the outside world where they came from. In the end of the story, Boku has managed to help his Shadow escape the End of the World, whilst Boku himself decides to live in the woods outside the Town in order to rediscover his true Self. Although Boku understands that the Town's perfection is a kind of lack and it would make perfect sense to return his former world where he belongs together with his shadow, after realizing the Town is his own creation, he cannot allow himself to walk away from his own imperfection. "'I have responsibilities', I say, 'I can not 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. I must know why.'"[49]

The plot has told us the End of the World is a visualised subconscious world created in Watashi's brain. And it is not hard to find out that Boku and his Shadow are two different egos of Watashi. According to the professor's explaination, Watashi will finally lose his conscious mind (one of Watashi's ego) and stay permanently in his unconscious world. So far, since the plot decides that Watashi will lose one of his ego, and since Boku's shadow (and all other Townfolks' shadows) disappeared in the end, I would like to assume that the Shadow is Watashi's self who represents his conscious mind and has been ultimately dismissed dues to Watashi's misfortune. To follow this assumption, Boku's choice to stay in his subconscious world, instead of go back to the conscious world

[49] Ibid., 339

outside with his shadow, can be perceived as a decision to firstly discard the Self formed in the outside world before he starts to look into his subconscious mind and rediscover his true Self. Susan Napier argues that Boku's sense of responsibilities to stay in his self-isolation world "might be seen as in some ways admirable, rather than only self-serving, emblematic of a generation which realizes that to change the world one must start with oneself".[50] I would not agree Napier and assume to withdraw an individual from his real life as something "admirable", but Napier's viewpoint does support my interpretation that Boku has abandoned his Self who formed in the real world. For Boku sees the necessity to forsake *what he was* in order to rediscover *what he is*.

"I cannot stop you," admits my shadow. "Maybe you can't die here, but you will not be living. You will merely exist. There is no 'why' in a world that would be perfect in itself. Nor is surviving in the Woods anything like you imagine. You'll be trapped for all eternity." [51]

Unlike Susan Napier, Karatani Kojin is harsh on Boku's final decision to stay by saying that "the responsibility for people, places and things one has created by one's own discretion is another name for irresponsibility. To emphasise the responsibility for meaningless things is to make the responsibility worthless".[52] I hold my conservation to Kojin's critics. Speaking of responsibilities, Boku's final decision has launched a mission to look into himself, and try to rediscover his Self by finding answers to those questions such as who are we, why are we here, and as an individual is him wrongly designed by the hands of both modernity and human beings themselves? There is definitely no answer for those questions. And they will remain as the problems of being as an individual under human conditions. Therefore, I argue that it is not a novelist's responsibility to either solve the problem of who we are, or to answer those human conditions. Because in one way or another, we will all be *trapped for all eternity*, as long as we still have yet given up upon the interrogation of those questions. However, it is an attempt with great ambitions for literary works to bring such questions onto a new

[50] Napier, 214
[51] Murakami 1985, 339
[52] Fuminobu, 31

level. I assume this novel has done a good job in trying to approach those questions with elegant narrative.

Chapter 4 Seekers:

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle

The main narrative of this novel can be read in a detective genre. The protagonist Toru Okada has lost his job and his cat. Even his wife Kumiko has disappeared without any persuasive reason. Thus Toru embarks a journey searching for Kumiko. In order to save his wife, Toru needs to confront his brother-in-law Noboru Wataya, an embodiment of evil power. The task for Toru is to get down to bottom of a well—his own subconscious world—where he finds his inner Self inhabits. And at the centre of Toru's inner world locates the room 208 where he encounters Kumiko's inner Self and where he freed her from the compelling power of Noboru Wataya.

This priamry narrative line is accompanied by several sub-narratives which are containing a wide stretch of timelines, places and history. In this story, like other Murakami novels, dreamscape, subconscious world and reality are interweaving. But all of those sub-narrative lines meet the intersection of the symbolic Wind-Up Bird--the protagonist Toru himself. In one way or another, characters appear in sub-narrative lines such like Kano sisters, Lieutenant Mamiya, May Kasahara, Nutmeg and Cinnamon all assist the protagonist to solve the riddle lay in his inner world. The experience of other side of the world enables Toru to recognise his inner Self and to reconstruct his inner world. Those characters with their stories encounter Toru's life and therefore contribute to this reconstruction by playing roles as Others in his inner world.

The novel is generally dealing with a dualism construction of world: this side of reality and the other side, which is twofold: the subconscious world and the historical world. Two worlds interact each other. Battles and conflicts which take place in reality are taking another form in the other side.

The media employed to support protagonist to access the other world is noteworthy. Three major media highlights the protagonist's boundary crossing: the telephone, the computer and the well. In this chapter I will elaborate the other world through analysing of major characters' experiences with it. In addition, I will examine how the major media connects these two coexisting worlds. To hightlight those characters who have boundary-crossing experience, I will mark them as "seekers" (who search for their inner Self) in each subtitle, whilst also mark the anti-hero as "intruder" in the analysis part.

Seekers 01: Toru Okada

After Toru quit his job, abandoned social life, he indulged even more in his own obsessive world. Toru was good at the office job and has a real talent for the execution of practical duties. He explains, "I'm a quick learner, efficient, I never complain, and I'm realistic. Not that leaving would help me realize any articular hopes or prospects."[53] But we also notice his fear to become integrated into the main system in the chaotic world. He explains how joyful it is to iron shirts when he is upset. He divides the job into twelve distinct stages, beginning with the collar (outer surface) and ending with the left-hand cuff. The order is invariable, and he counts off each stage to himself. Toru is satisfied with quiting his tedious white collar job in the law firm. After quiting his job, he indulges himself in his own alienated and organized world.

Newly unemployed, I found this kind of life refreshing. No more commuting to work on jam-packed subways, no more meetings with people I didn't want to meet. And best of all, I could read any book I wanted, anytime I wanted. [54]

In his newly shaped life style, everything is in order and under control. This a typical portrait of character in many other Murakami's works such as *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, *Dance, Dance, Dance*, *South of the Border* and *North of the Sun* (*South of the Border* hereafter). Philip Gabriel explains Hajime in *South of the Border* is "the latest manifestation of the often fussy, meticulous Murakami male character who endlessly irons shirts just right and is

[53] Murakami Haruki, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, 1997, [translated by Jay Rubin, Vintage, London, 2011], 3

[54] Ibid., 9

obsessed with making sure the spaghetti is perfectly *al dente*."[55] Gabriel argues that those characters attempts, even on the smallest of scales, to grab hold of control in a chaotic world of vast consumer culture of Tokyo in 1980s. The obsessive life style in one way is an "other world", "a kind of idyllic space he creates as a personal refuge", where holds back the chaotic of modern society by constructing an imaginary world.[56] Later this mode of individual's rebel against the materialised pyramid of social system takes another form in which Toru's rebel is against another person--Noboru Wataya—the symbolic dark force standing on top of the social system.

Six years marriage has yet aroused Toru any attempt to truly understand others including his wife. Kumiko once complained to Toru that he has been living with her all this time but has hardly paid any attention to her, and the only thing he ever thinks about is himself. Not until later Kumiko walked away from the family did it occur to Toru that he had found his way to the core of the problem.

Is it possible, in the final analysis, for one human being to achieve perfect understanding of another?

We can invest enormous time and energy in serious efforts to know another person, but in the end, how close can we come to that person's essence? We convince ourselves that we know the other person well, but do we really know anything important about anyone?

I started thinking seriously about such things a week after I left my job at the law firm. Never until then- never in the whole course of my life- had I grappled with questions like this. And why not? Perhaps because my hands had been full just living. I had simply been too busy to think about myself. [57]

He had noticed this trivial arguments with Kumiko may be the fatal blow, "would I grow old and die without ever really knowing her? If that was all lay in store for me, then what was the point of this married life I was leading? What was the point

[55] Gabriel, Philip, *Spirit Matters: The Transcendent in Modern Japanese Literature*, [University of Hawaii Press, First Edition edition 2006], 111

[56] Ibid.
[57] Murakami 1997, 21

of my life at all if I was spending it in bed with an unknown companion?" [58] Besides the task of standing in his world against the chaotic real world, Toru's task of exchanging his world with others (Kumiko) is also significant in this novel.

Medium 01: telephone

Several telephone dialogues take place while the major narrator and protagonist Toru Okada is doing housework at home in the beginning chapter of the novel. The first two paragraphs set an unexpected phone call which has interrupted Toru's peaceful daily routine. When the phone rings, Toru is in the kitchen boiling a potful of spaghetti while "whistling along to an FM broadcast of the overture to Rossini's The Thieving Magpie, which has to be the perfect music for cooking pasta. I wanted to ignore the phone, not only because the spaghetti was nearly done but because Claudio Abbado was bringing the London Symphony to its musical climax."[59] The protagonist Toru Okada, just like many other heroes in Murakami novels, is introspective, lonely, detached himself from the outside world. It seems that these characters have no interests in getting any deep understanding others .

The interference of a stranger's voice in the other side of the phone breaks Toru's self-enclosed status. This scene has registered a symbolic forecasting of the main plot of this storyline. The unexpected woman's voice is calling from the other world and is followed by avalanche of absurd things coming after Toru. It also suggests a collapse of old balance of both Toru ordinary life and his self-isolated inner world. A new order in his life trajectory has been hence arranged.

If we carefully examine the altering dialogues in this chapter, readers will notice that Kumiko's voice and the telephone girl's voice are complementing each other in tones and focus. Very later in the novel, the protagonist has figured out that Kumiko's Self has splitted in two: one of the Self (the telephone girl) is altered to the other. In the beginning chapter where the Komuko is seeking Toru's help from a dark place through telephone call, Toru does not realize that is his wife whom he is talking with. I suggest to revisit the first dialogue takes on between Toru and the telephone girl:

[58] Ibid., 331
[59] Ibid., 5

"Ten minutes, please," said a woman on the other end.

I'm good at recognizing people's voice, but this was not one I knew.

"Excuse me? To whom did you wish to speak?"

"To you, of course. Ten minutes, please. That's all we need to understand each other." Her voice was low and soft but otherwise nondescript.

"Understand each other?"

"Each other's feelings."[60]

In this dialogue Kumiko's altered voice kept her conversation with Toru in the dark. The telephone has confined Toru from examing the girl's appearance, gesture or facial expression. He can only try to depict the girl's image by her voice. However, the telephone girl's voice was "low and soft but otherwise nondescript", which is opposite to Kumiko's usually calm and detached voice. The second phone call Toru received by the telephone girl has even turned into her erotic sound performance.

Their conversation have agitated an anxiety inside Toru that in the following few hours he cannot stop thinking of "understanding each other in ten minutes" proposed by the telephone girl. "What were we supposed to understand about each other in ten minutes? What can two people understand about each other in ten minuets? Come to think of it, she seemed awfully sure about those ten minutes: it was the first thing she came out with."[61] Besides, the telephone girl delivers another information to Toru. She says that two of them have met hundreds of times and she knows everything about Toru's life. Then Kumiko's real voice appears in the other side of telephone and Toru "relieved to hear my wife's voice." Toru's relieved feeling is resulted by affirmation of his wife's voice, which is something he has full confidence to recognise and identify. At that moment, he has yet realise his impotence in understanding the real Kumiko, nor does he even attempt to. Toru does not see the potential crisis exists in his marriage: a lack of communication and mutual understanding. For Toru's failure to recognise

[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid., 6

Kumiko's alter self (telephone girl) shows that he actually does not have a good knowledge of the woman he has lived with for so many years. It creates becomes an obstacle between this couple and causes Toru's impotent to response while his beloved wife is seeking help from him.

After a trivial quarrel at home, Kumiko starts to cry where readers spot a tension between them. And the telephone rings again at this very moment,

"Get it, will you?" I shouted into the darkness of the living room.

"Not me," she said. "You get it."

"I don't want to."

The phone kept on ringing, stirring up the dust that floated in the darkness. Neither of us said a word. I drank my beer, and Kumiko went on crying soundlessly. I counted twenty rings and gave up. There was no point in counting for ever.[62]

It re-emphasized theeir loose will of communication. I assume that the telephone is a medium in this novel to connect the real world and the inner world on the other side, at the same time to isolate the two worlds from each other. In fact, it is not the first time in Murakami's novels to employ telephone as a kind of medium to emphasize the motif of communication and mutual understanding between self and others. The last scene in the novel *Norwegian Wood* we find the protagonist standing in a phone booth asking for a last chance to reconnect to a woman he failed to attach to many years ago:

I phoned Midori. "I have to talk to you," I said. "I have a million things to talk to you about. A million things we have to talk about. All I want in this world is you. I want to see you and talk. I want the two of us to begin everything from the beginning."

Midori responded with a long, long silence - the silence of all the misty rain in the world falling on all the new-mown lawns of the world.

[62] Ibid., 23

Forehead pressed against the glass, I shut my eyes and waited. At last, Midori's quiet voice broke the silence: "Where are you now?"

Where was I now?

Gripping the receiver, I raised my head and turned to see what lay beyond the phone box. Where was I now? I had no idea. No idea at all. Where was this place? All that flashed into my eyes were the countless shapes of people walking by to nowhere. Again and again I called out for Midori from the dead center of this place that was no place. [63]

The story of *Norwegian Wood* is mainly dealing with characters who are incapable of loving and understanding each other. The primary narrative is a nostalgic story recalled and narrated by the thirty-seven-years old protagonist Watanabe himself. At his young age Watanabe could neither get a love response from the girl named Naoko, nor could he really understand another girl named Midori's feelings and love her back. After so many years when he is standing in a place calling Midori, everything is too late in the end. The place where Watanabe initiates the phone call representation of the center of Watanabe's nostalgic inner world, where he holds all his memories about the past. While on the other side of the telephone is Midori from the present world. The last scene signifies Watanabe's ultimately failed attempt to channel his past world to the present one. And the protagonist is no longer eligible to enter Other's (Midori's) world.

In *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* the telephone scene has been repeated and adopted in a new way. In this novel endeavours of using this medium to connect two worlds and to channel one another are not all in vain. Through the medium and plot, we can see a change from protagonist's totally lose-ground nostalgic pursuit an to an enabled searching for love and communication. This time the protagonist's inner world has literally opened to others.

Seekers 02: Cinnamon

[63] Murakami Haruki, *Norwegian Wood*, 1987, [translated by Jay Rubin, Vintage, 2003], 350-351

In Book Three of the novel, Toru is employed by Nutmeg—a mysterious women who has magic healing power. Her twenty-year-old son Cinnamon thus associates with Toru. Later Nutmeg has mentioned about Cinnamon's inability to speak. She tells Toru that Cinnamon's grandfather disappeared after the Soviet invasion in the last days of the war when he served as a veterinarian with the Imperial Army in Manchuria. Shortly after Toru gets access to Cinnamon's computer he discovers the computer programme itself was a labyrinth container of Cinnamon's inner world. Besides, Cinnamon has a special talent to foresee the future. This gift enables Cinnamon to save Toru's life. Nutmeg explains that "Cinnamon understands things in a special way, and unlike you or me, he is always thinking very deeply about the potential for things to happen."[64] Cinnamon's talent is received from his "self-split-in-two" experience at age of five.

On having finished reading the subnarrative entitled "Things happened at night" in Book Three, we discover the mysterious cause for Cinnamon's losing voice. It happened at one night around 2 am, when five-year-old Cinnamon was sleeping in his own bed. A sound came from outside woke him up. It turned out to be the crying of a bird (the wind-up bird). The boy leaned out of the window and observed two men both in dark clothing who were digging a hole in the garden. They buried a cloth bag in the hole with shovel. And the boy discovered that the shorter man's looked exactly like his father. The boy tried to wake up other family members but failed. "No one would wake up anyway, no matter how big a sound they made out there. I'm the only person alive who can hear these sounds. It was that way from the start."[65] It implies that he was in a dream-like status. Cinnamon was sure about that the wind-up bird and two men in his yard were not merely a dreamscape but something "really, really happened."In another dream, the boy went out to the garden but his Self hence divided in two halves. When he crawled back into bed he discovered another himself was sleeping there. No matter what he tried to do, his sleeping self would not wake up. "Then he pushed his other, sleeping self as hard as he could away from the centre of the bed and crammed himself into the small space that was left for him at the edge. He had to secure a spot for himself here. Otherwise, he might be pushed out of this world where he

[64] Murakami 1997, 597
[65] Ibid., 361

belonged."[66] The next morning, Cinnamon woke up in his bed alone yet he felt something was different. "He felt as if his self had been put into a new container. He knew that he was still not fully accustomed to this new body of his. There was something about this one, he felt, that just didn't match his original self." [ibid.] Then he realised that he had permanently lost his voice ever since. From Cinnamon's out-body-experience we learn that when someone divided his Self in two halves, one of them will remain in reality while the other flows to the other side. Besides, the halved Self in the other side can hardly find an exit back to the real world without a cost. In Cinnamon's case the cost is his voice. Cinnoman's experience suggests that when the two halves merge to one Self again, nothing will be kept intact anymore.

A similar description of out-of-body experience has been plotted later in Murakami's novel *Sputnik Sweetheart*. It introduced twenty-five-year-old Miu's bizarre experience of dividing her Self into two halves in a sub-narrative entitled "The Tale of Miu and the Ferris Wheel". The newly shaped self hence co-exists with her physical body, but two of them can never merge into one again. The event occurs one evening when Miu travels to a small town in Switzerland. When she rides on a Ferris wheel the park is about to shut down. Unfortunately she is kept high above in the Ferris wheel the whole night. A more chill experience hits her when she is using a pair of binoculars to target her apartment building from the Ferris wheel in mid air. She spots herself in her room having sex with a stranger. At that moment, Miu realised her body has divided in two pieces. The next morning when she wakes up in her apartment, her hair has turned entirely white. If we compare Miu's experience with Cinnamon's experience (after forcing himself back into his body, he lost his voice for good) in this novel, we will easily find out that Miu's white hair is a sign which signifies the self-dividing and her change ever since. As the sub-narrative describes, part of Miu's will remains in the other side:

I was still on this side, here. But another me, maybe half of me, had gone over to the other side. Taking with it my black hair, my sexual desire, my periods, my ovulation, perhaps even the will to live. And the half that was left is the person

[66] Ibid., 421

you see here. I've felt this way for the longest time—that in a Ferris wheel in a small Swiss town, for a reason I can't explain, I was split in tow forever. For all I know, this may have been some kind of transaction. It's not like something was stolen away from me, because it all still exists, on the other side. Just a single mirror separates us from the other side. But I can never cross the boundary of that single pane of glass. Never….I guess never is too strong a word. Maybe someday, somewhere, we'll meet again, and merge back into one. [67]

Since Cinnamon lost his voice, he figures out a way to hold his Self in a container of cyper space which allows him to use computer language to shape his world inside and rebuild his gateway to outside world. The computer labyrinth Cinnamon creates is actually a cyber form of his inner world." I stood up from the sofa and went to Cinnamon's small office once again. I sat at the desk, elbows resting on the table, and stared at the computer screen. Cinnamon was probably inside there. In there, his silent words lived and breathed as stories. They could think and seek and grow and give off heat."[68] "The depths of this computer were the very depths of Cinnamon himself. And they had no way of knowing how incalculably deep that was."[69] It gives Toru limited access to Wind-up Bird Chronicle. It also provides a place for Toru and Kumiko to communicate with each other crossing over the realistic boundary. We learn from Cinnamon's case, not only one's conscious mind can be divided, it can also walk into others subconscious world and even has physical impact. Later in Toru's inner world room 208, he attacked the intruder Noboru Wataya. Toru knocked down Noboru's core Self in subconscious level but causing Noboru's coma in reality.

The computer files named Wind-up Bird Chronicle reveals how Cinnamon's inner world perceives events happened in reality. "I had no way of telling how much of the story was true. Was every bit of it Cinnamon's creation, or were parts of it based on actual events?…but even after a single reading of #8, I had some idea, however vague, of what Cinnamon was looking for in his writing. He was engaged in a serious search for the meaning of his own existence. And he was

[67] Murakami Haruki, *Sputnik Sweetheart*,1999, [translated by Philip Gabriel, Vintage, London, 2002], 157

[68] Murakami 1997, 527
[69] Ibid., 498

hoping to find it by looking into the events that had preceded his own birth."[70] In "Wind-up Bird Chronicle #8", Cinnamon attempts to fill in the blank spots in the past with stories he is familiar with, to re-create the enigmatic image of his grandfather in a new setting. This sub-narrative reflects the attitude of Cinnamon towards the unknown individual history in the past. The true knowledge is inferior to a true understanding of thoughts and minds, even though the process of this understanding is based on a fabricated truth. "The question of which parts of a story were factual and which were not was not a very important one for Cinnamon. The important question was not what his grandfather did but what his grandfather might have done. He learned the answer to this question as soon as he succeeded in telling the story."[71] We can also discover signs that Cinnamon associates his own "split-in-two" experience with the telling of the story #8. There is a scene in the story that a veteran watches soldiers executing Chinese escapees. "The vet watched in numbed silence, overtaken by the sense that he was beginning to split in two. He became simultaneously the stabber and the stabbed. He could feel both the impact of the bayonet as it entered his victim's body and the pain of having his internal organs slashed to bits."[72]

Easily to see Cinnamon is trying to tell a similar story to substitute the history of his grandfather, in order to understand others: the way to maintain his Self.

Seekers 03: Creta

Later in the novel, Noboru Wataya is more powerful and has constructed an even more solid position for himself in society. His political charisma and ambitions show intensively on televion. However, Noboru's growing power only increases Toru's distrust and abomination toward him. "He was conducting an ambitious programme of political activity…I would see his name everywhere. For some reason I could not fathom, people were listening to his opinions—and with ever-increasing enthusiasm."[73] But for Toru, to learn the nature of Noboru Wataya is key to open Kumiko's inner world and save her.

[70] Ibid., 524,525
[71] Ibid., 525
[72] Ibid., 516
[73] Ibid., 494

"Tell me," I said, "who is this Noboru Wataya guy, really? He's my wife's brother, but I hardly know him. What is he thinking? What does he want? All I know for sure is that he and I hate each other."

"Noboru Wataya is a person who belongs to a world that is the exact opposite of yours," said Creta Kano. Then she seemed to be searching for the words she needed to continue. "In a world where you are losing everything, Mr Okada, Noboru Wataya is gaining everything. In a world where you are rejected, he is accepted. And the opposite is just as true. Which is why he hates you so intensely."[74]

The supernatural power portrait of Noboru Wataya reminds us the fatal way to prevent evil's triumph is not to let it take control over one's inner Self. Same condition applies to Noboru's controlling of Creta, Kumiko's sister and Kumiko. In Book Two of the novel, Creta initiates a long conversation with Toru to tell her story and explained how she became the prostitute of consciousness in an surreal way. Noboru Wataya deprived her core spirit in her conscious world and split her Self in two halves.

Creta's misery past experiences of self-dividing story before she was defiled by Noboru is an inspirational one for Toru to uncover Kumiko's riddle. It helps Toru to understand Komiko's hidden agenda behind her decision to leave Toru. Creta's self-dividing has three stages. The first stage was that her self lived in the endless anguish of pain. The suicidal attempt shifts her into the second stage. Survived in the "accident", her body shifted to a new state in which she had no perception of pain at all. Unfortunately it combined with losing sensations of any kind. The sensations came to her as if from a distance, from a world that had nothing to do with her. She explained this was the reason she felt no resistance to the idea of having sexual relations with men for money which we learn later Komiko has suffered a similar experience. "No matter what anyone did to me, the sensations I felt did not belong to me. My unfeeling flesh was not my flesh."[75] At the second stage separated her conscious self and her physical body. Not only that, but at this stage her inner world was blocked from her physical body—in a sense that neither

[74] Ibid., 312
[75] Ibid., 298

could her mind reach the outside world, nor could her inner self channel others out from her inner world. The third stage, caused by Noboru's defilement upon her through having sex with her, has undone this confinement and allowed her conscious self and her physical self to reconnect to each other. Hence, her conscious self is able to cross the boundary and walk into other people's dreamscapes. She described the third stage experience to Toru,

"From between the two split halves of my physical self came crawling a thing that I had never seen or touched before. How large it was I could not tell, but it was as wet and slippery as a newborn baby. I hadn't the slightest idea what it was. It had always been inside me, and yet it was something of which I had no knowledge. This man drawn it out of me."

"I knew that I should not let this happen, that I should not allow my very self to spill out this way and be lost for ever, but there was nothing I could do to staunch the flow. I could only watch it happen."[76]

Later she uses her new skill to travel to the other side from reality and crosses boundaries of conscious minds and walk into other's inner world. She started a career as spiritual prostitute to help Malta to understand her clients' inner world or dream world. Her clairvoyant sister Malta Kano said to her, "the defilement, however, remains inside you, and at some point you will have to rid yourself of it. This is something that I cannot do for you. I cannot even tell you how to do it. You will have to discover the method for yourself, and do it by yourself.[77] She indicates that the only way to get rid of the dark impact on Creta is to rediscover and restore her true self. This is a single person battlefield. One has to find its own way to fix its world inside. "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", explained by Malta.[78] Characters in the novel share common pursuits and predicaments. They are all seekers who struggle with their inner world and seeking for true self. Some of them have totally failed the task and the inner world ends up becoming an empty container lacking of core. In Lieutenant Mamiya's story, he has lost his ground of living as a complete person since he came back to

[76] Ibid., 301,302
[77] Ibid., 307
[78] Ibid., 306

homeland from the war battlefield. For Creta Kano, her true self was still something that is beyond her grasp. She admits that although she is expecting her true self finds its way back to her, whilst it seems that she is "still lacking too much for that to happen."

To Creta, her sister Malta is the only light illuminating her dark inner world. In Malta, she had a companion by her side, in Creta's words "someone could depend upon, someone who understood me and accepted me. She became my guide and my protector."[79] In contrast with Creta, Kumiko has no such luck. Since Kumiko's sister past away, she had lost the only one whom she can share the family secret with. After she married Toru and left the patriarchy and anomalous family, Kumiko kept her fear and her dark side away from her husband. An invisible wall built up between the couple's inner world. Communication has been losing its functiondys for many years in their marriage. Kumiko's despair and fear have kept growing irresistibly inside her, from which her brother Noboru sees an opportunity. Technically Noboru does not force Kumiko to do anything but simply encourages or activates the dark side inside Kumiko. So once her conscious mind gives in, this dark power will take control over her inner world. Examining Creta's case we learn that the suicidal attempt and the violent erotic desire are junctures for Creta to split her Self. Kumiko's abortion can also be read as a juncture for her to divide her self in two. If we assume the survival from suicidal attempt and the violent sexuality are rituals of rebirth, then Kumiko's abortion also implies to a physical and mental rebirth. So when that happened to Kumiko, one of her split Self possessed by the dark power and made her desire violent sex all the time. While the other self as the real Kumiko became weaker.

If we examine the image of Noboru Wataya and the motif of self-dividing experience in the Aum context, we will see a same pattern in relations between the Aum leader and his followers. One of Asahara's attractive teaching is Buddhist meditation. In Murakami's subway sarin gas interview book *Underground*, one of Aum follower, Inaba, has talked about the experience inside the cult. Inaba argues that Buddhist meditation of the kind practiced in Aum is a "method to reach the deepest part of your self. From a Buddhist perspective, deep within the

[79] Ibid., 307

subconscious lies each person's essential sort of distortion."[80] Another follower Masutani Hajime argues that the "self is what should be discovered, not discarded. Terrorist crimes like the gas attack result from this process of easily giving up on the Self. If the Self is lost, then people will become comepletely insensitive to murder and terrorism. In the final analysis, Aum created people who had discarded their Selves and just followed orders."[81] Philip Gabriel writes in his *Underground* comments,

Indeed, in many of the interviews Murakami discovers that one of the appeals of Aum for members is this notion of 'giving up on the Self' in the sense of possessing a volitional ego. In this way one allows others to control one's life, destiny, and every act, and is relieved to have escaped from freedom. Kano again, is the minority voice here, portraying Asahara as someone who would 'adjust things so you'd be satisfied. So at least for me, he didn't seem to be forcing people to do things'.[Underground 283] Most members, though, saw things in a different light, depicting Aum as a grou in which individual freedom and will were entirely subordinated to the will of Asahara and the Aum elite. Masutani describes how 'at first everyone who joined had very strong wills, but after living in Aum you'd lose that.' This was 'the path to follow in order to do away with the Self."[82]

Seekers 04: May Kasahara

May Kasahara is a sixteen-year-old school dropout who lives near Toru's backyard. Toru meets her while he is looking for the missing cat. Several odd and but provocative conversations have evoked between the two characters. Kasahara holds weird and unique insights on topic of death and deterioration of life, which she shows her obsessive interests in. Later she mentions to Toru the scar on her forehead and her bad leg were the consequence of a motorcycle crash. When she and her boyfriend were passing over a highway together on a motorcycle, she covered his eyes to cloud his vision. Her impulsive action caused her boyfriend's death. The reason she did so, as she explained, is to get close to the thing latent inside her inner world and push it out. "The world looks totally empty to me.

[80] Murakami Haruki, *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, [translated by Alfred Birnbaum, Philip Gabriel, 1st Vintage International Ed edition 2001], 228

[81] Ibid., 302
[82] Gabriel, 97

Everything I see around me looks fake. The only thing that isn't fake is that gooshy thing inside me."[83] Seeking the meaning of death is Kasahara's way to understand the meaning of life. Kasahara started to re-examine her Self, and repent the past when she met Toru. But the discourse of death continues to haunt her. Later motivated by Toru, she probes into the dark well and searches answers in the core of her inner world. Kasahara gives us a glimpse into the needs of spiritual search of certain kinds among young people in Japan at the time. Kasahara's unique vision of the outside world and her maverick perspective on life reflect a group of young people live in the affluent Japan in the late 1980s and early 1990s. They have problems to attach themselves with the real world outside and therefore find out an alienated way turning themselves inward to their spiritual world. Reading Kasahara's story we find some similarities in motivation of a youth group who joined the cult. Murakami's interview in *Underground* displays several motivations for young followers who joined *Aum*:

One simply felt a vague sense of lack in his life (a "hole within") and sought refuge from "human relationships and responsibilities" in Aum. One member wanted to do away with the "uncleanliness and attachments" of the outside world, and "do away with the Self" as well. And one member views Aum as attractive to his entire generation, the so-called Moratorium People, that is the products of Japan's affluence who never want to truly grow up. Many of the interviewees share a sense of disgust for ordinary secular Japan. One woman, an OL, after a typical pleasure-seeking, consumerist lifestyle, rejects this as "increasingly pointless".[84]

The most noteworthy one, which is quite similar to May Kasahara's (and young boy Kafka Tamura in *Kafka on the Shore*) situation, must be one young girl, "only sixteen when she joins *Aum*, is turned off by her classmates' take of 'boys, love, fasion, where the best karaoke boxes were,' feels left out, and seeks refuge in the 'liberation' from such worldly interests promised by *Aum* publications."[85] Once they entered *Aum*, the group inside locked their true vision toward the outside

[83] Murakami 1997, 232
[84] Murakami 2001,255-344
[85] Ibid.

world, at the same time put them into a dangerous situation by exploring their inner world far too deep.

In the novel, Kasahara followed the ladder went down to the bottom of the well. After a few hours she started to lose her senses and the darkness was encouraging the "gooshy thing" inside her to grow. It was something she tried to hold down under the sun, but could not manage. "And that's when I really got scared. It was the scarest I've ever been in my life. This thing inside me, this gooshy white thing like a lump of fat, was talking over, taking me over, eating me up. This gooshy thing was really small at first."[86] To borrow Kasahara's vision we see the latent danger of the power hidden at the inner world. Particularly when one is not capable enough to be vigilant to the world inside, he even has the potential to connive that power and direct it to the real world in a harm way. Once people's eyes have been clouded by an idea, they may lose the clear judgement of what they are doing for the lack of seeing the whole picture. The triumph of the elusive power, which holds people away from seeing and viewing things objectively, leads people to an impulsive and wrong doing. Just like Kasahara's impulsive decision has caused an irreparable damage to herself and to other people.

When Kasahara saw Mr. Wind-up Bird (Toru) went down to the dark well—the very core of the conscious world, she noticed that if she covered the lid then Toru would die in his inner world down at the bottom of the well. Once the entrance to the outside world is blocked, there will be no way to return. She has perceived in it the danger of not being able to go back to real world. She told Toru because of him, she wanted to go back to school, to be close to the normal world. In the well, she had a chance to recognise the dark side in her inner world and to examine what will happen if she connives at her self-separation from the real world. It will only lead her to a dead end and the dark power inside her will take over her conscious for good. "You might think you made a new world or a new self, but your old self is always gonna be there, just below the surface, and if something happens, it'll stick its head out and say 'Hi.' You don't seem to realize that. You were made somewhere else. And even this idea you have of remaking yoursef: even that was was made somewhere else….That's a *big problem*, if you ask me."

[86] Murakami 1997, 321

[87]She explained it to Toru in order to warn him that it is wrong to try to get rid of the world he belongs, or try to get rid of his Self. She was actually saying these words also to herself as a lesson she has learned in the other side at the bottom of the well. Both Kasakara and Toru had once attempted to escape the chaotic real world and to avoid their own problems in the past.

Kasahara decided to leave the neighborhood and go to the mountains to work in a wig factory, where she wrote dozens of letters to Toru. When she wrote those letters, she was pursuing a way to share her perception of the world with Toru. To Kasahara, writing letters to Toru is the spiritual endeavour to share her world with others (Toru in this case). This performance shows her willingness to understand other's world. Not until the end of the novel that she finds out Toru has not received, let alone read, one single letter from her. This plot is very suggestive: letter exchanging in this novel takes on between Toru and other characters such as Lt. Mamiya, Kumiko, and Cinnamon (some exchanging is taking another form of computer language). But Toru did not receive May Kasahara's letters. To examine from Toru's side, all letters he received from different characters are registering stories or thoughts that have a inner link to the mission of finding Kumiko. But Kasahara plays a third party role to Toru all through the novel. Thus the content of her letters is merely talking about her inner vision and understanding of her life. From Kasahara's side, this performance has significant impact on her inner world's development. The plot seems to convey that through the practice of sharing her world, she has proactively opened her inner world to the outside world. And to open the gate is the first step for inviting others into her conscious world and allowing her Self to cross the conscious boundary and enter other's world.

Medium 02 : Deep in the well: room 208

When Toru goes down to the bottom of the well which connects him to his visualised inner world, he enters the room 208 that locates in the centre of his subconscious world. The room 208 is a reconstruction of Toru's world in reality. There is a line from an inner monologue of Toru written early in this novel, "I might be standing a t the shreshold of something big, and inside lay a world that belonged to Kumiko alone, a vast world tht I had never known. I saw it as a big,

[87] Ibid., 262

dark room. I was standing there holding a cigarette lighter, it tiny flame showing me only the smallest part of the room."[88] This line shows us how the room 208 in Toru's inner world is formed. We also find out that Kumiko is self-imprisoned in that room. Earlier I have already discussed about "other" can walk into Toru's inner world through a medium. Thus I would argue the room 208 is the place where Toru and Kumiko are exchanging inner worlds. They are sharing a same enemy or opposite ego—Noboru Wataya, which enables this character to get into room 208 too. For Noboru is an unavoidable element in the reconstruction process in both of the couple's inner worlds. Further, I assume that the image of the telephone girl— the way of her performance, tone, voice—is the choice made together by Kumiko's and Toru's inner mind. For the telephone girl appears in the room 208 as one of altered voices of Kumiko, and for she is the dark one of Kumiko's divided self. A more generalized explanation for the shaping of erogenous image, I assume, is a long term inadequate sexual communication in the couple's marriage. The subconscious mind is always seeking and desiring what it is lack of.

Thoughts and actions happen in the other side have physical power on this side. Not until Toru saw the news that he was able to convince himself that he had not in actuality beaten Noboru Wataya with a baseball bat. What Toru had done to Toru in room 208 still had impact on him in this world. Toru clearly "killed something inside him or something powerfully linked with him." Noboru, reported on TV news, had collapsed in public, but there was no crime involved. Toru would not in actuality be investigated by the police or arrested for the crime. It is however a familiar setting in Murakami's novel that those characters who have committed violence in the other side will free from punishment or charge in the real world. This setting emerges intensively in *Kafka on the Shore*.

Medium 03: Another well: historical narrative

The well which leasds Toru to the subconscious mind—room 208, is also connecting to another well: the empty well in Mongolian desert. That empty well has Toru with Mamiya's war memories.

[88] Ibid., 30

Lieutenant Mamiya meets Toru while carries out the particulars of Mr. Honda's will. He joined the Military Survey Corps as mapmaking specialist at the beginning of 1937, and assigned to the Kwantung Army General Staff in Hsin-ching in Manchuria. When he came back to homeland, he has been emotionally damaged by witnessing one of Japanese officer skinned alive. More significant experience of him was those nights spent in a dried-up well in Mongolian desert. He tells Toru his story in forms of dialogues and letters.

The historical narrative contains two story lines: one is the story of Lt. Mamiya, the other is the zoo massacre-story of Cinnamon's grandfather. The Soldiers in both stories were later sent to Siberia. We can read them as into a same historical background of the Second World War. In the story of Cinnamon's grandfather, the Hsin-ching soldiers were ordered to kill all the animals in the zoo. "If possible, I'd rather not kill any animals, the lieutenant told himself, in all honesty." "If, on the other hand, he chose not to kill the animals, he might be court-martialled for having failed to carry out orders. There was some doubt whether there would even be any courts-martial at this late stage of the war, but ultimately, orders were orders. So long as the army continued to exist, its orders had to be carried out."[89] Same sense of blind obedient of higher power applies to the sequel story in the zoo. But this time they were killing innocent Chinese exactly as how they had killed those animals.

The historical narrative reflects the discourse of individual's free will gives in to the system where a group is possessing overwhelmed power. Individual's lives and wills were relinquished like animals in the zoo. The higher power takes control over their fates. As foot soldiers, their sacrifices are meaningless in the flow of history. Matthew Strecher talks about the issue of individual's obedience to the system both take on in Japan before and after the Second World War:

Modern Japan, until its defeat at the hands of the Allies in 1945, could be called a society deeply devoted to national goals. And while these goals obviously changed somewhat as the nation developed, it is reasonable to say that at the centre of prewar state ideology lay the perceived need to form a unitary national polity of loyal, obedient imperial subjects whose first priority would also be the

[89] Ibid., 401

preservation an improvement of the state, embodied conveniently in the person of the emperor himself. …It stressed a program of 'taking a largely apolitical peasant population and turning them into nationalist-minded soldiers, savings-minded housewives and patriotic schoolchildren, all willing in spirit to make sacrifices for the nation'

…postwar Japan turned out not to be so different from prewar Japan after all. Aside from discrediting and effectively outlawing militarism and transforming the imperial system into a symbol of national unity, much of Japan's prewar economic and political structure remained in place…. At the same time, the so-called establishment, this power system, survives because it provides something to the Japanese people that left-wing ideologues have consistently failed to offer: a comfortable life through participation in the great consumerist machine that is the Japanese domestic economy. … This is the nature of the 'controlled society' (kanri shakai) as Hidaka conceives of it. It is also an apt description of the basic workings of the 'symbolic' in contemporary Japan, the mechanism by which individuals are drawn in as participants in the rules of the dominant social ideology.[90]

The history flow seems to suggest that present Japanese society and system (where Noboru Wataya's power is on top) Toru is confronting has no difference from the war battlefield Lt. Mamiya-the older generation was encountering. The dried-up well located in remote desert in the past links this ideology to the dried-up well in Toru's backyard. Fortunately at the end of Toru's story, he managed to defeat the enemy (the evil on top of the system). Toru accomplished things Mamiya's generation failed to fight against (Boris the Manskinner, another embodiment of evil), the dried-up well was finally surrounded by water. The historical narrative and the two wells are carrying a mission to present same evil system in altered forms. This line depicts the danger for people who joined the system and blindly follow orders, gradually lose their own judgement and their true self.

One mission for Murakami's Aum interview book *Underground* is to continue pursuing this theme through examination of the structure inside the world of the

[90] Strecher, 70, 72-75

cult. Murakami discovers Aum reveals a spiritual ranking system where well-educated elites and those who had contributed the most money were on the top of the pyramid. It seems that Aum has reconstructed the society outside the cult. But the basic structure and elements were kept intact. One of the cult members describes the system and situation inside Aum have no different from ordinary society. "No matter how much you resist and try to put a stop to things, the fact is that in a group like Aum your sense of Self is stadily deteriorating. Things are forced on you from above and you're continually attacked for not accepting the status quo, not being devoted enough, and inevitably your spirit is broken." [91] Gabriel comments that Murakami finds particularly disturbing on the part of both victims and victimizers, both inside and outside the cult, are the norms of conformism, blind obedience, and subordination of the will.[92]

The sequel story of the *clumsy massacre* (the Wind-up Bird Chronicle No.8) took place in a zoo has registered an imaginary form. For the young generation that Cinnamon belongs to, the perception of World War II can only remain in an indirect, metaphysical level. To understand it, they have to employ imagination. On contrary, Lt. Mamiya's letters to Toru invite his direct traumatic experience in the war forefront. Those letters can be regarded as a survivor memoir. To Mamiya, the telling of his story is a journey to revisit and re-experience his traumatic memories in the past. But he also knows its significance. To pass his story to Toru, he has passed the personalized war history to the next generation. To Mamiya, it is an effort to understand or accept the war damage with scant hope that such a dark age of human history will never be repeated. However, both the novel and the reality remind us how the history alternating with same patterns.

Through Mamiya's telling and Toru's receiving of Mamiya's memory, Mamiya as a war victim will "be able to disappear with some small degree of contentment." It is very tempted to consider *Hard-Boiled Wonderland* as an alter text to this plot. For we can associate Lt. Mamiya with the veteran lives in the centre of the End of the World. Thus we find another link to Murakami's the other world.

[91] Murakami 2001, 354,355
[92] Gabriel, 90

The most highlighted scene of Mamiya's story was the inside dried-up well experience. In that well he "was unable to do—or even to think—anything at all, unable to feel even my own physical existence. I was a dried-up carcass, the cast-off shell of an insect."[93] In the bottom of the well Lt. Mamiya experienced a complete darkness surrounding his subconscious world—a metaphor of the darkness of the war has relinquished the last hope for survivors. Even though physically they are still living, but they are not alive "in a place where I should have died, and at a time when I should have died, I had been unable to die."[94]

After his return to Japan, Lt. Mamiya has not married nor had any family left. He lived alone like an empty shell. "Living like an empty shell is not really living, no matter how many years it may go on. The heart and flesh of an empty shell give birth to nothing more than the life of an empty shell."[95] Through letters Mamiya wrote to Toru, we can see an old defeated person carrying curse and trauma from the past. The shadow of the war experience has destroyed their worlds inside, like the bottom of dried-up well—a perfect immortal darkness. Mamiya's core Self has been swallowed by the darkness and there is no chance to recover. Because of the curse Boris gave to him has deprived his capability to love. "Through the power of the curse, I love no one and am loved by no one. A walking shell, I will simply disappear into darkness."[96] In his case we figure out that love is a premise and fatal power to unlock one's Self and save one's inner world from the erosion of darkness. One of Toru's benefits from reading Mamiya's tragedy is to live "a life free of regrets" he needs the power and capability of love others. It is his love for Kumiko finally walks him into the core of Kumiko's inner world.

Seekers 05: Kumiko

There was some kind of inherited tendency in the Wataya family bloodline. That was the cause of Kumiko's sister's death. The person responsible for her sister's suicide was Noboru Wataya. Noboru had a dark force upon both Kumiko and her sister. Kumiko knew it as a fact from the very beginning. But since she left her family and married Toru, she had a temporary peace. Until at the time she was

[93] Murakami 1997, 171
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.

pregnant, she panicked because she was worried about the tendency would show up in her own child. I assume the abortion is the cause for Kumiko's self spitted in two. Her second self showed her violent sexual desires and had taken control over her inner world. She had driven by the violent desire and slept with numerous men for a long time in her marriage. Her first self (the true self) was overwhelmed and became weaker. To some extend, she detached herself from her husband hence. Toru's determination and love for her was the hope and light in the end penetrating her dark world. Toru's persistent searching for her had encouraged her to hold her first self from completely drifting to Noboru's evil side. "If it hadn't been for you, I would have lost my mind long ago.I would have handed myself over, vacant, to someone else and fallen to a point beyond hope of recovery."[97] To terminate the dark force which inflicted the chaos in Kumiko's inner world, she has to kill her brother in reality. There is no other option to do this, and from her point of view that is for Noboru's own sake. In the end of the story she took all the consequences and turned herself in to the police.

One fatal question is why after Toru has done everything he was supposed to do to save Kumiko, he still did not manage to bring her back. One of the reasons is she has her final task—to kill her brother in reality—to free her inner world from the control of dark force for good. The other reason—I argue is also the most important one—is that she has not yet fixed her world in the end. The task for Kumiko to find and restore her true self still remains after Toru has freed her inner world from Noboru's control. War is still on between Kumiko's divided selves. "Do I have any sound basis for concluding that the me who is now writing this letter is the 'real me'? I was never able to believe all that firmly in my 'self', nor am I able to today." [98]

As soon as Noboru Wataya was expanding his dark power, Kumiko started to be aware of the dark force inside her again. That is way she went to talk to Noboru and Malta Kano, hoping to learn the truth and asking for help. But she has never turned to her husband. It was only Toru that she could not open up. Kumiko's letter mentions that she should have opened up to Toru long ago, but she "lacked the courage to do so." She confesses it was all her fault but it was too late for

[97] Ibid., 602
[98] Ibid.

explanations. Indeed she has neither explained anything about the true reason for keeping Toru away from her secrets, nor has she confessed what has held her back from taking the courage to open her inner world to Toru.

"I often used to dream of you—vivid dreams with clear-cut stories. In these dreams, you were always searching desperately for me. We were in a kind of labyrinth, and you would come almost up to where I was standing. 'Take one more step! I'm right here!' I wanted to shout …But I was never able to produce that shout. And you would miss me in the darkness and go straight past me and disappear. It was always like that."[99]

Fatal problems lay in their marriage are not only the failure of Toru to understand Kumiko's feeling and inner world. Kumiko also fails to understand Toru's world.

That is the explanation for that when she many times see Toru die trying to seek her, she failed each time to response (shout loud back). One conspicuous scene to show her less interest of understanding Toru's mind lay in Chapter one. Toru told Kumiko at the dinner table about his thinking of resigning his job. She did not ask any reason or showed any concern or surprise.

"Her only response had been, 'I see.' I didn't know what she meant by that, but for a while she said nothing more. I kept silent too, until she added, 'if you want to leave, you should leave. It's your life, and you should live it the way our want to.' Having said this much, she then became involved in picking out fish bones with her chopsticks and moving them to the edge of her plate."[100]

A remained task for Kumiko is to understand Toru's inner world. It is one of the obstacles to complete the Self inside her. Kumiko has far from achieved a mutual understanding in the end of the story.

Kumiko thought if she could marry Toru and leave her former family, she might be able to save herself and prevent herself from the impact of evil power hidden inside her. Later she realized this attempt was all in vain. Marriage does not work for this kind of pursuit. At last, she has no where to escape but facing the crisis from her inner world alone. It implies that one's inner world can only be fixed in

[99] Ibid.,603
[100] Ibib., 93

that world, and only be fixed by one's own strength. She has explained it in the letter to Toru, no one chained her down or set a guard to watch over her in the dark room of her inner world. But she could not have escaped because chains and guards were herself.

"I was the chain that bit into my ankle, and I was the ruthless guard that never slept. Inside me, of course, there was a self that wanted to escape, but at the same time there was a cowardly, debauched self that had given up all hope for ever being able to flee from there, and the first self could never dominate the second because I had been so defiled in mind and body. I had lost the right to go back to you-not just because I had been defiled by my brother, Noboru Wataya, but because, even before that, I had defiled myself irreparably."[101]

And there is a long way to go before she has reconstructed her inner world and restore her true self. Before she comes back to Toru, she needs to acquire the capability to love and the courage to forgive herself and her past.

In the last chapter of the novel it mentions Kumiko's trial takes place in the next spring. For Toru, still, there is a long waiting for Kumiko's coming back.

"And you, Mr Wind-up Bird- you'll stay at home and wait for Kumiko again?"

I nodded.

"That's good…or is it?"

I made my own big white cloud in the cold air. "I don't know- I suppose it's how we worked things out."

It could have been a whole lot worse, I told myself. [102]

After going through all the bizarre and tough incidents, after experiencing the complexities in his own inner world, Toru is able to understand how to work things out in Kumiko's case. Finally, one has to solve one's problems and to restore one's true Self on one's own account.

[101] Ibid., 602
[102] Ibid.,605

Chapter 5: Reconstruction of Inner World:

Kafka on the Shore

This novel continues the dualism of real world and the unreal one from the other side. The main story is about a fifteen-year-old boy, Tamura Kafka, who was abandoned by his mother and sister since he was little and live with his father who is a famous sculptor. The relation between the father and son is rather distant due to two reasons: Kafka considers himself as a forsaken child by love and motherhood; his father set an Oedipal curse in his conscious mind, that he will eventually murder his father and sleep with his mother and sister. The young boy constantly lives in fear of his own violence impulse lay inside and wants to escape from the curse and his father, which lead him to alienate himself from others and outside world consciously. Gradually the wall Kafka built for isolating his inner world became higher and endured more and more pressure that may be the cause of Kafka's shaping of his imaginary friend, his alter ego "a boy named Crow", who talks to Kafka in his mind. The single chapters in this novel narrate Kafka's journey from his home in Tokyo to remote land Shikoku, seemingly in order to avoid his Oedipal curse.

In the Komura Memorial Library, Kafka is accommodated by Oshima and the fifty-year-old librarian, Miss Saeki, whom Kafka later assume that could possibily be his mother that left him when he was a four-year-old kid. The mountain and forest landscape in Shikoku and the Memorial Library easily arouse readers its resemblance with the End of the World in the early novel *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (*HBW* hereafter), except this time the other worldly space has two layers: the Shikoku landscape with the library and a cabin surrounded by densed forest inside the former one. In other words, this time the protagonist comes into a his own inner world within the Other world. I will come back to explain this landscape later.

The first "curse" penetrates Kafka's journey at one night is that Kafka wakes up in the woods behind a Shinto shrine with blood stain on his T-shirt. He has no clue of what had happened or where he is. But soon he learns from newspaper that his father was murdered by some unknown suspect at home in Tokyo at the same

night he awakens wearing a blood stained T-shirt. Oshima hides Kafka in a remote cabin in the forested mountains of Shikoku, to avoid police search. The cabin transforms to Kafka's inner spiritual world at his second visit, where he meets the fifteen-year-old young girl Saeki.

In the real world Kafka falls in love with the fifty-year-old Miss Saeki who may be his biological mother. In the library Kafka also encounters the young girl Saeki in his dreamscape. The second curse has hence semi-surfaced when he slept with both the real-Saeki in the library and the young Saeki in his dream.

A parallel story unfolds in even-numbered chapters of this novel, is about an old man named Nakata Satoru. Nakata's early life has shown in a series of U.S. Army documents during the second world war. As one of the young boys at a school locates in a small town in Yamanashi prefecture, Nakata and his classmates was guided by their teacher up forseted hills picking up mushrooms and all of a sudden they all fell into a temporary coma. Nakata was the only exceptional who remained unconscious for a long period until a nurse accidentally stained his body with blood "break the spell" and woke him up. Here the blood stain reminds us its same effect on Kafka. When one night he shortly lost his conscious into a dream-like status, it was the blood spit on his T-shirt that woke him up. In the end of the story, Kafka accepted Miss Saeki's blood so that he managed to return to real world from the other side, which persuades us to believe the blood is a bridge between one's conscious mind and his dream-like status. When Nakata woke up with is mind wiped clean, he has only half of his shadow left. The other half of Nakata's shadow, which we can assume enboddied his conscious Self, has gone to the other side and will never return to the real world. As a result, Nakata was unable to associate himself to the wrold around him thereafter. At the present time, Nakata is a mildly retarded old man lives in Tokyo on welfare, who uses his unique ability to speak with cats to earn extra money by helping people find their lost cats. One day he encounters Johnnie Walker who kills cats to make instrument. Johnnie Walker corners Nakata and forces Nakata to kill him in order to stop him from killing all the cats. Nakata can not stand the pain of watching Johnnie Walker tearing the cats apart and stabs Johnnie Walker to death with a strong violent impulse. When Nakata turns himself in to police they do not believe him for the absence of any evidence. Then Nakata embarks his journey to Shikoku

and join another story there with Miss Saeki. Nakata carries a mission to find the entrance stone in Shikoku and open the other world for Kafka so that the young boy can enter his own inner world. In the Komura Library Nakata rejoins the also half-shadowed Miss Saeki and burns her diary--the reresentation of her past in the real world--soon after she dies.

We can abstract from the story to figure out the shadow which represents one's complete Self can split into two halves when he or she opens the entrance stone and crosses to the other side. Miss Saeki had a lover who was brutally and mistakenly killed by student radicals in the late 1960s. In search for her lost lover, Miss Saeki opened the entrance stone came to another side and left her soul there. When she went back to the real world, she has only half of her shadow and has splited into the head librarian fifty-year-old Miss Saeki and the fifteen-year-old ghost-like girl Saeki. After she died in real world, she meets Kafka in the cabin of the other side and helps Kafka return to the real world by sharing her blood with the boy. Kafka complete his spiritual journey by returning to Tokyo and carring the painting *Kafka on the Shore* given by Saeki.

I assume there are two different kinds of other-worldly spaces in this novel: the limbo which creates a dream-like status toward people who is physically near the entrance stone, and the other side of one's inner world which can be accessed only when the entrance stone is open. I also emphasize the essence of the first kind is not the entrance stone or the limbo, but the dreamscale they create. For generally speaking it is very often and easy for someone to get lost during his journey to his inner world. This misleaded path creates the dream-like space other than real world and one's inner world. In the following analysis I will explain how this dream-like scale overlaps in several relevant events and read its link with the Aum context.

The inter-text of Oedipus Rex

Kafka's spiritual journey from Tokyo to Shikoku has an obvious connection to the Greek Tragedy *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. As Reiko Auestad points out, there are, however, fundamental differences between the Oedipal curse in Kafka on the Shore and the one in its precursor text:

In Oedipus Rex the prophecy is an oracle, pushing Oedipus for his pst sin, whereas in the novel, it is the father himself who gives the prophecy to his own innocent son. In the Freudian model the Oedipus complex (a desire to sleep with one's mother and kill one's father) is a tabooed desire every little boy harbors in his uncoscious, and it is the father's role to forbid it so that it remains uncoscious. In the novel this pattern is turned on its head; the father inculcates the prophecy in the boy's mind instead, "interpellating" Kafka, as it were, into a subject that desires mother and sister.[103]

As I have mentioned in the theory part of this paper, a literary text is a larger container of meaning relates to other texts than the layer of meaning in the text itself. And according to Bloom, the re-writing process of a text is always in conversation with its chosen precursor text (in this novel's case is the *Oedipus Rex*). But in *Kafka on the Shore*, Murakami obviously provides an anti-Oedipus text as the new way to imitat the former one. The fate here, unlike the Greek tragedy model, is avoidable in Kafka's case. For as Auestad has already pointed out, in this novel the curse takes form of thoughts\ideas which "inculcates in the boy's mind" so that it can be oppressed as long as Kafka carries a strong will and chooses not to given in his Self to allow those terroble thoughts get upper hand in his mind. Unlike Oedipus who tried to get rid of his fate and had wrong doing without knowing, Kafka deliberately let go his good will in his dream and follows the thoughts to rape her sister brutally:

You don't want to be at the mercy of things outside you anymore, or thrown into confusion by things you can't control. You 've aready murdered your father and violated your mother--and now here you are inside our sister. If there's a curse in all this, you mean to grab it by the horn snad fulfill the program that's been laid out for you.[104]

[103] Auestad, Reiko Abe. "The Problematic of Border-crossing in Kafka on the Shore: Between Metaphor and Reality" in Judit Arokay, Verena Bleichinger-Talcott, and Hilaria Glossman (eds.) [*Essays in Honour of Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit on the Occasion of the 60th Birthday*, Iudicium Verlag, Munchen. 2008.], 296

[104] Murakami, Hariki, *Kafka on the Shore*, 2002, [translated by Philip Gabriel, Alfred A. Knopf, 2005], 343

The variation between this novel and its inter-text has addressed the novel's motif of self-inflicted internal violence and has shown us what will happen when one given in his Self to an idea inculcated by others. And thus this plot eventually aims to demonstrate the danger of self-alienation which will trap one's mind in such situation without the presence of his Self.

In *Underground* Murakami describes Aum as an closed entity which alienates people from outside world in order to deprive their free will--Self and replace it with other thoughts. Murakami sees the danger of this kind of entity and tries to create a paranarrative to look into this dream-like status through the plot in *Kafka on the Shore*. The novel puts the young boy Kafka in an self-alienated situation and examines his behaviors and choices in an Oedipal plot and so to display the question about Self and Otehrs associates with Aum context. In Underground, Murakami throws out the question:

Haven't you offered up some part of your Self to someone (or something), and taken on a "narrative" in return? Haven't we entrusted some part of our personality to some greater System or Order? And if so, has not that System at some stage demanded of us some kind of "insanity"? Is the narrative you now possess really and truly your own? Are your dreams really your own dreams? Might not they be someone else's visions that could sooner or later turn into nightmares?[105]

In dream begins violence

Time weighs down on you like an old, ambigous dream. You keep on moving, trying to slip through it. But even if you go to the ends of the earth, you won't be able to escape it. Still, you have to go there--to the edge of the world.[106]

One night when Kafka wakes up and finds himself lying in a unfamiliar place surrounded by woods near a shrine with blood stian on his shirt. He is not aware of what happened in his dream, nor can he explain the blood stain on T-shirt. At the same time, his father has been murdered by some unknown suspect in his Tokyo home. But Kafka can not persuade himself to rule out the posibility that he

[105] Murakami 2001, 233
[106] Ibid., 260

may have actually murdered his father while he is dreaming. Even though it seems practically and physically impossible for Kafka to commit such crime in a short time: he should have to travel back to Tokyo, murder his father at home,then go back to Shikoku and wake up near a shrine. In the waking world, he has a perfect alibi to exclude the feasibility. However, Kafka has been conscious of his violent side sleeping inside him long time ago.And that is why he deliberately shuts himself down and walls himself from Others. He is always a silent kid in school, and natrally he has zero friends. "I've built a wall around me, never letting anybody inside and trying not to venture outside myself."[107] Kafka is also aware of that he can not always hold his monster inside, for violence is part of human nature."I'm not trying to imply I can keep up this silent, isolated facede all the time. Sometimes the wall i've erected around me comes crumbling down. It doesn't happen very often, but sometimes, before I even realise what's going on, there I am - naked and defenceless and utterly confused. At times like that I always feel an omen calling out to me, like a dark, omnipresent pool of water."[108] "A mechanism buried inside me." [109]

We all share an experience that sometimes in our dreaming world we are doing things which we will never allow ourselves to do in waking world. For the Self whom we value in our daily waking-life is absent in our dreamscale. The sleep opens an entrance to our dream world, and through sleeping we escape from our waking world. But in dream world the Self is a subconscious being distinguished from the Self in the waking side. And once we enter the dream side the Self, whom is trapped inside us when we are awake, now is out of our control. In other words, our dreams will undo the Self and the monster in our inner world. In this novel Kafka's imaginary friend Crow tells him, "you're afraid of imagination. And even more afraid of dreams. Afraid of the responsibility that begins in dreams. But you have to sleep, and dreams are a part of sleep. When you're awake you can suppress imagination. But you can't suppress dreams."[110] What does *imagination* imply in this context? My understanding is that the dream as an entity can release one's imaginations, and reconstruct them as a dreamscale. The imagination Kafka

[107] Murakami 2002, 9
[108] Ibid.,10
[109] Ibid., 11
[110] Ibid., 127

suppresses when he is awake retains its gravity in Kafka's sleep, and turns out to be relentlessly powerful. The narration of Kafka's dreamscape, in which he has murdered his metaphorical father, involves massive violence.

[T]he boy named Crow spread his wings wide, leaped off the branch and harted straight at him. He seized the man's chest with both talons, drew his head back and brought his beak down into the man's right eye, pecking away fiendishly as if he were hacking away with a pickaxe, his jet-back wings flapping noisily all the while. ...His face soon became cut to ribbons, pieces of skin flying off, blood spurting everywhere, nothing more than a lump of reddish flesh. [111]

One can not stop dreaming. Once he falls a sleep, crosses the boundary and slids in to another side of the world, the walls topple down. When the monster is released, one connives on his violent nature. In this novel, those characthers who have slided in to the dreaming side all connive their violent natures in separate occasions. The school teacher confesses that she had relentlessly beaten her student driven by a rush of blood over head, while the entrance stone opened in the forest during the war; Nakata-san stabbed Johnny Walker to death in the other side of reality; Miss Saeki once opened the entrance stone and stays spiritually in that dreamscale, while she abandoned her son and later connived incest with Kafka. They are victimizers who have experienced the power of imagination in the other side, and who have surrendered to their monsters in one form or another. The novel reveals the violent nature of mankind: under the state of nature, we all have the protential to become victimizers. In *Leviathan* Thomas Hobbes describes the state of nature as continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short. Thomas Hobbes' philosophy on mankind argues that the state of nature will eventually become a state of war of everyone against everyone. Violence lays in each and everyone of us.

In a way, the dream world (the Other side in this novel) creates a space similar to the state of nature in Hobbes' term but with an exception that in this dream-like world people are compelled by a high power or idea. In Kafka's case, it is the Oedipus-like oracle: he will soon murder his father, rape his mother and sister. In Kafka's dreamscale, he gradually surrendered to this compelling oracle. This other

[111] Ibid., 570

world is a grey zone where one's consciousness is trapped so that he has lost the capacity of telling good from evil.

In a section titled *Overhelming Violence* of *Underground*, Murakami contemplates the great catastrophic events of the Kobe earthquake and the Tokyo gas attack of January and March 1995 and unfolds the resemblance of the two davastating calamity: violence lay in underground of earth and the mankind has turned out:

Common to both [the Kobe earthquake and the Tokyo gas attack by Aum members] was an element of overwhelming violence: the one an inescapable natural calamity, the other an avoidable manmade disaster. A tenous parallel perhaps, yet to those most affected the suffering wasfrighteningly similar. The sourse and nature of the violence may have differed, but the shock in both cases was equally devastating. That was the impression I got, talking to the survivors of the gas attak.

Many of them remarked how intensely the "hated those Aum thugs," yet they found themselves deprived of any outlet for their "intense hatred." Where could they go? Where to turn? Their confusion was compounded by the fact that no one could pinpoint the sources of the violence. In this sense--having nowhere to direct their anger and hatred--the gas attak and the earthquake bear a striking formal resemblance. [112]

Similar to Aum, the dreamscale and the self-isolation have co-shaped the device to direct the intense anger and violence inside Kafka and seduced him to make the wrong choices. But more important is how to avoid this *avoidable manmade disaster.* Kafka's journey to his inner world has offered an option by inviting Others into the isolated Self.

Landscape: the introspective journey to the other world

I would like to first introduce Reiko Auestad's interpretation of the "other world" in this novel in comparison with my own interpretation. Auestad argues that the "other world" has two entrances in this novel, one is located in a Shinto shrine while the other is by the forest in Shikoku. Those two entraces create limbos of

[112] Murakami 2001, 237

different notions. The limbo near the shrine, according to Auestad, reveals a Buddhist notion, "where people, living or dead, with grudges against the living linger around before they go to the 'other side'(death) or return to 'this side' (life). It is a wrold in-between, where an ordinary sense of right and wrong does not necessarily apply".[113] In contrast with the former limbo, Auestad goes on to argue, the forest guarded by two soldiers from WWII is "a haven where one will be left alone and not be disturbed."[114] Besides, as one of the soldiers points out that the forest is a place without "Other" there. Therefore, the notion of self has also dissolved. "Peace and quietness one obtains by 'hiding in this place' is thus a two-edged sword which is not only comforting but is oppressive in the long run."[115]

As I have already mentioned before, I assume there are two different kinds of other-worldly spaces in this novel: the limbo which creates a dream-like status toward people who is physically near the entrance stone, and the other side of one's inner world which can be accessed only when the entrance stone is open. The first type of limbo that Auestad has explained, in my opinion, has two folds in this novel: the first one, which I agreed with Auestad, is the Shinto shrine while the other one is in the forsted hills during WWII. Both limbos are formed only because they are located close to the entrance stone. In other words, the entrance stone can create a limbo in the zone where it locates. Regarding the plot, after Kafka had the limbo experience near the shrine, Nakata san and his fellow Hoshino later find the entrance stone in the same shrine. When Hoshino close to the entrance stone, he is able to speak with cats as Nakata does, which suggests that the entrance stone has other worldly effect upon the place and people near it, even when the entrance is not open. Another limbo reveals itself in a school teacher's confession in a letter she wrote. The night before she took the children in class up into the hills, she had a dream which was so vivid that "it's hard to distinguish between dream and reality. "[116] In that dream she and her husband were lying on a large flat rock having sex. And the light grey rock was near the top of a mountain. The second day, when the school teacher took her class up to the mountain, she admitted that she was still in that dream-like status and the

[113] Auestad, 298
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Murakami 2002, 95

children were all falling into a strange coma. As her letter continues, she was overwhelmed by a violent impulse and let it take control over her, which led her to strike the young boy Nakata. We can abstract out Nakata's limbo experience from this mountain by knowing later that he left half of his shadow in the other side and lost all his memories when he woke up from that strange coma. Traits described make good reasons for me to believe the mountain top, where children fell into coma and where the school teacher could not take control over her violence impulse, was the other limbo. The rock where the school teacher had sex with her husband dragged her into a space between reality and dream, I believe, was another entrance stone, if not the same one at the present time, that created the limbo around it. I hold a different interpretation of the limbo from Auestad's which associates it to a grey zone between "life" and "death" in Buddhist notion. I argue that those characteristics of this mountain top limbo, sharing common traits with the shrine limbo (whose traits I have already elaborated in the former section), can be summed up as : surreal, overlapping itself with the dreamscale, splitting one's Self (shadow) and undo one's violent nature hidden inside.

The limbo in the forest Auestad mentions, in my opinion is a different one from the limbo I explained above. Kafka is not able to enter that forest guarded by two soldiers until Nakata and Hoshino open the entrance stone. The forest which Kafka explores into the second time is already becoming Kafka's own inner world in the other side. This is the second kind of other worldly space in my category. Many similarities regarding the landscape of the other world in this novel and the one in *HBW* can be found which allow us to read Kafka's inner world as an alternative (if not a revised) of the End of the World in Watashi's subconscious mind in *HBW*.

Before getting into the construction of Kafka's inner world, I would like to give a general impression about the landscape in this novel. In Kafka's narrative line, there are two major areas where major events take place: Tokyo where he leaves his home and Shikoku where he takes a journey to. Kafka meet major characters Miss Saeki and Oshima in the Komura Memorial library, which is inside the mountain forest landscape of Shikoku. Later Oshima introduces Kafka to a cabin inside the densed forest where turns into Kafka's own inner world at his second visit. The island name "Shikoku" (四国) has a syllable pun with the Japanese

word "shikoku"(死国) which literally means the death realm in English. If we read this link together with the library title "Komura Memorial", we can find the landscape's association with concepts of past, history and pilgrimage in traditional Japanese notion. Kafka has experienced several surreal events since he went into Shikoku. I assume that the landscape of Shikoku itself can be considered as an Other World to the central Japan, which emboddies Japan's past, history and memories. When the entrance stone has finally opened, Kafka came into the other world within this Other World, where we can also read its association with history, memories and the past. In contrast with the End of the World in *HBW*, the other world in *Kafka on the Shore* emerges more intensely the reflection and retrospection of history and the Second World War.

The two deserting soldiers conversation with Kafka in the other worldly forest brings up a question of the nature of war. The motivation which has brought these two soldiers into this space beyond reality is that they defy the killing in war. As Auestad points out, in a real place most of the soldiers "had just had to do as they were told, because it was a choice between 'my death' and 'someone else's death.'"[117] Auestad reveals the question of whether or not those soldiers had any other "real" choices under the war circumstances. It also reminds us the phenomenon of blind obedience of following orders by higher power both in war context and Aum context. Early in this novel, Johnny Walker also explained the nature of war to Nakata while he put Nakata into the similar situation:

I know. You've never killed anyone, and don't want to. But listen to me- there are times in life when those kinds of excuses don't cut it any more. ...Do you know what war is?

You've got to look at it this way: that this is war. You're a soldier, and you have to make a decision. Either I kill the cats or you kill me. One or the other. You need to make a choice right here and now. This might seem an outrageous choice, but consider this: most choices we make in life are equally outrageous. [118]

Watching his befriended cats are killed one by one by Johnny Walker, Nakata can not stand the pain and eventually stabed Johnny Walker to death. Nakata chose to

[117] Auestad, 303
[118] Murakami 2002, 153

stop Johnny Walker from killing more innocent cats by ending Johnny Walker's life. Retrospect Japan's fate in Second World War, it was also a victim of this kind of war logic. In his book *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering*, historian John Dower points out that for "understandable reasions, Americans wish to celebrate victory over an aggressive, fanatic, atrocious enemy. Most choose to see the atomic bombs as weapons that saved countless lives. In this heroic rendering, Hiroshima and Nagasaki simply hastened the end of a terrible global conflagration."[119] To look back into Japan's past has helped we learn another "device" which can direct violence out of mankind: the war. *Kafka on the Shore* seems to retrospect to the history and past to find answer for how to understand the manmade catastrophes such as Tokyo gas attack inflicted by Aum members at present.

Philip Gabriel argues that *Kafka on the Shore* shows how it is precisely only those who desire to escape violence and evil who are able to make the journey to the otherside. And there is "Kafka himself, who is on a mission to overcome the violence and evil he considers part of his genetic makeup, and the anger and hurt his abandonment by his mother have engendered.... But the reality is quite the opposite--at every step of the way evil and violence are there, powerful forces that must be acknowledged and confronted, and these forces are forever threatening to reappear....The powerful and disturbing message 'kill or be killed' that Johnnie Walker teaches Nakata, as well as the events of the final chapters, show that evil must be constantly battled, a message quite unlike that of Aum. Violence is not the *means* to the other world, as Asahara's confused apocalyptic 'narrative' implies, but the exact opposite--a barrier to a true spiritual encounter and restoration."[120] I agree with Gabriel's interpretation of violence in this novel that the violence is something prevailing and laying inside people which shall be acknowledged and confronted constantly. But I also want to supplement it by explaining the most powerful device created by Aum is not the apocalyptic 'narrative' which agitates violence, but the alienation of people from outside and from Others that

[119] Dower, John W., *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering: Japan in the Modern World*, [The New Press, New York, 2012], 163

[120] Gabriel, 126,127

eventually indulged Aum followers into a dream-like space in which they oppress their true Self and undo the violence.

In *Underground*, one of Aum follower explains how the Aum training and the alienation status caused her fall into the dream-like space and split her Self:

However, as continued my training I got immersed in astral, my subconscious began to emerg, and my sense of reality grew faint.

When taht happens you've supposed to be apart from the world. ... My sense of reality had vanished. My memory became hazy and I couldn't tell whether I'd actually done something or only dreamed it.

My consciousness had gone over to the other side and I couldn't get back. ...If there was nothing within me I could rely on, then the only thing to do was to give myself up to Aum.[121]

It shows that meditation is a method to reach the deepest part of the Self which lies deep within the subconscious. And Aum's training creates an dreamscale which is isolated from outside world and which gradually deprived people's judgment of good and evil when they start to give up their Self to Aum. Murakami points out that it is "possible to view the Self as divided into surface and depth--an unconscious, something like a black box. Some people feel it's their mission to pry open that blak box insearch of the truth. ...[H]uman beings should both open that black box and accept it as it is, otherwise it may turn dangerous. When I hear the statements of those who were arrested, though, it seems they couldn't do this. They only analyzed things and left the intuitive part to someone else. Their way of looking at life became extremely static. So, when someone with great dynamism--an Asahara, for instance--tells them to do something, they can't refuse."[122] The "black box" provided by Aum is a place to isolate people's inner world from Others and gradually make them lose their essential Self and given in, where violence is directed from inside out.

Kafka's journey to his inner world, as alternative to the End of the World, is a process of reconstruction. In HBW, the protagonist Boku stayed in his inner world

[121] Murakami 2001, 281
[122] Ibid., 28

and never came back to this side. Besides the Town dissolves Boku's capacity to love and dissolves his Self. Unlike the Town shut down the Self by walling out the Others in the inner world, in Kafka's other side of world the Others are invited in. In the cabin deep in forest, Kafka met Saeki again. At this time both Kafka (Self) and Saeki (Others) are beings with mind--capable of love and forgiveness.These two elements, love and mutual understanding between self and others, are the critical change of construction in the centre of the inner world, which enable Kafka to reconstruct his inner world and go back to the real world. By forgiving Saeki in the cabin and by accepting Saeki's blood, Kafka has accepted Others as part of his Self and retained the capacity of love and understading the world outside the alienation he walled himself in at the beginning of the story.

"You were discarded by the one person who should never have done that," Miss Saeki says. "Kafka--do you forgive me?"

"Do I have the right to?"

She looks at my shoulder and nods several times. "As long as anger and fear don't prevent you."

"Miss Saeki, if I really do have the right to, then yes--I do forgive you," I tell her.

Mother, you say. I forgive you. And with those words, audibly, the frozen part of your heart crumbles. [123]

The lesson Kafka learned from his spiritual journey to his inner world, is probably a method to break the wall he isolated himself from the Others and from outside world. The method is to understand others with compassion and love. Through mutual understanding, Kafka managed to guard the Self in the inner world from dissolving, which is the power gainst the internal violence driven by fear or anger.

Murakami points out in *Underground* that things that are wrong about *Aum* members are their lacking of a broad world vision, and the alienation between language and actions. The danger lays in their pure ideas were alienated from reality. “The sad fact is that language and logic cut off from reality have a far

[123] Murakami 2002, 411

greater power than the language and logic of reality—with all that extraneous matter weighing down like a rock on any actions we take. In the end, unable to comprehend each other's words, we'd part, each going our separate ways."[124] In contrast with Aum, the other world of *Kafka on the Shore* attempts to break the wall between this side and the other side by inviting comprehension and compassion in to the inner world.

Part II. Reception of Murakami Literature in China

Chapter 6 A Japanese Writer Conquered China

6.1 A Murakami Fever in Post-Tiananmen China

6.1.1 Post-Tiananmen China in transition: a literary background

China has been undergoing economic reform after the Culture Revolution. Drastic changes have been taking place in the economic, social, cultural, and ideological arenas. The tragedy of 4 June 1989 is considered to have fundamental importance in marking Chinese cultural and intellectual history. After the 4 June massacres in 1989, prominent writers who were involved in the protests had no choice but went in exile. The literary world experienced a short silence without dissidents until a new current occurred in domestic dues to economic (also touching upon culture and literary) policy changing. Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour in early 1992 proclaimed the economic openness as policy for the decade. In the summer of 1992, Li Ruihuan, in charge of ideological work at the Politburo, urged freedom from censorship for literary and artistic works that did not break the law, and recognition that the function of literature and the arts was not political indoctrination but included entertainment and aesthetic appreciation.[125]

[124] Murakami 2001, 363

[125] Richard Baum, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994, 356.

The potential readers at a time faced wild range of entertainment and information choices, from domestic and imported popular fiction, films and television to sport, shopping, travel and even for a few millions the Internet.[126] While modernization changed people's daily lives and promoted popular culture and commercial pursuit as new trends in society, the renewed prestige of dissident writers were experiencing the dwindling audiences and benefits as full-time writers or cultural functionaries.[127] Even though Chinese people then enjoyed a cultural diversity, the censorship is activated until present. "Works by dissidents abroad are still banned, while foreign literary, academic and commercial influences are largely unrestricted."[128]

From the middle of the 1980s to the present, fiction has been the main site of literary experimentation and commercialization, another conspicuous feature is the absence of overt political campaigns.[129] Many 1990s writers engage with themes or images of memory, drams, hallucination, myth and the supernatural.[130] Such avant-garde literature genre replaced the traditional high literature which lost their readership in the unprecedented trend of popular culture. As Sheldon Hsiao-Peng Lu mentions in his Post-Tiananmen China report, "Today, 'going pop' is certainly one of the latest fashions in China. Forms of literary and cultural production have come increasingly under the pressure of the new market economy. Taste in art, literature, and culture is no longer dictated by the intellectual elite. The numerous ordinary consumers of cultural production now exert a large influence upon what artists write, act, sing, and exhibit. In fact, traditional institutions of high culture have to fight for their survival under the onslaught of high culture have to fight for their survival under the onslaught of the market economy. Perhaps unwillingly, they have had to adapt to the taste and demand of the culturally 'untrained' and 'illiterate.'"[131]

6.1.2 A Petty bourgeoisie Murakami

[126] Bonnie S. McdDougall, Literary Decorum or Carnivalistic Grotesque: Literature in the People's Republic of Chinaafter 50 Years, *The China Quarterly*, No. 159, Special Issue: The People's Republic of China after 50Years (Sep., 1999), p.724 Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/655765 .
[127] Ibid.,p. 724.
[128] Ibid., p. 725.
[129] Ibid., pp.725-726.
[130] Ibid., p.729.
[131] Sheldon Hsiao-Peng Lu , Postmodernity, Popular Culture, and the Intellectual: A Report on Post-Tiananmen China, boundary 2, Vol.23, No2 (Summer, 1996), p.152 Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/303810 .

A new term “hybrid Chinese” in fashion among Chinese yuppies has firstly been claimed as a “new” language in one Chinese magazine in 1997. Characterizing it as Mandarin mixed with English, Cantonese, and Taiwanese expressions, it is said that the local employees are used to this kind of language practice and incorporate it in all aspects of their own lives. “The phenomenon of hybrid Chinese has caused distress and anguish among linguists who call for standardization of Mandarin Chinese. But as more and more people join such hybrid entities—working in joint ventures, eating hybrid Chinese-style fast food—it's inevitable that they regurgitate this kind of hybrid language.”[132]

The hybrid Chinese phenomenon indicates not only an urban transition of cultural life, but also a new direction of interests toward cultural consumption. Yuppie, short for a group of young urban professionals, is a term associates with popular culture initiated in late-20th-century America. Yuppie as a cultural phenomenon has occurred in economic booming nation of China in the late 1990s and 2000s. It represents a group of upper or upper middle class young adults at their 20s or 30s, who enjoying the cultural attractions of sophisticated urban life and thought, purchasing luxury brands and advocating high quality living standard. They usually hold a well-paying job in law, finance, or academia. They are good looking and well fitted elites. A more generalized cultural term to describe an increasing group in China is called Xiaozi (petty bourgeoisie). “The so-called xiaozi (小资) are a distinctly Chinese urban tribe that occupies a space somewhere between the yuppies and hipsters familiar to Westerners. A short list of xiaozi accoutrements includes coffee, Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*, French cuisine, the Houhai neighbourhood in Beijing, European films, Apple computers, the city of Shanghai and adidas .”[133]

As Margret Hillenbrand point out,through Murakami fictions, his fans in mainland China “sought, and found, guidance on how to live the Murakami way. Clear evidence of this can be found in the range of spin-off publications—cleverly marked ‘Murakami manuals’—that began to appear across Greater China from the

[132] Qing Zhang, A Chinese yuppie in Beijing: Phonological Variation and the Construction of a NewProfessional Identity, *Language in Society*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Jun., 2005), pp. 431-432. Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4169435 .

[133] Shepherd Laughlin , You petty bourgeoisie, ChinaDaily Europe, 11 May 2012 http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2012-05/11/content_15269332.htm

late 1990s onward, some translated from the Japanese and otehrs of indigenous provenance. ... Such texts, typically printed on plush paper and adorned with high-quality photographs, are more than just aids to appreciation that enthusiasts can consume while awaiting the next bona fide Murakami offering. Indeed, the core content of these glossy fanzines revolves around lifestyle: not how to read Murakami so much as how to inhabit his distinctively elegant identity. The writers of this material muse about cookery, music, sex, personal fitness, friendship, travel, and fashion, and they take Murakami, and their readings of his work, as the point of departure for lifestyle pieces that implicitly make the author a guru for gracious living."[134]

Particularly in mainland China, the Murakami fever (Cunshang re) emerged in 1990s is closely linked with the petty bourgeoisie (xiaozi) cultural trend. In "The 'Murakami phenomenon' in consumer social transition", Wang Zhisong categorizes three stages of reception of Murakami Literature chronologically.[135] First stage started by publishing Chinese translation of *Norwegian Wood.* Wang Zhisong argues that publishers and editors employed an erotic and pornographic adaption of the novel catering to the market.

In July 1989, Lijiang Publishing House launched Lin Shaohua's translation of *Norwegian Wood*. Later in June 1990, Northern Literature and Art Publishing House published Hong Jiezhong and Ma Shuzhen's translation, *Norwegian Wood – A Farewell to Virgin World*. Both versions revealed a strong commercial flavour observing from books' binding and editing. The book cover of Lijiang Publishing House's version (Lijiang version hereafter) portrays a Japanese beauty with high braided black hair viewed from behind, and her kimono barely covers half of her body. Description in back cover of the book provides information of content of this novel, which is depicted as a love triangle story. And the hero and heroine's "sexual relations" has been particularly mentioned. Northern Literature and Art Publishing House's version (Northern version hereafter) adds a subtitle "A

[134] Hillenbrand, Margaret, "Murakami Haruki in Greater China: Creative Responses and the Quest for Cosmopolitanism",[The Journal of Asian Studies, volume 68, number 3, August 2009, Cambridge University Press], 722

[135]王志松，消费社会转型中的"村上现象"，《读书》，2006 年第 11 期，三联书店 Wang, Zhisong, "The 'Murakami phenomenon' in Consumer Social Transition", *Dushu*, [Joint Publishing, 2006 , vol.11.], 63-71.

Farewell to Virgin World" to the origin title "Norwegian Wood". The back cover is a coloured photo of a European beauty bares her back, and writes a few lines: swept Japan, reprinted thirty times with 3.9 million copies, an unprecedented record of publication of Japanese pure literature. The designs and portrays of both versions have none association to the content of the novel, and the descriptions are suggesting one feature of the novel: a story of sexual engagement.[136]

Marketing strategy is also reflected in the text handling by editors. Originally, *Norwegian Wood* has none chapter titles, but both two Chinese versions are added chapter titles summarizing the content of each chapter. The way to summarize each chapter shows the understandings and interpretations of the novel by translators and editors. However, it can also play a guiding or misleading role for readers. The chapter titles of Lijiang version are as follows: Remember me forever, Campus romance, Night with wind and rain, Wild angel, Hospital flying birds, Moonlight nude girl, Scourge of lesbians, Rosy Rhapsody, Uncommon enjoyment, Playboy, Love her or love me, Dying soul under the setting sun. The original chapter six has been divided in two chapters “Moonlight nude girl” and “Scourge of lesbians” in this version. The intension is conspicuous: to further turn the novel into a love triangle story with erotic sex. The Northern version also divides chapter six in two chapters respectively titled “Precocious young girl hidden in the shade” and “The enchantment of the homosexual love”. If only judge by the added subtitles of the novel, readers will probably get an impression of pulp fiction. Such absurd adaptions can be merely explained by commercial motivations and marketing strategies.[137]

The second stage started from 1998 when Lijiang Publishing House revised the first edition and launched a Murakami Collection of five volumes. This new collection was characterized by series coherence of Murakami’s works. The cover design has picked up a simplified and elegant style which swept out the earlier image of pulp fiction. The new promotion guaranteed a substantial increase in sales and an accurate catering of petty bourgeoisie group.

[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.

The third stage is from year 2001 to present with a starting point of Shanghai Translation Publishing House's (Shanghai Translation hereafter) purchase of numerous copyrights of Murakami's athology. A major feature at this stage is the dramatically increasing number of copy sales, which thanks to the intervention of the publishing house with substantial capital. Currently Shanghai Translation has published over thirty volumes in Murakami series. Hence "Murakami fever" has actually occurred in mainland.[138] "Reading Murakami Haruki's Literature has even become an accreditation of Xiaozi (petty bourgeoisie) lifestyle, which was far beyond literary sphere. It can be rather identified as a social-cultural phenomenon."[139]

6.2 Motif: Student Movements

Particularly in recent years, people's way of reading Murakami's books in China is similar to the Japanese counterpart. Murakami's books have been on top of bestseller lists for over a decade. Chinese readers have already considered Murakami novels as their own literature. It is not a suprise that Murakami's literatures are resonated by Chinese young writers born in 1970s and 1980s, and are directly influencing their literary creativities. We observe a Murakami style in contemporary Chinese writing emerging recently in book markets which keeps gaining its popularity. It is noteworthy that even Nobel laureate Oe Kenzaburo has predicted that a young Chinese writer who is very similar to Murakami will soon emerge, and suggests that something very significant is happening in terms of the global literary "influence" of Murakami's fiction.[140]

Murakami first appeared on the Japanese literary scene is with his *Gunzō* Prize-winning novel *Hear the Wind Sing* published in 1979—the year when Japan's greatest political struggle in the postwar era –*Zenkyōtō* collapsed in utter defeat.[141] The following two decades Murakami has gradually established his literature as the major voice for the disaffected youth in contemporary Japan. In the period of 1970s, Japanese economy was booming in a level of affluence absent even in its era of "rapid growth". Mathew Strecher points out, during this period "in which

[138] Ibid.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Michael Seats, page 2
[141] Zenky*ōtō movement is the popular student uprising against the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty (Anzen Hoshō Yoyaku, "AMPO" for short) in 1960s.*

Murakami sets his early works, ordinary Japanese grew definitely less concerned with politics and more determined to share in the wealth and affluence of their country." He continues,

Ironically, this very affluence, combined with a marked decline in political tensions both internal and external, may pose the greatest threat to the development of a sense of self or individuality in contemporary Japan. At least, this is the impression one has from reading the literature of Murakami Haruki, concerned less with the collapse of the Zenkyōtō movement than with the sense of identity and self that it provided its participants. The implicit question throughout Murakami's literature has always been: how are Japanese of Murakami's generation and beyond to define themselves as individuals in the post-Zenkyōtō era?[142]

In June 1989, one month before Murakami's Literature's first encountering with Chinese intellectuals, China has experienced a student movement at home which unfortunately repeated the same fate of *Zenkyōtō*—an utter defeat. It has haunted Chinese for over two decades with a sense of disillusion. On June 4th, students across China converged on Tiananmen Square hoping this demonstration might bring needed political reforms. Two weeks earlier, Deng Xiaoping had imposed martial law in an attempt to contain the protests that had gripped China since April, but the students had refused to relinquish Tiananmen Square. The army had opened fire, hundreds died. "The military crackdown in the early hours of June 4 decisively squelched any hope of openness and reform. For the hundreds of thousands of people who took part in protests across China that year, the assault indelibly affected their lives, forcing some into exile, others to prison, and dooming many more to stagnant careers."[143] Needless to say, Tiananmen protest of 1989 (also known as the June Fourth Incident in Chinese,) is an unforgettable scene that spoke to the power of individual and collective resistance.

The aftermath was the government began a campaign of forgetting, first spinning the event and then erasing it. The popular Chinese search engine Baidu now

[142] Metthew Strecher,"Magic Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki," Journal of Japanese Studies 25, no. 2 (1999): 264

[143] Mara Hvistendahl, "The Great Forgetting: 20 Years After Tiananmen Square", Chronicle May 19, 2009 http://chronicle.com/article/The-Great-Forgetting-20-Ye/44267

blocks at least nineteen derivations of "six four" including Chinese character homophones, the abbreviation "sf," and "63+1."[144] Ma Jian, a former resident of Beijing who was at the Tiananmen protests, now lives in self-exile in London. His most recent novel, Beijing Coma (translated from Chinese by Flora Drew; Farrar, Straus & Giroux) is told from the perspective of a student who is shot in the back during the 1989 crackdown. As Dai Wei, the comatose but mordantly alert narrator observes, "No one talks about the Tiananmen protests any more." In a book review Pankaj Mishra writes,

While most of "Beijing Coma" renders the protests against Communist rule with the doggedness and precision of ordinary social realism, shorter sections of the novel, describing Dai Wei's regrets and desires with ironic nostalgia, recall the ambitious collages in which Kundera and Klíma frictionlessly juxtaposed political commentary, erotic memories, and philosophical reflections. Readers of Kundera and Josef Škvorecký would recognize the novel's frequent invocation of sexual love as an antidote to totalitarian control, and Ma Jian shares an affinity for the artistically gifted and the emotionally vulnerable, and for social outcasts. Immersed in his memories, Dai Wei brings to mind the protagonist of Klíma's "Love and Garbage," a banned writer "hemmed in by prohibition" who wants to escape into a "private region of bliss."[145]

Ma Jian's novel is banned in mainland China by its international fame. And the Tiananmen generation can hardly struggle against the nation's forgetting of memories by publishing literature based on June Fourth incidents. Their memorial of the protests will not be resonated by post-Tiananmen generations. Such predicament makes them, like Mishra said, banned writers "hemmed in by prohibition" who want to escape into a "private region of bliss."

In 1990s, the "socialist market economy", which is a euphemism for capitalist economy, was legitimized as an official policy in the party-nation. Thereafter, Chinese economy keeps growing in an astonishing speed. People's daily lives are changing dramatically, much better than they once were. Especially people live in urban lives, they now talk about buying a house, buying a car, going abroad on

[144] Ibid.
[145] Pankaj Mishra, "Tiananmen's Wake: A Novel of Hope and Cynicism", The New Yorker http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2008/06/30/080630crbo_books_mishra

vacation, putting their kids in this or that school. No one discusses politics for that does not interest them. Today, the communist country is on a stable path with economic growth. The post-Tiananmen era has achieved the material "success" which was struggling with among intellectuals in 1989. China is embracing a new era of commercial cultural transformation and globalization. The post-Tiananmen generation has, in part, lost their battlefield. They are in an era with nothing to fight for. They are in an era with nothing to lose.

Chinese novelist Kong Yalei ,born in 1970s, conveys such message with frustration in his short story written for Granta magazine. The story titled *Holy Solitude* employed "hunger" as a metaphor for lacking of spiritual sustenance and political ideals among his generation:

I arrived too early (at 8 a.m., and the ceremony began at 10 a.m.), and I was starving to death (I hadn't had breakfast). So I decided to look for some place to eat something – anything – and that wasn't easy. To the north was Tiananmen Square, to the east was the Chairman Mao's Memorial Hall, and to the west was the Great Hall of the People, where the ceremony would be held. So my only choice was south. I went south. I passed several soldiers, with their eyes steadily fixed on the same spots just like some wax statues. Then I passed an old, high, western-style building, whose windows were broken, like a gothic haunted house. I always think, either as a reader or as a writer, one person – anyone – can struggle against this filthy world by entering into a world of literature. Then a beautiful public convenience, like a temple. Nothing to eat. ... I had a great breakfast at KFC. These were just like a series of symbols, I told myself. Anyway, I felt a little happy (for the breakfast), a little sad (for the beggars) and a little absurd (for the symbols). Then the ceremony, the long and boring and empty speeches. When it was over, I felt partly happy (for was finally over), partly sad (it's hard to say why) and partly absurd (for all these).[146]

As an intellectual one is cornered and overwhelmed by fallacious, symbolic social configuration and finds himself completely defenceless. Only to turn into one's own solitude, one's inner world, can one remain a human alive:

[146] Kong Yalei,Holy Solitude, Granta website, 23 Jan 2012. http://www.granta.com/New-Writing/Holy-Solitude

On my way home, sitting in the jam-packed metro, I felt satisfied, anyway. I felt satisfied because I felt solitary. I treasure this solitude. It's my holy solitude. Maybe now there is nothing holy in modern China – except Money. But at least to me, Solitude is holy. It means that in spite of everything else, I still can do something I want to do, such as reading…. I always think, either as a reader or as a writer, one person – anyone – can struggle against this filthy world by entering into a world of literature. It's not naivety. It's not escape either. It's great. It's great because it's so simple, so beautiful, and – almost – no one can prevent you, even in China.[147]

Like other compatriots of his own generation, Kong Yalei encountered Murakami Haruki at the time when he confused and get lost in his metropolitan life. The first Murakami novel he has read is *Dance Dance Dance*. "Once I started the novel, I immediately found out it is a page-turner. It opens a door for me and led me stepping into a whole new world. The world only exists for me. It seems as if everything there is designed for me. It is embracing all my sorrow, my perplexity and melancholy in a warm way. Therewithal, I collected Murakami's novels as much as possible and read them one by one. Gradually, my heart became strong and calm. After the bewilderment found its peace, finally I was able to be aware of my immanent self from a new perspective." [148]

Kong Yalei's debut novel *Non-loser: A Novel* was published in 2008 and his translations include Paul Auster's *The Book of Illusions* and Leonard Cohen's *Book of Longing*. On belly band of the book *Non-loser* it writes: "China's Murakami, an intriguing novel which can compare with *A Wild Sheep Chase* and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*." Following this it quotes Lin Shaohua's comments about the author: "Kong Yalei's Non-loser makes readers recall Murakami's novels such as *Hard-Boiled Wonderland* which essentially presents the nature of Murakami's literature. To a large extent, Kong inherited both Murakami's narrative features and spiritual contents, which entails concordance of mind and affinity of soul, rather than merely technical simulation. Besides, it also contains exceptional talent of writing. In a word, you can say Kong is a 'true heir' of

[147] Ibid.

[148] 林少华，"谁说村上是'小资'？",《广州日报》 07.06.2008. Lin Shaohua, "Who said Murakami is *petty bourgeoisie*?", Guangzhou Daily 07.06. 2008. (My translation)

Murakami's literature."[149]As a representative of the young Chinese writers who are inspired by Murakami, Kong has shown the readers a new genre to express their individuality under the censorship. Embracing, rather than confronting the material global culture, Kong Yalei's generation (and probably even younger generation) has replaced the motif of "saving the world" with a sense of nostalgia and self-solitude. It is therefore very natural that Murakami is influencing contemporary Chinese writing as archetype.

Chapter 7 Academic Reception

7.1 A local cultural perspective

One interesting interpretation of Murakami literature provided by a Chinese scholar employs Chinese classical philosophy. In the article “Well, Water, Tao—Lao Tzu philosophy in Murakami Literature”, Sun Shulin argues that the “water” motif in Murakami literature permeates the Taoist philosophy.[150] One is that in Taoism the water is origin of all things, water equals to Tao. Another is that in Taoism it emphasizes the notion of harmony with nature. Tao abides in non-action, yet nothing is left undone. Non-action life philosophy is viewed very often as escapist and negative, receives many criticism among Chinese. However, Sun Shulin argues that the life style depicted in Murakami novels have several similarities with the one that Lao Tzu and Taoism advocates. Lao Tzu encourages a calm observation of the outside world without getting involved, while Murakami’s protagonists are usually outsiders satisfied to live as recluses. Owning to such life style against social norms, Murakami’s works remain as a heating discussion in China.

The types of wells vary in different novels. Sun Shulin’s article has sorted out four types of well categorized by plots and themes:

[149] 孔亚雷，《不失者》，上海译文出版社. Kong Yalei, *Non-loser*, Shanghai Yiwen Press, 2008. (My translation)
[150] 孙树林，井·水·道—论村上春树文学中的老子哲学，《日本研究》，2001 年第 04 期. Sun Shulin, Well, Water, “Dao—the Lao Tzu Philosophy in Murakami Literature”, Japan Study, 2001, Vol. 04.

a. Dry well (涸井) : *Hear the Wind Sing*, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Norwegian Wood*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*;
b. Watery well (水井): *Pinball, 1973*;
c. Watery well (水井)→ Dry well (涸井): *Pinball, 1973*;
d. Dry well (涸井)→ Watery well (水井): *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. [151]

The varied types of wells share a common metaphor, a symbolic representation of subconscious, according to Sun. He also points out that the water in the well is more significant than the well itself in interpretation of this motif.[152] In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, the water is unprecedentedly indispensable. The ensuing problems such as losing cat, disappearing wife and violence come after the protagonist after the blocking of water stream. The water well located in his backyard has been dried up, pointed by spiritual sided woman Malta in the novel, was the major cause of the awkward situation he was encountering. In order to sort out solutions to the problems the protagonist had to get down to the bottom of the dried well and enter the other world. After his triumph against the evil he returned to the empty well and the water was once again overflowing from the dried-up well.

The difficult situations and disorders depicted in this novel are a result of water blocking. It suggests the reasons for water blocking are the deviated social order and system. *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is considered as a turning point in Murakami oeuvre, which is directly confronting social problems in Japanese society. Nowadays, Chinese society with a rapid growth of economy is facing a similar situation. No later than entering 21st century, Chinese people started rethinking contemporary society and their lives with a Taoist insight.

But I assume the well in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* is a medium rather than the representative of the subconscious world. In this novel, the well as an connection leads the protagonist to the world of Others. The well also connect to the history and past of Japan. The well is as a tool employed to broaden the content of the other world, rather than the other world itself.

7.2 Motif: Forgettable War, Violent History, Traumatic Memories

[151] Ibid., p 86 (My translation)
[152] Ibid.

The perspectives on invasion wars/ imperial wars differ between Chinese people and people live in Japan. In China the ongoing censure towards Japan, regarding Japan's atrocities inflicted on Chinese people during the World War II, is mainly focusing on Yasukuni Shrine, history textbooks and the recently heating up Diaoyu/Senkaku islands dispute:

"关于道歉的问题，以当前的局势来说，日本道不道歉已经不重要了，重要的是日本国内包括政府以及民众在内，对于二战中所发生事情的态度。以我从中国国内媒体上了解到的信息来看，日本政府及民众对于二战中在中国发生的事，并不在乎。似乎他们更在乎的是日本是目前唯一一个曾遭到核弹攻击的国家。而对中国人民来说，当年日本入侵中国，是刻骨铭心的国耻。这种对二战记忆和感受上的差异造成了日方所做的"道歉"和"类道歉"表态，很难让中国人满意。"[153]

"Regarding the current situation (the escalating dispute of Diaoyu/ Senkaku islands), whether or not Japan will apologize to China is not important anymore. The important thing is what kind of attitude government and people in Japan holding toward what had happened in World War II. Based on the information I have learned from domestic Chinese media, Japanese government and Japanese people do not care about what they did in China during World War II. It seems like they are more concerned about the fact that Japan is currently the only country that had been attacked by nuclear bombs. For Chinese people, Japan's invasion of China (during the years of Japan's colonialism and imperialism) is an unforgettable, national humiliation. The distinctions (between Japanese and Chinese) of memories and feelings toward the war decide that all current forms of apologetic denotes from Japan will hardly be accepted by Chinese people." [154]

The comment above represents a mainstream in China which has significant impacts on critics and interpretations of motifs and discourses in Murakami novels. The novel *Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* includes unsettling scenes of Japan's occupation of Manchuria during World War II—another controversy on historical issues between China and Japan.

[153] 金文 《中国人对日本的仇恨能否消除?》，纽约时报中文网,sept 27,2012 http://cn.nytimes.com/article/opinion/2012/09/27/cc27letter/

[154] My translation

In America, while readers are used to the idea that World War II, Murakami Haruki's novels give them a new way of thinking of the war. *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* invites American readers to a warfront—a war zone inhabited Mongolian desert and Manchukuo that used to be part of Japan's where few Americans have any knowledge about. "Only a scattering of academic studies discuss the colony, while English-language popular histories and historial fiction almost ignore it. Murakami's novels, on a purely informational level, fill this gap," Katie Wadell writes in her essay.[155] Wadell argues that in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* Murakami depicts Manchukuo as a supernatural battleground and the Mongolian desert originates a "curse" that haunted soldiers who finally returns their homeland. Wadell points out that Murakami purposefully keeps explanations of the war curse confusing:

"Curse is a strong word, especially when it is found in war fiction, and it is easy to read it in a way that Murakami does not intend. We are used to war novels that provide a moral basis for destruction, and to an extent, Murakami offers us versions of the familiar World War II war stories: civilians are killed, POWs languish in sadistically run enemy camps, politicians advance their careers through violence. But Murakami also includes less-expected, and therefore more gripping, violence. In The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle, a man is skinned alive by Mongol bandits who then finish up the event by retiring to the side to compare skinning techniques. (The visceral impact of this scene is greatly enhanced by the extreme detail Murakami depicts the skinning in.) However much the bandit's actions add to the heightening sense of supernatural horror, through, they do not influence the curse. For Murakami, the curse is not a punishment or atonement for bloody atrocities. It is simply the blame-neutral result of stirring up the underlying order of the world. Murakami argues that war and colonization make people go where one should not be, both physically and supernaturally."[156]

In her article "Can Murakami Haruki be a 'fighter' of East Asia?" Liu Yan criticizes the war narrative in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* in a new historicism

[155] Katie Wadell, "Haruki Murakami's Supernatual War", The Quaterly Conversation. http://quarterlyconversation.com/haruki-murakami-windup-bird-chronicle
[156] Ibid.

perspective.[157] The keynotes, she pointed out in this article, are a reflection of author's consciousness of Japanese culture and a pursuit of understanding oneself from a whole new perspective. However, all the interpretations and insights upon war history and evil violence are excavated "inside" Japan. The article criticizes the absence of its East Asian counterparts in the process of questioning Japan's war history. As part of the narrative the abstracted evil nature of war has been eradicated by violence through a metaphorically virtual game. It functions, to some extend, as a 'healing' therapy for post-war trauma among Japanese. The novel's introspection is always on the Japan side. When referring to Japan's post-war responsibility to other East Asian countries, Murakami's attitude is rather ambiguous, Liu Yan continues, "Murakami views the war 'as a fate of an ordinary people who introspect the war tragedy'. Logically it has internal consistency with the historical revisionism prevailing in Japan since 1990s."[158]

It has been further pointed out in this article that the plotting and character setting are showing a strong consciousness of victimhood:

"Logically speaking, as a member of invaders Lieutenant Mamiya is supposed to seek for atonement. But when he returned home from the colony, he found out he lost everything. And this powerful feeling overwhelmed the guilty one. As time goes by, such feeling evolved into a consciousness of victimhood. …Here Murakami seems to indicate that Japan should take responsibilities for wars. However, from readers' perceptive, there is a huge gap between author's intension and the plotting in the text. After Japan was defeated, its pacifism and anti-war advocates are built up upon a sense of victimhood. As a Japanese, perhaps in a subconscious level, Murakami himself also can not get rid of such sense."[159]

The varied views on historical issues among Chinese scholars, affects their judgment and interpretation in reading Murakami Literature. In the Asahi Shimbun, Murakami commented on the island disputes, expressed his concern

[157]刘研,《村上春树可以作为东亚的"斗士"吗？——〈奇鸟形状录〉战争叙事论》，外国文学评论, 2010 年 01 期. Liu Yan, "Can Murakami Haruki be a fighter for East Asia?—The war narrative of *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*", Foreign Literature Review, 2010 Vol. 01.

[158] Ibid. p 13
[159] Ibid. p 9

about the noxious effects of nationalism: "When a territorial issue ceases to be a practical matter and enters the realm of 'national emotions,' it creates a dangerous situation with no exit," according to the translation from Japan Times.[160] "It is like cheap liquor: Cheap liquor gets you drunk after only a few shots and makes you hysterical. It makes you speak loudly and act rudely. . . . But after your drunken rampage you are left with nothing but an awful headache the next morning. We must be careful about politicians and polemicists who lavish us with this cheap liquor and fan this kind of rampage."[161] After being shocked by reports that books by Japanese writers have been removed from Chinese stores because of the dispute, Murakami puts,"One of the main purposes of cultural exchanges is to bring about an understanding that we are all human beings who share emotions and inspirations, even if we speak different languages. That is, so to speak, the path through which souls can come and go beyond national borders."[162] Despite the disagreements on historical issues in Murakami's novels, a continuous popularity of his books in Chinese is affirmative. But discussions on historical issues will remain a popular one in Chinese readership.

Conclusion

In this paper I have examined the other world in Murakamia's novels *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore* with inter-textual and contextual analysis. In my analysis, I have emphasized on discussion on the inner world of Self and its relation with Others

[160] "Murakami calls for cool heads amids Senkaku's flareup", The Japan Times Online, September 30th. 2012 http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20120930a2.html

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid.

as well as themes such as alienation, self-dividing, mutual understanding, love, history and internal violence. This paper also endeavours to get a general understanding of other world in Murakami's post-Aum fictions whilst they are in conversation with early Murakami literature.

In these Murakami novels the main characters share several features in common: alienated from outer world, divided selves and experience of entering the other world. The reason results in self-alienation of those characters is probably their fear to be integrated into the main system in the chaotic reality and therefor lose their Self. In Murakami's early works, the protagonists choose turn inward to isolate themselves in their inner world in order to resist the world outside.

Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World depicts the other world as an introspective and nostalgic place in one's subconscious world. In the centre of this subconscious world, the difference between Self and Others is dissolved in order to repel violence and conflicts. It is also an self-isolated space where individuals are impotent to love, desire and mutual understanding with one another. In the end of the story, protagonist chose to stay in the other world and never return to the present world outside. This novel reveals a strong sense of defeated in Japan's 1970s, when the young generation felt their individuality was oppressed by the consumerism system with a melancholy of the defeated student movements in early 1960s.

But since *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, the other world has been reconstructed. Several themes are penetrating the other world after the Kobe earthquake and the sarin gas attack shocked Japan in 1995. One of the most evident changes in the other world is that it is no longer a completely isolated inner world. The Others have been allowed to get into the protagonist's inner world. Besides, their dreamscape, subconscious minds and the reality of outside world are interweaving and connecting to each other. To understand other's world in order to understand better of one's own world becomes a major announcement.

In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, love between self and others through communication is required for ultimately achieving self-reconstruction in the inner world. The this shifting idea of the inner world very naturally reminds us Murakami's research work looking into *Aum* society. The alienated nature of *Aum*

group has inflicted the evil atrocities toward thousands of innocent. *Aum* supplements ideological construction with a communal life completely cut off from outside world and followers gradually lost their Self in this alienated trap. It is the closed dystopian construction that relates to the similar other world which Murakami has depicted in his novels. The *Underground* has provided the novelist a deeper and renewed insight on the exploration of the other world. This time in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle,* Murakami perceives the potential danger of an inner world without conversation with other and other's world. The wrong doing of Aum perpetrators dues to their lacking of a broad world vision and the alienation between their ideas and comprehensive understanding of the reality. Failed comprehension of each other's language separates each other to opposite directions. *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* plants this important message and the centre of other side (room 208) becomes a place where characters can exchange their worlds with each other, a place which enables characters to regain the capacity of love and achieve mutual understanding. The other world in this novel has shaped a new space to discover one's true self by reconstructing it with an exit to the outside world.

Kafka on the Shore further developed the other world in conversation with the Town in *Wonderland*. The end of the world in the earlier fiction now is returnable. Kafka is the first protagonist in Murakami novels that has physically walked into his inner world and managed find his way back to the real world both physically and spiritually. I argue this is an attempt to draw a counter-narrative of *Aum* members who are facing a tough situation: while they physically separated from the cult and returned home, their selves and spirits remain in the other side struggling with finding a way out.

The other world in post-*Aum* era also highlights the theme of violence: the dark power lying inside protagonist's inner world. In the developed narrative of the other world in *Kafka on the Shore,* the protagonist must confront violence from an evil icon and his inner self.

History and memories in the past has registered in the other world landscape since the novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore.* The past becomes a large proportion in the process of self-reconstruction within the other world

motif. The postwar Japan with its identity crisis has a trend to forget the past. But self-inflicted disasters repeat the violent history. And only by going into the past can one go into the future.

Bibliography

Allen, Graham, *Intertextuality 2nd edition*, Routledge, London and New York, 2011

Auestad, Reiko Abe. "The Problematic of Border-crossing in Kafka on the Shore: Between Metaphor and Reality" in Judit Arokay, Verena Bleichinger-Talcott, and Hilaria Glossman (eds.) *Essays in Honour of Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnereit on the Occasion of the 60th Birthday*, Iudicium Verlag, Munchen. 2008.

Bal, Mieke, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative third edition*, Universtiy of Torono Press,2009

Baum, Richard, *Burying Mao: Chinese Politics in the Age of Deng Xiaoping*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994

Dorman, Benjamin, "Pana Wave The New Aum Shinrikyô or Another Moral Panic?", The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions, Vol. 8, No. 3 (March 2005), University of California Press

Dower, John W., *Ways of Forgetting, Ways of Remembering: Japan in the Modern World*, The New Press, New York, 2012

Gabriel, Philip, *Spirit Matters: The Transcendent in Modern Japanese Literature*, University of Hawaii Press, First Edition edition 2006

Goto-Jones, Christopher, *Modern Japan: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2009

Hvistendahl, Mara, "The Great Forgetting: 20 Years After Tiananmen Square", Chronicle May 19, 2009
URL: http://chronicle.com/article/The-Great-Forgetting-20-Ye/44267

Kong, Yalei, "Holy Solitude", Granta website, 23 Jan 2012
URL: http://www.granta.com/New-Writing/Holy-Solitude

Laughlin, Shepherd, "You Petty Bourgeoisie", China Daily Europe, May 11th 2012
URL: http://europe.chinadaily.com.cn/epaper/2012-05/11/content_15269332.htm

Lu, Sheldon Hsiao-Peng, "Postmodernity, Popular Culture, and the Intellectual: A Report on Post-Tiananmen China", boundary 2, Vol.23, No2 (Summer, 1996) Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/303810

McDougall, Bonnie S., Literary Decorum or Carnivalistic Grotesque: Literature in the People's Republic of China after 50 Years, *The China Quarterly*, No. 159, Special Issue: The

People's Republic of China after 50 Years (Sep., 1999) Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/655765

Metraux, Daniel A., Religious Terrorism in Japan: The Fatal Appeal of Aum Shinrikyo, Asian Survey, Vol. 35, No. 12 (Dec., 1995)
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/2645835

Mishra, Pankaj, "Tiananmen's Wake: A Novel of Hope and Cynicism", The New Yorker URL:http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2008/06/30/080630crbo_books_mishra

Mulhall, Stephen, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Heidegger and Being and Time*, London : Routledge, 2005

Murakami Fuminobu, *Postmodern, Feminist and Postcolonial Currents in Contemporary Japanese Culture: A Reading of Murakami Haruki, Yoshimoto Banana, Yoshimoto Takaaki and Karatani Kojin*, Routledge 1 edition 2009

Murakami Haruki, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum, Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 1992

Murakami Haruki, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum, London : Vintage books, 2007

Murakami Haruki, *Norwegian Wood*, 1987, translated by Jay Rubin, Vintage, 2003

Murakami Haruki, *South of the Border, North of the Sun*, translated by Philip Gabriel, Vintage, New York, 1999

Murakami Haruki, *Sputnik Sweetheart*,1999, translated by Philip Gabriel, Vintage, London, 2002

Murakami Haruki, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, translated by Jay Rubin, Vintage, London, 2011

Murakami Haruki, *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum, Philip Gabriel, 1st Vintage International Ed edition 2001

Murakami, Hariki, *Kafka on the Shore*, 2002, translated by Philip Gabriel, Alfred A. Knopf, 2005

Napier, Susan J., *The fantastic in modern Japanese literature : the subversion of modernity*, London : Routledge, 1996

Nelles, William, *Frameworks: Narrative Levels and Embedded Narrative*. Lang, New Yourk 1997

Rubin, Jay, *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words*, Harvill Press, London, 2003

Seats, Michael, *Murakami Haruki: the Simulacrum in Contemporary Japanese Culture*, Lexington Books, 2009

Strecher, Metthew, "Magic Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki," Journal of Japanese Studies 25, no. 2 (1999)

Stretcher, Matthew, *Dances With Sheep: The Quest for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki*, University of Michigan Center 2002

The Japan Times Online, "Murakami calls for cool heads amids Senkaku's flareup", September 30th. 2012
URL: http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/nn20120930a2.html

Wadell, Katie, "Haruki Murakami's Supernatual War", The Quaterly Conversation
URL: http://quarterlyconversation.com/haruki-murakami-windup-bird-chronicle

Young, Katharine Galloway, Taleworlds and Storyrealms: The Phenomenology of Narrative. Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff,1987

Zhang, Qing, "A Chinese yuppie in Beijing: Phonological Variation and the Construction of a New Professional Identity", *Language in Society*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (Jun., 2005)
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/4169435

刘研,《村上春树可以作为东亚的"斗士"吗?——〈奇鸟形状录〉战争叙事论》,外国文学评论, 2010 年 01 期.
Liu Yan, "Can Murakami Haruki be a fighter for East Asia?—The war narrative of *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*", Foreign Literature Review, 2010 Vol. 01.

孔亚雷,《不失者》,上海译文出版社.
Kong Yalei, *Non-loser*, Shanghai Translation Publishing House, 2008.

孙树林,井·水·道——论村上春树文学中的老子哲学,《日本研究》,2001 年第 04 期
Sun Shulin, Well, Water, "Dao—the Lao Tzu Philosophy in Murakami Literature", Japan Study, 2001, Vol. 04.

村上春树,《挪威的森林》, 林少华 译,上海译文出版社
Haruki Murakami, *Norwegian Wood*, Simple Chinese translation, Lin Shaohua, Shanghai Translation Publishing House.

林少华,"谁说村上是'小资'?",《广州日报》 07.06.2008.
Lin Shaohua, "Who said Murakami is *petty bourgeoisie*?", Guangzhou Daily 07.06. 2008.

王志松,消费社会转型中的"村上现象",《读书》,2006 年第 11 期,三联书店 Wang, Zhisong, "The 'Murakami phenomenon' in Consumer Social Transition", *Dushu*, Joint Publishing, 2006 , vol.11.

金文 ,《中国人对日本的仇恨能否消除?》，纽约时报中文网，September 27,2012
Jin Wen, "How to dissolve the hatred toward Japan among Chinese? ", Nytimes, September 27,2012
URL: http://cn.nytimes.com/article/opinion/2012/09/27/cc27letter/