

Chapter I

Introduction

Every fictitious idea has its seed in reality, which has proven to be more bizarre than fiction in many cases. It is the fictitious in the real and the real in the fictitious that continues to captivate the human mind. Every novel offers a real idea in a fictitious form that gives allowance for doubts and hopes, and has helped push the genre to the frontlines of popularity.

Imagination plays a role, for better or worse in our view of reality.

More especially it is responsible for the creation of spheres of reality.

As a result the borderlines between the two may change significantly

as may the boundary between falsity and truth. To a large extent this

interaction determines also the form and content of literature, its modes

and values. (Mooiji 1)

Fiction has been a part of human life for as long as literature has been. The first song that was ever sung or the first story that was ever told had an element of imagination in it and hence was a forerunner of fiction in some form. Many authors have elucidated the importance of fiction. In his Jerusalem Prize acceptance speech, “Always on the Side of the Egg” (ASE) Murakami says:

By telling skillful lies - which is to say, by making up fictions that appear to be true - the novelist can bring a truth out to a new location and shine a new light on it. In most cases, it is virtually impossible to grasp a truth in its original form and depict it accurately. This is why we try to grab its tail by luring the truth from its hiding place, transferring it to a fictional location, and replacing it with a fictional form. In order to accomplish this, however, we first have to clarify

where the truth lies within us. This is an important qualification for making up good lies. (Murakami ASE)

Fiction is one of the most desired genres of literature. Its individuality and simplicity of narrative accounts for its popularity and is of great value “in the history of the progress of society” (Dunlop 33). Fiction is described as “select and highly coloured history” (Dunlop 33), which is based on events that have occurred in the past or which could possibly happen in the future. It differs from factual literature by selecting only that which interests the author. It includes sudden changes and twists, and more importantly “inculcates morality and nobleness of soul” (Dunlop 34). According to Bacon “[Fiction] raises the mind by accommodating the images of things to our desire and not, like history and reason, subjecting the mind to things” (Dunlop 33).

Fiction arises from the imagination of the writer and it is not always based on facts. The nature of fiction has been emphasized repeatedly from the time of Plato who declared that poetry was mimesis and twice removed from reality. Aristotle stressed on the importance of poetry by bringing the imaginative element to the center. Characters are portrayed not always ‘as they are’ but “the agents represented must be above our own level of goodness or beneath it” (Tilak 27), the poet endeavours to relate “not the thing that has happened, but a kind of thing that might happen, i.e. what is possible as being probable or necessary” (Tilak 32), that which has happened is the work of the historian. Aristotle gives a strong argument for the importance of fiction and its nature. He also advocates for the function of fiction with the theory of catharsis and the pleasure that a reader receives from observing accurate imitation of human actions. Fiction is therefore seen to inculcate a strong sense of empathy among its readers.

Mythology, folklore, legends and fables play a great role in fictional writing. The novels of today are an evolution of these forms of literature. In recent times, the term *Fiction* has now become synonymous with the word *novel*. This genre has been said to have its birth with Daniel Defoe, Richardson and Fielding. The term came to mean what it is today by the end of the eighteenth century when it was considered a deviation from the former “idealite poetique” or the more imaginary literature of earlier times, to the bland reality or “verite humaine” of the French (Watt 10). The genre has now come full circle, where sometimes realism may find no place except under the cloak of fantasy. The novel is different from earlier forms of fiction because it did not take its plot from mythology, history or legends. Its focus is on the individual and the perception of the individual rather than on the society and its culture (Watt 13-14).

According to Steven Moore, the novel dates back to the 4th century BCE with Xenophon’s *Cryopaedia*, along with Greek and Latin literature, novels in Sanskrit, *The Arabian Nights* and *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu among others (4). The early fictions included “rhetorical display, literary criticism, sociopolitical commentary, digressions... interpolated poems, stories within stories”, until the “Christian Dark Ages” when the novel lost its popularity. The Renaissance resurrected the novel once again with works like *Hyperotomachia Poliphili*, *Gargantua* and *Don Quixote* among others (Moore 5). During the eighteenth Century the genre was realistic and included works like Richardson’s *Pamela* and Henry Fielding’s *Tom Jones* and saw the works of Fanny Burney, Ann Radcliffe, Tobias Smollet, Laurence Sterne and others. The novel had once again taken root and was here to stay and evolve to what it is today.

In *Traditional Japanese Literature* (TJL), Japanese Literature is “defined in a number of different ways”, it could be the “literature written in the “Japanese” language usually in the writing system based on the Kana” (Shirane 11). This includes all writings of immigrants in countries like Brazil and the US and also all writings in Japanese by the Koreans and Taiwanese “during the period of Japanese occupation in the twentieth century” (Shirane TJL 11). The influence of Buddhism plays a great role in the social and religious shaping of the country. Buddhism was first introduced to Japan from India in the “Asuka” period through the “kingdom of Paekche on the Korean peninsula to the Yamato court” (Shirane TJL 18). India, China and Japan continue to be tied with this thread of Buddhism.

Buddhism - named after the teachings of Shakyamuni, the historical Buddha, who was born in India - was one of the principle vehicles of Chinese civilization, particularly of literature and architecture. In Japan Buddhism was first thought to cure diseases and prevent plagues and was adopted by the ruling Yamato lineage as a means of protecting the realm. But it eventually had a far more profound impact on shaping the Japanese state.” (Shirane TJL 18)

Japanese literature has been strongly influenced by China, its culture and literature. “During the Nara period, a state university was established, with Chinese as the official written language and focusing on the Confucian classics.” (Shirane TJL 19). “Chinese writing was first brought to the Japanese archipelago around the first century C.E. . . . It was not until the seventh century that Chinese writing began to be used widely for administration, religious and commercial purposes.” (Shirane TJL 20)

The early writings of Japanese literature are traced back to documentations of historical events as early as 682 A.D. In *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the*

Earliest Times to A.d. 697, Part 697, the *Kiujiki* is said to be the “first literary effort of the Japanese” (Aston x). “The need to make Chinese writings accessible to non-Chinese speakers led scribes in the Yamato courts from the archipelago and the continent to devise methods of reading Chinese script in Japanese” (Shirane TJJL 20). This gave rise to the development of new hybrid styles of writing that required knowledge of both the Chinese script and Japanese language. *Kiujiki* is an example of this, while *Nihon Shoki* is an example of the orthodox classical Chinese writing (Shirane TJJL 20). In *The History of Japanese Literature*, W. G. Aston claims that “What Greece and Rome have been to Europe, China has been to the nations of the Far East. Japan in particular, is very deeply indebted to it” (3).

The first logographic script of the Japanese is called the *kanji* script taken from the Chinese. It was later that the *kana* or the syllabic writing system evolved from *kanji* characters. Japanese script consists mainly of four types: *Kanji*, *Hiragana*, *Katakana* and *Romanji*. *Hiragana* is a cursive writing style, while *Katakana* is an angular script, both of which form the *kana* script. *Romanji* is the use of Roman characters to write the Japanese language (Akamatsu 481).

Japanese literature is divided into several periods; the most prominent of them are the Nara period, Heian period, Kamukara period, Marumachi period, Edo period, Meiji period and later the Post-War literature. The dates of these periods are approximate since scholars “have difficulty agreeing on the terminal times of the ages” (Miner 18) and some believe that the Yamato period may have been the starting point of Japanese literature but all knowledge of that period is vague and cannot be verified so the Nara period is recognized as the first from 645 to 793. The scribes and scholars dominated the early form of oral literature of Japan, while early writings of the Japanese is preserved in three main texts: *Kojiki* (History of the ages of Gods),

Nihon Shoki (Chronicles of cultural heroes) and the *Man'yōshū* (Collection of ten thousand leaves). They were mainly prose, which was interspersed with poetry. They were divided into episodes and are a witness to the introduction of a writing system. *Man'yōgana* is considered the “most cumbersome writing system ever devised” (Miner 19).

Kakinomoto Hitomaro is a noted poet of the Nara period having written more than 500 poems. Like most other literature, poetry seems to have had an early entrance and an advantage over other genres. “Lyrics defined what was literature” and there were “pro-dramatic elements” like dancing with hand gestures that were a precursor to Japanese drama (Miner 21). It is notable that all courtiers wrote verse and some distinguished poets of ancient literature include Yamake Akahito, Yamanoe Okura, Otomo Yakamochi. The famous tale of *Urashima Taro* is from the Nara period and is the first novel that includes time travel.

After the Nara period, Japanese literature witnessed a hiatus before the rapid developments of the Heian period that lasted from 794 to 1186 AD. The Emperors Daigo and Murakami represented the “golden years” (Miner 29). It was during the reign of Murakami that Murasaki Shikibu wrote the famous *Genji Monogatari* or *The Tale of Genji*. It is considered to be the first novel ever to be written (“Tale of Genji”). Some of the best Heian poetry was by women (Miner 42). During the Kamakura (1185-1333) and Muromachi (1392-1573) period, popular works were *Heiki Monogatari*, *Taketori Monogatari* *Hojoki* and the *Shin Kokin Wakashū*. The influence of Buddhism could be seen in some works.

According to *Early Modern Japanese Literature* (EMJL), the Edo period (1603 - 1867) that followed is also called the early modern period or the Tokugawa period. The transition from the medieval (thirteenth century) period to the early

modern era (sixteenth century) was very drastic “when literary and cultural paradigms gave birth to a whole new body of vernacular literature” (Shirane 1). The introduction of printing found a new market for traditional texts among “urban commoners (*chonin*)” by the middle of the seventeenth century. This was an era “where the country moved from war to peace and started on the path to economic and urban development that would be the mark of early modern society.” (Shirane EMJL 18). A rigid hierarchy, similar to the caste system of India could be seen in Japanese society of this era. The Society had samurais, farmers, artisans, and merchants in a descending order. “Below the four classes were outcastes called *eta* and *hinin* (nonpersons)” (Shirane EMJL 4). Women were not given a high position in society during the Edo period and “...the role of the wife was reduced to that of a protected lady with any power she might have had going entirely to the husband, who was the master of the house.” (Shirane EMJL 5). Women played an important role in the “licensed quarters” as courtesans. The “*tayu*”, the “*oiran*” and the “*geisha*” were the highest rank for a courtesan (Shirane EMJL 10). This period saw very few women writers when compared to the Heian period. Their presence was seen in poetry such as *Waka* and *Haikai* (EMJL 12).

Samurais lost their place in society and there was a rise of the working middle class. Japanese literature was subject to western influence and saw the birth of many genres. *Joruri* (story telling with chanted lines) and *Kabuki* (dance drama) were popular along with *Renga* (a form of collaborative poetry writing) and later *Haiku* (short poems in a single line of seventeen syllables). Chikamatsu Monzeamon was a great writer of this era. There was great ambition to succeed as literary figures during this period and the reason is seen in the words of Hosokawa Yusai:

As throughout the past,

So even now it has not changed

In this world of ours:

The seed engendered in the heart

Lasts after only in poetic words. (Miner 44)

The Meiji period (1868 to 1912) followed the Edo period during which translation saw great advancement.

. . . works as diverse as Aesop's Fables, Jean Jacques Rousseau's Social Contract, the Arabian Nights, and Jules Verne, the last decades of the nineteenth century saw hundreds of Western texts reincarnated into Japanese versions that fed an increasingly literate citizenry whose appetite for then-fashionable Western goods seemed insatiable.

(Miller 3)

Many new ideas were embraced as Japan opened up to the western world.

Romanticism, Transcendentalism, Naturalism and Neo-Realism were prevalent. Some renowned authors of the Meiji period include: Natsume Soseki, Kyoka Izumi, Mori Ogai, (who adapted Western novels and used many techniques of Western Literature) Ryunosuke Akutagawa, (who wrote historical stories) and others.

The World War II had a great impact on the literature of Japan. Literature once more began to flourish with the freedom of expression after a long and controlled silence during the war. Post-War literature had heavy nihilistic strains and the influence of existentialism:

The dull pain of nihilism and despair found in so many writers that came of age in the late 1950s has clouded the optimism expressed in the 1940s and early 1950s...the post war writers were motivated by

social issues, political activism and a sense of responsibility.

(Slaymaker 162)

Many new publishing companies opened up and serial novels and short stories were very popular, and several books were made into movies. Translations were extremely popular and western literature seemed to have immense influence on the literature of Japan. “The history of the early Meiji era is being repeated in the mad rush to import foreign books and ideas” (Yamagiwa 5). Popular fiction and pulp fiction began replacing the traditional writing forms; “...they begin to abandon the reading of belles-lettristic literature and start reading *taishu-shosetsu* or popular fiction” (Yamagiwa 7). Some schools of literature during the twentieth century were the Neo-Perceptionist School, the “Newly-arisen Aesthetic School” (Yamagiwa 9) also called the “Avante-garde Art Group” (Starrs 76), *shinko geijutsu ha*, and the *Shirakaba ha* or the White Birch School.

The Neo-perceptionist school is otherwise called *Shinkankaku ha* was started by Yasunari Kawabata and Yokomitsu Riichi in the 1920s. It was inspired by Dadaism and Surrealism and laid stress on the emotional and artistic importance of art instead of a scientific approach to it (Varley 299). Dadaism rose as a reaction against contemporary trends during World War I to mock at the meaninglessness of life at the time. The influence of Dadaism was strongly felt in the Neo-Perceptionist school. *Shinki geijutsu ha* was the Aesthetic School. Writers associated with this group tried to depict the urban culture of their time and shunned the use of art for political propaganda. Authors of the Aesthetic School include Abe Tomoji, Hori Tatsuo and Ozaki Shiro, among others. The *Shirakabaha* was the other name for the White Birch School, which was partly inspired by Tolstoy and was concerned with the trends of

Western Literature and society. It laid stress on “individualism and humanitarian idealism” (Yamagiwa 9).

It was in 1968 that Yasunari Kawabata won the Nobel Prize for Literature, the first time for a Japanese author. His novels had psychological depth and belonged to the “Neo-Perceptionist School” (Yamagiwa 9). The I-novel (*shishosetsu*) or a type of confessional literature gained popularity and “[It] requires the reader /critic to search for possible connections between the ‘real’ life of the author and the presented narrative worlds of the text” (Seats 32). Kenzaburo Oe was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in the year 1994 and was the second Japanese author to win the honour. Kenzaburo Oe, Kobo Abe, Shizoku Todo, Yokio Mishima, Haruki Murakami and Banana Yoshimoto are some of the popular writers of contemporary Japan. Their works concentrate on the loss of identity and the ennui of man. Haruki Murakami belongs to the post-war period and is one of the prominent figures of post-modern literature. He is greatly influenced by Truman Capote, Scott Fitzgerald and Dostoevsky among others.

Murakami was born in Kyoto Japan in 1949 to parents who taught Japanese literature. Although he was exposed to traditional Japanese literature at a young age, Murakami’s appetite for reading extended beyond Japanese works to World Literature. He was greatly influenced by authors like Dostoevsky, Dickens, Fitzgerald, Kurt Vonnegut, Richard Brautigan, Raymond Carver and others. He studied at Waseda University in Tokyo where he majored in Drama. He opened a jazz bar in Tokyo called ‘Peter Cat’ and ran it with his wife Yoko.

Murakami’s love for Jazz spills over onto his writing and can be seen even in the titles of his books. His love for cats can also be traced in his novels. Murakami graduated at the age of 26 in 1975. His interest in studying was replaced by his love

for music. He began his writing career in 1978 when he realized his calling during a baseball match. This led to his first book *Hear the Wind Sing* (1987), which he wrote after work hours at the Jazz bar. This was only the beginning of his magnificent career. Murakami moved to Europe in 1986 and later to America in 1991 where he worked at Princeton, New Jersey as an associate researcher and was later nominated as an Associate Professor at Princeton University. From there he moved to California and then back to Japan in 2001. Murakami guards his privacy. His writing blends genres and bends the mind to stretch the limits of human imagination.

Murakami's works include thirteen novels, short stories, essays, non-fiction and translated works of F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Irving, Raymond Carver, Tom O'Brien, Truman Capote and Paul Theroux among others. He is most known for his novels. His first novel *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979) is based on the student activist group of Zenkyoto and its destruction. It is the first book of *The Trilogy of the Rat*, the second being *Pinball, 1973* (1980) and the last book *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982). These three books are about a male protagonist (not named) who deals with emptiness in his life and the friendship he shares with the Rat.

Hard-Boiled Wonderland and The End of the World (1991) comprises a parallel narrative; one is of a high-tech human data processor and the other of a narrator in a post nuclear dystopia, who is cut off from all civilization. The narratives converge at the end of the novel.

Norwegian Wood (2000) is a novel where the protagonist reminisces over his student days. It is a novel that deviates from the original style that Murakami writes in, without the force of magical realism to propel the plot.

Dance Dance Dance (1998) revolves around a writer who is forced to solve a murder mystery. The novel reads like a sequel to *Wild Sheep Chase*, where the

protagonist is forced to return to the Dolphin hotel, which is renovated and meets a clairvoyant thirteen year old, a receptionist, along with his old school friend. The protagonist tries to solve the murder of a call girl with whom he had been acquainted.

South of the Border West of the Sun (1992) is about Hajime, the protagonist, who meets his childhood friend and is torn apart by his need to chose between his family and what might have been with his long lost friend.

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicles (1997) deals with Toru the protagonist whose wife leaves him and his cat runs away. In an attempt to find the cat, Toru comes across a chain of events that give a different take on everyday mundane life. He meets a medium, a war veteran, a school dropout and a mother and son. The tale takes the readers through empty well, alleys without entrances or exits and other surreal elements.

Sputnik Sweethearts (1999) is about an author, Sumire, who falls in love with an older woman. The novel features a lesbian relationship. Her friendship with the character K causes him to go in search of Sumire when she is missing. The possibility of other worlds is explored until the return of Sumire.

Kafka on the Shore (2002) depicts two narrative; one of a fifteen year old boy Kafka, who runs away from home fearing an Oedipal prophecy and the other of a mentally challenged person who has a rare ability to find cats. The two narratives are seen to come together as the plot unravels.

After Dark (2004), showcases the events of a single night in the lives of a group of people. It borders between reality and dreaming. The novel captures the essence of Tokyo's nightlife and the alienation in people, which is a recurring theme in Murakami's works.

1Q84 (2009) is about a woman mercenary killer who avenges criminals and about a young writer and her editor Toru, who publish a book and the scandal that revolves around the publication.

Colourless Tsukuru Tazaki and his Years of Pilgrimage (2014) is Murakami's latest novel, which is about Tsukuru who is suddenly abandoned by his four friends and his search for the past. The protagonist is imprisoned by his past and his need to confront his friends with the help of his girlfriend.

Murakami's graphic novel *The Strange Library* (2014) is about a little boy who wanders into a library and is imprisoned by the librarian who is waiting to eat his brains after it is crammed with knowledge. The boy meets the Sheep Man, a bird and a girl, who help him escape.

In 1979, Murakami won the Gunzo New Writer Award for *Hear the Wind Sing*. In 1982, he was given the Noma Literary Award for New Writers for the book *A Wild Sheep Chase*. Later in 1985, he received the Junichi Tanizaki Award for *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*. In 1996, he was given the Yomiuri Literary Award for *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*. The Czech Republic awarded the Franz Kafka Prize for the novel *Kafka on the Shore* in 2006. He has received an honorary doctorate from Princeton University and from the University of Liege. In 2006 Murakami was the recipient of the Frank O' Connor International Short Story Award for his collection *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman*. It is the biggest prize awarded to short stories at 35000 Euros. He received the Jerusalem Peace Prize in the midst of protest in 2009 for his contribution to literature that focuses on the freedom of the individual spirit. Murakami was granted the Order of Arts and Letters from Spain in 2009. In 2014 he was awarded the *Welt-Literaturpreis* and the Danish Hans Christian Andersen Literature award in 2015.

Although Murakami is fluent in English, all his works are in Japanese. Despite the fact that he has translated a lot of works into English, he has not translated his own works. His translators are Alfred Birnbaum, Philip Gabriel and Jay Rubin who have translated most of his works. Birnbaum is an American citizen who has lived in Japan for many years. He has translated the early novels of Murakami. Gabriel is an Associate Professor of Japanese Literature in the University of Arizona and Rubin is a Professor of Japanese Literature at Harvard. He has written the biography of Murakami: *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words* (2002). Other translators are Hideo Levy and Theodore W. Goossen.

Murakami's novels are often described as pulp fiction, pop fiction, science fiction, detective story, metaphysical fiction, post-modern manifesto and even philosophical fiction. The novels mystify the reader so that he or she willingly suspends disbelief to enter the world of Murakami to view a different take on the mysterious and the mundane.

This dissertation deals with four novels of Murakami: *Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (HBEW), *Kafka on the Shore* (KS), *Wild Sheep Chase* (WSC), and *Dance Dance Dance* (DDD). These four novels have been chosen over the others since the theme of multiple identities is very prominent and the use of techniques is similar in these novels.

Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World is a spellbinding novel that often threatens to surpass the boundaries of perception. The story revolves around a protagonist who is not given a name. He works as a 'Calcutec', who is a human data processor. The program inserted into his brain malfunctions killing the other Calcutecs and leaving him to be the last one who will soon meet the same end.

The story alternates between two worlds of the central character: one is his physical world, the “Hard-boiled Wonderland” (HB), where he has a day job, with the occasional girlfriend and material comforts; and the other, “End of the World” (EW) is his inner world that his subconscious has created as a result of stress from technology. It is a world devoid of material comforts and exposed to nature. It assumes metaphysical proportions, where every element of the inner world is symbolic of the identity of the character. The shadow is cut off from the body and left to perish. The people live alongside unicorns and the protagonist works as a Dreamreader in the library, where unicorn skulls are stored.

The novel throws light on the importance of an individual and his urge to conform to a system that may not always benefit the individual. Murakami separates the mind into different levels of consciousness and bares them to his readers. He delineates the perception of self from within and from without the character.

Kafka on the Shore was first published in 2002 in Japanese as *Umibe no Kafuka* and was published in its translation in English in 2005. The story, a parallel narrative, is about a fifteen year old boy called Kafka, who runs away from home and another of an old man called Nakata, who is mentally handicapped owing to an accident during the war. The odd chapters describe the incidents that happen to Kafka, while the even chapters describe the tale of Nakata. It has been prophesied that Kafka Tamura will murder his father and be intimate with both his mother and sister. Although his mother and sister have left their home, the boy leaves fearing that he will kill his father according to the Oedipal prophecy. He soon finds that his father has been murdered and feels responsible for it even though he is physically incapable of the crime due to proximity. He is able to remain hidden with the help of the

librarian Oshima. The journey of the young boy appears to be more of a search for his missing kin rather than distancing himself from his father.

The parallel narrative reveals the life of Nakata, who is mentally affected due to experiments during World War II. He has the ability to talk to cats but is unable to read or write. He has no friends or any other relations. He lives on the subsidy from the government and finds missing cats for their owners. His simple and organized life is changed overnight with a bizarre murder that he is forced to commit. He flees from Nakano ward in Tokyo and finds that he is drawn towards Takamatsu. The novel ends with the death of Nakata and the return of Kafka to his home.

The novel brings out the conflict between the role of fate and the power of free will. The novel is a coming-of-age revelation of a young boy and his search for identity even as he tries to escape his destiny. The double narrative juxtaposes two very different characters that seem to fit into a single puzzle.

A Wild Sheep is the final part of the Rat trilogy, but reads very well independent of the prequels, which have not been published outside of Japan. The story details a narrator, who is forced to go looking for a sheep in a photograph. Nothing else is known about the sheep, which is of a very rare breed that has never been in Japan. It is said to have a star shaped stain on its back. The narrator does not reveal that it was his friend, the Rat, who took the picture and is willing to take the journey to a place he does not know. His psychic girlfriend, who has magical ears is his willing companion in the journey and they finally make it to the destination only to find that the Rat is missing. Later the narrator meets the Rat, who is dead and learns about the sheep with the star that entered him and how the Rat killed the sheep by hanging himself. The novel is a struggle against oppressive authority and the loss of one's identity.

Dance Dance Dance reads like a sequel to *WSC* and it has some of the same characters that *WSC* has. The narrator is the same person and the author maintains the same time frame that exists between the publications of the books. They are set four years apart. The narrator makes the same journey that he made in *WSC*, this time in answer to a voice he hears from the Dolphin Hotel in which he stayed in *WSC*. Only this time the Dolphin Hotel has been transformed into a modern building and retained the name only so that the narrator may find his way back. He finds the same Sheep Man hiding on the sixteenth floor of the hotel. He meets more people in his search for Kiki who has been calling out for him through his dreams. The novel ends when he falls in love with Yumiyoshi.

The identity of a person and the perception of oneself in society are extremely important in order to live in harmony as an individual and a social being. The protagonists in each of the novels undertake this voyage of self-discovery and make difficult choices and sacrifices in realizing their true identities.

According to John Locke, identities are greatly shaped by experiences and their memories. He claims that personal identity is “a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking...” (225). The social identity theory of Hogg defines social identity as “the individual’s knowledge that he belongs to a certain social group together with some emotional value to him of this group membership” (Hogg 113). The different identities, both individual and social, that coexist in the protagonist are illuminated by the use of certain techniques throughout the novels.

Anton Chekhov stresses the importance of technique: “Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass” (Willobee 92). Murakami’s

writing employs myriad techniques in weaving a fantastic phenomenon with which many readers willingly identify. Techniques therefore play a vital role in exposing the identities of his characters. Mark Schorer defines technique: “The difference between content, or experience, and achieved content, or art, is technique” (249). He stresses the importance of techniques in telling a tale:

... technique is the only means he has of discovering, exploring, developing his subject, conveying its meaning, and finally, of evaluating it. And surely it follows that certain techniques are sharper tools than others, and will discover more; that the writer capable of the most exacting technical scrutiny of his subject matter, will produce works with the most satisfying content, works with thickness and resonance, works which reverberate, works with maximum meaning.
(Schorer 250)

Schorer may well have been speaking of Murakami when he penned the words since Murakami’s skillful use of techniques causes his novels to “reverberate” with “maximum meaning”. Schorer points out the importance of seeing form and content as one. The author can control the effect that a situation has on the readers if he can manipulate the techniques well. This gives the writer great control over the different kinds of meaning he wishes to impart to his audience:

...while [technique] puts its hard light on our environment, it penetrates with sharp weapons, the depth of our bewilderment. These are not two things, but only adequate technique can show them as one. In a realist like Farrell, we have environment only which we know from the newspapers; in a subjectivist like Wolfe, we have the bewilderment only, which we record in our own diaries and letters. But

the true novelist gives them to us together, and thereby increases the effects of each, and reveals each in his full significance. (265)

Techniques that are explored in the select novels in this thesis include symbols, monologues, interior monologues, dialogues, narrative modes, juxtaposition, simulacra, defamiliarization, magical realism and dreams.

Murakami brings his novels to the readers from the minds of his protagonist. He has an uncanny way of exploring the world of the protagonist from within his mind and allowing the readers a “glimpse into the unfathomed” abysses of the mind (Jung 178). Murakami may well be placed in the Jungian “visionary” mode of artistic creation. His works are aptly described by the words of Jung. Murakami’s writings often remind the reader of “dreams, night-time fears and the dark recesses of the mind that we sometimes sense with misgiving”. The readers are “astonished, taken aback, confused, put on our guard or even disgusted” (Jung 179).

This research recognizes that creativity and skill are two critical tools of creative writing. Creativity is aided through perception and the analysis of it. Writing to a large extent is a psychological process as it is intellectual. There are many instances where the work of art may mean more than what the author intended. Roland Barthes brings out the role of the author as a ‘medium’ for art to reach the multitudes in *The Death of the Author*. Barthes asserts that the process of writing is not to decipher a single end, but it is the “entrusting to the hand the responsibility of writing as fast as possible what the head itself ignores (this was automatic writing), by accepting the principle and the experience of a collective writing” (166). Art, to a large extent is an unconscious process. The use of symbols and archetypes may vouch for this. The psychological approach to literature is therefore very important in order to interpret any work of art.

Good writing cannot stop with creativity but should also be a product of a good critical sense on the part of the author. The skill in writing a novel accounts for a large part of the popularity of the novel. The dexterity of an author in crafting his work is seen in his use of techniques. A novel is a reflection of its society, not only at the point of its creation but also of all its histories and its future. The chosen novels serve as a reflection of the human identity and ask the most often asked question “Who am I?” Literature is a reading into the minds of not only the protagonist but of its readers. This research examines the convergence of creativity and skill in the chosen novels of Murakami that allow the reader to look at the psychological process of the protagonist in their quest for identity through the sagacious use of techniques.

This research proposes to examine *why* certain events take place rather than *what* takes place. This allows for the psychological approach to Murakami. It proposes to explore the philosophical question of *who* we are, which traces the search for identity and the realization of the protagonist. It also proposes to analyze *how* the author allows the events to take place, which would account for the use of techniques. Murakami’s novels are unique in their unconventional narrative and intimate voice of the characters, since the readers are moved by the characters that seem to confide in them and are lured into the plot to be an accomplice as the story unravels. The power of capturing the readers’ trust and conviction even in bizarre situations is a talent that Murakami flaunts. This ability is possibly hidden in the techniques that Murakami employs to make his narrative a plausible event.

The novels that are analysed in this dissertation have psychological undertones that bring out many unspoken ideas that the author implicitly projects onto the readers. The novels have psychological nuances that can be detected even though the author does not focus his narrative around it.

Freud and Jung were the pioneers in psychology who have often connected art and literature to psychology. Freud gave the world the psychological vocabulary that is in use today. According to Freud, the mind is divided into the conscious and the unconscious. The conscious is the part of the mind that has easy access to memories and thoughts, while the unconscious is beyond the voluntary control of the person. This was a “major step in psychoanalysis” (De Berg 5). The conscious and the unconscious are not a place in the human body but it is a process that is always active and in motion and has a continuous influence on the person (De Berg 5).

Freud also gave the terminology of Id, Ego and Superego to psychoanalysis. According to him, the mind is divided into id, ego and superego. The id is the “lustful, aggressive” part of the personality, which Freud called the sexual hub (De Berg 50). All “libidinal” urges or the life energy originate in the id. These urges are “constantly pushing for satisfaction” and since they are not always suitable to be acted out in society, they are “constantly being pushed back” (De Berg 50).

The superego is made up of the “norms, values and ideals” that an individual aspires for. They are the ultimate moral ideal that society expects from the individual. The superego is as stubborn as the id, as it pushes “for ethical perfection in the same uncompromising manner as the id pushes for erotic pleasure” and for “immediate satisfaction” (De Berg 50).

With the id and the superego on the extremes, it is the ego that negotiates for the expression of the two. It is the ego that encounters both the id and the superego and tries to achieve a balance between the two. The ego is therefore equipped with the “realistic problem-solving methods” and “the methods that deny, falsify and distort reality” (De Berg 51). The functions of the ego are unconscious and the individual is quite unaware of how the ego works.

The theory of defense mechanism is a contribution of Sigmund Freud from whose shoulders other theories are built. When the ego is unable to tackle the unyielding pleasure of the id as opposed to the demands of the super ego, there arises anxiety in the mind. In order to resolve this anxiety, the ego uses “defense mechanisms”. “Freud gave the name *defense mechanisms*” (Kahn 122). The defense mechanisms are called into play when a conflict arises between the individual desires and social constraints. Dr. George Vaillant’s research on defense mechanism and its classification is a great contribution to the in-depth study of defense mechanism in Psychology.

The use of Dr. Vaillant’s study allows for the researcher to analyse the characters of the selected novels. In each of the novels the society or “the system” limits the impulses of the individual. The role of the society in the life of the protagonist plays a very crucial part in the development of the characters as well as the plot of the novels. Murakami is a champion of the individual.

The select novels are studied in their translation. The chosen novels have been best sellers in over twenty languages in their translation (Chozick 71) and Murakami is greatly appreciated by many, all over the world, who have read his work only in translation. As a translator himself, he shares a close relationship with his translators and the English translations of his novels have won his approval and confidence. Only three translators have translated the major works of Murakami in English: Philip Gabriel, Alfred Birnbaum, and Jay Rubin. The problems of cultural differences in Murakami may be considered close to non-existent since his writing is considered to be “liminal, as existing in a gulf between cultures” and that Murakami “may represent a new cultural plurality that cannot be easily fit into common historical conceptions of national identity or literary canons” (Chozick 65). His themes are not

hampered or distorted due to translation since they do not discuss any particular kind of ethnicity, nationality, indigenous system, religion or geography. His characters are not uniquely Japanese. As Chozick points out: the skin color is not mentioned in his novels; he discusses phenomenon like baseball, which everyone can connect with; he defamiliarizes and appropriates culture to neutralize his work from leaning toward any cultural tones (67-72). This testifies to the thirst that his readers have for his fiction even in translation. Although the chosen novels have been read in translation, the problems and challenges of translation of Murakami are not taken into consideration, as they are not the focus of this thesis.

The **objectives** of the research are to analyse the four novels and highlight the struggles that the individual faces due to its forced conformity to society from a psychological perspective and to trace the effect of social pressure on individual identities. The study aims to examine the concept of identity in each of the protagonists. In order to examine the struggle between the individual expression and social acceptance, the researcher **aims**:

- i) To identify the conflict that arises in the protagonist due to a social impetus
- ii) To investigate the psychological impact on the characters
- iii) To examine the defense mechanisms used by the protagonists as a temporary means to cope with his situation
- iv) To analyse the enigma of identity: the individual identity and the social identity
- v) To study the realization of the predicament
- vi) To discover the choice that the protagonist makes to assume an identity
- vii) To explore the techniques used by the author to bring out the theme in his novels.

The researcher has greatly benefitted from the **review of literature**. A few books and research articles that have influenced the researcher are mentioned here. *Haruki*

Murakami and the Music of Words (2002) by Jay Rubin, which is a biography of Murakami, gave many deep insights into Haruki Murakami's personal life. Murakami is a reclusive writer and Jay Rubin has served to quench the curiosity of Murakami's fans. *Haruki Murakami and the Music of Words* has helped the researcher to identify autobiographical elements in the novels of Murakami. As Murakami's translator, Rubin has used interviews conducted with the author and his observations of the author to give a more intimate view of the solitary writer.

Murakami Haruki: The Simulacrum in Contemporary Japanese Culture by Michael Robert Seats is another such book, which has helped the researcher to understand the novels of Murakami in relation to contemporary Japanese culture. It lays stress on how the media reflects the current Japanese culture and modernity and delineates how Murakami's works function as a critique of the technology ridden culture of Japan. Although Murakami's works do not have any direct cultural references, the characters themselves are a reflection of the modernisation of Japan, which is clearly brought out by Seats.

Ego Mechanisms of Defense: A Guide for Clinicians and Researchers (1992) by George E. Vaillant has helped the researcher with the psychological approach to the characters of the novels. Vaillant's theory has allowed for deeper understanding of psycho-social behaviour, which has been applied to understand the characters' psychological response to the society. Each character under study in Murakami's novel is a representation of human nature. *Adaptation to Life* (1998) by George E. Vaillant has allowed the researcher to understand various defense mechanisms and the categories to which they belong. Vaillant explains how these defense mechanisms are at work due to conflict between the individual desire and socially acceptable norms.

The researcher has also greatly benefitted from John Locke's essay *Of Identity and Diversity*, which is a part of his work *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), which has allowed the researcher to include the philosophical aspect of the research, which delves into the identities of the characters. The idea of social identity and personal identity have helped the researcher to identify some of their aspects in the select novels.

Mark Shorer's *Technique as Discovery* has greatly helped the researcher to substantiate the importance of techniques in bringing out the themes in the novels. The use of techniques, as not just decorations, but as a vehicle to portray the nuances of meanings in literature is elucidated. It has enabled the researcher, as an authority in the study of techniques, to explore how techniques play a crucial role in understanding and interpreting the work of art.

Matthew C. Strecher's *Magical Realism and the Search for Identity in the Fiction of Murakami Haruki* (1999) has dealt with the technique of magical realism and individual identity. It has allowed the researcher to gain insights into the role of magical realism in Murakami's novels.

Haruki Muraki: Challenging Authors (2016) edited by Matthew C. Strecher and Paul L. Thomas, is a part of the *Critical Literacy Teaching Series: Challenging Authors and Genres*. It has been a great resource for the research in understanding and interpreting cosmopolitanism and the idea of globalisation in Murakim's works. A collection of essays, it gives a deep analysis and examination of what Murakami could mean to contemporary readers. It elucidates the impact of the novels on the writers as well as the intentions of the author.

The **methodology** followed by the researcher includes an analysis of the techniques used in the novels along with the psychological approach. Secondary

sources were reviewed through the University libraries like that of The British Council, Case Western Reserve University, Bharathiar University and American College Madurai, for using information sources like abstracts, dissertations, academic papers and reviews along with electronic resources such as UGC-inflibnet's N-LIST project, JSTOR, Project Gutenberg and ProQuest. The researcher attempted to contact the novelist through Vintage Books and is still awaiting his reply. The Wall Street Journal calls him the "reclusive author, who seldom talks to the media" (Hongo), which stands true of the author, who is not easy to get in touch with. To overcome this setback, sources such as interviews, documentaries, speeches, Facebook and Twitter have been extremely helpful in gathering more information about the author and his ideology. The researcher has followed the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Paper* seventh edition.

The **hypothesis** of this research is that if a person is able to find a balance between one's individual identity and social identity, only then can that person find harmony. If the individual identity dominates over the social identity, then the person is often an outcast or is extremely troubled. Similarly if the social identity dominates over the individual identity, then the person gradually ceases to live and begins to simply survive without aspirations. Therefore only if a person is able to strike that fine balance between individual and social identity can he live in harmony.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the Introduction, where the history of Japanese Literature is traced and Murakami's place in contemporary Japan is established. The aims and objectives of the study, the review of literature, the hypothesis, the methodology and the scope of the thesis are formulated. The second chapter is entitled 'The Conflict', the third chapter is entitled

‘The Psyche’, the fourth chapter is entitled ‘The Identity’ and chapter five is the ‘Summation’.

The following chapter entitled ‘The Conflict’ investigates into the conflict that is present in each of the protagonists. The social background of each novel is delineated and the problem that the protagonist faces due to some stimulus is seen. The chapter will recognize the elements of society that instigated the conflict between individual desire and socially accepted norms and subsequently the interference of the defense mechanisms. The chapter will focus on symbols, dialogues, monologues and interior monologues to show how these techniques highlight the conflict of the protagonist.

Chapter III entitled ‘The Psyche’ traces the psychological aspects in the select novels highlighting the play of defense mechanisms in the characters. The researcher also endeavors to bring out the various defense mechanisms that the psyche of the character employs in the novels under study, and examine how they help the character to adapt to his society. The psychological theory of Dr. George Vaillant is used to analyze the psyche of the characters. Techniques like narrative mode, juxtaposition, defamiliarization, technoculture and simulacra are studied to show how they discover the defense mechanisms and thereby the psyche of the protagonists.

Chapter IV entitled ‘The Identity’ focuses on the enigma of identity and the struggle to realize the true predicament of identity that lies within the protagonists and not outside of them. The researcher proposes to identify the individual identity of the protagonist in the novel as well as the social identity of the protagonist, which leads to the realization of the conflict among the identities. The choices and sacrifices that the protagonists make to assume an identity are analyzed. Techniques like magical realism and dreams are identified through which the identities are discovered. The

realization of the predicament and choosing one's destination is the focus of this chapter, which is brought out with the help of the mentioned techniques.

Chapter V is the summation that gives a condensed view of the thesis, highlighting the tone and style of Murakami's writing. It delineates the areas of focus and its findings in the chosen novels and connects the search for identity in the select novels to the hypothesis of the thesis. It also gives the limitations of the study and further scope for research in the novels of Murakami.

The next chapter enquires into the predicament that the protagonists of the select novels face due to a social stimulus that does not allow them to be comfortable with their surroundings.