The Influence of the Structure and Form of Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction on Selected Novels of Murakami Haruki

Submitted by

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Abstract

The Influence of the Structure and Form of Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction on Selected Novels of Murakami Haruki

Haruki Murakami is a contemporary Japanese writer of fiction and non-fiction whose texts reveal an uneasy dialogue with capitalism and consumerism. The novels, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Dance, Dance, Dance*, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, and *Kafka on the Shore*, most especially illustrate Murakami's experiments with the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. These early novels are well known for their use of a detached, flat, central character (the *boku*), understood widely as Murakami's expression of postmodern alienation. However, this narrator also resembles the typical hard-boiled private eye protagonist. Murakami's plots often depart from the familiar investigation of a murder and, instead, incorporate elements of the fantastic, as well as lengthy digressions into the *boku*'s thoughts on food, books, and Japan's military history; such digressions call attention to a deeper commentary. In this way, the texts engage in a social critique of contemporary Japan, giving the narratives a deliberate critical comment. Social commentary is not new to hard-boiled private eye fiction, but Murakami's unique development of the form has not yet been analysed; and thus, this thesis hopes to make a useful contribution.

The novels also hint at themes of Japanese identity, attitudes to work, commodification in advanced-capitalist societies, the complexities of memory, and the reclaiming of historical accounts of Japan's military past. This thesis will examine how Murakami's experimentation with the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction has influenced the content of these themes across the selected novels. By considering how and why Murakami both appropriates and departs from the conventions of hard-boiled private eye fiction, a deeper understanding of his texts may be gained.
Statement of Authorship

"Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

The thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree of diploma in any other tertiary institution."

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My parents and brothers in Ireland, and my sister in Britain have always given me love and support throughout my life, for which I am grateful. Finally, thanks always to Flor.
Note to the Reader

Throughout the text, Japanese names are generally given with the surname first, followed by the personal name. This is the order that is customary in Japan; hence, Murakami Haruki. For authors using pen names, the name by which they are best known has been used in the text; thus, Edogawa Ranpo is referred to as Ranpo, Kuroiwa Ruikō is Ruikō, and Natsume Sōseki is Sōseki. The names of Murakami’s characters follow the English translations.

For long vowels in Japanese names and terms, a macron has been used (shōsetsu). Most Japanese words have been written in italics (tantei shōsetsu), with an English translation provided in the text. In the case of such commonly used terms as Taisho, Showa and Tokyo, the macron has been omitted.

Where it is important in the text, the original date of publication is given, followed by the more recent edition that has been used for reference. In the case of Murakami’s novels, the first date given in parenthesis is the date of original publication, followed by the date of the first English translation; hence, Dance, Dance, Dance (1988; 1994).

The following abbreviations have been used for the novels of Murakami Haruki:

A Wild Sheep Chase (WSC)
Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World (HBW&EW)
Dance, Dance, Dance (DDD)
The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (WBC)
Kafka on the Shore (KOS)
Chapter One
Introduction: Problems of Identification

This study discusses the novels of Murakami Haruki published in English, which exploit the form and structure of hard-boiled private eye fiction. It is, of course, a sad limitation to be working with translations and not the original Japanese texts. It is, perhaps, an even greater limitation not to have access to secondary material written in Japanese. Any familiarity with the importance of language as a conveyor of information and culture recognizes the need to acknowledge the deficiencies of this lack of language skills. However, the corpus of work in English provides sufficient material for its own study, within these limitations. Murikami’s international reception validates critical enquiry into his work, and neither lack of language skills, nor lack of translations, is sufficient reason to neglect critical research. This thesis is a preliminary for future critics better suited to discuss Murakami texts, critical responses, and interviews originally written in Japanese.

Among the issues discussed by Japanese critics of Murakami, which have crossed into the criticism written in English, is the problemization of identity in Murakami’s texts. The protagonist in the first three novels, *Hear the Wind Sing*, *Pinball, 1973*, and *A Wild Sheep Chase*, is given no name and this gave rise to much critical commentary. Since many of Murakami’s novels are written from the point of view of a nameless central consciousness, the unnamed protagonist has been referred to as “the boku” in English language literary criticism; and, this thesis will continue that practice. Japanese criticism of the nuances of the choice of that particular pronoun has provided material for comment by critics in English, (most prominent are Strecher, Suter, Murakami, and Seats). The discourse on identity and the choice of pronouns provides an interesting introduction to the three contexts that this thesis will discuss: the context of Japan, the context of hard-boiled, "tough guy" crime fiction, and the context of five of Murakami’s novels (*A Wild Sheep Chase* (WSC); *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (HBW&EW); *Dance, Dance, Dance* (DDD); *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (WBC); and *Kafka on the Shore* (KOS)). These novels provide the most interesting examples of the development of Murakami’s early reliance on the structure and form of hard-boiled crime novels, towards a lessening of that reliance, and an opening towards other thematic interests and other, more generalized, novel structures.

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1 The italicized abbreviations will be used throughout to refer to the respective novels.
I. Naming the Pronouns

The Japanese language has no single pronoun for the English language's first person pronoun "I." Most often pronouns are not used in speaking or writing in Japanese. However, when it is necessary for clarity of meaning, a pronoun may be used. There are many Japanese pronouns that can be used and the choice depends on the context. There are two Japanese pronouns of interest to readers of Murakami Haruki among the possible seven more common Japanese pronouns that correlate to the English first person pronoun: 私 watashi and 僕 boku. Neither is especially honoured with a capital letter when transcribed using the Roman alphabet. The first, watashi, is considered appropriate for a more formal use than the second, more familiar, boku; although boku is also considered polite usage. Boku is traditionally male gendered. In Japanese literature these two pronouns have been politicized. Postmodern culture has challenged the distinction between high culture and popular culture, and in Japan the distinction between writers' use of watashi or boku has been taken as a marker to differentiate the author as aspiring to either high culture or popular culture. The formal, interiorized watashi has been associated with the bundan-acclaimed introspective novels (I-novels) which sensitively explore the narrator's feelings, inner dialogues and reasoning. However, Murakami's use of the slightly less formal, and non-internalized boku has challenged this association. Kawakami has remarked on "the elusive nature of Murakami's work, which has evaded easy categorization as either junbunkaku ... (pure/high literature) or taishū bungaku ... (popular literature)" (309) and Susan J. Napier writes of Murakami's "straddling of the gap between pure and popular" (The Fantastic 207). This opposition between high culture and popular culture has been more than an aesthetic issue in Japanese literature. Critics and writers as influential as Karatani Köjin, Miyoshi Masao, and Ōe Kenzaburō have all linked the interiority of the confessional I-novel to a necessary formation of a Japanese ethic rooted in historical consciousness. The writer, then, has a social responsibility to contribute to the formation of the national identity and to uphold the ethical self. Miyoshi Masao goes further, "The 'I-novel' is thus not just one genre among many, but the essential pattern of Japanese prose fiction..." (xii). Murakami Haruki's almost exclusive use of the pronoun boku for the central consciousness of his narrator has been an external marker of his challenge to the Japanese literary bundan

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2 See Lippit, Reality and Fiction 1-38 for an overview of the style of the Japanese I-novel.
3 See Karatani Köjin, "The Discovery of Landscape" Origins 11-44; Hirata Hosea gives a good overview of Karatani's essay on Murakami (44-7; 71-91), as does Suter (55-7); see also Murakami Fuminobu (136-63); Miyoshi Masao, Off Center; and Ōe Kenzaburō, "Japan's Dual Identity: A Writer's Dilemma" Japan, the Ambiguous, and Myself (57-104).
(the literary establishment), announcing that he aimed to write a new type of novel, different from the I-novels (shishōsetsu) of his more immediate predecessors: "he criticizes the idea of literature as self-expression (jiko hyōgen), and his work presents a new and unique approach to the problem of the subject" (Suter 27). His use of the boku pronoun was seen as a linguistic stylism that marked his fundamental break with Japanese literary tradition. Kawakami argues that, "Murakami's work declares the end of the effectiveness of the 'serious,' leftist paradigm espoused by postwar junbungaku, which takes as its axiom the writer's discursive practice of social struggle" (310).

II. The Importance of Names

Murakami's earliest novels, *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979, 1987), and *Pinball, 1973* (1980, 1985), first established his hallmark use of the pronoun boku, and he continued with its use in the next novel of this trilogy, *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982, 1989). In case there were any Japanese readers who had failed to notice his use of this first-person pronoun, Murakami's next novel *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1985, 1991) played with both pronouns watashi and boku for the alternating narrators. The use of boku was further underlined by Murakami's avoidance of traditional names for the characters of his novels. Instead, the characters are designated by non-names. In the early trilogy, the boku narrator is given no name. The narrator's girlfriend in *Pinball, 1973* is named Naoko, but she is one of the few female characters who have a name. The narrator's wife and his girlfriends are not named in *A Wild Sheep Chase*. The narrator's best friend is named Rat, and the bar that they frequent is owned by the Chinaman J. In *A Wild Sheep Chase*, there are characters with non-names which describe a work function (the partner, the chauffeur, the girl-who-would-sleep-with-anyone), animal names (the Rat, the Sheep), a title (the Boss), clothing (the black-suited secretary, also called the secretary), or non-named fantastic characters (the Sheep Man). Then, as critics engaged in discussing the merits of Murakami's idiosyncratic use of pronouns and his avoidance of names, Murakami published *Norwegian Wood* (1987, 2000), in which he departed from his trademark and named his protagonist Toru Watanabe, and re-used the female name Naoko. Most of the minor characters are also given conventional names. However, the following year Murakami returned to his usual

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4 Suter summarizes the Japanese response to Murakami, 47-61.
5 The first date is the original Japanese date of publication; the second is the date of the first English translation.
6 For a sample of critics who discuss the lack of names and the introduction of names in Murakami's work, see Elizabeth Carter's article, "Namelessness in Haruki Murakami's *A Wild Sheep Chase*;" see also, Hirata (55-91); Iwamoto; Strecher (78-9; 106-08); Suter (110-11; 166; 170); and Seats (203-10).
practice of avoiding names in *Dance, Dance, Dance* (1988, 1994) and continued the story of the *boku* from the earlier trilogy – although he does now name the *boku*’s girlfriend (drawing attention to the fact that he is naming her; and the name Kiki is written in Katakana, suggesting a foreign quality to her name); and he also gives names to the other major characters. In *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1995, 1997), the protagonist is again named, Toru Okada, and his missing wife is also named, Kumiko, as are all major characters. However, Hirata Hosea notes that the name order is given in the English sequence with the family name given second (63-64). The novel *Kafka on the Shore* (2002, 2005) is also full of named characters, including named cats. By playing with the trope of character names, it is as if Murakami did not wish to be predictable. Whatever his intention, he has certainly succeeded in attracting critical attention to the purpose of names.

Murakami’s use of the pronoun *boku* and his lack of character names gave rise to critical reflections on the meaninglessness of life following the collapse of Japanese social radicalism during the 1960s and 1970s, and on alienation in postmodern Japan, as well as on the loss of identity in Japan’s affluent decade of 1980s’ rapid economic growth. Murakami’s play with language was variously interpreted while he himself remained silent, giving only ambiguous responses regarding his purpose. (Michael Seats politely notes that “there is a sense of contradiction in some of Murakami’s claims” (xi)). Ironically, Murakami himself is a translator. Favouring the translation of American authors into Japanese, Murakami has proven his comprehension of the English language and the subtleties of language itself, yet, he employs others to translate his Japanese into the variously-styled English (and other languages). In a twist that goes beyond irony, Murakami described how he experimented when writing his first novel. To achieve the "sound" he wanted, he turned from the Japanese that he had been using and wrote in American-English and then translated himself into the unique Japanese language style for which he is famous ("A Long Way from the Stuffed Cabbage"). It is this mix of what has been termed Americanized Japanese that he then requires another person (Birnbaum, Rubin, or Gabriel) to translate back into English. Thus, the very language of Murakami’s works is multi-layered and draws attention to his style. The negotiation with language and languages does more than announce Murakami’s internationality; it throws into question the authenticity of the original. Seats refers to the "evidence of prescribed 'complicity' in matters of style" (198). The very language and style of Murakami is problematized. Far beyond the quibble that he is an Americanized-Japanese and thus either copies the Americans and so denigrates his own unique Japanese culture, or copies the Americans and so globalizes the very notion of culture, Murakami also highlights
the binary of copy/original and its various applications to genre, style, language, subjectivity, culture, and nation. Murakami fundamentally asks, "Who are we humans and what distinguishes us? What gives us our identity? Indeed, how are we to be named?"

III. Naming the Japanese

During the late 1970s and 1980s in Japan, as Murakami began his career in writing, the critical discourse of *nihonjinron* attempted to define the essence of Japanese character and culture. Critics attempted to name what it was that made Japan unique and tended to conclude that the essence of what is Japan could never be adequately named. This nationalist thinking correlated with the interests of the canonical high culture literary output, (termed *junbungaku*) and the canonically sanctioned I-novel form. In conflict with the *nihonjinron* were those universalist critics who claimed that the focus on the uniqueness of Japanese culture was another instance of the nationalistic tendencies that had led to the disastrous fifteen-years' war (1931-1945), initially with China, and then followed by the second world war. The desire to name Japan as a unique character, nation, and culture should therefore be repressed. Instead, the universal nature of humans and culture should be explored; this universalist thinking tended to be more open to accepting popular culture and popular formula writing (*taishū bungaku*). This debate coincided with Japan's economic recovery from the 1970s' oil crisis recession and the 1980s bubble economy when Japan was exporting high quality consumer goods to American and the rest of the world. Globalization was the new word for the decade, and Japan and other nations were reconsidering if the record high GNP levels were worth the loss of its traditional values, culture, and lifestyle. The literature-culture debate was part of a deeper debate about how to redefine self-identity in a rapid-growth capitalist-consumer society that was renaming itself postmodern. Ironically, while Japan was successfully exporting its exotic Asian image in a variety of media, manga, music, movies, and anime, it was also experiencing an identity-crisis. For many, Murakami's nameless characters reflected the loss of identity and meaning in a society that was naming itself as being increasingly alienated from its linguistic and cultural origins.

Since the opening of Japan to foreign powers during the Meiji modernization project (1854), Japanese writers were expected to contribute to the modernization of Japan. It soon became normative to judge writers as those who were seriously committed to the

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7 The naming of the period of Japanese military aggression from 1931 (the Manchurian Incident), until the end of the second world war in the Pacific, 1945. See Sandra Wilson's "Rethinking the 1930s" for the political significance of the various names attributed to the Japanese aggression. See also, Buruma, *Inventing Japan* 87-8.
national project of modern development (equated with the good of the nation) and those who were merely frivolous writers who wrote to entertain using popular formulae to earn a living. Fowler describes well the social culture of the literary establishment, (the bundan), and its writers who were engaged in the style of I-novel writing and who set the canon for Japanese literature (junbungaku), (128-45). The friendship groups between writers, and their shared literary beliefs, tended to act as a literary gatekeeper to innovation and new writers. Giorgio Amitrano acknowledges "the traditional Japanese distinction between junbungaku ... (high literature) and taishū bungaku ... (popular literature). Such dualism, ... for better or worse has dominated the literary scene in Japan for most of this century [the twentieth century]" (10). In many ways, this division reflected the elitist divisions in other countries since the high culture, low culture binary is certainly not unique to Japan. The introspective I-novels and the Marxist-inspired novels of class struggle became the standard forms acceptable to Japan's traditional canon of literature. In contrast, the popular formulae of clue-puzzle detective fiction and crime writing, romance novels, and horror stories were deemed outside the junbungaku project of national development. Omori Kyoko's dissertation on the popular magazine Shinseinen argues that the Japanese crime fiction writers "called into question the values of mainstream styles of literary expression such as, on the one hand, the naturalist influenced I-novel and, on the other, highly politicized proletarian literature" (64), and she translates Japanese critic, Ozaki Hotsuki, who affectionately called these figures [the Japanese crime fiction writers published in Shinseinen] 'heretic writers' (itan sakka) because they went beyond the confinement of the 'guild-like' bundan literary circle of the naturalist influenced I-novel and Shirakaba school to produce literature that became popular with the new middle class living in modern metropolises. (59; Omori's translation)

Following the economic ruin, large scale destruction and human death toll from Japan's fifteen years of engagement in armed conflict (1931-1946), the role of the writer in national development took on a deeper commitment. Again, writers were expected to contribute to the national project – this time of democratization. Writers were encouraged to be socially responsible and, although the novels of Japanese crime fiction writers, for example, did turn to plots involving more complex investigations of social crimes, it was still the form of the I-novel that was privileged. Again, Japan was no different from other nations in prizing the literature of what is termed high culture. By 1968, the Nobel commission recognized the writings of Kawabata Yasunari "for his narrative mastery, which with great sensibility expresses the essence of the Japanese mind" ("The Nobel Prize"). Twenty-six years
later, (1994), Ōe Kenzaburo was similarly recognized. Both writers represent the idealism of Japan's *junkō* and its perceived need to use the personalized form of the I-novel to strengthen the subjective self of the Japanese people in order to fashion individuals capable of the social responsibilities inherent in the practice of democracy. A self-reflective, socially aware, ethical individual was what Japan needed following the disaster of the second world war to build a new Japan. Writers who did not obviously conform to this national project were dismissed.

IV. Naming Japanese Crime Fiction

Japanese crime fiction has had its own crisis of identity and struggle for self-awareness since its early inception during the Meiji modernization project. Crime fiction was considered *taishū* literature. The development of Japan's crime fiction began in a negotiation with Chinese wise magistrate stories and a growing popular interest in sensational courtroom dramas. However, the Meiji period's modernization project initiated translations of a wide range of literature from America and various European countries. Thus, French *roman policiers*, crime stories, and clue-puzzle stories of detection from America and Britain, as well as the Dupin stories of Edgar Allan Poe, were all translated into Japanese and were eagerly read by the Japanese public. Japanese writers of the various forms of crime fiction were thus influenced at an early stage by foreign works. This loss of identity impelled Japanese crime fiction writers to prove that they could adhere as strictly to the classic traditions of the clue-puzzle form, in particular, as well as any foreign writer. However, the Japanese crime fiction identity crisis also impelled early writers to seek their own distinctive voice and to shape the conventions of crime fiction to fit with Japanese literary tastes and interests. A history of Japanese crime fiction, then, may illustrate some examples of the narrow formulae of the classic clue-puzzle writing, but it will also recognize examples of genre mixing, unusual plot, character, and thematic devices, and lingering influences from earlier Chinese literary forms. In this mixing of forms, Japanese writers are no different from other writers; the history of crime fiction is a morass of mixing and experimentation. Japanese crime fiction has also had difficulties in naming itself, struggling between unique Japanese tendencies and classic clue-puzzle writing. Should it adhere strictly to the clue-puzzle form, it risked the label of being a mere copy of a foreign sub-genre. However, should it depart too widely from the classic clue-puzzle formula, it could not be named true detective fiction.
Since the American-styled hard-boiled crime fiction was not widely translated or copied in Japan, at least Japanese writers were spared the added dilemma of negotiating their identity in regard to hard-boiled, tough-guy, private eye fiction, which was itself struggling to be named, and seems finally to be identified as a sub-genre within crime fiction. It was only during the American occupation, with the inflow of American private eye and film noir movies, that the Japanese translations of hard-boiled crime fiction became popular with the Japanese reading public. However, Japanese writers tended not to write their own hard-boiled stories and focused instead on the new national project of shaping the public's ethical conscience by writing crime stories about socio-political corruption and business corruption. As before, during the modernization project and the interwar period, Japanese crime fiction writers were again overwhelmed by the national need for development and reform, and their own self-identity suffered in consequence. They struggled to assert their own self-importance against the dismissal of the bundan.

V. Naming Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction

The story of hard-boiled, tough-guy private eye fiction echoes the Japanese hierarchical divisions. As the Japanese I-novel was privileged over the popular formula novels, so too was the classic clue-puzzle novel privileged over the hard-boiled 'private eye' novel. The classic clue-puzzle novel emphasized the analytic deductions of the detective hero, while the hard-boiled private eye solved the case with guns and threats. The classic detective was usually a clean-cut, well-educated, often amateur hero. The hard-boiled private eye struggled to earn his living, worked in a decrepit office, and tended to use more street-savvy common sense and slang than deductive reasoning. Hard-boiled crime fiction was initially written by writers who earned their living producing fiction written for mass consumption. Lehman describes the early days in America:

Hard-boiled fiction didn't, at first, declare itself to be literature. ... it found its seeding ground in pulp magazines ... [with] names like Black Mask and Spicy Detective and paid its writers at the going rate of a penny a word. (136)

Literary critics had a difficult enough time trying to account for their enjoyment of the classic form without having to argue the merits of the hard-boiled form. G.K. Chesterton, W.H. Auden, R. Austin Freeman, Ronald A. Knox, and Dorothy L. Sayers all wrote defensive apologies for their enjoyment of clue-puzzle detective stories (see Haycraft The Art of the Mystery Story, 1946, rpt. 1974). As late as 1977, Ross Macdonald still felt the need to write, "I believe that popular culture is not and need not be at odds with high culture" (Winks 186).
Early critics seeking to define the sub-genre of crime fiction and to trace its history had difficulties in classifying hard-boiled, private-eye, crime fiction. Murch's history, *The Development of the Detective Novel* (1958, rpt. 1968) is focused primarily on the classic clue-puzzle form. It is clear in her final chapter that she considers the hard-boiled private eye form part of the classic form, differing only in exceptions, "the American detective story dwells less on material clues and itemized evidence, more upon exciting action and a multiplicity of crimes" (253). Haycraft's *Murder for Pleasure*, (1941), attributes hard-boiled crime fiction to an American reaction against British classic clue-puzzle fiction and a desire for realism, and this opinion was endorsed and canonized by Chandler's essay, "The Simple Art of Murder" (1944). Lehman's *The Perfect Murder* (1989) still draws heavily on Chandler's essay and illustrates the strength of his authority. Landrum's *American Mystery and Detective Novels* (1999) tends to present an amorphous set of historic and generic roots in nineteenth century European works, American dime novels, classic clue-puzzle detective fiction, pulp fiction, a desire for realism, and post-war paperbacks. Landrum's presentation of "Related Formulas" (21-38) includes gothic novels, gangster, suspense, and thrillers, courtroom, lawyer, and police procedurals, and postmodern detective novels. The suggestion is that the hard-boiled private eye form seemed to borrow from other sub-genres, thus defying clear classification. The very concept of generic naming was threatened by the fluidity of forms and inter-generic crossings which were becoming increasingly popular with writers throughout the 1960s and the beginnings of postmodernism. However, it could well be that the real source of the discrimination in Eurocentric literary circles that favoured the classic form of clue-puzzle detective novel over the hard-boiled form, was that the classic clue-puzzle form was associated with Britain, while the hard-boiled form was attributed to America, (see George Grella's essays in Winks as an example, 84-120; and Mike Woolf's comments in Docherty, 131-2). Even if Edgar Allan Poe was frequently acknowledged as the first writer of a detective story (however erroneously), and even if the French, Germans, and Americans (as well as the Japanese and other nationalities) also explored the sub-genre of clue-puzzle detective fiction, it was the British writers who were privileged by the early historians and critics.

The growth of critical awareness of the complexities of generic naming, and the intertextual nature of literature, began to influence the criticism of hard-boiled crime fiction. In the 1970s, Tzvetan Todorov published "The Typology of Detective Fiction" (translated into English, and published in *The Poetics of Prose* in 1977). Denis Porter and Stephen Knight followed with their structural analyses of the contrasting forms of classic clue-puzzle
detective fiction and hard-boiled private eye detective fiction. The generic structural
differences were clearly established at last, and hard-boiled private eye fiction slowly began
to be named as a distinct form within the larger sub-genre of crime fiction. Winks's
anthology of essays, *Detective Fiction* (1980), shows the growth of academic writing on
classic clue-puzzle fiction by critics like Grella, Cawelti, Barzun, and Symons; as well as
reproducing earlier essays. However, Grella does have an essay on hard-boiled crime fiction.
Most and Stowe's collection of essays, *The Poetics of Murder* (1983) illustrates the continued
degree of scholarly interest in the classic detective form, with essays by Caillois, Pederson-Krag, Laçan, Eco, Holquist, Kermode, Most, Stowe, and Porter. (Again, there are essays by
Jameson, Marcus, and Knight specifically on the hard-boiled private eye form.) By 1988,
Stowe had broadened his appreciation of the historic roots of hard-boiled private eye fiction,
together with an essay by Richard Slotkin on generic origins, in Rader's and Zettler's *The
Sleuth and the Scholar* (1988). There is a mixed collection of essays on a wide variety of
forms of crime fiction in *The Art of Detective Fiction* (2000), edited by Swales and Vilain, that
show an end to the rivalry between the two forms.

The early privileging of the classic clue-puzzle over the hard-boiled private eye
novels betrays a binary that associated intellect and literature, and thus critical interest, with
the clue-puzzle form. Associated with the hard-boiled private eye form were violence,
action, and formula, thus accounting for its early critical depreciation. Chandler's defence of
the form merely constructed another binary, equating the hard-boiled private eye novel
with America and a liberal, even radical, realism, in contrast with what he named as the
conservative, British form of the classic clue-puzzle. These early prejudices were challenged
when Knight and Porter gave increased critical attention to the hard-boiled private eye form,
naming its form and structure, and its characteristics. Landrum then followed by
acknowledging its complex history and development. More recent criticism is at ease with
the distinctions between the forms, naming them as sub-genres of the over-arching genre of
crime fiction, and granting them with equal value and attention. It is unlikely that the last
note has been sounded in the tangle of origins and names of the various forms within crime
fiction, and different critics have their own names for the various forms. This thesis will
follow the method suggested by Stephen Knight (2010) in sub-dividing the genre of crime
fiction and naming the classic *whodunit* form as clue-puzzle fiction, and the action-adventure
form as hard-boiled private eye fiction. It is the structure of this latter form that has most
influenced certain novels of Murakami Haruki, especially in his early years as he learned to
name himself as a writer.
VI. Murakami Finds his Name

The young Murakami Haruki grew up in postwar Japan in Ashiya, a suburb of Kobe (he was born in Kyoto). His parents were both teachers of Japanese literature. Surrounded by the various discourses on history, literature, culture and identity, Murakami professed his enjoyment of American authors more than Japanese authors. A child of the 1950s and 1960s economic miracle years, Murakami witnessed the growing confidence of the Japanese as exports rose and wealth and consumer comforts increased. Japan had its own student riots and hosted the world Olympics – both, in very different ways, gained global attention for Japan. Murakami began his university studies in 1968 as a Film and Drama student in Waseda University, a private university in the suburbs of Tokyo. He claims to have spent more of his erratic student days (during the 1968-1969 student unrest and closure of universities) in the Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum reading scripts for American movies, "I was bored so all I did was watch movies; in one year I think I saw at least two hundred movies." (Fisher 157). The Theatre Museum collection includes a mix of filmscripts and musicals: *Porgy and Bess* (1935), *The Philadelphia Story* (1941), *Rear Window* (1953), *The Pajama Game* (1954), *The Aspern Papers* (1959), *The Boyfriend* (1959), *The Magnificent Seven* (1960), *Judgment at Nuremberg* (1961), *A Raisin in the Sun* (1961), *Detective Story* (1962), *In the Heat of the Night* (1966), *A Wild Bunch* (1968), *The Fantasticks* (1968), *They Shoot Horses Don't They?* (1969). However, as most young students graduated on schedule and quickly settled down after university life to career planning and advancement, Murakami, instead, married Yoko Takahashi in 1971, set up a Jazz Bar called *Peter Cat* at Kokubunji, Tokyo (1974-1982), and only finally graduated from Waseda University in 1975, seven years after beginning. He was not the typical young Japanese male student. He describes his early days in the essay "A Long Way from the Stuffed Cabbage." His plans to write for film were set aside when he faced the realization that he had nothing to write about; he lacked life experience and had nothing to say: "All I needed was the time and the experience to identify myself." He needed time to name himself and to discover his identity as a writer.

Murakami's early experiments in writing were immediately successful. He won the Gunzo Literature Prize for his first novel *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979, 1987). His second novel *Pinball, 1973* (1980, 1985), introduces the characters of the *boku*, J, and the Rat. Both these novels were written in a fragmentary style, a pastiche of events, memories, and excerpts of
advice on writing, or from the history of the pinball machine. Murakami switched his style in his next novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982, 1989), and here, for the first time, is his clear use of the structure and form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. *A Wild Sheep Chase* does contain elements of the supernatural and fantasy, but it is the form of the private eye novel, with its structure and characteristics, that dominates.

Throughout the next few novels, Murakami experimented with the forms of hard-boiled private eye fiction and romance fiction. The novels which most closely follow the hard-boiled private eye structure are *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1985, 1991), *Dance, Dance, Dance* (1988, 1994), *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1995, 1997), and *Kafka on the Shore* (2002-2005), and these are the novels which this thesis will discuss most. *Norwegian Wood* (1987, 2000), *South of the Border, West of the Sun* (1992, 2000), *Sputnik Sweetheart* (1999, 2001), *After Dark* (2004, 2007) are examples of his novels which are shaped by the structure and conventions of romance and will not be discussed in this thesis. As certain themes emerged from his writing (memory, consumerism, time, violence, identity, media, sexuality, healing), Murakami’s dependence on the structure and form of hard-boiled private eye fiction lessens. Perhaps this is a writer who gains confidence and learns through his craft what it is that he really wants to write about; perhaps it is the desire to continue to explore narrative structures. Murakami’s writing has changed and developed throughout his career as he names himself as a writer. By tracing his use of hard-boiled private eye fiction, this growth and change can also be traced.

**VII. Naming the Chapters**

There is a confluence of problematics here: Murakami’s work and its literary devices, Japanese *nihonjinron* and the discourse between identity and the postwar socio-economic conditions, hard-boiled, tough-guy private eye fiction and its place in the wider sub-genre of crime fiction; each issue revolves around the question of identity. By investigating Murakami’s use of hard-boiled crime fiction, it is hoped to shed light on Murakami’s response to the Japanese postmodern dilemma of identity during the late twentieth century. Murakami’s distinctive use of "I" and his often nameless heroes, the Japanese crisis of identity during its transition to consumer capitalism, the Japanese privileging of the I-novel and the de-privileging of American hard-boiled crime fiction – these elements all interact in a

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8 Matthew Strecher summarizes Murakami’s work, "... the question that most often concerns him is one of identity – how it is formed, how it may be maintained, how it can be lost due to traumatic circumstances, and what its loss might mean to contemporary society" (*Dances with Sheep* 213).
playful confluence of meanings that may not ever be finally named, but can certainly provide clues towards an understanding of some of Murakami’s novels.

The following chapter will investigate the history and context of Japan since the initiation of the modernization project that has dominated Japan’s relationship with the western nations since the mid 1800s. As Japan concerned itself with how the west identified it, Japanese writers were faced with the challenge of having to adopt the identity of modern (western) subjects capable of producing modern literature. They were also expected to assist in the modernization of the Japanese intellect and in the production of a nation of Japanese modernized subjects. In conforming their identity and their writing to the modernization project, however, Japanese writers found ways to resist government constraints, to assert both their own opinions and their own Japanese identities. The question of how to remain Japanese while embracing the foreign has fashioned a nation of writers open to creatively borrowing and mixing. Murakami’s identity as a writer is contextualized in this Japanese heritage.

The third chapter will investigate the history and form of the hard-boiled crime novel. The characterization of the private eye hero will be explored. Clues to the underlying values of truth and justice can be seen in the characters and plots of the formula of hard-boiled crime fiction and traces of attitudes towards wealth and class division can be glimpsed in the portrayal of the corrupt city setting of most of the hard-boiled crime novels. The rugged frontier individualism of the hard-boiled, private eye detective possibly finds its origins not in the classic clue-puzzle detective counterpart of European origins, but in the American tradition of frontier and western cowboy stories. This glorification of individualism is nested in the seemingly dissonant values of friendship and family, and also in the professionalization of the work ethic of the private eye. Together, these values form the personal code by which the hard-boiled detective lives, and which collectively give him (these early characters were most frequently male gendered) his identity as a hard-boiled private eye; a tough guy with a touch of chivalry. The backward structured plot of the hard-boiled crime novel involves the private eye in investigations of crimes that are rooted in past events and the retrospective nature of the plot gives rise to the themes of memory, past events, and historicity. Whilst often dismissed as mere pulp fiction written to a formula designed for mass entertainment, the form of the hard-boiled crime novel has allowed the expression of values that both reflect and challenge social norms.

Once the form of the hard-boiled crime novel is understood, it will be applied as a lens through which the work of Murakami Haruki will be viewed. In particular, the novels A
Wild Sheep Chase; Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World; Dance, Dance, Dance; The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle; and Kafka on the Shore will be the focus of consideration, since these are the novels most influenced by the form of hard-boiled crime fiction. It is anticipated that issues inherent in the hard-boiled form of crime fiction will be reflected in the writing of Murakami and will converge in a commentary on social conditions in Japan, specifically regarding the themes of individualism and work (Chapter Four); wealth and corruption (Chapter Five); and memory and historicity (Chapter Six). In this way, Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled form of crime fiction can be regarded as a useful tool for his negotiation as a writer in identifying what is important for Japan and in naming what is most essential in being human.
Chapter Two
The Context of Japan

History depends on an agreed narrative of the progress of human society over time. However, history involves a selection of specific facts by an historian and a construction of a narrative that offers an explanation of those events. E.H. Carr describes the process of the writing of a history: "Our picture has been preselected and predetermined for us, not so much by accident as by people who were consciously or unconsciously imbued with a particular view ..." (What is History? 13). History, therefore, is a constructed narrative of selected facts. Hayden White highlighted the drive to present history as a coherent narrative of selected main characters and events (The Content of the Form 187) and understood this desire for narrative coherency as a distinctive human enterprise. The historian is presented as a detective seeking facts and as the interpreter of these facts. Like the detective, the historian selects among the facts and constructs a narrative explaining the facts.

In an attempt to contextualize the writing of Murakami Haruki, it is necessary to look at the relevant history of Japan and its literature. However, this historical contextualization will also be a selection and an interpretation. The following history will be presented as a coherent narrative, with causes and effects, and it will provide a context for Murakami that has "a particular view" and that argues that Murakami is representative of a Japanese tradition of creative exploration of literary forms and influences. In borrowing from hard-boiled detective fiction, Murakami may be unusual in Japan, but the form of detective fiction has had a long and creative history in Japanese literature. Mixing elements from Chinese and classic detective fiction with fantastic, grotesque, and heroic elements, Japanese detective fiction has struggled between the desire to produce narratives that adhere strictly to the form of classic detective fiction and the conflicting desire to experiment with form and other literary devices. The history of Japanese detective fiction also shows an ability to embed social criticism within the text, often disguised to avoid government censorship. Whether or not Murakami ever read much Japanese detective fiction (and he claims to have enjoyed foreign authors more than Japanese), he is not unique among Japanese authors in his mixing of forms and styles in his work.

9 The practice of research has been frequently likened to the process of detection. See Rader and Zetler, eds., The Sleuth and the Scholar for the coupling of these terms.
This chapter will first give a brief overview of the late 1800s in Japan, the time of the modernization project when detective fiction was first read, translated, and written, before giving examples of Japanese writers who experimented with the form for purposes of creativity and social critique. The chapter concludes with the context of postwar American occupation, when Murakami was born, the rapid economic growth decades during which Murakami grew up, and finally the student protests of the 1960s and early 1970s when Murakami attended university. The narrative of Japanese detective fiction writers and the narrative of Japan's history provide the context in which Murakami’s writing situates itself, and also against which it reacts.

I. The Japanese Modernization Project

The opening of Japan to foreign relations following the Treaty of Kanagawa, 1854, resulted in more than a trade agreement. The American "Black Ships" may have been primarily concerned with trade, but their forced entry into Japan opened new knowledge systems and different cultural values. Japanese leaders who warned that openness to foreigners would undermine Japan's traditions and identity were correct in realizing that if one door is opened another is closed; even if many of their other predictions proved to be incorrect. Granted that the Tokugawa bakufu (shogunate) was nearing its own chaotic closure, however, the opening to the West heralded changes that would not have happened had Japan remained closed. Murakami Haruki is from a heritage of Japanese authors who have had to negotiate their own response to the mix of international cultural influences.

Japan was already in a state of flux prior to the arrival of the American "Black Ships." It was not the arrival of the Americans alone that heralded change in Japan's Tokugawa regime. Tensions between the more affluent trading towns and cities and the more underdeveloped rural, agrarian communities flared into a series of peasant uprisings throughout early 1823 until the late 1830s. The combination of extremely cold winters and repeated crop failures resulted in widespread famine in rural communities throughout Japan. With poverty and famine, diseases spread and added to the hardship. In the larger towns and cities, a merchant middle class had developed that generally remained immune to the farmers' hardship, and indeed profited from the conditions by controlling prices (see Duus 40-54). Peasant farmers, who abandoned the land and arrived to swell the cities' numbers, found no relief. Many of the samurai class had long been indebted to merchant

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10 Beasley concludes, "For Japan as a whole it has been estimated that there were about 400 such incidents between 1813 and 1868 (though many would be better described as demonstrations or riotous assemblies than as rebellions in the full sense)" (15).
traders and had become an impoverished relic of a feudal power system that was no longer stable. Duus writes that the "samurai was becoming a stock figure in popular satire" (51-2). The merchants were envied, but not liked, by both samurai and farmers. However, both also depended on them.

The growth of the cities and new towns contributed to the clamor for the redistribution of wealth and power in the Japanese social hierarchy. The hereditary hierarchy of the Tokugawa regime was being eroded by the growing importance of the merchant class. Trading between the rural farmers and the increasing urban population, the merchants proved wealthier and often wiser than the samurai class who became increasingly indebted to them. The traditional class system was disintegrating.

Clan leaders throughout Japan were also vying for power as the weakening Tokugawa clan could no longer command allegiance. The lack of any strong central leadership to assist with rural hardship, or to intervene in rural uprisings, opened up the cracks in Japan’s national cohesion. Local rulers gained a taste of independent rule and saw opportunities to expand their individual power in the weakening bakufu system. However, the divisions among the various rival power groups meant that no one group was strong enough to force change from the political establishment. The Tokugawa bakufu had become an ineffectual administration, but it still remained in power.

If Japan was presumed to be closed to, and ignorant of Western culture and sciences, it was equally true that Western nations had no idea that their ultimatum threat to force Japan’s open trading was only the final pressure causing the collapse of the Tokugawa bakufu system. Commander Perry claimed victory in forcing the Japanese to open up to the West, despite, as Tipton points out, the presence of Russian ships to the north and British ships to the south (22). None of the foreign nations that demanded Japan’s agreement to "unequal" treaties gave any thought of future negative repercussions of their intervention into the affairs of Japan. Culture, education, and economic progress were seen as gifts to be bestowed, and it was thought Japan could only benefit from Western Enlightenment. Meanwhile, there were Japanese people who saw the Edo earthquake in 1855, the subsequent unusually strong winds and rains, and the typhoid and smallpox epidemics of 1857 as signs that the foreigners should have been driven out of Japan (Tipton 19-20). Of course, as the Japanese political leaders knew, there really was no way of driving off the foreigners: Perry "had sixty-one guns on the decks of his ships" (Buruma Inventing Japan 13), while the Japanese had samurai swords and bowmen. It was probably fortuitous for the Japanese that the Edo emperor died in 1867, allowing the shogun to step aside and to
transfer power from the Tokugawa bakufu to a new Meiji emperor. The 1868 charter oath marked the transition to a new constitutional socio-political order.

The Japanese have not been immune to the myths surrounding detective fiction. Its association with reason and rational deduction made it a form suited to the national project of modernizing Japan. Amanda Seaman refers to Hirabayashi Hatsunosuke as a primary promoter of the intellectual values of detective fiction. Seaman says that, "Japanese detective fiction was (from its earliest days) implicated in wider processes of cultural assimilation and modernization" (3). When the Japanese began to look to the west in admiration of its culture, wealth, and progress, they soon sought to copy and to integrate the underlying values of the west in order to gain similar economic and material benefits. The catch phrase for the resulting Japanese national project of modernization was "Civilization and Enlightenment." All groups of Japanese society were expected to contribute to this drive to "catch up" with the west, including writers. Thus, detective fiction was a form that allowed Japanese writers to explore new techniques in writing, while also fulfilling their responsibilities to the national project.

I.I Opening to Enlightenment

None of the nations hurrying to make an unequal trade agreement with Japan in the 1850s knew enough of Japan's priorities to foresee how the Japanese would accept the open door policy and engage the whole nation in a unified effort to catch up on foreign science, political administration, and culture. The new Meiji administration settled down, following an initial brief bloody civil war, and committed the nation to a well-ordered policy of "Civilization and Enlightenment" – by this they meant western civilization and the values of the Enlightenment. The modernization project was initiated. Coupled with modernization was a second catch phrase, "rich country, strong army" (Tipton 32). The Japanese administration saw that Japan lacked natural resources and aggressive colonial expansion was seen as the answer. Military development was the subsequent tool for colonial expansion and by the end of the nineteenth century Japanese nationalism already had a military flavour. Thus, military development became part of the national project and colonial expansion soon brought Japan into conflict with China in 1894-5 and with Russia in 1904-5. The roots of later military nationalism find its source in the nineteenth century modernization project.

What the western nations failed to understand was that Japan had seen the British defeat of what had been seen as an invincible Chinese neighbour. The European powers had
then forced the unequal treaties of Nanking and the Bogue (1842-43) on the Chinese following the opium wars. For the first time, it was clear that a western power could indeed defeat the Chinese and even destroy the power of the Chinese dynasty. The consequences of this, and subsequent reports of the western rule in Shanghai, caused the Japanese to deeply fear invasion and colonization by a western power. Duus writes that, "The defeat of the Chinese by a small British naval and military force was a tremendous shock. It shattered the image of Chinese centrality and strength. It also raised the question of whether a similar fate might be in store for Japan" (57). The Dutch traders who had been long tolerated in Japan had explained the western policy of colonizing another weaker nation for the purpose of economic and strategic gain. That foreigners could possibly lay claim to Japanese land and rule Japanese people was abhorrent to Japanese thinking. Japan had thought itself never to have been ruled by a foreign power; even when it had paid tribute to China, it had retained its own independence. This was not just a matter of national pride, it was mixed with a spiritual ideology that combined nationalism with elements of a reformed imperial Shintoism: Japan was the land of the gods with its Emperor directly descended from Japanese divinities. This reformed state Shintoism aided in a unified nationalism that considered it intolerable for Japan to be ruled by foreigners. This fear of colonization was another source of the relentless drive of the Japanese towards modernization in order to equal the western powers and to avoid foreign rule through colonization.

By 1872, there was compulsory primary education (Beasley 93-5). Select Japanese were sent abroad, the samurai class was abolished, and universal conscription was implemented for army service. A new commercial and entertainment center was built in western style red brick in the Ginza district of the renamed Edo city; Tokyo (Tipton 38-48). The Ryōunkaku tower was twelve stories high and was designed by a Scottish architect. It had two elevators installed by the Toshiba company providing access to the department store, shops, and art galleries as well as its famous observation deck. Western style food and clothing were signs of the public endorsement and growing popularity of the modernization process. Public administration was also restructured: a legal system and a police force were established, taxation was introduced, political parties founded, banking formalized, roads and railways built, and, perhaps most importantly in modernizing the people's thinking, the education curriculum was westernized and, by 1899, primary education was provided free. Japan was set to become an efficient, westernized nation.

11 See Buruma, Inventing Japan 21, for a similar description of Japan's response to the opium wars, "shock ... Japan's own vulnerability" (21).
The Japanese had realized that if they were to achieve the standards of western modernization, then it would not suffice to remodel only the economy and the socio-political systems. The very thought process of Japanese people had to be changed so they could become modern, rational citizens in the newly modernized Japanese nation state. Since each loyal citizen was expected to contribute to the national goal in a collective effort towards modernization, Japanese artists, musicians, and writers were called on to participate. Translations of British, French, German, and Russian literature provided examples of literary genre and styles that were carefully studied by Japanese writers who opened themselves to this foreign influence. Experimentation with plot, voice, themes, and character opened Japanese writers to new methods of expression. Japanese writers had a major contribution to make in modernizing the minds of the literati and also the more popular readers.

Change is not something that happens immediately, nor once and for all. Instead, change is often a matter of two steps forward and one step back. Within literary circles, the dance of change illustrates the gradual back and forth between the old styles and subjects of Edo literature and the new forms and content of Meiji literary ambitions. Describing the Meiji reformation, Peter Kornicki writes, "in the early years at least, the new was added to the old rather than replacing it" (476). Japanese authors brought with them the tradition of their own literary forms from poetry, Noh drama and Kabuki theatre, and novel and short story writing. Edo styles of popular art and popular literature continued into the Meiji era due to popular demand, as Kornicki illustrates in his study of public reading habits, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in the Meiji Period."

Kornicki shows that the spread of popular literature was greatly facilitated by the Japanese system of public lending libraries, kashhonya. Within major cities, kashhonya were reading rooms where male and female members were admitted to read newspapers, journals, novels, and serialised novels. A selection of the most popular reading material was also carried about throughout more rural areas as a kind of traveling library. Individuals could order their choice to be delivered to them on loan from their kashhonya. Kornicki's study shows that the readership of newspapers and novels was greatly extended through these lending libraries and reading rooms. Popular subgenres included historical fiction (yomihon), sentimental fiction (ninjōbon), and vernacular, "witty" fiction portraying everyday subjects and life (sharebon and kokkeibon). Known as gesaku literature (comic, frivolous), these popular forms were written for mass entertainment and sold well in both Edo and Meiji era. Korniki asserts that "the reprinting of works of the Edo authors was carried out on
a large scale in the first half of the Meiji period, and numbers must have been prodigious by the standards of the times" (474).

The popular literary traditions of what has been collectively termed gesaku and their relationship to the more sensationalist journalism of popular newspapers has been overshadowed in the study of Japanese literature by the more formal literary works of the Kenyūsha writers group, especially Futabatei Shimei. Once Tsubouchi Shōyō published his Essence of the Novel (1885-1886) and Futabatei followed with his rival work, Survey of the Novel (1886), the model for Japanese Meiji literature was set and major writers turned away from the forms of popular literature.

The rational intellect of the western modern mind soon came to be considered by the Japanese themselves as superior to their own Japanese sensibilities and values. (This inferiority may in part explain later strident arrogance in declaring superiority over western powers. Comparisons and contrasts tend always to degrade either Japan or the west.) The Japanese were afraid of being judged as inferior in any way, and suffered from the humiliation of the unequal treaties. Thus, the Japanese drive to modernization was a matter of national pride as well as fear of colonization. First, the political institutions had to be restructured in the fashion of at least an outward parliamentary democracy. Then, the Japanese imagination had to be restructured in the style of the modern western mind. In a world greatly influenced by Darwinian hierarchies, the Japanese felt they had to prove themselves capable of higher order thinking. The translations of Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin stories, Emile Gaboriau's Monsieur Lecoq roman policier, and the novels of Anna Katherine Green received attention from writers interested in furthering the national agenda towards modernization (Silver Purloined 58-61). Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes followed on the popularity of these earlier translations. While these detective fiction works all stressed the process of detection and the ratiocination established by Poe, they also combined elements of historical fiction, romance, adventure, gothic, and sensationalism. However, the classic form of a central detective engaged in the detection of a definite crime, following clues, eliminating suspects, and explaining all in a grand finale was clear for the Japanese author to study. It was these elements of the classic detective form that fitted best with the administration’s policy of modernizing the Japanese mind in keeping with the western methods and values of the Enlightenment. Reason and rationalism were privileged. Japan had taken on the western myth of the Enlightenment.

Since Murakami Haruki is a Japanese writer, and since he makes use of various elements from crime fiction, it will be helpful to understand better the context of the
development of Japanese crime fiction. What follows here is a selection from authors and events from Japan's past that are woven into a narrative to support the thesis that Murakami Haruki is from a line of Japanese authors who have had to negotiate their own response to the mix of international cultural influences and domestic socio-political forces. The historiography of Japan's crime fiction is complex, illustrating the intertextual influences from other nationalities, as well as genre mixing and hybridity.

I.II A Genre at the Service of the Nation

Detective fiction (tantei shōsetsu) was a new form for Japanese writers and Japan looked to the western countries for examples. Any history of Japanese crime fiction, therefore, is complicated by issues of cultural imperialism. Indeed, national rivalries among European nations (British, French, Italian, and German crime fiction) and the British-American tension all confuse an historical understanding of the development of crime fiction. However, the relationship between Japan (or any other subaltern nation) and these western nations in the development of crime fiction has been largely ignored. Once Japan "decided to accept Western advances into Asia and colonialism as a way of life" (Kawana 4; italics mine) it committed itself to that decision, and this necessitated the co-committal conviction that the previous feudal Edo way of life was over and the new western way of democratic individual, rational, free subjects was the only, and therefore the best, possible future for Japan. A socio-cultural and political-economic revolution was necessary to change Japan from its traditional, feudal, past into a modern, prosperous, powerful nation that could compete equally with the other nations in world affairs. Once this was achieved, then Japan could refocus on being Japanese. In many ways, crime fiction, and literature in general, was a tool for national development; a means to an end.

Although suffering in many ways from an inferiority complex, Japan also retained a sense of its own self-worth as a nation. Japan did not merely see itself as a poor country dominated by western powers; it also saw itself as a possibly backward country but with the drive and potential to be the equal of any western nation. It simply needed to learn, to copy, and eventually to surpass. Japan did not have the attitude of a colonized nation. However, it did seem to believe that the western way was better and it feared being ridiculed. Having been forced to submit to unequal treaties with the western powers, Japan was driven to prove itself as their equal so that it would avoid invasion and instead be treated equally. Once it was thoroughly modernized, Japanese leaders believed, then it
could engage equitably with other nations in economics, arts, sciences, politics, and in colonial expansion.

Detective fiction (*tantei shōsetsu*) was tolerated by the administration as a method of educating people in rational thinking. Interest in the foreign writers of clue-puzzle detective fiction came at a time when it could complement the national project of modernization. Poe, Green, Gaboriau, and Conan Doyle were internationally recognized proponents of the use of reason, and the whodunit with its challenge to the reader, seemed to offer a useful form in educating and modernizing readers.

This openness to various national literatures was reflective of Japanese practice. The benefit of acceding to the demand to open to the west was that Japan resisted colonization (although it took on the influence of the west). This left Japan free to survey the various systems of administration and to select that which it considered the best (Beasley 85-9). A team was sent out to America, Britain, France and Germany prior to the decision to adapt the German style of constitution. Similarly, the British navy, German medicine, French diplomacy and education, the Prussian army discipline and strategy were considered the best for the Japanese to model. Japan was free to pick and choose in its modernization process. It used the same technique in its study of foreign literature. Russian authors, French, British, and German were all carefully analyzed and discussed. It was a natural practice then to import and translate detective novels from a variety of countries and to experiment with writing in a similar style.

II. Imaginative Clues: Chinese Influences

Mark Silver has described the criminal biographies and courtroom narratives that predated the introduction of crime fiction in Japan (*Purloined Letters*). As in Europe, stories of criminals were published in Japanese woodblock circulars much like the British *Newgate Calendar*. As in Europe, these story/reports were a mixture of melodrama and morals. Famous cases of court trials were also circulated and much discussed. Chinese tales of wise men's judgments in difficult cases were popular too. An oral tradition of the wise Chinese magistrate existed in storytelling and drama. These tales tended to illustrate various Confucian and Taoist morals, yet maintained a battle of wits between the criminal and the detective-magistrate. Magistrate Bao lived from 999 to 1062 and was one of a number of magistrates whose wise decisions formed the basis of further tales and dramas. In his English translation of *Cases of Judge Dee*, Robert Hans van Gulik claims:
Short stories about mysterious crimes and their solution have existed in China for over a thousand years, and master-detectives have been celebrated in the tales of the public storyteller and in theatrical plays for many centuries. The longer Chinese detective novel started later, about 1600, and reached its greatest development in the 18th and 19th centuries. (i)

Van Gulik continues in his introduction to number five characteristics of the Chinese tradition of magisterial stories:

1. The criminal is known from the beginning of the story;
2. Supernatural elements are frequent in the stories: ghosts, dreams, demons, an afterlife;
3. A variety of forms within the text are frequent: poems, case law, official documents, philosophical tracts; (causing lengthy digressions from the main plot)
4. There is an over-abundance of minor characters and details of family relationships;
5. Details of the final punishment are described in full, sometimes including torments in hell. (ii-iii)\(^\text{12}\)

As well as characterizing the Chinese (and later Japanese) magistrate tales, these characteristics are echoed in the plots of Nō drama. Describing Chikamatsu’s *The Love Suicide at Amijima* (*Shinjū ten no amijima*, 1721), Thomas J. Rimer states:

The audience knows from the beginning who is the hero, who is the villain. ... Rather than moving his play along by such devices as suspense, however, as a modern dramatist [or crime fiction writer] might do, Chikamatsu concentrated rather on trying to find a means to portray how certain events, happenings already known to the reader, had come to pass. (75)

This focus on character motivation is true of much literature throughout the world, and from the earliest times. However, Rimer makes the point that character motivation was used in Japanese literature as frequently as anywhere else to explain the causes of events already known to the reader. This device was retained throughout the centuries, so that with Mishima Yukio’s *The Golden Pavilion* (*Kinkaku-ji*, 1956) the readers again knew the plot well in advance and therefore "knew the outcome of the story before they began," (182).

Mishima’s narrative explains why the characters acted as they did. Both Chikamatsu in 1721 and Mishima in 1956 concentrate "on how the final incident came to pass; suspense of plot is replaced by an analysis of character and circumstance." (182)

\(^{12}\) Remarkably, most of these characteristics (certainly 2, 3, and 4) are obvious in Murakami’s texts. Often, the antagonist is known early in the narrative.
There is a tradition, therefore, in Japanese literature (although certainly not unique to Japan) to explore interiority, the motivation of characters. This interest was supported by translations of western literature that were similarly focused on interiority and motivation. For example, the work of Dostoyevsky was well read in Japan (and well read by Murakami also). This has implications for the Japanese writing of crime fiction. Both the classic clue-puzzle form and the hard-boiled private eye form engage the reader through the device of suspense, usually withholding the identity of the criminal until the end: the reader does not know “who is the villain” or “the outcome of the story.” Later writers of Japanese crime fiction will use their own tradition and depart from the classic clue-puzzle plot, exploring the motivations of the criminal (as in the sub-genre of psychological crime fiction), the details of the crime, and its consequences. Similarly, it will be seen that other characteristics from van Gulik’s list of five are evident in Japanese crime fiction – most notably the supernatural element. By drawing from their own literary tradition, Japanese crime fiction authors created a distinctive style. This creative mixing of influences to produce a distinctive style can also be seen in other literary genres, and indeed Leslie Pincus and Irmela Hijiya-Kirschnerreit, among others, separately argue that the Japanese shōsetsu displays characteristics of genre mixing (Hamilton’s “layering”) that distinguishes it from western novels. Murakami Haruki has inherited these characteristics of genre-mixing and creative experimentation.

In his dissertation, "Culture and Authenticity: The Discursive Space of Japanese Detective Fiction and the Formation of the Nation's Imaginary," Satomi Saito refers to the Japanese adaptations of the older Chinese magistrate tales, transposing the characters and settings into a Japanese context: thus, Judge Dee becomes Magistrate Ōoka. These stories were quite popular in Edo times and, quoting Kozakai Fuboku and Asō Isoji, Satomi argues that:

The antecedents of Japanese detective fiction, such as Ihara Saikaku’s Honchō Ōin Hiji (Tales of Japanese Justice, 1689), Takizawa Bakin’s Aoto Fujitsuna moryōan (Tales of Aoto Fujitsuna, 1812 [re-telling of fourteenth century judge]), and a series of tales later compiled as Ōoka seidan (Cases Dealt with by Magistrate Ōoka) are all said to be influenced by the case studies of crime investigations and court trials in China known as Tōin hiji (Cases Solved by Just and Benevolent Judges, 1211). (35) Satomi is persuaded that these Chinese-influenced, wise magistrate tales, with their combination of logical reasoning and belief in supernatural elements, complemented the public desire for stories with both resolution and horror at a time of national, transitional
tension. Both the breakup of the Tokugawa rule and the threat of foreign gunships left the Japanese insecure and anxious for their future. Stories of wise magistrates provided reassurance. Alternatively, stories of crime and criminal biographies reflected the public dread of social change. The gesaku popular literature included crime stories and the kawaraban popular press sensationalized the drama of courtroom trials. Human nature is the most likely cause of the spread of crime fiction, in all its varied forms, not national origins.

Mark Silver also mentions the Japanese tradition of "courtroom literature" which followed the Chinese pattern ("Putting the Court on Trial" 856-861), and he also refers to Ichara Saikaku (1642-1693) who published a collection of wise magistrate stories, *Cases from the Shade of the Japanese Cherry*, continuing the five characteristics Van Gulik attributes to the Chinese. What is certain is that among the popular forms of literature that crossed the Edo-Meiji periods were the stories of criminals and courtroom prosecutions. As in Europe, the confessions of criminals were popular reading in newspapers and journals. In Japan, the popularity of these confessional stories began in the Tokugawa-Edo period and continued through the Meiji period. The early Meiji tales of what are termed the "poison woman" (dokufu-mono) also follow the Chinese characteristics. Kanagaki Robun’s *The Tale of Takahashi Oden the She-Devil* (*Takahashi Oden yasha monogatari*, 1879) is the best known and is based on an actual court case. Silver notes that "Robun’s tale establishes the infallibility of the court and its rulings" (860) and this is also an important element in these magisterial or courtroom stories. They were essentially conservative and did not question the established status quo, reassuring readers that Japan would survive the disturbances of modernization.

A number of the writers of popular gesaku styles of literature were also the journalists of the popular press.\(^{13}\) Thus, Robun’s novel of Takahashi Oden began as a news report, first serialised in his single-sheet (kawaraban) newspaper. The popularity of Oden’s story led to a newspaper rivalry, and Robun capitalized on the public interest by issuing his coverage in book form. Strecher comments that Robun and other journalists saw an opportunity in the Oden story to sell newspapers, similar to journalists and editors of today’s newspapers. In order to maximize sales, the Oden story was stretched out over days into a serialised story (tsuzukimono), and this necessitated the narrative devices of backstory and sustained tension to maintain readers’ interest. Thus, Strecher, explains, Robun’s account

\(^{13}\) See Peter F. Korniki, "The Survival of Tokugawa Fiction in the Meiji Period." Also, John Pierre Metz, *Novel Japan: Spaces of Nationhood in Early Meiji Narrative, 1870-88*, especially his fourth chapter. See also, Matthew C. Strecher, "Who’s Afraid of Takahashi O-Den? ’Poison Women’ Stories and Literary Journalism in Early Meiji Japan."
"transformed the relatively uncomplicated case of murder by a woman desperate for money into a dark and sensational tale of greed, violence, and sexual excess" ("Who’s Afraid" 29). The narrative elements of crime fiction, murder, motive, investigation, and also courtroom drama, are all present. However, Van Gulik’s five elements from Chinese crime fiction are also present: the killer is known from the beginning, Oden is characterized as a mythical 'She-Devil,' mixed sources are used (Robun famously used court records, exact dates, and the final judgement speech of the magistrate, as well as letters), additional characters are introduced and lengthy digressions into their history and relationships are employed, and the final condemnation of Oden suggests her punishment is continued in the afterlife.

Robun’s report, according to Silver ("The Lies"), is an example of:

the old conventions of gesaku hybridized with a new interest in creating an aura of authenticity, an interest prompted by an emerging market for tabloid journalism that made a selling point of truthfully [not necessarily an accurate claim] covering recent actual events. This market demand, combined with criminal biography’s inherent interest in details of chronology, physical evidence, and motive, led Robun to experiment with new conventions of realistic representations. (9-10)

Silver draws attention, here, to the coming together of influences: the pre-Meiji style of popular writing, the older Chinese crime stories of wise magistrates, the criminal biographies, and the journalism of the popular press. This combination of subject matter, style, and actual writers provided a fertile ground for the emergence of crime narrative.

Japan was ready for a new literary form and authors, like everyone else in Japan at that time, were busy looking to the west, and so they largely ignored the Sino-Japanese base upon which they were constructing. Interestingly, works by French, German, and Russian, as well as British and American authors, were favored. However, since the purpose of the Japanese writers had to be aligned with the national goal of "Civilization and Enlightenment," themes and concerns which lay outside this mandate tended to influence the Japanese writers a lot less. Thus, the American preoccupation with individualism and free enterprise worked out in the form of American frontier and cowboy novels did not attract Japanese authors. Later, especially during and after the American occupation, cowboy movies and hard-boiled heroes from the American cinema became very popular in Japan. Kurosawa Akira was to make much of parallels between American westerns and Japanese samurai, and he also made two noir films. Perhaps by then Japan was ready to investigate a more rugged individualism, or perhaps Kurosawa managed to make use of the samurai hero tradition to popularize his movies in Japan. Murakami Haruki, born in 1949,
and whose early childhood was during the height of American influence in Japan, will follow
this interest in American individualism and hard-boiled fiction. Meanwhile, the Japanese
initially focused on the classic form of the clue-puzzle detective novel.

The stories of Poe and Anna Katherine Green were the first to be translated into
Japanese in 1887-1889. Conan Doyle soon followed. Kuroiwa Ruikō was among those who
quickly saw a career in translating and writing clue-puzzle detective fiction while also
enjoying the opportunity to promote intellectual thought and logical reasoning. Very soon,
however, any appreciation of Japanese crime fiction writers is beset by the complications of
copying and originality. From the perspective of normative western scholarship, Amanda
Seaman summarizes Ruikō’s work as, "including translations and adaptations of Western
works (some of them bordering on plagiarism)" (3). This is a charge that continued to haunt
Japanese writers as they explored the form and style of clue-puzzle fiction. Curiously,
Murakami is also often criticised for his reliance on American references, language, and
hard-boiled style.

II.1 Creative Experimentation: International Influences

Silver begins his book, Purloined Letters, wondering, "what happens when writers
work in the shadow of a culture they see as more advanced and powerful than their own."
(1) Silver’s assumption that the Japanese saw the west as "more advanced" must be taken
with caution since this is unproveable and, considering the strength of Japanese national
dignity, it is surely more complicated than even Silver acknowledges. However, Silver does
describe well the double burden of cultural imperialism:

1. "that Japanese literature needed to be modernised to accord with Western
models" (1); and,
2. "That their writings would be measured against ... [Western work and] be found
wanting." (2)

Even as translations, Ruikō’s works are suspect since he "had to adapt stories ... reworking
the plot and changing the names and places to ones with which his readers would be
familiar" (Seaman 3). Ruikō himself was well aware of such charges. Silver quotes Ruikō’s
introduction to Hōtei no Bijin (The Courtroom Beauty, 1886-87; a translation of Hugh
Conway’s novel Dark Days). Ruikō begins by explaining that he read the novel once and then
wrote his "translation" from memory without recourse to the novel:

It is quite improper to call this a translation, but then again if I were to say it is not a
translation, I could hardly escape the charge of plagiarism and the distain in which
imitators are held. ... Call it improper if you will; accuse me of plagiarism if you will; I make no pretension to being a translator. (Qtd. in Silver 66; Silver's translation.)

Less concerned with loyalty to the originals, Ruikō used these "translations" for his own purposes. It is in this very crime of scholarly mis-"translation" that led Seaman, Silver, and Kawana to claim that Ruikō and other Japanese writers subvert any attempt to easily dismiss them as mere copy-cat writers. Silver details the changes Ruikō made to his translation into Japanese of an English translation of Gaboriau's *Man or Devil?* (*Hito ka oni ka*, 1888-1889), and concludes:

His radical – and indeed creative – manipulation of Gaboriau's text suggests that subordinating *Man or Devil?* to his own political purposes was more important to him [Ruikō] than any act of transplantation or imitation carried off for its own sake.

(77)

Embedded in Ruikō's work is a concealed critique of Japan's ready embrace of modernization, most especially the newly reformed legal system (see Silver 57-97). This marks a radical shift from the earlier Magisterial and courtroom literature. It was also a dangerous intent given Japanese authority's keen surveillance of all published material. Literature may have had an important role in forming the minds of the people, however, the administration desired that readers become modern logical thinkers but not critical of government policy. Any author who wished to offer a criticism, then, had to be careful and disguise such criticisms in creative experimentation with structure, imagery, style, and language. This, too, is a legacy inherited by Murakami who, it will be seen, uses the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, as well as language and style, to disguise his critical commentaries on Japanese culture and international power structures.

In Ruikō’s translation of *Man or Devil?* (*Hito ka oni ka*, 1888-1889), a translation from an English translation of Gaboriau’s *L’Affaire Le Rouge*, Ruikō changes the original conclusion. Silver tells us that, first, Ruikō has the guilty man’s wife encourage and join him in his suicide (in keeping with Japanese values at that time of an honourable death); and second, Ruikō’s version has "three pages' worth of extraordinary material that he adds to the novel’s end" ("Putting the Court on Trial" 867). Before his suicide, the guilty man writes a will bequeathing money for the foundation of "an international society for the abolition of capital punishment" (868 Silver’s translation). Since the novel hinges on a false accusation, the theme of judicial error surfaces strongly in this novel – in contrast with the previous stories of magistrate’s trials. By inserting additional material in what is declared openly as a translation, Ruikō disguises his intent to criticize the Japanese legal system of trial without a
jury and capital punishment. Ruikō’s additional material includes details on exactly how such an international society could be established, including possible members and funding.

In the context of what is claimed as a translation of a French novel, readers would easily believe this content to be the original work of Gaboriau and not Ruikō. Silver notes that Ruikō’s novel "seems calculated to move common readers to political action, or at least to imagine themselves as political beings" (868). There is little doubt that Ruikō here is using the crime fiction "translation" to modernize the minds of his readers in the development of Japan as a nation, not as the government might wish, but instead, as he individually thought best.

This independence of mind in Japanese novelists needed to be carefully concealed so that their critique would not cause censorship or, possibly, imprisonment. That Ruikō stopped writing crime fiction in the late 1890s to devote himself to a more direct political career in journalism lends support to this opinion. It is ironic that the Meiji administration, which welcomed clue-puzzle detective fiction as encouraging its project of modernization, failed to notice the covert criticism in Ruikō’s work. Indeed, had the administration been aware of his opinions, it would have been difficult for him to publish. Ruikō’s muckraking journalism received opposition from the administration while his crime fiction did not.

Kawana and Silver defend the later work of Edogawa Ranpo (1894-1965), whose very pseudonym is a Japanese transliteration of Edgar Allan Poe, from any charge of plagiarism. Silver points out that Ranpo himself was aware of "the difficulty … authors faced when it came to seeing themselves as something other than second-rate copies of their Western counterparts" (173). While the Japanese concerned themselves with the crime of copying, western historiography of crime fiction blithely ignored its assumption of superiority and cultural imperialism. The translation of crime fiction was a one-way traffic and there were few interested in translating Japanese works into English. Kawana cites Ranpo’s first story "Nisen Dōka" (Two-Sen Coin 1923) which overturned "some of the central conventions of the genre" (20) by having an unreliable narrator and an inconclusive ending. The date of this story is prior to Christie’s The Murder of Roger Ackroyd (1926), but it remains absent from most histories of the form. Again, Ranpo's novel Injū (The Devil in the Shadow 1928-29; Silver translates the title as Shadowy Beast) is prior to Dashiell Hammett’s The Maltese Falcon (1930), however, both use the same device of the femme fatale who initiates a relationship with the hard-boiled private eye and meets the same end: the detective Samugawa "causes" Shizuko’s death. Again, this work had never been discussed in previous histories since few of these Japanese stories and novels had been translated into
English. Neither Christie nor Hammett were ever worried by any accusations of plagiarism, real or imagined; however, it remained a worry to Japanese writers and critics: "The facility with which Japanese authors could access translations seems to fuel the fallacy of direct influence and devalue their creative production" (Kawana 21). Kawana wryly concludes: "Perhaps the case of Ranpo and Christie [and Hammett] calls for a new way of looking at various formalist literatures and cross-cultural literary inspiration and encourages the willingness to go beyond the existing hierarchy of influence and de-emphasize originality and priority" (22). The lack of complaint when Ranpo borrows from Tanizaki Jun’ichirō’s "The Secret" ("Himitsu," 1911) in his 1925 story "The Walker in the Attic" ("Yaneura no sanposha") suggests that the issue of copying was only seen as a crime when a Japanese borrowed from a westerner. Angles describes the similarities between the bored, cross-dressing male narrator in both stories and notes in Ranpo’s story: "These passages are clearly based on … Tanizaki … Ranpo often paid homage by working other authors’ ideas into his stories" (119, note 52; italics mine).

A tension between retaining a Japanese identity and style, and the desire to work with foreign texts and trends, affected the work of many Japanese authors. Murakami is fortunate that when he began publishing in 1980, the development of genre studies allowed for intertextuality and the influence from other authors and styles. Murakami acknowledges his homage to Raymond Chandler and Murakami’s work is full of references, allusions, as well as some elements of parody and pastiche. The crime of copying is no longer a problem but the Japanese tradition of working with foreign literary influences is clearly seen in Murakami’s texts and Murakami readily acknowledges the influence of Chandler, Carver, Brautigan, and Vonnegut on his work 14. Murakami has benefitted from coming after the early Japanese writers who struggled with issues of influence. Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916) is often considered the father of the Japanese novel form. Sōseki is also known for his belief in the social responsibility of novelists to national development and the national goal. However, he struggled with how best to bridge the ideas and styles of modernist writing to which he was exposed during his two years in London and his own tradition of Japanese Confucianism and the emerging national Shintoism. More important for Sōseki was the dilemma of fashioning a literature that would remain Japanese yet be informed by modernity. Only in this way would he be able to evade the charge of being a mere Japanese imitator of the western modern novel.

14 Less frequent is the acknowledgement of his "Sōseki experience" which "remains firmly rooted within me to this day" (Introduction. Sanshirō xxvi). See also, Hanada Atsuko, "Bridging Sōseki and Murakami."
Sōseki exemplifies the Japanese desire to be accepted as equal on the international stage. Following the Triple Intervention of Russia, Germany, and France into the post-war settlement between Japan and China, the Japanese had begun to doubt that the western powers would ever voluntarily accept Japan as a modern nation equal to any in the west. Japan had proven its military ability in Korea and China, following the western example of colonialism, and yet even Britain its ally had stood aside as Japan was forced to yield land and reparation claims. Japan learned that it could not depend on the western powers to respect Japan’s modernization and that western politics was an unfair game among unequal rivals. Having worked so hard at modernizing, and thus shaping themselves to be accepted, it naturally hurt Japanese pride to again be pressured to concede to foreign dominance. The national goal of modernization (Civilization and Enlightenment) in order to gain international equality had clearly failed. However, on the other hand, the Anglo-Japanese Treaty, 1902, and the continued Japanese military success against the Russians in the 1904-1905 Manchurian campaigns, were all sources of growing self-confidence and national pride. It is this double-sided inferiority/superiority complex that Sōseki exemplifies.

Sōseki began by experimenting with the form and style of the novel. His early works *I am a Cat* (*Wagahai wa neko de aru*, 1905-06); *Young Master* (*Botchan*, 1906); and *Grass Pillow* (*Kusa makura*, 1906) each show his willingness to take risks. *I am a Cat* reads like a series of short stories, and was initially intended as a short story but was extended as a serial. From the viewpoint of the household cat, the family and life of a college professor (Mr. Sneeze) is satirized. Sōseki drew from his own experience in university teaching and his critique of academic administration is the primary focus of the narrative; it does also parody the trope of the detective in the character of the observant cat. *Botchan* relates a young math teacher’s loyalties torn between two other teachers: a more closed, traditional teacher from a samurai family and a more open, radical teacher who does whatever is best for himself. In both of these stories, Sōseki seems to warn his readers against too quick an appropriation of modern western values. In his introduction to Jay Rubin’s translation of Akutagawa, Murakami Haruki refers to "the fierce clash between the modern and the pre-modern" in late Meiji and Taishō writers like Sōseki, Mori Ōgai, Shiga Naoya, Tanizaki Jun’ichirō, and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke: "...they had to strive to internalize both Eastern and Western high culture in equal doses so they could be ready at a moment’s notice to switch from one to the other" (xxix). Even in his later novel, *Kokoro* (1912), Sōseki suggests that Japanese sensitivities and values do not sit easily with modern thought. Openness to the west necessitated a creative openness of the Japanese imagination. Murakami himself is
often accused by Japanese critics, especially, of being too American, while American critics wonder at his appreciation of American music and food. A large amount of critical attention has been given to Murakami's balancing of cultures and influences (see Rebecca Suter (35-59); and Michael Seats (25-38), for their reviews of critical reception of Murakami in Japan and America).

Sōseki's *Kokoro* weaves together three narratives, beginning with the encounter between a student and a teacher. The student is enamoured by the modern westernized teacher, the enigmatic sensei. A section follows as the narrator returns home to his father’s deathbed, and the novel concludes with the testimony of the sensei to his student recounting his life. Sōseki may not have been the first writer to employ alternating narrators and intertextual devices, but the narration of the sensei’s story from a letter gives a sense of distance that reflects the character of the sensei himself. Note also in these novels that Sōseki consistently uses nicknames, or a capital letter, or no name at all for his characters. However, writing about his early novel *Grass Pillow* (*Kusa makura*, 1906), Sōseki gives a clue to his struggle to retain a Japanese authenticity in his writing:

... if this haiku-like novel – that’s a peculiar name for it – succeeds, it will open up a whole new domain in the literary world. This kind of novel has no counterparts in the West, and of course there are none in Japan. If it can be written in Japan, we shall be able to say that a new development in the world of the novel originated in Japan. (Keene 316)

Sōseki wanted desperately to gain the recognition of the western modern world as his contribution to the national modernization project. The west should recognize Japanese writers as it should recognize the Japanese nation. With this as his ambition, Sōseki could not afford to be dismissed as a mere copyist, and to his credit, he never suffered this accusation.

The Japanese relationship to western cultures was always ambiguous. The eagerness to learn from the world new ideas and styles of writing can be easily seen and adhered well with the national project of modernization. However, in practice, tensions arose which writers had to settle: how to retain their national identity in the face of what seemed a superior world culture; how to use influences from both their own traditions, Chinese traditions, and western traditions and blend them into a creative and coherent text; how to speak their criticism of socio-political issues in a system that censored outright criticism? Such issues are not easily resolved and these questions can never receive a definitive satisfactory answer. Murakami has had to find his own resolution to these and
similar questions, and he appreciates the "sincerity and ... success" (Introduction Sanshirō xxxvi) with which Sōseki creatively combined traditions: "Into the format of the modern Western novel, he smoothly and very accurately transplanted the many forms and functions of the Japanese psyche he observed around him" (xxxv).15

III. Modernizing the Genre

The classic clue-puzzle tales that allowed intellectual challenge and gave ample opportunity for the detective to show off his intellectual acumen were most popular for those aligned with the Japanese administration's policy of western modernization. This form was known in Japan as "orthodox" detective fiction. However, Japanese writers after the turn of the century did not always adhere strictly to the classic clue-puzzle formula but opened themselves to experimentation with "unorthodox" forms. They remained open to mixing genres and often used elements from gothic, adventure, horror, and romance. Certainly, as Seaman points out, "authors drew upon the elements of mystery, horror, and suspense found in Ueda Akinari's (1734-1809) famous collection of ghost stories, Ugetsu monogatari and combined them with insights gleaned from more modern psychological research on obsession, fetishism, and sadomasochism" (4). Possibly, this openness to genre-mixing reflects the Japanese desire to move beyond mere imitation and also possibly reflects a Japanese preoccupation with their own distinct issues worked out in the genre of crime fiction, among others. There were those who realized that the relentless drive to openness to the west meant a closure to Japan's own cultural past and imaginative future alternatives. By using Japanese folk tales, ghost stories, supernatural beliefs, and historical settings in their fiction, Japanese crime fiction writers could claim the uniqueness of their form. In many ways, however, it can also be seen that the previous Chinese characteristics of the Magistrate's tales were exerting their influence on the Japanese writers.

The early twentieth century work certainly illustrates a mixing of genre, to the extent that it is impossible to clearly define it as only detective fiction; it resists clear definition. There are ordered elements of clue-puzzle detective fiction (a crime/mystery, a detective character, but not always a reasoned method or a reasoned solution) but the form is chaotically altered – sometimes by the inclusion of the supernatural and often by reasoning from instinct instead of pure logic. Within this category are writers like Tanizaki Jun'ichirō (1886-1984) and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke (1892-1927) who influenced many

15 See also, Handa, "Bridging Sōseki and Murakami."
Japanese writers but who can scarcely be called pure clue-puzzle detective fiction writers. Murakami Haruki also fits in with these predecessors.

Akutagawa was a student of Sōseki and thus had much of his commitment to fashion a uniquely Japanese literary mode. Writing only short stories, Akutagawa has bequeathed "Rashômon," "Hell Screen" ("Jigokuhen"), "In a Bamboo Grove" ("Yabu no naka"), and "Kappa" as his most famous stories. His stories would have been familiar to his readers, because they are from the twelfth century Tales of Times Now Past (Konjaku monogatari) which was as familiar to Japanese readers as fairy stories are to European readers. Of interest to the form of detective fiction is "In a Bamboo Grove." Subverting the classic form of the whodunit, Akutagawa presents the reader with a series of testimonies from witnesses and suspects of a murder. These do not come together to give the standard ordered narrative form of beginning, middle and end; in fact there is no conclusion. The testimonies each present a set of confusingly contradictory statements and clues. It is clear that someone is lying, or perhaps everyone is lying. But it is impossible from the testimonies to be sure who may be telling the truth and who is lying. There is no Great Detective who deduces the truth for the reader. There is no wise magistrate who cleverly questions the suspects to reveal both the truth and the moral. Instead, the reader is put firmly in the position of the detective trying to piece the puzzle together, only to find out that there is no definitive answer. The desire for realism outweighs the conventions of the classic clue-puzzle form. Akutagawa's story makes clear that in reality there is often no clear-cut distinction between truth and fiction, there are only points of view, different perspectives. The truth cannot always be definitively ascertained as in the classic clue-puzzle form. Chaos is closer to reality than order. However, in reality there would be a cross-examination by an investigating official and so Akutagawa's tale is itself clearly a fiction, a contrived reality.

Tanizaki Jun'ichirō was a versatile writer who tried many forms throughout his long career. Among the texts that Apostolou and Greenberg have classified as crime writing are his novel Evil for Pleasure (1954), The Key (1956) and A Springtime Case (1915) and the short story "The Thief" (72). Ueda sees detective elements in Tanizaki's novel, The Secret Trial of the Lord Musashi (1935) and writes:

Some of his early tales – "The Thief," "Devils Talk in Broad Daylight," and "In the Street," among others – are plotted as carefully as detective stories; indeed, they are usually assigned to that genre. The same type of suspense is built up in "Arrowroot Leaves in Yoshino," which relates the search for a missing person, while The Key
approaches the detective story when the wife begins to plot her husband’s death.

Tanizaki’s interest in the psychological motives of his characters attracted him to crime writing and the behavior of characters who are under pressure from, either having committed a crime or, from being accused of a crime. What fascinated Tanizaki was the chaos of the sub-conscious and the unknown unconscious mind. His purpose as a writer was to explore and reveal the power of the imagination: Ueda first quotes from *The Secret Trial of the Lord Musashi* and then offers a comment:

"Before this time he had been the master of his mind; he had always been able to command it in any way he liked. But at the bottom of that mind there lay something alien, something like a deep well that no conscious effort of his could reach. Now, suddenly, the cover was removed from it. Clutching the edge of the well, he looked into the dark interior." … Imagination has this capacity to reach for the depths because it is not controlled by the conscious mind; … a work of art presents truths that, because they are hidden under the surface of ordinary life, can be grasped only by the creative imagination … imaginative representation of these mysterious psychological forces … The artist, with his imaginative power, perceives the forces and creates a self-contained world in which they are given free reign. In Tanizaki’s view, this world was truer to reality than the real one. (56-60)

The acknowledgement of Freud’s concept of the unconscious self and the mistrust of surface reality can be seen in Tanizaki’s early work. Classic clue-puzzle detective fiction was a form useful to Tanizaki and others in their exploration of modernization. (The similarity between Tanizaki and Murakami in the use of the image of a well to symbolise the unconscious is remarkable.) The whole movement from the early White Birch school to the 1920s and 1930s *modanizumu* and the *ero-guro nansensu* play represented the struggle of Japanese writers to explore what it means to be human and to find their distinct voice in the world literary order.

From its early beginnings, Japanese crime fiction is complicated by the motives and purposes of its authors. Sometimes purporting to use detective fiction to educate the public in logic, writers produced stories in the classic clue-puzzle form. However, social criticism can also be seen hidden in the writings of these authors. In addition, the desire to create stories in a style unique to Japan that both reflected and explored issues important to the Japanese influenced their output of crime fiction. Conan Doyle’s first three novels and first three anthologies of the Sherlock Holmes stories were translated and published by 1913
(Miyata 513). However, the only writer who comes close to portraying a similar detective character is Kidō Okamoto (1872-1939). In 1917, Kidō published his first Inspector Hanshichi story. Set in the late Edo in the city of Edo, Hanshichi is an elderly ex-meakashi; a civilian assistant investigator employed by the police, who tells his tales to a young nephew, the admiring narrator. Kidō wrote approximately sixty-eight stories about this wise old man who was less like Sherlock Holmes and more like Baroness Orczy's old man in the corner. Also, the narrator is less like Dr. Watson and more of a simple background narrator. The setting, the plots, and the content make the series very Japanese. There are elements of the supernatural, values of samurai honour, and nostalgia for the past Tokugawa reign. Hirohisa Shimpo claims Kidō had "many imitators" (52), including Nomura Kodō (1882-1963) who produced a very popular Zenigata heiji series "of nearly 400 novels, published between 1931 and 1957" (52). Both of these writers employed the trope of the Great Detective – a character who is slightly removed from the reader through the use of the third person narration and a degree of flat characterization. Hanshichi and Zenigata are both typed as intellectual detectives who follow clues and set traps to catch their suspects in the manner of the classic clue-puzzle form. Similar intellectual detective characters were serialized and appeared in later years. Hirohisa lists that Ranpo had Akechi Kogorō as his detective character; Yokomizo Seishi (1902-1981) had Kindaichi Kōsuke; Takagi Akimitsu (1920-1995) had the forensic scientist investigator, Kamizu Kyōsuke. Hirohisa shows how the detective character has persisted in Japanese crime fiction over the years; reviving in the 1970s with the increase in female crime writers, characters, and readership; and the development of the police procedural.

III.I Introducing Diversity and Detecting Dissent

These more traditional clue-puzzle fiction stories were far from the stories that were rapidly becoming popular in the Japan of the 1920s. As Japan benefitted from economic growth, a large urban workforce was established that was better educated, more financially secure, and had an appetite for consumerism and commercial entertainment. Modern Tokyo had Asakusa Park, the twelve-storied Ryōunkaku, and the Asakusa Aquarium. The whole square was a riot of crowded entertainment designed for the Japanese modan to see and be seen. Angles describes: "Small shops, public performances, freak shows, caged animals, and gardens could be found in Hanayashi ... and Okuyama ..." (115). This was the beginning of the age of the moga and mobo – the Japanese bright young things; cafe waitresses, and salarymen (Tipton 103-4; 109-10). That Japan was changing fast is well
illustrated by the fact that "the future Shōwa emperor as 'the young prince' was instituted in March 1921, when he was sent on an extensively photographed six-month world tour in preparation for his regency" (Silverberg 28). With the rebuilding in Tokyo necessary in the aftermath of the 1923 Great Kanto earthquake, a new modern Imperial Hotel designed by Frank Lloyd Wright replaced the Ryōunkaku tower. New department stores lined the Ginza and new magazines catered to popular interest in how to dress, speak, and live modan.

Fascination for the erotic, grotesque and nonsensical (ero-guro nansensu) in this changing Japanese society was reflected in the new wave of short stories emphasizing the bizarre and unusual. While in America, writers for the Black Mask magazine stressed realism in the new form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, their Japanese counterparts were experimenting with diversity. The mixing of clue-puzzle fiction with ero-guro nansensu resulted in crime stories that extended the use of supernatural elements and the boundaries of the real and the imaginary in psychological explorations of the human mind and madness.

Shiga Naoya (1883-1971) has two ambiguous crime stories, "The Razor" and "Han's Crime." The first describes a barber famous for his perfect record of never having cut any of his male clients while shaving them. Proud of his reputation for perfection, the barber struggles out of his sickbed to sharpen a sword left by a samurai. Despite his fever, he insists on doing this himself. While at this task, a disreputable beggar enters insolently demanding a shave. Shiga does not describe the barber becoming enraged and slitting his client’s throat; instead, there is an uncanny description of the fevered mind’s reaction to an accidental cut, the drop of blood, the unfairness of a reputation ruined on the throat of a nobody, and the inevitable consequence of the throat-cutting. It is not a sensational tale told to excite readers, as ero-guro nansensu tales were dismissed. Similarly, "Han’s Crime" leaves the reader wondering if Han deliberately killed his wife or not, and whether the judge was correct or not in his verdict. This is a development on the previous century’s Chinese court tales and wise magistrate stories. In Shiga’s story, the reader is invited to act as the wise magistrate and to judge the case. Tanizaki’s early mystery stories also moved beyond a story told to shock readers. "The Thief" does portray an amoral thief who does not regret stealing from his own friends (indeed, he blames his friends for carelessly allowing him to steal from them), but it is obvious from reading that the story is an attempt to understand the inner mind of a thief: "I hope you will believe that delicate moral scruples can exist in the heart of a thief like me" (Apostolou 84; Apostolou's translation). Tanizaki’s novel Naomi was decried upon its publication in 1924 both for its overt sexual license and for its overly-critical condemnation of the modan culture. Neither conservatives nor moderns were happy with
it. However, Tanizaki could never be accused of catering to the modan taste for the ero-guro nansensu. His early 1910 story, "The Tattooer," shows his interest in the erotic and grotesque years before it was fashionable. The story also shows that his interest was not merely sensationalist. William Tyler writes that, "it raises genuine questions concerning the meaning of art, the nature of gender and power, and the problems of power" (24). This indeed is the secret of modan writing: beneath its seeming "'frivolity' ... we discover [the] agenda of erotic and grotesque nonsense has considerable substance" (Tyler 24). For Akutagawa also modanizumu offered opportunities for writing about reality in the disguise of the fantastic and grotesque. His novel Kappa is usually taken to be a social critique of a too-easy assimilation of western modern culture. Even if it is not, as Ueda argues, it can instead be read as an existential investigation into "a man who has become awakened to the monstrous 'source of life' (symbolised by the kappas), and who eventually goes insane as a result" (116). Whichever reading one prefers, the point remains that it is not a merely frivolous piece of ero-guro nansensu written for mass consumption.

Instead, the ero-guro nansensu movement should be seen as an extension of the earlier Japanese desire to fashion a literary style that would be seen as uniquely Japanese, while also thoroughly modern. It illustrates the use of folk tales, superstition, and interest in the supernatural as a way of retaining a Japanese flavor in a modern form of writing. This, then, accounts for the crime fiction stories that include ghosts, erotica, humor, history, social manners, and the afterlife. In a reciprocal relationship, crime fiction also offered the ero-guro nansensu writers a form that allowed them to explore themes and settings in sympathy with their ero-guro nansensu style. Jeffrey Angles, writing on the lure of dark city streets for ero-guro nansensu curiosity-seeking (ryōki) writers, comments: "Positioning criminality at the heart of darkness endows that darkness with a malevolent life-force and the sort of thrill that might appeal to the curiosity hunter" (124).

Angles suggests that the Japanese form of ero-guro nansensu crime fiction creates a space that allows the reader to indulge in anti-social imaginations of criminality that counter social rules and norms. Instead of remaining conservative by upholding social norms, as the classic clue-puzzle form is said to be conservative, Japanese crime fiction acts as a mechanism for the release of pressure and in this way, even as it may engage in its own disguised social criticism, it still conservatively facilitates the maintenance of social structures.
Edogawa Ranpo’s "The Two-Sen Copper Coin" ("Ni-sen dōka," 1923) follows the traditional clue-puzzle form set out by his namesake, Edgar Allan Poe. It seems as though Ranpo was at pains to name himself as a disciple of a western master. "The Two-Sen Copper Coin" has an ingenious plot that initially seems easy to figure out. The reader continues the story, confirming this initial assumption in smug self-congratulation, only to be astounded with the final twist. The wry reader can only laugh at having been so thoroughly fooled, and is now prepared for reading other Edogawa Ranpo stories. Ranpo establishes his credentials with references to Sherlock Holmes, Poe’s “The Gold Bug,” the codes of Roger Bacon and King Charles I, and Hornung’s 1890s Raffles series. Even in this first of his stories, Ranpo warns the reader through a conversation between the two main characters, "Do you really believe reality is as romantic as all that? ... Granted your fantasies may have all the makings of a novel, but the world is far more realistic than any story" (Tyler 287). Ranpo began as a master of the clever final twist in his carefully plotted stories. But as his career developed, his stories became more and more bizarre and nansensu. "The Man Traveling with the Brocade Portrait" (1929), is a mystery story leaving the reader puzzled about what is real and what is fantasy or madness. "The Caterpillar" (1929) is one of the stories which gained notoriety for Ranpo and claimed him as a major writer in the ero-guro nansensu style. While it may no longer seem erotic to contemporary readers, it remains grotesque and somewhat sad.

However, in 1939, Ranpo’s "The Caterpillar" was banned from republication by the growingly repressive censorship board. While in no way a clue-puzzle detective story, it describes borderline psychological states leaving the reader wondering again if this is meant as realism or fantasy. The story lingers in the memory in much the same way as a puzzle, since its questions are a puzzle with no answer. In this, one of the last of Ranpo’s stories, the element of social critique is clear – and may have been the real reason for its censoring, not the erotic representation of women’s libido. Ranpo’s irony rings with sarcasm in the descriptions of the war hero: "... he was awarded the Fifth Order of the Golden Kite in compensation for the loss of his four limbs. ... she could not help but wonder if it wasn’t all too ludicrous" (415). As Japan was engaged in war in China and preparing for dominion in

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16 Discussions abound on who wrote the first detective story. Despite the popular notion that Edgar Allan Poe was the first writer in English of the detective story, most contemporary historians of crime fiction agree that credit cannot be attributed entirely to Poe (see Knight, Ascari, Worthington). Origins are complex and neither Ranpo nor Poe can be said to have written the first detective story. What is interesting to note, however, is that Poe was read by many writers of crime fiction and Poe’s combination of mystery, horror, supernatural and crime detection may have opened possibilities of genre-mixing in the minds of other writers. It is unlikely, though, that the Japanese creative experimentation is due solely to Poe’s influence.
Asia, it was no wonder Ranpo’s story was censored. It is surprising that it was published. "The Caterpillar" also has an indirect criticism of the press itself. "It went without saying that the brilliant – even demonic – battlefield heroics of Lieutenant Sunaga and the miraculous facts of the surgical procedures were written up in the papers" (414). This was as close as he might dare to a criticism of the media’s tendency to exploit suffering without caring for the actual lives of the suffering. (Ranpo’s stories were published in newspapers and magazines.)

These social commentaries within *modanizumu* stories made the attacks by the Japanese Marxist writers (of proletarian stories) all the more mistaken. In various ways, Japanese writers did engage in social criticism, though not as radical as the proletarian writings of the Marxists. The *ero-guro nansensu* was less an escape into other worlds than a disguised method of questioning the reality and conventions of this world. As far back as 1910, Sōseki wrote a preface for Nagatsuka Takashi’s novel *Earth* (*Tsuchi*, 1910) approving of its depiction of the ordinary daily struggle of poor farmers. The death of Marxist writer, Kobayashi Takiji (1903-1933), beaten to death at the hands of the police in 1933, spoke a loud warning to Japanese writers of all genres. Certainly, as Japan became more imperialistic in its pursuit of a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, extending its ambition beyond Manchuria to have economic control over all China and other east Asian countries, including those controlled by western colonial powers, then any perceived criticism of the national project, or indeed of anything Japanese, was no longer tolerated by government administration. It became dangerous to write or publish critical material. The *Tokkō* (Thought Control Police) had been established since 1911 to keep in check radical groups, but its powers were extended in 1925 by the Peace Preservation Law (Tipton 97; Beasley 184-88). Again, the role of a writer was to further the nation’s interest, though this became increasingly defined by government and state censors, and not by the writer. Gonda Manji’s comment on Edogawa Ranpo can be extended to all writers of *ero-guro nansensu*:

As Edogawa’s short stories exemplify, mysteries came to focus less and less on logical solutions to riddles. This tendency was fostered partly by the social climate in Japan immediately prior to World War II; it became impossible to write realistically under the rule of absolutist imperial authority. In fact, during the war, Japan’s militarist government banned mystery stories. (160)

This brings to a head the contribution of the Japanese to the genre. Kawana situates this wave of writers in the changed world of modernity. Japan had engaged in the Sino-

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17 Omori Kyoko has documented the role of *Shinseinen* magazine (1920-1950) in the popularity of crime fiction in Japan, *Detecting Japanese Vernacular Modernism*. 
Japanese war (1894-95), the Russo-Japanese war (1904-05), and the first world war (1914-18), and although not as economically successful as they might have hoped, these military engagements boosted Japan's self-prestige and morale. Increasing economic production was also drawing in wealth to the nation and the quantity of both imported and exported goods increased. Kawana observes, "Japan had to find its own destiny as a colonial suzerain, a modern nation with both an emperor and a budding democracy, and a cultural power" (6).

Having worked so hard, sacrificed so much, and looked forward for so long to achieving a modern, wealthy, powerful state, Japan was finally in a position to wonder if it actually wanted western modernization.

Like many who strive to achieve a dream, many Japanese seemed disillusioned and empty in the late Meiji and early Taishō era. Tanizaki Jun'ichirō's story "Secret" ("Himitsu," 1911) and Edogawa Ranpo's "Red Chamber" and "A Wanderer in the Attic" ("Akai Heya,"1925 and "Yaneura no Sanposha," 1925) have as their central characters bored, dissatisfied young men. While the intellectual and bored young men in the west were depicted as usefully engaged in tightly structured classic clue-puzzle form (as exemplified by Dorothy L. Sayers's Lord Peter Wimsey), the Japanese authors were willing to go beyond the form of either the classic or the hard-boiled and to explore instead a mix of genres and a more direct engagement in social issues. The much lauded power of reason had led to some questionable scientific, military, and economic excesses, and new moral questions emerged. Had Japan given up too much of its own values and culture in the drive for modernization?

This questioning, arising at a time of economic prosperity and social change and during the growth of military imperialism, has echoes in the much later work of Murakami who, it will be seen, also questions the price Japan has had to pay for its economic success and its military power. That such questions are repeated in the work of Murakami years later suggests that historical issues have not yet been resolved.

Opposing the ero-guro nansensu style in Japanese literature was the Marxist social-realism school – also longing for another, brighter future; the interior confessional I-novel (watakushi shōsetsu) turning away from the world and withdrawing inside to an interior monologue; and the literature of writers returning to the pre-Meiji world in nostalgic historical novels of Japanese beauty and heroism (Tipton 105-7). The ero-guro nansensu writers were not the only movement who could be accused of escapism. Okamoto Kidō's detective character, Inspector Hanshichi, is an old-school policeman and his stories are set in the Edo period (officially 1603-1868, but Kidō here nostalgically looks back to the 1840s to

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1860s – prior to the Meiji Enlightenment and its modernization). Even if Kidō claimed Sherlock Holmes as his inspiration, Hanshichi’s method of investigation shows little reasoning and a lot more of intuitive guesswork and mere odd coincidence. Silver says, "In Kidō’s stories, the benefits conferred by modernity are forever suspect; the electric lights are likely to fail at any moment" (131). Crime fiction became a site where these suspicions could find expression within plots of murdering mad scientists, returned soldiers, politicians and businessmen. Readers familiar with Murakami’s texts can recognise similar characters and themes in his work.

As well as casting these characters as murderers, crime fiction expanded to allow digressions from the form:

Less interested in upholding the generic format than their Western counterparts, Japanese detective writers used the framework of the genre to package and disseminate their ideas on such modern phenomena as urbanization, privacy (both its acquisition and its violation), abnormal sexuality, science devoid of ethics, and total war. ... detective writers also served as guides to the dark side of modernity, urging readers to examine problems from new angles and devise solutions in and outside the textual space, all the while maintaining the façade that this philosophical quest is nothing more than a frivolous diversion for mass consumption. (Kawana 10-11)

In many ways this response of the Japanese writers to aspects of modernization echoes the American writers in the 1920s. While, in this general context, the British response to the changes brought with modernity was to use the classic clue-puzzle form, either to uphold or question established values of justice, class and rationality; the Americans, instead, explored the new form of hard-boiled private eye fiction to reflect the corruption, wealth and unreasonableness of modernity. The Japanese also seemed to question their rapidly changing nation but, like the Americans, had not settled on any single form of crime fiction. Their social critique is embedded in plot and style. The politicization of the form of crime fiction by the Japanese writers is distinct from the writing of the American hard-boiled private eye or the European classic clue-puzzle forms. It is also

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19 This, of course, over-simplifies the each national response. Detective fiction in America did not develop into the hard-boiled private eye form as a response to the classic clue-puzzle form, despite Raymond Chandler’s assertions (“The Simple Art of Murder”). Socio-historical circumstances, writers’ creativity, and commercial pressures are among the circumstances that gave rise to the hard-boiled private eye form in America. Generic history is never simple.

20 There were writers in the clue-puzzle form whose socialist beliefs influenced their writing, Eric Ambler and C. Day Lewis (writing as Nicholas Blake), for example. Even the writings of Agatha Christie cannot be as easily classified as conservative as Chandler claimed.
different from the later metaphysical or postmodern semiotic experimentations of Robbe-Grillet, Borges, or Eco. Angles asserts:

*Tantei shōsetsu*, the genre in which Ranpo and his followers specialized, is sometimes misleadingly translated 'detective fiction,' but only some of the stories classified under this rubric describe the adventure of police detectives or private investigators. Many feature people who find themselves involved in a strange situation and attempt to get to the bottom of it ... their desire to investigate a strange occurrence (most often a crime) may derive as much from curiosity and the desire to assuage boredom. (126-127)

Angles could well have been describing the typical protagonist in Murakami's novels.

### III.II Coded Criticism in Wartime and Postwar Detective Fiction

It was during the war years especially, and in their immediate aftermath, that Japanese writers needed to be extra careful not to fall foul of the official censors. Social criticism was read as unpatriotic and Japanese writers had to learn to disguise their opinions. The technique of copying a form, and concealing within it questions or outright dissent, is a skill that went back beyond the first translators of crime fiction, Robun and Ruikō. It was a skill, however, that Japanese writers certainly found useful. In an earlier article, Kawana clearly explains how Yokomizo Seishi (1902-1981) "could manipulate the existing rules of the genre and the conventions of Western detective fiction" ("With Rhyme" 119). Writing generally in the form of classic clue-puzzle detective fiction, Yokomizo was a known admirer of John Dickson Carr. However, Yokomizo’s detective character, Kindaichi Kōsuke, wears "kimono and hakama, ... stammers when excited and flakes of dandruff flutter from his unkempt hair" (Hirohisa 55). Yokomizo was adept at borrowing ideas from classic clue-puzzle writers and resetting them in Japan. For example, he uses the nursery rhyme murder technique from Agatha Christie but uses *haiku* verse instead (*Gokumontō;* Gokumon Island, 1949). Yokomizo similarly adapted real-life murder cases into plots for his novels (notably, *Yatsu-haka mura; Village of the Eight Graves*, 1951). However, Yokomizo’s first novel *Onibi*, 1935, was censored by the Japanese government who felt it drew unfavorable attention to murder at a time when the pro-nationalistic administration wanted to valorize Japanese cultural values. Post-war Japan was to be much more sympathetic to clue-puzzle fiction and crime writers. After experiencing war, the reality of crime and murder may have become easier to imagine. The disorder of post-war society and the revelations of corruption may have created an audience for the reassurance of classic clue-puzzle fiction.
Japan was a very different nation following the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese conflict, the second world war, and the Pacific war (1937-1945). Kawana briefly describes:

The Pacific War was Japan’s first brush with total war, and the casualties, financial losses, and emotional trauma it generated far exceeded those experienced in previous international conflicts. Those who survived the ordeal were forced to adopt a new worldview, taking into consideration the pain of mass destruction and the real possibility of its future recurrence. For them, the world had gone mad and could easily go even madder. ("With Rhyme" 123)

Considering Japan witnessed firsthand the immediate effects and continued aftermath of two atom bombs, Kawana’s description is mild. Remembering also that Japan was occupied by American forces (1945-1952), and administered by a newly imposed American-style democratic constitution (although Japan retained a role for the emperor as titular head of state, he was no longer considered a deity), the world had indeed changed radically for the Japanese people. It had physically become an occupied nation.

The Japanese had journeyed far along the western road. The combined threat of American, Russian, and British ships had forced Japan to reopen to the west in the mid 1800s. Japan then had to accept the humiliating unequal treaties imposed on it by these western powers. Japan responded by initiating a policy of Civilization and Enlightenment, copying intensely the best from the various western powers in an attempt to gain equality and acceptance by the west. There was the belief that Japan could hope to gain equal international status, and the ending of the hated unequal treaties, only through engaging in military colonial conquest (see Buruma’s descriptions of the Japanese response to victory over China during the Sino-Japanese wars, Inventing Japan 50-3; and Tipton’s summary, 119-23). This contributed to the reasons for Japan’s copying the western example in building an efficient army and navy, and annexing first the Kuril and Ryukyu Islands (1875 and 1879), Taiwan (Formosa, 1895), Korea (1894-1910), southern Sakalin Island (Karafuto, 1905); and then Manchuria (1905-1932), the Liaodong Peninsula, Mongolia, and eastern China (1915-1917). From its initial fear of being colonized by western powers, Japan turned to copying the tactics of the colonizers and became in turn an aggressive colonizer.

Initially, it seemed this political copying of western colonization proved successful for Japan: the unequal treaties were revised from 1894 onwards, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was signed in 1902, and trade agreements favorable to Japan followed. Modernization and imperial military colonization initially earned for Japan the respect of
western nations. However, as Japan bred a racist, totalitarian military regime, respect turned to fear and hatred when its military forces later engaged in war atrocities.

Crime fiction writers now had to contend with these wartime experiences and the mixture of postwar American censorship (again, both real and imagined) during the war trials and the American occupation.21 As had been argued before in the Meiji era, Yokomizo declared that "Japanese do not read detective fiction as much as they should. ... detective writers need to write rational ... and intellectual ... detective fiction [in order to] ... begin to build a (new) Japanese culture" (trans. Kawana, "With Rhyme" 125). This became Yokomizo’s project and he was endorsed by Ranpo and others. It was a message that could easily find favor with American administrators keen to publically endorse fact-finding and the revelation of the truth. Although Kawana finds no sub-message of criticism in Yokomizo’s work against the American or other western powers, she does contend that his stories can be read as indirect criticisms against war, superstition, and the remnants of traditional feudal hierarchy. These themes also would find support from the American administration. In general, "A close reading of the text reveals that Gokumontō [Gokumon Island; literally, Hell's Gate Island ... (1947) 119] offers ... a reflection on what caused or allowed the fervor of imperialism to take over Japan" (126). Kawana’s close reading does indeed persuade that "Yokomizo’s attempt to use this subgenre as a medium for political critique" (126) was successful. There was in Japanese crime fiction a tradition of writing that hid beneath the surface of the text clues a deeper reading that offered a critical analysis of Japan’s socio-cultural history and values. Again, this is not unique to Japan, but it was present in Japanese literature.

IV. Japanese Detective Fiction and the Hard-Boiled American Occupation

Crime fiction in Japan privileged the classic clue-puzzle detective stories that encouraged the reader to participate in puzzle-solution challenges. The clue-puzzle form was thought to develop the rational skills of the readers and thus contributed to the national project of modernization. However, there were always Japanese writers who sought to experiment with the genre and to use it to question Japanese society. Following the Japanese surrender that officially ended the Pacific war, Japan was forced to submit to an American administration. The introduction of all-things American into Japan brought the genre of the hard-boiled private eye novel in both English paperbacks and in Japanese translation. These paperbacks influenced Japanese writers and were read by Murakami.

21 For censorship in Japan, see Buruma Inventing Japan 135-7.
Emperor Hirohito, the same young prince who had toured Europe prior to his reign as the Showa emperor, proclaimed the Japanese surrender in a prerecorded radio broadcast on August 15, 1945. He asked the Japanese people to accept surrender "by enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable" (Dower 34). The resulting seven year American occupation under General MacArthur’s SCAP (Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers) administration initiated a new democratic constitution and socio-political reorganization. The new 1949 constitution inscribed a strict policy of neutrality for Japan, formally renouncing war and forbidding the arming of a Japanese force capable of war (article nine). The Japanese welcomed the American-style democracy that initially encouraged trade unions and political parties of all ideologies, rebuilt roads, schools, and train lines, provided agricultural advice, and introduced new technology into the pre-war heavy industries, while they also initially opposed the zaibatsu banking and business monopoly conglomerates by introducing anti-monopoly laws. All things American became popular. American clothes, food, music, reading material, and movies became popular. In addition, the hard-boiled detective fiction of Hammett, Gardner, Chandler, Spillane, Rice, and Irish was translated and the hard-boiled style gained a Japanese readership that it had not previously enjoyed. The Japanese film industry produced gangster movies and film noir, exploring the character of the private eye as a Japanese lone hero with integrity. Japanese yakuzi gangs were a common feature in plots to give a local setting.

Once the post war restrictions on paper and ink were lifted, the Japanese print industry quickly regained circulation. In a 1959 review, Miyata Shipachiro wrote that, Since the war, ... there has been an increasingly large flow of detective and mystery stories, and the space devoted to them in newspapers and magazines has increased also.... The whisper seems to be going the rounds among publishers that a 'quiet boom' in detective fiction is upon us (509).

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22 The Japanese zaibatsu were family-owned banks and business conglomerates. By controlling both finance and manufacturing in a tight monopoly, certain Japanese families prospered enormously and gained significant political power. The zaibatsu system was seen by the Americans as sharing in the Japanese aggressive military drive for imperialism that sparked the Asia Pacific wars. Initially, it was an American post-war aim to break the zaibatsu with anti-monopoly laws. Later, it was seen that Japan's economy would be severely weakened and that it would lose much of its manufacturing industry. With America's engagement in the Cold War and in the Korean war, American advisers realized their dependence on an economically strong Japan that could counter communist influences in Asia, and could also provide supplies for the American army, navy, and airforce (Morris-Suzuki *Japanese Capitalism* 109-15). This change in policy (the "reverse course") owed much to the economic politics of Joseph Dodge, but also suited business interests in Japan. Morris-Suzuki writes, "From 1951 onwards, the former zaibatsu trading companies, dissolved during the American occupation, began to reconstitute their dismembered parts" (115). The old zaibatsu system was remolded into the present keiretsu system of satellite companies with mutual interests.
In 1953, the Hayakawa Pocket Mysteries began publication of a series of translations and local authors which numbered 1,600 titles by year 2000. Its rival, Tokyo Sōgensha, published the World Mystery Series in 1956, 1,500 titles by year 2000 (Hirohisa 57). Miyata draws attention to the phenomenal success of Niki Estuko’s *The Cat Knew* which sold 120,000 copies for this first-time female writer (511).

However, despite the enthusiasm for American consumerist culture, the American hard-boiled form of private eye fiction did not attract a large following in Japan. Prior to the Pacific War, only Ko Haruto was writing what bordered on hard-boiled crime stories ("Black Market Blues"), in a loose vernacular style of direct short sentences and a dark city setting. Nakajima Kawataro writing in 1962 wondered about the possible reasons why “this new trend abroad failed to take root in Japan” and put it down to Japan’s lack of private detectives and noted vaguely that “The social conditions which had produced the hard-boiled school differed from those prevailing in Japan” (52). During the initial years of the American hard-boiled private eye form, Japanese crime fiction writers were engaged in the *ero-guro nansensu* style. But the post-war proliferation of translations of American hard-boiled fiction, and its consequent reproduction in *noir* films, did initiate a new form for Japanese writers. Nakajima suggested, "The spread of television in addition to the radio and the cinema has encouraged a taste for suspense which does not depart too far from reality" (53). The teenage Murakami Haruki was buying second-hand copies of the American hard-boiled detective writer, Ross Macdonald, and not Japanese authors, most likely from soldiers based in Ashiya Air Base. Responding to the trend, Japanese writers like Matsumoto Seichō, and Takagi Akimitsu (1920-) with his detective character Kamizu Kyosuke, and Morimura Seiichi (1933-) turned towards a more realistic plot and setting, with less of the supernatural and erotic or grotesque.

The American enthusiasm for introducing democracy into Japan proved short-lived. The cold-war between America and the Soviet Union resulted in a "reverse course" for Japan. America now needed a conservative bulwark in Asia (Tipton 156-9; Dower 541-3) and urgently needed a supply depot for its war in Korea (1950-1953); as it would again use Japan in its war against Vietnam (1961-1975). Japan was thus encouraged to develop its economy and to develop a capitalist mentality (Dower 546). The earlier insistence on the reorganization of the *zaibatsu* was quietly set aside and, instead, the *zaibatsu* flourished in the new climate (529-33). Despite the pacifist article nine clause in the constitution, the Americans retained army, air, and navy bases in Japan (under the ANPO agreement), and stocked chemical weapons on Japanese soil (Beasley 226). Meanwhile, Japan braced itself
for a united drive toward economic development under the leadership of Yoshida Shigeru. Once again, Japan was to be united by a national goal. Needless to say, the administration’s sympathy for trade unions and Marxist ideology waned.

Matsumoto Seichō (1909-1992) had been writing crime fiction prior to the war and had been supported by Edogawa Ranpo. Matsumoto adhered quite closely to the classic clue-puzzle formula of detective fiction and general crime writing. The element of _ero-guro nansensu_ was minimized and totally absent from many of his stories and novels. Instead, Matsumoto wrote stories of average individuals who commit criminal acts for various reasons, usually focusing on the motive of the criminal, who is sometimes driven to confess through feelings of guilt. Matsumoto’s stories written in the 1950s, (translated by Adam Kabat as _The Voice and Other Stories_), illustrated the beliefs that crime does not pay and that justice will out. The reader follows plots of what could be perfect crimes only to be persuaded that the criminals are driven by guilt, growing paranoia and fear to confess their crimes. Sometimes, personal honour may lead them to confess, or plain solid detective work will result in a confrontation and confession. There exists a certain dignity to Matsumoto’s criminals; they are not portrayed as bad people or offenders against society (as in western classic clue-puzzle fiction). Rather, there is an understanding and sympathy evoked for the perpetrators in a manner that is different from the sympathy of Chandler’s hard-boiled criminals. Matsumoto’s criminals are not stupid nor lacking options; instead, they are portrayed with dignity, understanding, and honor. Some of the stories in _The Voice_ selection show the uneven quality of Matsumoto’s writing (he was a prolific writer and was often pushed to meet deadlines by editors eager to use his stories to boost sales) and some of the stories would have made better full-length novels. However, Matsumoto is most frequently noticed as the writer who explored the social setting of his stories, ”Matsumoto exposed the social injustices underlying contemporary politics and business” (Gonda 157). Drawing from his early working life in northern Kyushu where he struggled to make a living, Matsumoto initiated the Japanese social detective form, joined later by Natsuki Shizuko (1938 -) who uses a female lawyer as her protagonist investigating business and political corruption, and Minakami Tsutomu (1919-2004), and Kuroiwa Jūgo (1924-2003).

The Japanese social detective school may have expanded the setting and the scope of crime in the detective fiction stories, but it was not unique in using the form to offer a critique of society. From the first, this seems a purpose for Japanese crime fiction writers. Japanese crime fiction writers since Matsumoto have continued to write about corporate, political, financial crime, extending the concept of crime beyond the traditional murder case,
or theft, or disappearance. As society is seen as more complex, crime is recognized as hegemonic. Writers in America, Europe and throughout the world were following similar trends in recognizing the more complex setting of social crimes. Even if the young Murakami did not read these Japanese authors, he followed the tradition of using the form to write his own commentary on social crime in Japan.

Japan’s location had proved strategic to America during the Korean war (1950-1953). The war had given Japan an opportunity to build up its economy by specializing in high grade steel production. The Japanese Ministry for International Trade and Industry (MITI) arranged low cost loans for Japanese industry and the reconstruction of cities and ports destroyed in the war brought employment (Beasley 246). By 1956, the GNP for Japan had reached prewar levels and family incomes were rising steadily also. The American engagement in the Vietnam war provided yet another opportunity for supplying equipment and machinery, spurring economic growth: "Japanese companies received contracts worth nearly two billion dollars for textiles, lumber, paper, steel, and vehicles" (McClain 573-574).

The Japanese middle class again felt a degree of comfort and security. The large industrial companies were a source of a job for life and the Japanese salary man (sararî-man) loyal to his company benefitted from this near-paternal relationship. In addition, many smaller companies depended on sub-contracted work from large industries and provided employment for specialists. Underlying the new democracy were the older Japanese power relationships between government, industry, banking and major families. The American occupation had left many Japanese with the dream of a new socio-political structure offering a more equitable sharing of wealth and power; democracy blending with the ever-popular Marxist teachings. Hidaka Rokurō writes of this optimism: "... there was an overall consensus of opinion within the country with regard to national goals. No matter how poor and small a nation Japan might be, internationally it should abide by pacifism, and domestically it should build a democratic society where meager resources would be equally shared" (64-65).

The 1950s had also been a time of major trade union strikes in the coal, steel and iron industries. In 1960, a year long strike in the Miike coal mines gained wide media coverage (Tipton 166). Opposing redundancy plans, the Miike miners were joined by sympathetic students in mass demonstrations that were further politicized by opposition to American use of Japanese bases for their war in Vietnam. The American atomic bomb tests in waters bordering Japanese fishing limits had roused fears when a Japanese fisherman died from nuclear exposure in 1954 (the Bikini fishing incident). The lifting of the media ban on
the description of the destruction from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki nuclear bombing, and its consequences for the health of its victims, allowed for the lobbying for recognition of nuclear radiation disease victims. This meant that the Japanese people were growing in awareness of the possible consequences of any accident in the transportation of American nuclear material across Japanese territory. The United States-Japan Security Treaty (ANPO) was due for renegotiation in 1960, and this occasioned further student mass protest. "The public response was the largest and most widespread popular political demonstration in Japanese history. Almost every day during May and June in 1960 hundreds of thousands of union members, students, white collar workers, intellectuals, and housewives staged massive demonstrations outside the Diet building" (Duus 263). The Prime Minister, Kishi Nobusuki, ensured the ratification of the ANPO agreement, and then acknowledged this disregard for public opinion by resigning from office. An official visit of President Eisenhower was cancelled, due mostly to public unrest in Japan. Trade union and student unrest quietened for a time during the "Japanese miracle" of Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato (1960-1964). However, an undercurrent of dissatisfaction continued throughout the 1960s' rapid economic growth.

Murakami Haruki was born in 1949, in Kyoto, and spent his next nine years in Ashiya (in the Hyogo Prefecture, along Osaka Bay). Murakami, then, grew up during the postwar prosperity. Ashiya had been badly bombed during the war but it was a wealthy city. Ikeda unified political groups by initiating the economic "double income" policy. The promise was to double the income of every Japanese family by the end of the decade. "From 1954 to 1967 the GNP of Japan grew at an average annual rate of about 10 percent, faster than any other national economy in the world and about three times as fast as the United States" (Duus 256). The enormous success of this industrial drive can be seen from economic statistics, however, the cost can equally be guessed from the mining disaster costing 460 lives in the infamous Miike coal mine, illustrating how health and safety regulations were often disregarded in the effort to meet the demand for high production levels. Hamada Koichi describes "the damages caused by pollution ... 'Itai-Itai (Ache-Ache) Disease' caused by cadmium waste by the Mitsui Metal and Mining Co., 'Minamata Disease' caused by eating fish and shellfish polluted by mercury that was contained in the waste of the New Nippon Nitrogen (now Chisso) Co. in Minamata Bay, and ... 'Yokkaichi Zensoku (Asthma)' caused by air pollution of petroleum refining companies in Yokkaichi" (8). By the end of the decade, Japan had become known worldwide as the nation that produced and exported high-class electronic goods, cars, optics, and industrial and agricultural chemical products. The success
of the 1964 Olympic Games in Tokyo gave positive international media coverage of Japan and a much needed boost to the Japanese self-image. The speed and efficiency of the bullet train (*shinkansen*) became yet another symbol of Japanese efficiency, design, and technology. Japan had transformed from an impoverished post-war nation to a nation of affluent consumerism. Carol Gluck’s essay, "The Past in the Present" summarizes the popularization of the economic changes in the standards of living for most Japanese: "... consumers of the late 1960s moved from the convenient ‘three treasures’ to the middle-class ‘three C’s’ and began to dream of the luxurious ‘three V’s.’" Gluck draws from Shiba Ryōtarō for these popularizations, and explains: "The three treasures (1957): washing machine, vacuum cleaner, refrigerator; the three C’s (1966): cooler, car, color television; the three V’s (1973): villa, *vacansu*, and visit (vacation house, overseas travel, and guests for dinner)" (59). This was the Japan that Murakami knew from childhood. Wartime Japan was only history for Murakami and his generation; stories spoken about by his parents and elders. However, as Murakami finished his schooling and considered university, the 1950s' disputes by trade unionists, students, anti-ANPO protestors and aggrieved idealists wanting greater democratic representation, reasserted themselves despite the high speed economic growth. Murakami was more directly influenced by this decade of Japanese history, and not by the war and its aftermath.

The US-Japan Security Treaty (ANPO) was due for ratification in 1970. Protests by student youth against the American involvement in Vietnam disrupted cities across the world. 1968 seemed for many the last opportunity to initiate a Marxist revolution. For others, the anti-war protests were also a chance to fight for the utopia of equity and justice. In Japan, all of these reasons were joined to protests against corruption in university administration.23 Student protests against increased tuition fees had occurred in Keio University in 1964, in Waseda University the following year, and in Chuo University in 1966. Murakami entered Waseda University to study Theatre Arts in 1968.

It was the introduction of two extra years of medical internship in Tokyo University that provoked the students there to begin a sit-in and to take-over of the university. The *Zenkyoto* student organization barricaded the university against riot police for almost a full year. The University suspended classes and cancelled entrance exams for incoming students. Entangled in the student protests and socialist idealist movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s was the *Rengo Sekigun* or the United Red Army (some members later reformed the group as the notorious Japanese Red Army movement, the JRA). Committed

23 Marotti’s article, "Japan 1968," gives a good, detailed account of the protests and media coverage.
to the use of violence to attain their communist objectives, the United Red Army initially had wide sympathy from Japanese who supported the trade union, students, and anti-war protests. However, with the Asama-Sanso incident of February, 1972, public opinion turned against the group and against street protests in general. In an internal purge of party members, leaders of the United Red Army beat to death eight members and one non-member and then left six other members to freeze to death in the mountainous region of Mount Asama, Nagano prefecture. In a holiday lodge there, the group held a woman hostage while police and media watched. As the police finally stormed the building, the group surrendered. The widespread media coverage of this event deepened the disillusionment with socialism and civilian protest. As the 1960s generation began to seek employment and as the oil crises necessitated a downscaling of economic growth, public attention was directed elsewhere. The American dream of democracy, freedom, and independence is suggested in the nostalgia expressed in the early novels of Murakami Haruki.

V. Conclusion

This chapter opened with comments from E.H. Carr and Hayden White that all historiography contains the ideologies of its writers. This historiography of the roots of Japanese detective fiction has its own purposes: to show the diversity of roots and forms possible in the genre of crime fiction; to show the characteristics of Japanese crime fiction; and, to show the openness to experimentation and hybridity of Japanese writers. Similarly, the historical context of Japan has been discussed to show the context from which Murakami emerged as a writer. The understanding is that Murakami is not writing in isolation but in response to the pressures of his time. His texts, then, beginning with A Wild Sheep Chase, look back at the context of Japan in the 1960s to the 1990s. This has been the historical context primarily addressed in all his novels again and again, with the exception of Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World. It will be noted that past issues from Japan’s military involvement in Manchuria, its colonization of minority ethnic groups in the northern islands, and the ongoing struggle between the individual and the national collective are all repeated issues throughout the novels, A Wild Sheep Chase, The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle, and Kafka on the Shore. These repetitions show the importance of these issues to

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24 Strecher briefly summarises the parallels between this incident and the description and events in Rat’s mountain lodge in Hokkaido, in A Wild Sheep Chase. See footnote 2, Strecher 37.
25 Members from the Japanese Red Army later formed links with international terrorist organizations. Subsequent acts of terrorism were met with condemnation and outrage by the Japanese public.
Murakami the writer and they show his belief that there exists in the context of Japan's past certain unresolved issues. The modernization project certainly left its mark on a society driven to achieve the power of status and wealth, but the texts also suggest that there are ghosts of the past buried in Murakami and Japan's history.

Looking back at past crimes is a structural trope of the hard-boiled private eye form. The historiography of hard-boiled private eye fiction has its own unresolved issues, not the least of which is the loss of its identity as it was subsumed within the hierarchically superior genre of classic clue-puzzle fiction. As Japan has had to negotiate its identity against the wider global community, so too has hard-boiled private eye fiction had to name itself against the dominant form of classic clue-puzzle fiction. Genre rivalries have not hindered the actual writing of hard-boiled private eye fiction, but they have influenced its relegation to a secondary status against the classic clue-puzzle form in the historiography of crime fiction. The following chapter looks at this history, showing how the creativity of genre-mixing was always part of the growth and development of new forms. Murakami may have inherited an openness to hybridity from his Japanese literary roots, however, he may also have inherited it from the roots of hard-boiled private eye fiction. The specific form of hard-boiled private eye fiction will be described in order to provide a template for the examination of how its form, and especially its structure, has affected Murakami's writing. The characterization of the detective hero will be explored. Clues to the underlying values of truth and justice can be seen in the characters and plots of the hard-boiled private eye formula and traces of attitudes towards wealth and class division can be glimpsed in the portrayal of the corrupt city setting of most of the hard-boiled novels. The rugged frontier individualism of the hard-boiled detective finds its origins, not in the classic clue-puzzle counterpart of European origins, but in the American tradition of frontier and western cowboy stories. This glorification of individualism is nested in the seemingly dissonant values of friendship and family, and also in the professionalization of the work ethic of the private eye. Together, these values form the personal code by which the hard-boiled private eye lives, and which collectively give him (these early characters were most frequently male gendered) his identity as a hard-boiled detective; a tough guy with a touch of chivalry. The backward structured plot of the hard-boiled private eye novel involves the detective in investigations of crimes that are rooted in past events and the retrospective nature of the plot gives rise to the themes of memory, past events, and historicity. Whilst often dismissed as mere pulp fiction written to a formula designed for mass entertainment, the form of the hard-boiled
private eye novel has allowed the expression of values that both reflect and challenge the social norms.

Genre limits the writer, and writing within the structure of a set formula can constrict creativity. Murakami’s texts resist the narrowness of formula but borrow from hard-boiled private eye fiction (as well as from other forms) in a cross-generic creativity. However, later chapters may well show that there is a dialogic relationship in this borrowing from a literary form; the form itself also influences the text giving rise to meanings beyond the possible intentions of the author. Beginning with the characteristics of the hard-boiled private eye form and its structure, the following chapter will conclude with the identification of themes that will be used in a reading of the novels of Murakami that can be classified as most closely related to the form and structure of hard-boiled private eye fiction: The Wild Sheep Chase (WSC), Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World (HBW&EW), Dance, Dance, Dance (DDD), The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (WBC), and Kafka on the Shore (KOS). A brief mention of the novel, 1Q84, will be given in the final chapter.
Chapter Three
The History and the Form of Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction

There is a curious irony in the coupling of the words detective and fiction. It flies in the face of what detective fiction claims about itself. Detective Fiction: the term itself is a puzzle in search of a solution. It deconstructs itself. To detect is to find, to discover. Indeed, facts are sacrosanct. This is an illusion. In the form of clue-puzzle fiction, the process of detection is understood to be logical, reasonable and rational, scientific even. However, the whole process is fiction. It exists only through the imaginative exercise of writers and readers. The detective, in this literary form, is the character commissioned to discover the facts. The job of the detective is to detect all the fabrications, the various fictions in the case and, by stripping these away, the detective is left with the final solution. Detective fiction attempts a mimesis and carefully conceals the fact that it is a construction. In this, it is no different from any other genre of fiction; it depends on the agreement between writer and reader to enter into the creative process. Like all true fictions, detective fiction is a game. The term detective fiction, then, indicates that what shall be found out (detected) will be fiction. Although in the detective fiction novels there are plenty of facts mentioned, all is fiction.

This chapter is a detection of the possible context and sources of the fiction of Murakami Haruki in the novels which most heavily rely on the structure and form of hard-boiled private eye fiction: WSC, HBW&EW, DDD, WBC, and KOS. The previous chapter explored the mixed sources of crime fiction in Japan as an important context for Murakami’s fiction. The hybridity of the form in Japanese literature is an example of the difficulties of attempting any definition of detective fiction. (It is better perhaps to agree to the more inclusive term, crime fiction, and allow the two forms of classic clue-puzzle and hard-boiled private eye fiction to exist with other variants, the police procedural, forensic crime stories, and others.) The influence of Chinese fictive forms, the acceptance of the supernatural and fantastic elements, as well as historical-cultural attitudes all played a part in the narrative of Japanese forms of crime fiction. The origins and the structure of hard-boiled private eye fiction will provide the other important context for Murakami’s fiction that will be described in this chapter. This contextualization is as an introduction to the narrative that this thesis

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26 Roger Caillois was the first to refer to the qualities of game in the detective novel, "The Detective Novel as Game," in Most and Stowe, 1-12. See also Heissenbüttel in the same collection, "Rules of the Game of the Crime Novel" 79-92, for a more playful reading.
offers on Murakami as a Japanese literary explorer who has been influenced by, and who influences, the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction.

As in the last chapter's history of Japan, it can be expected that the historiography of crime fiction will reveal a selection from historical events (the publication of various texts), their interpretation, and their arrangement into a coherent explanatory narrative. This is the case. Despite the more accurate term "crime fiction" as the generic name, and classic clue-puzzle and hard-boiled private eye as sub-genre forms, genre historians have tended to privilege "classic" clue-puzzle detective fiction as the dominant generic form, while arguing about its sources, and have tended to subsume "hard-boiled" private eye detective fiction as an American reaction against the British classic form, thereby demoting the private eye form to a sub-genre of the prototypical classic clue-puzzle form. The historiography of the two forms, therefore, has been hierarchical. This has changed, perhaps, but it exemplifies the point that the writing of history (including the history in this chapter) is constantly developing.

The privileging of the rational deductive detective in the historiography of crime fiction reveals the underlying values of the Enlightenment: its emphasis on rationalism, the methods of scientific enquiry, its hopes for liberal democracy and its humanist education policy to develop the individual. The ideology of the Enlightenment opposed the chaos of European wars, the lack of national institutions to provide coherent government, and the blind faith of traditional religious observance that bordered on superstition. Dorothy L. Sayers argued persuasively that a trustworthy police force was needed before the detective story could emerge ("The Omnibus of Crime" 25-34). However, prior to the establishment of an efficient police service is the belief that a policing force was necessary for the enlightened enforcement of order. The dominant leaders in society continued into the nineteenth and twentieth century to accept the values of scientific fact and the priority of reason, and worked to establish a societal order based on these elements. The ideology of the Enlightenment is based on positive humanism; that development will be beneficial to everyone and that everyone will benefit from socio-cultural and economic growth. These general principles are easily assimilated into popular thought. Enlightenment principles are allied with scientific determinism, liberal democracy, economic free trade, and the general belief that the world can and will be a better, more prosperous, place. This new dream, replaced the previous European alliance of religion and the feudal aristocratic system. Clue-puzzle detective fiction had its beginnings in the nineteenth century and thrived throughout the twentieth century. The texts show generic-mixing and traces of religious values,
romanticism, and respect for scientific method; all of which helped it survive the transition into modernism, since the underlying principles of reason, positivism, and development remained in place. Clue-puzzle detective fiction began and remained popular because it complemented the general values of Enlightenment dominant in society.

The historiography of clue-puzzle detective fiction also illustrates the forward thrust of progress and development. Drawing on Darwin’s theory of evolution, genre history adopted a similar classification system that first postulated a generic prototype (a generic ancestor) from which subsequent texts and differing forms evolved. The classification system became the explanation for generic development. Jean-Marie Schaeffer explains this early understanding of genre theory as "an era of essentialist generic theories, that is theories that claimed to explain the existence and essential characteristics of literature through generic definitions" (170). The persistence of this way of thinking of the genre of crime fiction will partly explain why accounts of the history of crime fiction insisted in tracing the source of hard-boiled private eye fiction back to classic clue-puzzle fiction. An explanatory history of crime fiction could be constructed relatively easily to show the origins and the development of the classic clue-puzzle fiction throughout the nineteenth century and into the next century with the classic clue-puzzle form as the original prototype traced from the stories of Edgar Allan Poe and fitting in hard-boiled private eye fiction as one of a group of errant exceptions that proved the rule. Positioning the classic clue-puzzle form as the hierarchical prototype, "... the genre became the causal force explaining literary evolution" (171). In contrast, a wider appreciation of genre theory revels in the complexities of influence in genre formation and development and asserts the "positive support" of generic form for both writers and readers (Fowler 31).

This chapter begins with a history of the genre of crime fiction, showing the essentialist understanding of early genre historians and their relationship with writers of the classic clue-puzzle form which resulted in a period of generic narrowing and restrictive rules. It will also show the problems early historians of the genre had with placing unconventional narratives and with placing the hard-boiled private eye form. Far from resolving the issues of origins, this chapter merely aims to point to underlying values and structures in the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction that are important to an understanding of Murakami’s fiction. John Frow argues the importance of genre to an understanding of a text: "To speak of genre is to speak of what need not be said because it is already so forcefully presupposed" (93). By placing Murakami’s texts within the context of the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, the chapter aims to highlight what is already presupposed by the genre.

As noted previously, the tendency to credit Poe as the writer of the first detective story has been a persistent misconception.
I. The Myth of Clue-Puzzle Fiction

In 1948, W.H. Auden set the definition for the classic clue-puzzle story: "The basic formula is this: a murder occurs; many are suspected; all but one suspect, who is the murderer, are eliminated; the murderer is arrested or dies" (15). For Auden, the crime of murder was essential to his argument that detective fiction functioned as atonement for readers' existential guilt. Since murder was a crime against both "God and society" (17) it necessitated investigation and readers enjoyed reading these books because it helped assuage their own interior guilt, "the detective story addict indulges … [in] the fantasy of being restored to the Garden of Eden, to a state of innocence" (24).

Auden’s theory proved popular among genre historians and writers who established the form of detective fiction. Consequently, many of the narratives converged into a tightly ordered formula commonly known as the Whodunit. There was an initial crime, a detective, suspects, a process of detection, and a grand finale where the culprit and the method were revealed. In her history of the detective novel (1968), Alma Murch defines the detective story as "a tale in which the primary interest lies in the methodical discovery, by rational means, of the exact circumstances of a mysterious event or series of events" (11). Her definition focuses on the method of detection by a Great Detective type character. The detective is a god-like character who creates order out of chaos. A crime has been committed (a murder, a theft) and the plot commences. Murch's definition clearly depends on Auden, whose definition and theory of the classic form provided a conveniently cohesive narrative to explain detective fiction texts. Textual examples that did not fit the history and classification, such as hard-boiled detective fiction, were either ignored or made to fit.

Of course, this focus on detection did not exclude the amateur detective or the accidental detective. Sayers had already acknowledged that a falsely accused character could be forced into the role of detective in order to prove his/her innocence. Indeed, Dorothy L. Sayers was quite successful in narrowing the definition and thereby suggesting a
distinction between general mystery stories and stories of detection (although her own
detective fiction explicitly broke these definitions). Together, Auden’s and Murch’s
definitions set the form, and narrative attention now focused on the method of detection.
Auden’s definition, especially, proved popular and complemented the earlier tendency to
generate series of rules for detective writers. By strictly defining and setting the form,
clue-puzzle detective fiction created its own limitations to the endless creative possibilities
generated by writers. The linear historical-critical approach to defining clue-puzzle fiction
had the advantage of establishing a neat and tidy history and definition of clue-puzzle
fiction. A clear form was established for clue-puzzle detective fiction that followed Auden’s,
Sayers’s, and Murch’s descriptions. Readers know what to expect when picking up a
detective novel. The desire for a tidy generic taxonomy tended to essentialize the clue-
puzzle form into a static formula which, arguably, may have satisfied readers’ expectations
but which limited, or at least challenged, literary creativity. Grella summarizes the familiar
plot:

The typical detective story presents a group of people assembled at an isolated
place - usually an English country house – who discover that one of their number has
been murdered. They summon the local constabulary, who are completely baffled;
they find either no clues or entirely too many, everyone or no one has had the
means, motive and opportunity to commit the crime, and nobody seems to be
telling the truth. To the rescue comes an eccentric, intelligent, unofficial
investigator who reviews the evidence, questions the suspects, constructs a fabric of
proof, and in a dramatic final scene, names the culprit. This sequence describes
almost every formal detective novel, ... ("The Formal" 84-85)

Grella’s description, and the earlier definitions of Auden, Sayers, and Murch,
classifies a form generally known as "classic" detective fiction, or clue-puzzle fiction. Despite
the occasional American author, it was also frequently termed the British form: a nation
 caricatured for its privileging of formality and regulation. That this neatly ordered
classification was based on a selective reading of history (setting aside debates favoring as

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28 Ronald A. Knox, "A Detective Story Decalogue," 1929; S.S. Van Dine, "Twenty Rules for Writing
Detective Stories," 1928; and the oath of the British Detection Club, reprinted in Haycraft 198.
29 The national caricature of the British unfortunately associated the classic clue-puzzle form with
conservative values, class divisions, and a strict adherence to rigid form. That the writers of the
classic clue-puzzle form were British, and used the British upper-class setting of a country house,
tended to fuel this unfortunate association of the clue-puzzle form with "all things British." In
contrast, therefore, the hard-boiled private eye form became easily associated with a caricature of
American culture. Raymond Chandler will employ these caricatures of British and American in his
writing, "The Simple Art of Murder." Martin Priestman has a witty commentary on the "transatlantic
relationship" (Detective Fiction and Literature 169-70).
the first detective story Godwin’s *Caleb Williams*, Voltaire’s *Zadig*, E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Das Fräulein von Scuderi*, Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter" or even the biblical story of Susannah in the Book of Daniel, or the thirteenth century Arabic story *Nighiarista*; that it ignored the many exceptions (seen as merely proving the rules); and that it was ignorant of the universality of the form (there were detective fiction writers in America, Asia, Africa, Australia, and Canada and South America) was overlooked in a British colonization of the form. These abhorrent complications were secondary to the need to establish an ordered reading (a narrative) of the history of detective fiction. Subsequently, the classic British detective story, the clue-puzzle form, was erroneously understood as the prototype that gave rise to variants, which could be placed neatly on the generic tree of origins. The creativity and diversity of the form were contained by a scheme of historical classification. Todorov recognized the relationship between authors and critics (and institutions), as well as readers, in shaping texts (1990):

In a given society the reoccurrence of certain discursive properties is institutionalized, and *individual texts are produced and perceived in relation to the norm, constituted by that codification*. A genre, whether literary or not, is nothing other than the codification of discursive properties." (17-8; italics mine)

The form of detective fiction was similarly contained and the creative exceptions were just that: exceptions to the rule of order.

The previous chapter has already shown that the history of Japanese detective fiction and crime writing in general illustrates that crime fiction cannot be classified simply as either a British classic clue-puzzle form or an American hard-boiled private eye form, nor can its history be traced only in reference to European countries, or to Poe or any other writer. Instead, the early global spread of crime fiction defies an association with any single nationality. The classic form of the clue-puzzle was replicated and developed in a number of countries around the world, including Japan. Similarly, openness to experimentation and resistance to the limitations of its structure illustrate that variety existed from the earliest narratives. Writers from all nationalities have broken conventions and Japanese writers have also shown that they rarely limited themselves to pure conventions. In addition, hard-boiled private eye fiction challenges the single-origin historiography with its neat categories and too easy explanations. The erasure of the private eye, or its begrudging acknowledgement, in the historiography betrays an ideology that privileges the Enlightenment values of rational deduction and reason above the hard-boiled language and action driven plots of the hard-boiled private eye form. The historiography required a
narrative that illustrated the values of reason and the success of empirical deduction. The monogeneric source history of detective fiction is a myth.

II. Clues to the Past: Widening the Genre

Japanese writers were worried about issues of fidelity to the classic form of detective fiction while also experimenting with that form. They attempted to negotiate between the form, the restrictions of censorship, and their desire to question societal values and corruption. Meanwhile, the American writers of crime fiction had moved away from the conventional form of clue-puzzle fiction and were engaged in their own negotiation with their values and culture. As critical attention turned to the hard-boiled writings of American authors, explanations had to be found for the obvious differences in the developing hard-boiled private eye form of American writers and the form of the European (and Japanese) classical clue-puzzle fiction writers. Critics writing on the history of the genre wanted to reestablish a narrative order to their historiography.

The hard-boiled private eye novel had a detective investigating a crime and resolving its mystery in a grand conclusion. However, it also had its distinctive hard-boiled detective – a character type very different from the detective character. The difference for most critics was simply due to historical-cultural differences between Britain and America. By attributing the differences in form to national differences, critics attempted to erase the deeper contradictions. This allowed them to cling to an ordered narrative history and to avoid confusion. That their history of the sub-genre was based on false assumptions was never acknowledged. Michael Cohen, for example, sees the classic clue-puzzle and the hard-boiled private eye as originating from the same root:

...the hard-boiled detective is rightfully seen as a twentieth century, American literary invention. But in fact the underlying world views, the generic conventions of both classical and hard-boiled detective fiction – the interpretability of the world by the perceptive searcher for traces, and the lone reformer taking on a corrupt world – are anticipated in the earliest detective stories. (Murder Most Fair 35)

For Cohen, the prototype is William Godwin’s novel, Caleb Williams (1794). He also refers to the American frontier trackers in the novels of James Fenimore Cooper who influenced French and British authors as well as other Americans. This common root allows Cohen to retain a narrative coherence in his account. The interest in the skills of frontier scouts in tracking by footprints and clues fascinated readers and influenced detective writers such as Conan Doyle. This commonality seems to support Cohen’s confidence in a common source.
However, coupled with his second point, it can be seen that the frontier tracker may have been used differently on each side of the Atlantic. For those who followed the classic form, the tracker reinforced the myth of the Great Detective character who could see clues and interpret them to astonishing result. Holmes, Dupin and even the later Poirot and others acted like Fenimore Cooper's Hawkeye; a combination of tracker and bloodhound. The detective of the classic form was no "lone reformer taking on a corrupt world". The clue-puzzle detective, instead, was the righter of wrongs who restored order to an already ordered world – hence the charge that the classic form was essentially conservative at heart. Auden, Grella, Symons, Moretti, Hilfer, and many other critics indentified this as an important difference between the classic form and the hard-boiled form, establishing yet another well-ordered, but essentially misconceived, critical narrative.

Tony Hilfer, meanwhile, contrasts the purpose of the hard-boiled private eye, "While there are puzzles solved by the American detective, his real function is to validate the American myth of personal integrity, absolute individualism, and stoic self-control. His exemplary role is not to explain the world but to survive it" (7). Again, the difference between the classic clue-puzzle and hard-boiled private eye form is due to the caricature of cultural differences between Britain and America. The clue-puzzle is associated with the ordered tradition of solving a puzzle, and this is termed British. There is also the suggestion that the character of the hard-boiled private eye is different from the detective in the clue-puzzle because there is a basic difference in the setting. Cohen goes further saying the difference reflects two different worldviews. First, the British classic form:

In one fictional world view, society is by nature law-abiding, most people are truth-tellers, and crime is an aberration. ...  (Murder Most Fair 27)

Once again, the suggestion here is that this association is over-simplistic and naive. The association of the clue-puzzle with so-called British national characteristics of "law-abiding ... truth-tellers" is a gross generalisation. The clue-puzzle was similarly dubbed "conservative" because the resolution of the crime in the dénouement suggested an approval of social norms. The falsity of these claims are obvious: British people are no more "law-abiding" than other nationalities, and the resolution of the crime at the conclusion of the clue-puzzle does not necessarily imply an easy acceptance of the societal status quo. In contrast, Hilfer describes the American hard-boiled form of the private eye novel as more realistic and therefore more perceptive:

In another fictional view of the world, society is not basically law-abiding; it is corrupt. The people in control – the prominent citizens, the government and its
police, the industrialists, the rich, ... – are in a conspiracy to conceal the truth about a crime. People are not basically truth-tellers but speak out of self interest. (27)

Again, the racial associations are obvious. Most critics trace this different portrayal of the world in the private eye form to an underlying realism that is inherent in the form. Realistically, crime is not "a comedy of manners" but a harsh reality and the hard-boiled private eye form symbolizes this in its setting of the chaotic corrupt city. Grella and others claimed that the gangsterism prevalent during prohibition, the movement of people from rural countryside to urban areas in ever-expanding cities, two world wars, and the American Great Depression all contributed to the changed style and form of the hard-boiled private eye novels. Thus, the hard-boiled tradition was seen as a rejection of the ordered classic clue-puzzle form, and its association with all things British. It was replaced in America by a form open to the more gritty reality of corrupt city life. Larry Landrum hints at this:

... hard-boiled detective fiction began to deal with the feelings and reactions of men and women who were surviving without the benefit of inheritance [the inherited wealth of many British amateur detectives]. Hard-boiled stories tended to look at the political, economic, and social structures from the bottom up ... the rougher street fiction often circumvented the social restrictions of the classic story to touch on the more shocking rawness of American materialism. Authenticity seemed to demand a rejection of the social complacency found in the formal classic story. (11)

There is a too-easy social judgement in the distinctions between the assumed British and American characteristics, and the forms of the clue-puzzle and the private eye are drawn into these racial assumptions. Since the hard-boiled private eye writers claimed they were true to life (Chandler especially disparaged the artificiality of the classic clue-puzzle form with its British upper-class setting), there was a tendency to consider the strict classic form of the clue-puzzle with its clinging to a formal social setting as mere escapist fantasy. Referring to the interwar period, a prolific period of clue-puzzle writing, Charles J. Rzepka simply dismisses the classic work of the 1920s as "a decade of relative generic naïveté in England," (154). Grella writes that the Americans were "Rejecting the established patterns," ("The Hard-Boiled" 103). Michael Holquist also suggests a preference for the hard-boiled school, "You get, at least in the hard-boiled American school, something more like real blood, actual corpses instead of mere excuses for yet another demonstration of the detective’s superhuman skills" (163). This rejection of the classic clue-puzzle form in favor of

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30 See Chandler, "Introduction to the 'The Simple Art of Murder.'"
a chaotic gritty realism was generally applauded by critics, and seen as a positive
development of the genre of crime fiction. The clue-puzzle form was seen as having been
trapped in the narrow restrictions of its form, and the hard-boiled private eye fiction was
thereby seen as having given new life to the genre. The hard-boiled form appeared to be
associated with realism, openness, and imaginative creativity. Its detectives were presumed
to operate less by rational method and more by instinctive hunches and direct action. It was
claimed that the vernacular language, witticism, and action-driven plot brought vibrancy and
life to the form. In all these claims, British and American stereotyping supported the writer-
critic-reader relationship in classifying the forms and produced a circular argument that
deepened the biased historiography.31

More recently with the development of genre theory to accept intertextuality and
the historical framing of the text, critics have revised these historical oversimplifications.
Cynthia Hamilton clearly states:

The adventure-detective story is a very different breed from the classical detective
yarn. It is part of a tradition which grew up alongside the puzzle type of story. ... It
is not at all certain, therefore, that, when Carroll John Daly and Dashiell Hammett
began to work toward a new and highly successful formulation of the adventure-
detective story, they were rebelling against the inadequacies of the classical pattern.
Even, if they were, it seems likely that the shaping of the hard-boiled formula was
more positively influenced by the adventure-detective type than it was by any
negation of the classical formula. (65-66)

Instead of depending on caricatures of national differences, it is far better to accept that
both the hard-boiled private eye and the classic clue-puzzle forms have their own
conventions which impose limitations. The clue-puzzle form required a closed setting; the
hard-boiled private eye required an urban city setting. However, even if clue-puzzle
detective fiction writers have frequently chosen British country houses as their setting, this
does not necessarily align them with the aristocracy.32

31 In to using national boundaries as literary descriptors, Wai Chee Dimock argues for a transnational
concept of influence: "I have in mind a form of indebtedness: ... a much more complex tangle of
relationships. Rather than being a discrete entity, it is better seen [American literature] as a
criossracing set of pathways, open-ended and ever multiplying, weaving in and out of other
geographies, other languages and cultures. ... connective tissues binding America to the rest of the
world" (3). This is true, argues Dimock, of all national literatures, and equally true of time: "Literature
is the home of the nonstandard space and time" (4).
32 For a discussion of opposing opinions, see Alison Light, Forever England: Femininity, Literature and
Conservatism Between the Wars.
As scholarship began to take seriously the critique of American literature, nineteenth-century American clue-puzzle writers were unearthed and the neat well-ordered linear history tracing the origins of the detective novel directly from Poe finally fell apart. In addition to Poe, Murch called attention to Anna Katherine Green, "the first woman to write a full-length detective story, and she described The Leavenworth Case in that way on the title page" (158). Green’s novel was published in 1878 in America and was published the following year in Britain. Certainly there are elements of gothic melodrama in the story and style, however, as Murch notes, "The paramount interest is clearly the theme of detection". The story follows the typical plot of a detective novel with all the usual puzzles, suspicions, false clues and mistakes and has a final revelation of the least suspected person. What is unusual is that this early example of a full-length classic clue-puzzle novel had been largely ignored in the history of crime fiction, perhaps because its author was American, not British, and was a woman, not a man. In her ordered linear history, Murch at least recognized Green and pointed out that:

Dickens had made a special explanatory chapter the culmination of the detective theme in Bleak House; Collins had done much the same in The Woman in White and The Moonstone; Le Fanu had gone much further in Checkmate, but in none of these does the detective theme monopolize the reader’s attention so completely as in Miss Green’s novels, and in her work we can discern for the first time, in its entirety, the pattern that became characteristic of most English detective novels written during the following fifty years. (158-59)

The exploration of early French authors also threatened the prejudice that the clue-puzzle form was a British phenomenon. Although much of the early French authors (and indeed later authors) tended to mix the form of their plots with action, adventure, and thriller conventions, their novels also threw into question the simple ordered classification of a clear clue-puzzle form that was essentially British. Murch notes that the American dime novels of the eighteenth century also illustrate mixed conventions: the Nick Carter series "used the techniques of French Lecoq and Tabaret, and gave them an American setting with a thriller/adventure style. Detection gave way to action and logical reasoning gave way to physical drama” (141).

There were also British writers that explored the boundaries of the clue-puzzle conventions and some who deliberately went beyond: Chesterton’s The Man who was Thursday (1908), Bentley’s Trent’s Last Case (1913), Sayers’s The Nine Tailors (1934), and Murder Off Miami by Wheatley and Links (1936). There were also British writers who wrote
in a similar tough action style of the hard-boiled writers, ranging from the Sexton Blake series (1893-1963, and onwards) and Bulldog Drummond (1920). The single-source historiography of the genre that insisted on the clue-puzzle form as the generic prototype began to strain and break. It could no longer maintain the myth. The roots of the clue-puzzle form were no longer easily discernible and a linear history of the form of clue-puzzle fiction alone could no longer explain the complications, and all the exceptions. Instead, the wider genre of crime fiction offers a better explanation, allowing the forms of clue-puzzle and hard-boiled private eye fiction, as well as the variations. A narrative order is not so easily imposed on past events and their interpretation, and an open-ended, non-narrative is sometimes more accurate. The history and the definition of crime fiction deconstructs from an ordered narrative into a much more loose narrative that acknowledges the variety of forms. The origins of both clue-puzzle fiction and hard-boiled private eye fiction have a network of roots, instead of the single source theory that trace a linear history from Poe, William Godwin, or whomever.

This appreciation of the mixed roots of the subgenres of clue-puzzle and private eye fiction draws attention to the difficulties in categorizing a writer like Murakami Haruki who may have used the structure and characteristics of hard-boiled private eye fiction in some of his novels, but who has also borrowed from other literary forms. None of Murakami’s novels fit easily into any subgenre. Instead of writing to a formula, Murakami makes use of various forms to structure and shape his novels. In later chapters, it will be seen that A Wild Sheep Chase is the novel closest to the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, while the novels The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle and Kafka on the Shore depend less heavily on the structure and form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. Thus, while it is possible to trace his use of the structure of private eye fiction, it must also be acknowledged that Murakami too, like the writers of clue-puzzle and private eye novels, is not bound by the conventions of form. Indeed, since the between-world boundary is important in Murakami’s work, it is expected that he will explore generic boundaries.

Genre studies draws heavily on historical context and, like the study of history, has been tempted by the desire for a cohesive narrative. As historians appreciate that the past cannot always be represented as a narrative of progress, so too genre critics acknowledge that the generic family trees have rhizomes as roots, and branches that have withered and died. The narrative is not always clear and generic unity does not always exist. H.R. Jauss, describing genre in medieval literature, proposed the term "historical families" and concluded that "they cannot be deduced or defined, but only historically determined,
delimited, and described" (80). He draws attention to the historical context of the genre and to the boundaries that mark off, distinguish, one genre from another. Generic boundaries are the locus of creativity and differentiation. John Frow explains the changed understanding in genre studies. There has been a shift away from the earlier strict classification schemes towards an appreciation of the constantly evolving nature of texts over time: "Grasping genre in a properly historical way, apprehending them in re, in the process of becoming, rather than normatively (ante rem) or in a purely descriptive taxonomy (post rem)" (70).

Crime fiction disturbs. The initial crime may be solved at the conclusion, but every reader of crime fiction is aware of the detective, or private-eye, series (and if there is no series for a particular novel, there certainly exists many other series). The reader knows that there will be another crime. The detective will be called in again, and again will solve a crime only to reappear at the scene of yet another crime in another novel. The series itself acknowledges the repetition – crime (like history) repeats itself and crime fiction reminds us of this. There is no closure to crime. Crime fiction does not restore order but reveals an inherent truth: that crime endures. The difference between order and chaos collapses in the genre of crime fiction and the final truth (the fact) is the detection of crime is itself a fiction. Just as the question of why crime occurs has never been solved, the solution to crime will remain unsolved. Hard-boiled crime fiction, with its depressing open-ended conclusion, emphasizes the continuing, repetitive nature of crime. This is the ultimate fact that crime fiction detects. It is not a conservative fact, it is not reasonable. Hard-boiled private eye fiction, especially, reveals the chaos underlying the surface of societal order.

The crime novel, following the form of conventional fiction, requires a closure to the story. Usually, narrative closure fulfils the purpose of the novel, often connecting the opening conflict with its resolution at the end and giving the whole narrative structure a sense of unity and completion. In clue-puzzle fiction, the story is expected to end with the detective revealing whodunit. The purpose of the detective novel is to discover who the criminal is, and how, and why the crime took place. Closure resolves the tension built up throughout the novel and satisfies the readers' investment in the reading process. The advantage of formula writing is that the reader knows what to expect from the form, and finds a degree of comfort in the familiarity of the form. By deliberately opposing closure, an open-ended conclusion tends to frustrate readers' expectations and forces the reader to reconsider the novel’s purpose. Aperture highlights the form and the narrative purpose.
Thus, the anti-detective novels of Robbe-Grillet, for example, present yet another puzzle to the reader.

Similar to the disrupting effect of Robbe-Grillet’s anti-detective novels, Murakami’s novels rarely have complete closure. Very often, it is the supernatural element in Murakami’s novels that confuses, and thus leaves open, the interpretation and readerly closure. In WSC, the reader must decide first whether the sheep is a "real" entity, before deciding whether the sheep has truly been destroyed in the finale. In WBC, the reader must unravel the possible meanings of the boku’s relationship with the mysterious telephone woman before deciding whether any final healing has taken place between him and his wife. Again, in the novel Dance, Dance, Dance, the reader has to decide whether or not the border-world of the old Dolphin Hotel is a friendly place or as a dangerous, deathly in order to accept the novel’s closure as positive or negative. While requiring, perhaps, less work from the reader than the novels of Robbe-Grillet, Murakami’s novels push the reader to reconsider the multiple meanings of the texts through their lack of closure.

The history of the varieties of crime fiction must remain open-ended; otherwise the various forms would stagnate and die. Closure involves a death, a mini-dying, as the narrative concludes (in crime fiction, the criminal too faces an arrest, a death). Despite attempts to impose order on the history of the genre, crime fiction resists and offers a narrative openness. New approaches to understanding the roots of both the clue-puzzle and the hard-boiled private eye forms have been raised, arguing essentially for a longer, wider historic root tracing back into sensational, gothic, and popular literature, and accepting the mix and influence of genres, a layering of texts. Yet to be explored in any detail is the universality of the forms; a recognition of the role of French, German, and Asian, African and Latin American writings. An open-ended reading of the history of crime fiction allows for the variety and universality of forms, their various influences, and the adaptations of the hard-boiled and other forms. Such openness may encourage some light to enter through the aperture of the past, revealing an understanding of the vastness of crime fiction and bringing into sharper focus aspects of the genre that a closed reading would conceal. Closure, while satisfying, may not always be conducive to life and growth.

Having appreciated the complexities of historical contextualization and the necessary openness of any constructed narrative of the past, attention will now be given to

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33 See Adrienne Johnson Gosselin, ed., Multicultural Detective Fiction: Murder from the "Other" Side, for readings on detective fiction writers from minority cultures and groups; also, Linda Martz, and Anita Higbie, eds., Questions of Identity in Detective Fiction; and Ralph Edward Rodriguez, Brown Gumshoes: Detective Fiction and the Search for Chicana/o Identity.
the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. The following sections will focus on the structure of the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction and its characteristics. This will provide a necessary basis for the analysis of Murakami Haruki’s writing in the next chapters. It is hoped that the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction will act as an important lens to investigate the reciprocal relationship between the form and the content of Murakami’s writing; how each influences the other.

III. The History and Conventions of Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction

Critics of the hard-boiled private eye form tend to note the obvious differences between the character of the detective in the stories of Hammett, Chandler and other hard-boiled writers and the character of the detective in Poe, Conan Doyle, Christie and the classic clue-puzzle writers. The clue-puzzle detective was an intellectual solver of puzzles, sometimes eccentric and possessing some esoteric knowledge, tending to be aloof and emotionally detached; later writers modified the character to being occasionally charming and witty with a long-term love interest. The hard-boiled private eye, on the other hand, shared the tendency to be aloof and emotionally detached, but solved cases through more direct action, making things happen, without recourse to any special skill or knowledge, but able to withstand the fist fights and beatings that came with the job. The hard-boiled private eye is famous for wit, not a charming wit, but sarcastic and sometimes even caustic. There was no love interest that ever worked out for the hard-boiled private eye. Hilfer terms the hard-boiled private eye "alienated" and claims this is because the world (the city) around the private eye is corrupt. It is because the city is corrupt that the hard-boiled private eye must remain apart:

The world of the American detective is too corrupt to be tidily rationalized [as in the clue-puzzle form’s conservatism], but the detective retains at least the illusion of control by his sardonic knowingness. He distances himself from emotional engagement with others by his ability to reduce them to a phrase [the glib witticism] … The alienated posture of the tough detective becomes a reassurance about how to live, with style, in a job-centered, emotion-denying society. (7-8)

Again, Hilfer contends that it is two very different worldviews that shape each form’s detective; the clue-puzzle and the hard-boiled. Hilfer illustrates a hard-boiled private eye who stands alone for different reasons than the clue-puzzle counterpart, opening the distinctive possibilities for the hard-boiled private eye character and the purpose of hard-

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34 There are hardboiled female private eyes; see authors Paretsky, Cross, Forrest, Grafton, and Muller, for examples. See Birgitta Berglund, "Desires and Devices: On Women Detectives in Fiction."
boiled private eye fiction. Glenn Most reminds us that, "For the detective to be familyless, typically a divorced or widowed male, was, of course, traditional in the crime novel, this was thought to ensure his incorruptibility and the single-mindedness of his dedication to solving the mystery" ("Elmore Leonard" 104). But Chernai points out the basic similarity of the detective character in the two forms: "Hammett and Chandler established the convention of the hard-boiled private eye, without family ties, emotional commitments, or a settled place in society, a perpetual outsider deeply distrustful of all institutionalized authority. ... (indeed, it fits Holmes and Poirot nearly as well)..." (117) However, the detached separation of the hard-boiled hero, the only honest man going it alone against a city of corruption, reminded American critics of another formula hero in their tradition: the frontier cowboy. An exploration of the hard-boiled form opens up a variety of possible sources of crime fiction and reveals the tangles that defer a simple single source theory.

III.I Criminal Roots

Philip Durham is usually credited with the first study on the similarities between the hard-boiled private eye and the American cowboy. However, Durham came to this association through a prior exploration of the underlying romantic echoes in the hard-boiled writing. In Raymond Chandler, especially, the influence of romance is clear. Rejecting existentialism and modernism as the source of the alienation of Chandler's detective character Philip Marlowe, critics agreed that Chandler referred to the British writer Thomas Malory (an early name for the Marlowe character) and Christopher Marlowe (also spelt with an end letter "e" unlike the usual American spelling of the name, Marlow). Chandler's character often drops literary references and exhibits certain gentlemanly manners underneath his tough exterior, earning him the reputation of vulnerability. Stephen Knight referred to Marlowe as "... a hard-boiled gentleman" (Form and Ideology 135-67), quoting from Farewell, My Lovely. It is in the novel The Big Sleep that the direct reference to the romantic knight in shining armor is found.35

The novel opens with a description of a stained glass window showing a knight errant rescuing a damsel in distress tied to a tree. There is also a brief reference to the knight again towards the end of the novel, providing a narrative frame. In romance, the knight errant is traditionally chaste, and hence distant and unavailable, in order to retain the purity necessary for his romantic chivalry and role of rescuing women or questing the holy grail. The knight errant proved his virtue and this gave him his alternative strength. Prior to

35 See also, George Grella, "The Hard-Boiled Detective Novel" 113-114. His comments on Mark Twain and Westerns are also relevant.
Chandler, lay a whole tradition of a tough, straight-talking virtuous hero from the knight errant tradition placed in an updated setting: the American cowboy. Chandler’s success was in more obviously placing this trope in the Californian city of corruption.

Durham’s book *Down These Mean Streets a Man Must Go: Raymond Chandler’s Knight* was first published in 1963 and republished in 1993. Initially, Durham was interested in the language and romantic imagery of Chandler’s writing. But he soon noted the similarities in the use of colloquial dialogue and the characteristics of the hero character: the tough exterior and inner chivalric virtue, the rugged individualism, and the single honest man fighting generalized corruption. By widening the aperture of his lens, the American cowboy came into focus.

Poe’s cerebral detective stories were published in the early 1840s. By the 1860s, America saw the publication of numerous dime novels featuring Buffalo Bill, Jesse James and Deadwood Dick. These were popular Western adventure stories borrowing from Fenimore Cooper’s 1820s and 1840s novels of frontier trackers who used Indian skills in hunting. The dime novel Westerns set the cowboy in the American frontier in opposition to both the American Indians and the white, rich, settled ranchers. The cowboy hero "is the best man; he demonstrates what is possible for the individual to accomplish. The plot in which he is presented involves some variation on the trope of the chase. The story is told using a colloquial style of narration, characterized by the literary imitation of everyday speech. The theme which permeates every aspect ... is the primacy of the individual; he is seen as the key unit of society" (Hamilton 2). Mark Twain represents an interesting bridge between the various subgenres of adventure, Western, and detective fiction. His characters exhibit the rugged individualism of the frontier and he experimented freely, borrowing, combining and inventing: he "saw possibilities for social exposé as well as for humor and literary parody. Twain openly parodied Sherlock Holmes in "A Double-Barrelled Detective Story" (1902) ... Twain’s social realism and satire were outside the boundaries ... toward a critique of social conventions and expectations..." (Landrum 7-8). However, Twain showed others how colloquial everyday speech and ordinary common characters could be central in a novel. Slotkin observes that during the period between 1880 and 1900, the dime story outlaw cowboy heroes were rewritten into detective heroes:

Many popular dime-novel figures who began their careers as either Indian-fighters or Wild West figures, began to be called detectives. Deadwood Dick, for example, is originally the outlaw of the Black Hills but he ends as Deadwood Dick, detective.

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Buffalo Bill first appeared in dime novels as the man who got the first scalp for Custer, but by the end of his career there are titles like *Buffalo Bill, Detective* ... (96).

Durham’s observation that the American hard-boiled private eye form had more in common with the American cowboy and frontier novels than with the clue-puzzle conventions established by Poe and others was quickly accepted by critics. By 1988, William Stowe was claiming that:

The link between the hard-boiled detective story and the frontier hero is familiar. ... The genre [of crime fiction] was soon Americanized, however, and the image of the hard-boiled detective as urban cowboy or citified Daniel Boone has become a commonplace. (80)

The confusion of the two seemingly disparate roots, the American cowboy Westerns and the romantic knight errant, is clarified with the step back to the ideological worldview of the American dream. In this, Hamilton is extremely useful. She explains the American dream of an individual who can make it in a new, wild country. In the West’s frontier, the individual had to be resourceful, tough, and he had to be careful about whom he could trust. Individualism became an important American value. Part of the concept of individualism, combining with the values of liberal humanism, was the need for the individual to grow, develop and improve. This was done by pitting himself against the environment and against difficult tasks. (The influence of *Robinson Crusoe* and the *bildungsroman* can be seen here.) Hamilton argues that extreme individualism reflects the Social Darwinist competitive survival of the fittest, producing the "best man" who wins against opposition. The individual hero was, of course, an essentially good, virtuous person. However, in the general lawlessness of the West, it was acceptable for the hero to resort to unlawful methods and to take the law into his own hands. Since the hero was an admired individual, his inner integrity and honor was seen as more important than the closed adherence to the letter of the law, especially when the law could not be relied upon to be fully honest and free from corruption. For Hamilton, this American competitive individualism is the master formula (she avoids suggesting a prototype) of the American adventure novels from which the subgenres of both the Western cowboy and the hard-boiled private eye have evolved.

The concept of individualism forms an interesting background theme in much of Murakami’s fiction. Murakami has repeatedly stated his interest in the value of individualism in interviews. "When I was younger I was very attracted to the hard-boiled fiction writers like Chandler and Ross Macdonald, maybe because their detectives seemed to be so individual... they were always able to live their own way..." (Gregory, Miyawaki,
McCaffery 114). In an interview with Jay McInerney, Murakami explained that valuing individualism puts him in contrast with the traditional Japanese value of social community and conformity: "Japan is such a group-conscious society that to be independent is very hard" (73). It was this cultural contrast which attracted him to the hard-boiled private eye novels, "Raymond Chandler was my hero in the 1960's. I read The Long Goodbye a dozen times. I was very impressed by the way that his protagonists live by themselves and are very independent." Murakami's protagonists tend to stand alone, even if they also search for a lost friend, girlfriend, or wife. The use of a first-person narrator also stresses the individualism of the central consciousness, a common stylist in the hard-boiled, direct style of the private eye novel.

It is interesting to note the opposition that individualism poses to social responsibility. Hamilton observes:

'Individualism' is a main constituent of American ideology: it postulates that the individual is the foundation of society and that his interests and rights should have priority over those of society. ... Society becomes a false concept, for, when an individual's first duty is to himself, social responsibility is ignored, and group needs and collective responsibilities are not considered when they clash with an individual's needs of the moment. Indeed, group action comes to be seen as devious, as a contravention of the code, for it circumvents the duty of self-reliance and self-protection. (sic 9-10)

In the hard-boiled private eye, then, we can expect to see the private eye standing alone and individually fighting against a corrupt society, but we cannot expect him to see himself as belonging to a wider community in which his actions and choices affect others, and we cannot expect him to join with others to change society. This is an element that has been negotiated by hard-boiled private eye fiction writers, more recently Walter Mosely, Sara Paretsky, Tony Hillerman, and Lucha Corpi, for example.

Murakami's negotiation between the individual and the responsibility to society will be an interesting consideration in the characterisation of his protagonist, the boku. This will be considered in later chapters. There is a tension between the narrative choice of crafting a hero that is independent and alone (set apart from the corrupt city setting), and the desire of novelists to have their hero engage in effecting change for the betterment of society. Chandler tended to have his hero, Marlowe, criticise corruption but Chandler limited Marlowe's engagement in wider corporate, or societal, crime.
Cohen notes: "we realize it is only a formula and that Chandler is not talking about our responsibility for making society better but about stepping aside from it" (Murder Most Fair 46). The underlying ethic of individualism imposes its own restrictions on the character of the hard-boiled private eye and the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction as a whole. Charles Rzepka, referring to Hamilton's book, points out:

It is no accident that these tales of heroic self-determination should have become popular during an era of industrial and corporate triumphalism, when the ordinary citizen, especially the small farmer and immigrant factory worker, was being victimized by America's most successful exemplars of self-empowerment, the industrial 'robber barons' and their financial backers. (182)

Hard-boiled private eye fiction holds out the promise that the individual could maintain his honor and self-respect even if poor and alone. There was no encouragement of collective action against the injustices of society, merely the recognition that society was corrupt and unjust. In this, although seeming more open to social critique than the classic clue-puzzle form in many ways, the hard-boiled form has its own degree of limitation. It is not expected to encourage social engagement.

Hamilton says that the Western cowboy novel often tolerated the acquisition of wealth and the cowboy could become rich and happy. Wealth was not automatically associated with injustice. This has changed in hard-boiled private eye fiction. Wealth is a central part of the city's corruption and the private eye hero distances himself from the acquisition of wealth, often refusing payment for his work, while he freely mixes with wealthy people and treats them either as equals or inferiors. Again, the hero is seen as standing outside, alienated from society; but this gives him the freedom to mix with both sides and to remain uncontaminated. This indifference to class and wealth suggests an open-ended questioning that is not clearly resolved. Slotkin describes: "Hawkeye and a Chandler detective are both solitary men who can operate as Indians or as whites, on the common side – the mean street side – or on the polite side. Likewise, they serve a bourgeois society but never compromise themselves by accepting its most corrupting social value. They do not do what they do for money" (94). Both Rzepka and Hamilton attribute the change in attitude to the acquisition of wealth to the journalism of the American muckrakers and the spread of progressivism. However, the hard-boiled private eye, though standing apart from the corruption of wealth and either pitying the wealthy or disparaging their hypocrisy, is not a Robin Hood and does not seek to redress injustice. In its own way, the hard-boiled private eye form is as conservative and limited as its clue-puzzle counterpart.
Summarizing the character of the hard-boiled private eye, William Stowe lists three points: the ambivalence towards lawlessness: the freedom of the private eye hero to break the law and to make friends of criminals; the vulnerability of the private eye hero who shows physical vulnerability by placing himself in danger and being beaten up, and emotional vulnerability by evoking sympathy despite the exterior toughness (a stylistic effect achieved through the withholding of emotional descriptors; by not saying how the hero felt the reader is indirectly encouraged to imagine it. This was especially true in the writing of Chandler); and, finally, the loner individualism of the private eye hero (80-1). Although initially providing an alternative to the detective character of the clue-puzzle form, the hard-boiled form moved towards its own formula for the hard-boiled private eye character.

IV. The Plot Structure of the Hard-boiled Private Eye Form

The duality of the private eye character, with his tough hard-boiled exterior and vulnerable sentimental interior, is reflected in a double plot structure. Glenn Most describes the different plot structures in the clue-puzzle and the hard-boiled forms ("The Hippocratic Smile" 346-7). The hard-boiled private eye, in contrast to his clue-puzzle counterpart, is always hired to work on a case. This hiring of the private eye for what Most terms a "minor matter" (347) is the event that initiates the investigation. Stephen Knight calls this the "outer" plot (Form and Ideology 153). However, this professional case is personalized (interiorized) in various ways to provide a second plot line; Knight’s "inner" plot. The private eye hero may be hired to take on a case but the case always gives way to a complicated set of relationships that threaten the stoic self-sufficiency and individualism of the hard-boiled private eye hero. The case is paralleled, therefore, by the second plot centering on the question: how will our hero survive the threats to his ordered life and his personal code? This inner plot is triggered by the gradual revelation of a past crime or secret of the criminal other that culminates in a betrayal of the private eye, often but not necessarily, by the client who hired him. As this past crime is disclosed in the final resolution, the betrayal reveals the solution to both of the crime events: the hidden crime/secret and the crime event for which the private eye was initially hired. The solutions to the two cases are interdependent and the criminal may or may not be the same person. The double plots give rise to a double

37 Stephen Knight details this stylistic device in Chandler in Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction, 137-147; “The notional ‘objective’ style creates an illusion. ... this style manipulates feeling; an apparent factual mode of narration is only the persuasive background to the foregrounding of a sensitive, discriminating persona” (140). Hamilton describes it thus: “By borrowing from the objective technique, Chandler gains impact from the shock produced by the equation. The combination of shock with sentimentality is highly evocative emotionally, producing the heightened response which was Chandler’s artistic objective” (167).
The double plot structure distinguishes the hard-boiled private eye story from the clue-puzzle plot structure. In many ways as complicated as the backward plot construction of the clue-puzzle plot, the hard-boiled plot follows the traditional adventure (especially the quest) plot structure more closely, with its usual methods of tension. The hard-boiled form is episodic. The events are set in motion with the initial hiring of the private eye by a client. Once hired for this outer case, the private eye does not investigate so much as he makes things happen by his mere presence and involvement in the case. In describing the plot, Glenn Most says, "The novel begins, not with a murder [unlike the classic form which does
begin with a crime], but with the client’s hiring the detective in some far more minor matter ... The detective begins to investigate: and only then do the murders begin" ("The Hippocratic Smile" 347). His description of the hard-boiled form shows that a second, hidden crime or secret emerges as the investigation progresses, what Most terms as a "deeply hidden, far more heinous crime" (347). This is gives rise to Knight’s "inner" plot. This hidden crime is often either initiated or revealed by the private eye's involvement in the outer plot, as are the violent consequences of his investigation into the outer plot. Most says the private eye is "the catalyst who by his very introduction both provokes murders and solves them" (347). Most explains that the second, hidden plot usually turns out to be that the client wanted to frame the detective; Knight suggests that the "inner" plot is usually related to the personal ethics of the private eye, his integrity.

Stephen Knight explains this double plot structure more clearly and sees its connection with the character of the private eye hero. Since the hard-boiled private eye himself has the dual characteristics of the tough exterior and the sentimental interior, this in turn explains the double plot structure. The inner world of the hero is only hinted at, and is disguised by the stylized objective, harsh, witty dialogue. The private eye hero refrains from sharing his inner thoughts and feelings with any other character, especially the women he may love. This is central to his inner plot and requires closure in the conclusion of his plots. The tough guy exterior generally wins over the sentimental interior and the private eye remains alone to fight another day. This maintains the values of self-reliance and individuality that the genre commends. Knight explains this:

The style of the novels, that is, creates a double man whose full humanity is only released in private reverie, speaking to his literary audience. His working life and his encounters with people are arid and painful; ... [This inner/outer split] is the alienation of the self, the privatized world of the individual, a structure where the person has a rich inner life and a defensive, even hostile, exterior, unable to share with others the humanity which is felt and privately enjoyed. ("A Hard Cheerfulness" 81-2)

This description of tough guy exterior and private interior easily applies to the boku in Murakami’s novels. In WSC and DDD the boku is divorced and in WBC his wife leaves him. In HBW&EW and in KOS, the multiple protagonists are all single. Most of Murakami’s protagonists find difficulty in expressing themselves to others. The inner/outer plot structure also explains the structure of Murakami’s novels that more closely resemble the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. In each, there is the other plot of active engagement
as well as the inner plot of interior conflict. However, Murakami foregrounds the inner plot; and the outer plot, usually the fast-paced episodic action in hard-boiled detective fiction, is backgrounded. (The significance of this reversal of the usual plot structure will be evident in later chapters.)

The split in the private eye hero’s interior/exterior character facilitates the double plot structure. The outer plot revolves around the outer world and the crime; the inner plot focuses on the relationship with the hero and his inner life. His self-composure is threatened, usually by a woman, sometimes by a male friend. This secondary inner plot frequently involves a betrayal; the hero is betrayed by someone he trusts, ”intimate associates, former lovers – from women, above all” (Knight, *Form and Ideology* 156).

This betrayal is again evidenced in Murakami’s novels. The *boku* discovers that the one he loved, or his trusted friend, has not disclosed the full truth. This is true of the Rat in *WSC*, the friend Gotanda in *DDD*, the Professor and his granddaughter, and the *boku* in *HBW&EW*, the wife in *WBC*, and Miss Saeki in *KOS*. The tension of the main relationship in the inner plot adds to the suspense in his novels. This betrayal of trust is central to Murakami’s inner plot and requires closure in the conclusion of his plots. Often, however, the lack of closure, or the unexpected nature of the closure, leaves Murakami’s novels their open-ended conclusions. Like the hard-boiled private eye, there is no final resolution to the inner plot of the private eye /*boku*. Knight continues in the essay, ”’A Hard Cheerfulness’”:

... there always remains an outer, public and socially attuned area of operation with a bogus problem and a suggested solution. They fall away, and the gangsters actually turn out to have been themselves employed by the agent of the inner plot, the betraying, personally threatening force that Marlowe identifies and is himself threatened by. (83)

The structure, then, of the inner plot of the hard-boiled private eye story can be represented as below. It can be seen in the diagram also that the investigative methods of the hard-boiled private eye differ from those of the clue-puzzle detective. As noted, the private eye accepts a professional contract to investigate some ”minor matter” – an excuse from the outer plot that will result in the private eye being threatened and betrayed in the inner plot. Often, the criminal will be revealed as the same person as the client, but not always. The private eye, then, may also be betrayed in the outer plot; a double betrayal. Once the private eye accepts the contract, he uses the traditional clue-puzzle methods of following clues and interviewing suspects, but his primary method of investigation is his relentless action, thrusting himself into the lives of the suspects and causing them to
respond. Their response often results in the physical violence that the hard-boiled fiction is known for: the private eye must be physically tough enough to withstand the beatings, torture, and threats that his actions provoke.

The diagram below focuses on the inner plot and shows that the investigation of the past crime/secret instigates the awareness of betrayal, the hidden motive behind the initial hiring of the private eye. Thus, the revelation of the outer plot and the inner plot are interdependent and feed into each other. This doubling is also seen in the violence the private eye endures from his investigation of the outer plot and the hurt he receives from the betrayal in the inner plot. There are two seductions also: the detective is seduced by at least one woman in the inner plot, the *femme fatale* (he may also be seduced by an innocent, honest woman), and his integrity is also seduced in the outer plot by an attempt to bribe him or seduce him into the corruption of the city. Finally, the private eye is blocked by the police (who are part of the general corruption) and other authorities, as well as by other extraneous factors.

### The Inner Plot Structure of Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outer Plot</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;minor matter&quot;</td>
<td>Private eye gets professional contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;minor matter&quot;</td>
<td>Private eye investigates/acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Crime</td>
<td>Private eye resists seduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client hires detective</td>
<td>Private eye maintains integrity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hidden cause</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Revelation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motive:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past Crime</td>
<td>Client hires detective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;deeply hidden,&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;minor matter&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;far more heinous crime&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who?</th>
<th>How?</th>
<th>Why?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blockages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private eye suffers violence</td>
<td>Who?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private eye is seduced</td>
<td>How?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private eye values are threatened</td>
<td>Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private eye is hurt by betrayal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police authorities, law, ...</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INVESTIGATION</th>
<th>BETRAYAL</th>
<th>DÉNOUEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAST</td>
<td>PRESENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVESTIGATION</td>
<td>BETRAYAL</td>
<td>DÉNOUEMENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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80
Without the foundational myth of individualism, hard-boiled private eye fiction would not be driven to assert the character of the hard-boiled private eye hero; and would not, therefore, require this double plot structure. The underlying value of individualism necessitates the generic convention of the double plot, and the betrayal, or double-cross. In a sense, individualism is the theme that drives the plot through the character. Tony Hilfer stresses self-control as the basis of this individualism, and shows how the corrupt city setting, and the style of wise-cracking wit, combine with the character of the private eye hero to give a coherent shape to the hard-boiled form:

The threat in the American detective novel is the entrapment of the self, its loss of control. The function of the femme fatale is to sway the hero, thus highlighting his control over the self and, in a qualified way, the world. The world of the American detective is too corrupt to be tidily rationalized, but the detective retains at least the illusion of control by his sardonic knowingness. He distances himself from emotional engagement with others by his ability to reduce them to a phrase ... (7-8)

Since individualism is highly valued in the hard-boiled form, the private eye cannot be shown to lose self-control. In Hammett’s novels, this is rarely a serious threat. But with the private eye Marlowe’s more sensitive nature in Chandler’s novels, the reader is held in suspense whether Marlowe will give way to his emotional needs or not. Chandler uses the vulnerability of his private eye hero to add to the suspense; this is especially so in his novels. This is central to his inner plot, and requires closure in the conclusion of his plots.

In addition to the tension of participating in the threat to the individualism of the private eye hero, the reader is curiously manipulated into yet another uneasiness in the hard-boiled form. Most had noted the hard-boiled private eye’s physical engagement as the main driving force in the investigation (differing from the intellectual reasoning of the clue-puzzle detective character). Hammett’s Continental Operative was famous for explaining, in Red Harvest, his style of investigation as "stirring things up" (79). Hamilton also recognizes this distinction between the hard-boiled and clue-puzzle form, explaining that the hard-boiled private eye intervenes and makes things happen – things disintegrate and fall apart – in contrast to the clue-puzzle detective who provides order to the chaos of the initial murder (133). Since it is the decisions and the actions of the hard-boiled private eye that cause things to happen, including often the murder/s in the novel, the private eye hero is implicated in the crime in a way that the clue-puzzle detective hero is not. This has implications for the sense of psychological closure in the hard-boiled form. While the clue-puzzle form relied on the distancing of the detective from the guilt of the crime so that he
could act as the restorer of order and the high priest bringing absolution from the general
guilt, in the hard-boiled form the private eye cannot bring these reassurances and does not
allow this religious/psychological closure. The residual guilt and corruption at the conclusion
of the hard-boiled form erases closure and thus there remains an open-endedness that
leaves the reader as vulnerable as the private eye. Most states that the hard-boiled private
eye hero "can never be entirely freed of the burden of responsibility for having catalyzed the
criminal's actions: at the end of these novels, Spade, Marlowe, or Archer is terribly alone, ...
("The Hippocratic Smile" 350).

Alone, yes; there is a sadness at the end of the hard-boiled novel that is not found in
the conclusion of the clue-puzzle form. Grella associates this with the inability in the hard-
boiled form to return to Eden, since the setting of the hard-boiled was never Eden but
instead a hellish corrupt city ("The Hard-Boiled" 112). Cohen also recognizes that the private
eye hero is part of the corruption inherent in the hard-boiled form, but he attributes this to
the setting: the private eye hero lives and works in the city and this is what implicates him in
its corruption: "In Hammett and Chandler and Ross McDonald [sic] there are moments when
the hero realizes that one cannot pretend to be free of society's taints. Thus Chandler's
Philip Marlowe, at the end The Big Sleep, [sic] realizes his complicity: "'Me, I was part of the
nastiness now" (Murder Most Fair 35).

Most asserts the private eye hero is guilty because he makes things happen; Cohen
asserts he is guilty because he is part of the institutional corruption of the city. Both critics
point to a major difference here from the clue-puzzle form which sought to assuage guilt and
reassure the reader. The hard-boiled form arouses guilt and disturbs the reader. It avoids
closure and ends with an open-ended aperture that allows a glimpse of the reader's
complicity in corruption. Stephen Knight, in describing the character of Chandler's Marlowe,
writes about Marlowe's defensive alienation which protects him from the risks of
engagement in relationships (in the guise of self-sufficient individualism) and notes that,
"This is a powerful contemporary image, of course" ("A Hard Cheerfulness" 82). This is the
final tension in the hard-boiled form – the source of deepest uneasiness for the reader. The
private eye hero in the hard-boiled form is not alone at the end of the novel; the reader sits
with him in a shared tension of collective guilt. In identifying with the hard-boiled private
eye hero, the reader can recognize the self portrait: we too make or do not make things
happen (hopefully, not murder); we too profess our individualism which shields us from
collective responsibility for the crimes of the city and the crimes of the past.
In general, the novels express the fears of the modern, privatized individual, who does not see matters socially or collectively at all, but just fears that those who are closest might not prove trustworthy, that committing yourself is a threat, that true life is in sensitive guarded watchfulness, and that death is the final extinction.

(Knight 84-85)

In the hard-boiled form, the city never sleeps, there is no closure, and crime is never resolved. Narrative closure, therefore, is not possible. At the personal level, also, is the lonely, isolated, hard-boiled private eye hero. The form is essentially romance but the hero remains unfulfilled, alone – again delaying closure. In many ways, then, the hard-boiled private eye form does indeed seem open-ended. But these characteristics become formula – and with the repetition of formula the reader’s expectations are set. Repetition of familiar plot structures in the reading of formula fiction reassures the reader; the private eye is expected to remain alone and frustrated. The very lack of closure becomes familiar.

This setting of readers' expectations can be a useful tool in the hands of creative writers. Rosalie Colie sees genre as an epistemology: a way of learning. By classifying, the human brain groups things together to remember more easily, and associations can be made more quickly between groups of information. A set of related pieces of information develops into perceptions, expectations, attitudes, and habits; "patterns, kinds, mental sets organize for us the lives we individually lead, much as these kinds, sets, patterns organized the vast body of literature. Experience can be seen as searching for its own form, after all …"

(30). Genres set a frame of reference, aiding in our understanding of a text. A writer can exploit readers' expectations, taking for granted set associations and expectations, and thus avoiding lengthy exposition or background information. Writers can also exploit readers' expectations by occasionally surprising the reader with the unexpected, the unforeseen twist. However, the surprise, the de-familiarizing of generic conventions, will not work unless familiarity with the form has been established first.

V. A Changing Genre: Red-Herrings and False Suspects

Fiction is in constant evolution and needs change to avoid stagnation. As Alastair Fowler stresses in the understanding of genre theory: "For to have any literary significance, to mean anything distinctive in a literary way, a work must modulate or vary or depart from its generic conventions, and consequently alter them for the future ... all genres are continuously undergoing metamorphosis" (23). The clue-puzzle form of detective fiction came very near its own death as it became fixated on the rules and conventions of its form.
There are only so many variations possible to a puzzle involving a detective, criminal, crime, and suspects. However, writers are as much creatures of the imagination as they are of form and reason. Even Agatha Christie learned to adjust her closed group settings to suit the changes over the years. David Grossvogel charts how the country house at Styles began its life as a family residence in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* and ended in *Curtain* when Styles was transformed into a hotel; the country house setting was no longer credible ("Death Deferred" 1-17). However, Christie always remained within the formula, as Cawelti approvingly notes (188-93). The writers of clue-puzzle detective fiction happily explored the contours of their form and members of the classic British Detection Club broke conventions greater than Christie’s *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), though with less publicity. Readers knew what to expect when reading clue-puzzle fiction, but it was Christie’s *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* that taught readers and genre critics to expect the unexpected.

The clue-puzzle form has a history of creativity and experimentation, and so also has the hard-boiled form. Chandler’s private eye hero has an idealistic, chivalric ethos that Hammett’s more amoral heroes lack, and the writings of Walter Mosley and Sara Paretsky are deliberately revisionist. Mosley has written eleven novels centering on a black detective, Easy Rawlins, and set in Los Angeles in the 1950s. Rawlings is not a professional private eye, but, like John D. MacDonald’s Travis McGee, is open for hire and especially open to help friends. As an ex-world war two army veteran, Rawlins has a sense of bitterness towards his difficult life situation. Running through the novels is the thread of Rawlins struggling to provide for his wife and daughter, and to make the mortgage payments on their home. Rawlins has his own secrets. He fails to tell his wife that he owns apartment buildings and has additional income from them. This is an unusual twist in a private eye series where the protagonist rarely has independent means. To understand Rawlins, the reader needs to enter into the world of coloured American life (like John D, McDonald’s novels, Mosley’s Rawlins novels have colour in their titles). The emphasis on family, extended family, and the interior life of the protagonist (his drinking, love-hate relationships, messy friendships, fear, guilt, and racial tensions) combine to unify the series in a secondary plot arc. There is no

38 Robert Rushing calculates the possibilities in the board game *Clue* (also known as *Cludo*): "There are thus 324 possible outcomes to the game, given 6 possible suspects, 9 possible rooms, and 6 possible weapons. Relatively speaking (compared, for instance, to chess or cards) this is a claustrophobically small number of possible end-states for a game" (151). Of course, a detective novel allows for a greater range of possibilities than the board game, but the point remains that there is a limitation to creativity.

escaping the awareness of racial conflicts in Mosley's novels. Less obvious are the gender politics of Paretsky's novels. V.I. Warshawski is the innocuous name of Paretsky's female private investigator. Her no nonsense replies to clients who think twice when they discover that the V.I. initials hide a female private eye serve as much to convince the reader as the client. Paretsky is clear in her ambition to claim the hard-boiled private eye genre as open to women. V.I. gets beaten up occasionally, but she also gets opportunities to dress up. Rather than banging the feminist drum, Paretsky seems more eager on highlighting issues on urban development, corporate crime, and injustices of poverty, colour, and other liberal issues. Again, since Paretsky's Warshawski novels are a long-running series, there is a story arch following the inner life and relationships of her protagonist and secondary characters. Both Mosley and Paretsky show how the private eye form subsumes elements of romance in the serial development of the main private eye character. By borrowing from other genres and by combining conventions, both the clue-puzzle and the hard-boiled private eye have successfully extended the lives of their generic forms. In practice, genres work through mixing and adaptation.

The history of crime fiction shows the complexity of trying to classify novels and the difficulty of tracing root sources. The initial simplistic beliefs that clue-puzzle fiction originated with Edgar Allan Poe, or that all crime stories follow the same basic formula, or that the hard-boiled private eye form was a 1920s American reaction to the British clue-puzzle form, are all complicated as historians and genre critics expand and develop their fields of study. Instead, the history shows a complex, creative weaving of influences, experiments, and purposes. Hamilton names this complexity the "layering" of various conventions and genres. She warns:

Such are the dynamics of the layering process, which critics have not even begun to explore because they have failed to recognise the fact of layering. ... Formula literature is not linear; it does not operate on one level. The interplay between the layers ... explains both the continuity and the adaptability of formula, and shows how different generic traditions can interact to produce new patterns. (49)

A quick application of Hamilton’s point here suggests that the traditions of clue-puzzle writing were layered with gothic and supernatural in Poe’s stories; while novel writing conventions were layered with crime sensationalism in Dickens and Collins; the trust in the rational use of reason layered with Poe’s detective character in Conan Doyle’s clue-puzzle fiction; frontier fiction and cowboy themes layered with the clue-puzzle form in the hard-boiled private eye form; the possibilities of layering are numerous. The point is that critics
cannot depend on an easy, rational, classification of an author and the use of generic conventions to structure a criticism. Nor can novels be easily placed within a specific genre – especially novels which experiment in a variety of genres. However, the conventions of the various genres may help explain seeming anomalies and inventions in a novel. It is hoped that a broader understanding of the mixed origins and influences of hard-boiled private eye fiction will help explain the work of the imaginative writer, Murakami Haruki.

V.I History Revisted: Using Clues Creatively

It has been suggested throughout, that a conventional linear history of crime fiction has interrelated with a generic essentialism to oversimplify both the history and the classification of the form. The very terms used by critics over the years have reflected the confusion: detective fiction, classic detective fiction, hard-boiled detective fiction, mystery fiction, clue-puzzle, private eye, crime fiction. Robert Rushing, while focusing on his own "New Lacanian" psychoanalytic critique, is quite sarcastic in noting "Most critical studies of detective fiction present a fairly simplified version of the genre. ... the variety of detective fiction has been largely ignored or underestimated. ... [Critics] don't fully recognize the types and subgenres that flourish within detective fiction" (4). It may seem that Rushing is poking fun at the genre when he claims as subgenres, "a seemingly endless sequence of subsequently smaller and smaller generic denominations ... detective novels about Jane Austin, about Jaine Austen, about cats, about horse racing, about crossword puzzles, about catering, about beauticians, about chocolate. ... subgenre many scholars of genre theory may have been previously unaware of" (18, 25,26). But Rushing's point is far from humorous: this is a quick, brief listing of some of the proliferation of cross layering of genres and conventions that has taken place in crime fiction in the late twentieth century and the early twenty-first. However, any historian will wonder where to classify the literary anomalies: "As early as 1912, R. Austin Freeman gave the solution of the mystery at the beginning of The Singing Bone. In 1932, Anthony Berkeley Cox revealed the name of the murderer in the second sentence of Before the Fact" (Hernández Martín 91). Well before the terms anti-detective, metaphysical detective, or experimental detective fiction were used, before the works of Robbe-Grillet, Borges, Nabokov, and Eco, there was the mistaken detective in Bentley's Trent's Last Case; the open-ended possibilities of Berkeley's The Chocolate Box; the betrayal of narrative trust in Christie's The Murder of Roger Ackroyd and Curtain. Crime fiction was never a well-reasoned, easily classified genre. It was always a creative, imaginative negotiation by authors who had other interests to explore and who,
above all, wanted to tell a good story. Similarly, genre historians who wanted a clear narrative history attempted to write a linear history of crime fiction with clue-puzzle fiction as its prototype. They too wanted to tell a good story, a coherent narrative. Instead, the wider genre of crime fiction contains the very different forms of clue-puzzle fiction and hard-boiled private eye fiction, among others, each with their own confused history.

VI. Conclusion

The writing of Murakami Haruki is not especially unusual in experimenting with a particular form. Nor is he unusual in disguising his social commentary beneath the structure and style of his writing. However, he has suffered due to his creative experimentation with hard-boiled private eye fiction. If, as John Frow defines, "Genre is a framework for processing information and for allowing us to move between knowledge given directly in a text and other sets of knowledge that are relevant to understanding it" (80), then many of Murakami's texts can be better appreciated by associating them with the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. This is especially true with regard to the character of the boku; as Matthew Strecher's stated, in 2002, about the boku from A Wild Sheep Chase: "The protagonist, a cool, detached character who owns an advertising agency, ... is in fact the quintessential model of the hard-boiled detective" (35). Similarly, knowledge of the historical context of Japan, especially from the 1960s to the 1990s, is essential to an understanding of indirect references and assumptions in Murakami's texts. Frow says that, "Genre thus defines a set of expectations which guides our engagement with texts" (104), and an understanding of Japan's history and hard-boiled private eye fiction certainly enhances the reader's engagement, and enjoyment, of the texts. It simply requires close reading to penetrate his use of hard-boiled private eye fiction and to uncover his break away from the form.

The next two chapters will illustrate Murakami's adherence to the form in the person of his hard-boiled private eye character. The attitude to work and the portrayal of wealth borrow from the conventions of the hard-boiled private eye form, and also provide opportunities for Murakami's critique of Japanese society. The sixth chapter will show how the form struggles to challenge and to contain Murakami's unresolved negotiation with the crimes of the past. Even as historians of the genre of crime fiction have had difficulties in composing a coherent narrative to support their interpretations of past events, it will be seen that Murakami also has difficulties in integrating his perspective of Japan's past war crimes with his narration.
Chapter Four
Working for a Living

Beginning first with a review of some major critics who have written in English, this chapter will question a too hasty categorization of Murakami Haruki as a postmodern writer. Instead, the plot structures, and the perspectives of the hard-boiled private eye novel, will be used to read the texts; and this reading will suggest Murakami’s critique of contemporary Japan. Next, the character of the boku will be compared and contrasted with the character of the hard-boiled private eye. In considering the treatment of the boku’s character, the excessive attention given to objects, that has been noted by many of the critics (Iwamoto, Cassegard, Hirata, and Carter), will be contextualized. Since work is a significant trope in the hard-boiled form, the attitude of the boku to work will be explored.

I. The Critics

Murakami published *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1982 (English translation, 1989) as a conclusion to the trilogy about the friendship of the boku, his girlfriend, and Rat. However, *A Wild Sheep Chase* (*WSC*) easily stands alone as a novel. Much more conventionally structured than the previous *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979, 1987) and *Pinball, 1973* (1980, 1985), it was Murakami’s first use of the hard-boiled private eye narrative style and structure. Murakami said of it, "... I knew I wanted to tell a continuous narrative – a big, long story" (Gregory, Miyawaki, & McCaffery 119). This necessitated that he find a narrative structure: "I wasn’t really interested in writing a hard-boiled mystery. I just wanted the hard-boiled mystery structure" (114). In 1988, he published a sequel, *Dance, Dance, Dance* (English translation, 1994), which also follows the structure of the hard-boiled private eye form. By no means can Murakami’s novels be called hard-boiled private eye novels, however, they do contain elements borrowed from them and it is these elements that explain some of Murakami’s more discussed narrative characteristics: his nameless detached, lonely, aloof narrator; the sardonic wit; the attention to objects, numbers, and details as a means of emotional detachment. Critics have commented on these narrative characteristics from their own various perspectives. However, critics frequently ignore the generic foundation in the hard-boiled private eye form and instead attribute the characteristics of the main protagonist, the plot structure, and other elements of Murakami’s style to his immersion in postmodernity. Murakami’s position towards postmodernism is open to question. Without disputing that Murakami offers a critique of...
consumerist society, it is important not to rush too hastily into an evaluation of Murakami’s critique, but instead, to take the time first to explore his use of the hard-boiled private eye form. By considering how and why Murakami both appropriates and departs from the conventions of the hard-boiled private eye form, it is hoped that a deeper understanding of his social message may be gained. Elements from the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction may also be responsible for shaping the textual response to social conditions.

Iwamoto Yoshio (1993) is representative of the critics that consider the nameless boku in Murakami’s work as “an exemplar of the diffusion of the ego, the dispersal of the self, the death of the subject, that are an integral part of postmodern discourse” (297). While this may indeed be true, it is not the only possible reading of Murakami’s characteristic absence of names. Iwamoto follows Karatani’s assessment that the boku lacks subjectivity precisely because he is a character in a postmodern novel. It is the postmodern, Iwamoto believes, that gives the boku his characteristics. Thus, although Iwamoto says the boku is a likeable character, he describes him as lacking in relational skills, "Boku tries to escape the self-other confrontation by viewing others as objects, no doubt because his own subjective self is wanting in depth" (297). There are plenty of examples of the boku’s avoidance of in-depth conversations. Iwamoto draws his argument from WSC and the boku’s passive acceptance of his wife and his girlfriend having left him. The boku does not seem even to try to communicate with his wife; but it is mistaken to say "the matter is soon erased from his consciousness" (298). Iwamoto ignores the end of the novel where the boku sits alone on the beach and cries. Aside from this judgment, Iwamoto and others have failed to situate Murakami in the form of the hard-boiled detective. Frequently, it is mentioned that Murakami is heavily influenced by American literature and American culture but the influence of the hard-boiled private eye form on his writing, while acknowledged, is rarely taken into consideration.

The emotional detachment of the hard-boiled private eye is a trope shown in the lack of deep personal relationships and conversations in the novels. The tough guy treats attempts to pierce through his outer guise with witty one-line verbal parries and only brief internal commentary:

He distances himself from emotional engagement with others by his ability to reduce them to a phrase ... The alienated posture of the tough detective becomes a reassurance about how to live, with style, in a job-centered, emotion-denying society ... Irony substitutes for political action. (Hilfer 9-10)
The form of the early hard-boiled private eye fiction requires the private eye to remain detached and thus uses the dialogue to show the private eye as distancing himself from romantic overtures and appeals to emotion. This is necessary to support the role of the private eye as the loner removed from the corrupt world, standing isolated, as Grella puts it, "because he is too good for the society he inhabits" (in Wicks 110). This alienation of the protagonist is stressed in the hard-boiled private eye form to contrast with the setting of the corrupt city. Grella continues, "Although not a perfect man, he is the best man in his world ... an urban chaos, devoid of spiritual and moral values, pervaded by viciousness and random savagery" (110). Both form and content have to be taken together in understanding Murakami’s *boku* and many critics fail to acknowledge the influence of the hard-boiled private eye form on the content of his writing.

Carl Cassegard (2001) also situates Murakami as a postmodern writer and ignores the influence of the hard-boiled private eye form in his writing. Cassegard interprets the *boku*’s "resignation which borders on indifference" (85) as a result of the "absence of shock" in the face of modernity and city life. Using the theory of Walter Benjamin, Cassegard argues that the *boku* lives in a world where the shocking pace of change is naturalized "as one grows accustomed to it" (83). Surviving in modernity has its price and city people like the *boku* survive by turning inwards and interiorizing their emotions instead of reaching out to share with others. Thus, Cassegard explains that the privatization of the self gives rise to the intense loneliness of Murakami’s protagonists: "It is self-imposed solitude that makes it possible for them to avoid the shocks of social life in modernity" (83). As with Iwamoto, however, Cassegard makes no mention of the convention of the hard-boiled private eye hero isolated against the corruption of the city.

Hirata Hosea (2005) engages with Karatani Kōjin’s dismissal of what he termed Murakami’s lack of historical subjectivity and denial of existence in his nameless characters (54-5). Hirata defends Murakami and notes the importance of the nine missing pages in the English translation of *Dance, Dance, Dance (DDD)* regarding the decision to give the name of Kiki (59), and the missing chapters fifteen and eighteen from book two of *WBC*, which he claims explains the connections between the name of the mysterious telephone woman in room 208, the missing wife Kumiko, and the named protagonist Toru Okada (64). Hirata argues that Karatani is mistaken in his claim that subjective historicity resides in a unique "irreplaceable singularity" signified by a proper name (69). Instead, drawing on the Lacanian notion of the loss of the object of desire, Hirata argues that the human person’s ethical engagement is better expressed as an unnameable search for lost desire, since Murakami’s
novels are about "the rediscovery of one’s identity, which seems irrecoverably fragmented" (69) and "Murakami’s later works are an exhaustive effort to grapple with the issue of naming and the rediscovery of something that is irreplaceable ..." (70). Hirata is drawn to Murakami’s motif of searching for lost people and things. While this may lead to an interesting reading of the text, it erases the obvious foundation in the hard-boiled private eye form where the private eye is hired to seek and find. Hirata sees in the novels an emphasis on the process, not the end/conclusion, but fails to notice that this is a defining difference between the clue-puzzle form which follows the process of detection to a logical conclusion and thus provides closure, and the hard-boiled private eye form which has a more open process of detection and an open-ended finale that suggests crime is never concluded. Thus, there are no conclusions in Murakami’s novels, only new beginnings, because it is precisely the search, the process, that gives the individual and life itself their meaning and purpose. Instead of grounding his critique in Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye form, Hirata philosophizes in his explanation of the repetition in Murakami’s work. "The Murakami-text keeps repeating this impossible question: 'Who are you?'" (66). In WBC, the named boku seeks to identify the mysterious woman telephone caller. She assures him that he knows her name and that he will not get his missing wife back until he discovers her name. In the extended search for his wife, the out-of-work boku is confronted with his need to find himself also; to rename himself. The question "Who are you?" applies to the named boku as much as to the unnamed telephone woman. The question applies equally well to the reader: how are we named through the decisions we make in our lives? Hirata's paper is an insightful reading and this is not contested here. The point is that it overlooks the use Murakami makes of the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction; how Murakami both observes the conventions and extends beyond them. It is in this between space, the gap, that the text voices its critique. Hirata and others sadly miss this point.

Elizabeth Carter (2007) also focuses on the boku who "remains a static character, unable to make emotional connections with others. This is largely demonstrated by his lack of a name" (1). Carter agrees with most critics in saying that "Murakami is really critiquing the emptiness and disaffection of postmodern Japanese, and perhaps the new global, society" (1). The namelessness of the protagonist is coupled with the first-person objective voice that adds to the flattening of his interiority: "his feelings, opinions and views often go unexpressed" (2). This flat character, first-person point of view, however, is typical of fast paced, action narrative of the tough guy style. Carter does acknowledge that, "some critics
... argue that Murakami’s curt, concrete sentences are an imitation of earlier ‘hardboiled’
Western detective” (sic 5). In contradiction of Susan Fisher (2000), Carter declares that
Murakami is intending more than a humorous parody of the hard-boiled:

The hardboiled detective story style is not borrowed without reason. ... by having a
thoroughly mediocre, nameless everyman mimic the hardboiled style of the
stereotypical cool, collected detective, Murakami encourages the reader to see how
lonely such an outlook would be for anyone ... Murakami uses humor to show the
reader the emotional problems caused by the protagonist’s ‘hardboiled’ attitude. (5)
The lack of connection between people and events is indicative of the fragmentation
of postmodern society and makes the individual powerless and life meaningless. Thus,
Carter contends that Murakami has borrowed the hard-boiled private eye form because it
allows him to parody the private eye character and plot in an allusion to "the search for
identity in postmodern Japan, or for the identity of postmodern Japan" (5). This search
cannot be satisfied by the commodities of capitalist consumer society; rather, consumer
goods only serve to intensify the emptiness of the individual. Carter likens the Japanese
salary man of the rapid growth bubble economy to the nameless mass produced items that
the Boss’s chauffeur in WSC says do not deserve a name (4). The boku’s fascination with
objects and daily routines parallels the meaninglessness of a commodified existence and the
lack of identity that it produces. This, perhaps, is why postmodern readers identify with the
boku; they see themselves and their lives reflected in him. That Murakami’s novels have no
closure, no neat solution, Carter concludes, "is a statement that, just as in real life, there are
no easy answers to anyone’s problems" (7).

Like many critics, Carter assumes Murakami offers a commentary on postmodernity
and seeks in the texts proof of her reading. Interested in the absence of names, Carter and
other critics immediately conclude this reflects the interior emptiness of the postmodern
individual and that the open-ended conclusions of the novels reflect the meaninglessness of
life. Michael Seats warns of "the critical literature in English ... which tends to invoke
interpretative forms serving only to reinforce those schema, rather than helping to
illuminate the possibilities suggested by the ... texts themselves (and not just their apparent
thematic concerns)" (13). By beginning with a concentration on the hard-boiled private eye
form and its appropriation by the texts, it is hoped to avoid a reading that similarly proves a
prior assumption. However, it is easier to notice the errors of other critics than to avoid
similar faults oneself.
Matthew Strecher wrote the first book length critical analysis of Murakami’s fiction in English in 2002. Drawing on his doctoral thesis, Strecher’s book, *Dances With Sheep*, focuses on Murakami’s response to the loss of identity in postmodern Japan, and traces the postmodern lack of subjectivity back to Japan’s failure of hope following the 1960s’ student protests. In answer to Karatani, Ōe, and others, Strecher argues that Murakami is very much interested in socio-political reality, but grounds his interest in postmodern awareness of the indeterminacy of cultural shaping of subjective perception:

The relationship between these subjective realities and identity itself thus becomes clear, insofar as our grasp of the reality around ourselves is always historical: we are constituted as subjects according to our experiences via culture, and thus how we envision, interpret, and finally know the realities that surround us – and also ourselves as subjects – is finally the result of this relationship between culture and experience. (26)

Strecher notes Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye form in the rebellious nature of the *boku*. Strecher describes the *boku* from *HBW&EW*: "in the 'hard-boiled' sequences [he] regularly takes matters into his own hands. He bypasses official channels to take on his present job [the hiring by the Professor], lies to his superiors, and works at his own pace, without the benefit of his liaison officer" (40). These are traits of the hard-boiled private eye. As well as noticing the similarities in the character of the *boku* and the hard-boiled private eye, Strecher also observes the conventional corrupt city setting of the hard-boiled form:

[the] portrayal of the System/state as all-powerful, omniscient, and dangerous, is typical of Murakami’s literature, but more importantly for the [hard-boiled detective] formula, it locates an evil presence throughout the urban landscape of Tokyo … against which the hero’s marginality stands out as a rebellious yet wholesome good. (40-1)

Strecher makes a good point. Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye form necessitates his protagonists’ character, and his corrupt city setting must be seen within the context of the hard-boiled private eye conventions. This is an important primary reading prior to any application to postmodernity or commentary on subjectivity. As Strecher says, "This sinister characterization of the city as a beautiful shell, teeming with evil and danger, is a defining characteristic of the hard-boiled setting" (41). Murakami uses these hard-boiled private eye characteristics to highlight "the power of the late-capitalist consumerist state to strip the individual of his identity, and replace it with an artificial, externally constructed
identity designed for optimum state control" (41). There is a cross doubling here: the form dictates and names the content; but the author has decided on the form and, by imposing his own content, subsumes both the form and content into his own commentary on postmodernity.

The hard-boiled private eye form is only treated cursorily in Strecher’s book, which offers multi-theoretical readings of Murakami’s texts (see Seats 4-6; Sherif 371). Similarly, Rebecca Suter’s book, The Japanization of Modernity: Murakami Haruki Between Japan and the United States (2008), also only makes passing reference to "the metafictional anti-detective novel" (104) in describing how the reader is challenged by the undecidability in Murakami’s texts. While extremely useful, it is not the purpose of Suter’s book to explore in detail the traces of the hard-boiled private eye form in Murakami’s writing. Since such an exploration has not yet been attempted in either English or Japanese publications, this initial study will be the first to open up what the hard-boiled private eye voice of Murakami’s writing may be saying.

II. The Hard-Boiled Boku

Among the characteristics of the hard-boiled private eye mentioned in the previous chapter is the distancing of the private eye from his feelings, from other people, and from life in general. Murakami’s boku is noted for his aloofness. The hard-boiled private eye stands alone, apart from others, so that he can offer a moral alternative to the corrupt city setting of the novel. There is no clear, simple portrayal of the hard-boiled hero in Murakami’s novels. Instead, there is a mix of characteristics from the various forms that inform his writing. The influence of the form of romance fiction blends with the hard-boiled cool of the boku. Absent, lost love and unfulfilled romance bleeds into the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. This brings out the inherent sentimentality (see Cassuto) and nostalgia in the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. The novels that are closer to the form of romance (Norwegian Wood, South of the Border, West of the Sun, Sputnik Sweetheart, After Dark) do cross-influence the more hard-boiled novels that are considered here. More importantly, is the theme of loss that pervades all of Murakami’s writing. Loss, sentimentality, and nostalgia affect the portrayal of the boku. The hard-boiled boku in WSC has lost a previous girlfriend who committed suicide, his wife who divorces him, and his present girlfriend who walks out of the mountain lodge in Hokkaido. In DDD, the boku searches for a lost girlfriend. Loss is part of the world of the Town in HBW&EW and the more hard-boiled character is threatened with the loss of his life. The boku in WBC also
loses his wife, and the protagonist Kafka has lost his mother and sister who left him and his father. These losses not only shape the character of the protagonists, the tone of loss blends with sentimentality and nostalgia throughout the novels. (It will be seen in later chapters how Murakami makes unique the theme of the past that is part of the private eye structure and form.)

The novel, A Wild Sheep Chase (WSC), is narrated by the nameless protagonist, using the first-person pronoun *boku*, and is written from a limited point-of-view. The focus is on episodic plot action, although there are descriptions of daily life, surroundings, digressive internal musings, and excerpts from books that the *boku* is reading. However, the novel opens with a flashback: the *boku*'s memories of a previous girlfriend from his college days who had committed suicide. Digressions such as these slow down the plot's forward momentum, however, they help create tension by postponing the resolution of action. The use of dialogue to provide plot, the smart verbal quips, and the repression of emotion signal narrative characteristics familiar to hard-boiled private eye readers, of which the following is an example:

"What have you been up to this past year?" she asked me.

"Different things," I said.

"Wiser for it?"

"A little."

That night, I slept with her for the first time. (WSC 6)

In WSC, the *boku* is newly divorced, has a cat and a new girlfriend (the girl with beautiful ears), and he is a partner in a growing advertising/translating company. By the end of the novel, he has lost his girlfriend, has quit his job, his friend Rat has died and his ex-wife and partner have drifted out of his life. He gives away the money he has earned from the black-suited secretary to the bar owner, J, and sits alone on the beach. Murakami's *boku* is a version of the drifting, detached, depressed, private eye who lives on the edge of a corrupt society, exists solely to work, and who takes refuge in his cat, books, music, cooking and cleaning.

The *boku* has not changed much in the sequel, Dance, Dance, Dance (DDD). The novel begins with a description of his empty life. He writes impersonal copy, "shoveling snow" (12), for magazines. He chooses undemanding relationships, "I slept with a few

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women I met through work" (13); and he makes no mention of close male friends. Only when he has buried his faithful cat, Kipper, is he finally pushed to resolve his life: "All I had to do was take action" (15); and he significantly names the woman that he will search for: Kiki, his girlfriend with the beautiful ears from WSC.

The protagonist in *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (*HBW&EW*) is divided into the hard-boiled *watashi* and the more passive, romantically-styled *boku* (see Stecher 39). The *watashi* in the *HBW* section defends his isolated lifestyle in his apartment surrounded by his old movies, his whiskey collection, and "two-hundred-thousand-yen worth of bomber jacket and Brooks Brothers suit" (142). He claims that the nature of his work (shuffling secret data) keeps him isolated. But it is obvious that it is his own nature that keeps him aloof: "No one had any business with me, ... Fine. I had no business with anyone else either" (67). He is a hard-boiled tough guy. He is divorced. Both his wife and his cat have walked out on him (341). He spends his last day thinking of books, movies, music and, even if he does decide to deepen his relationship with the female librarian (eating an enormous, expensive Italian meal and making love afterwards), he cannot bring himself to tell her that his existence is ending. His last moments are alone in his parked car on "the waterfront" (395) listening to Bob Dylan.

The protagonist in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (*WBC*) is not divorced, but is struggling in his marriage, and lies in bed beside his wife wondering "just how much I really knew about this woman" (30) and whether "this was it: the fatal blow" that would end his marriage. Toru Okada, the *boku* in *WBC*, has quit his job and is deciding what to do next in life. He and his wife and cat live quietly without many friends (180) and, (unusually for Murakami who rarely mentions parents), there is mention that the *boku* has no contact with his parents nor with his wife's parents. He also cooks, cleans, listens to music and goes to the laundry. But it is the inner loneliness that defines him, "Two people can sleep in the same bed and still be alone when they close their eyes" (388).

The novel, *Kafka on the Shore* (*KOS*), has a fifteen year old boy trying to be "the world's toughest fifteen-year-old" (5). His inner voice, Crow, seems to be a lot tougher. Kafka has no friends from school since he deliberately kept to himself because he planned to run away from home when he reached fifteen. Hoshino is the more hard-boiled character in the novel. Hoshino is a minor character, "a no-good-ex-soldier-turned-truck driver" (449) with no steady girlfriend or male friends. Hoshino is a wanderer, well-suited to the long hours driving alone "in his own private little kingdom" (243). However, he decides to help Nakata, whose search for the cat Goma turns into a search for the entrance stone. It is their
section of the novel that has the plot elements that most obviously resemble a hard-boiled private eye story.

Murakami's narrators do fit the characteristics of the Chandleresque private eye hero: the lone man with moral integrity, unafraid to walk the "mean streets." However, they are unlikely heroes. They are not professional, private detectives, nor do they work for the police. They are average men who get caught up in extraordinary events and who have a common openness to the supernatural. Murakami shifts away from the hard-boiled private eye form which resists the supernatural. Few of Murakami's protagonists engage in pure rational detective work of the clue-puzzle style. In WSC, the boku does piece together some clues. He collects information on sheep and sheep farming, on the ownership of the house in Junitaki, on Rat's movements, cigarette butts, food, mirror reflections, books, and the identity of the Sheep Man. All the while, he reads Sherlock Holmes. His attraction to the girl with the beautiful ears is most fortuitous for him: she urges his acceptance of the case and it is she who uses her psychic powers to select the Dolphin Hotel. However, there are more elements from the form of hard-boiled private eye than the clue-puzzle detective mystery. The plot moves forward through events, some initiated by the boku, others that happen to him. Like the hard-boiled private eye, the boku is provoked by the case to engage in direct action and it is his decisions that break open the case, causing events to happen. In this, the private eye learns and grows in his personal life, as well as resolving the case.

In DDD, the boku's inner quest is to discover where Kiki is and what her connection is to the dead Mei, nicknamed the Goatgirl. It is only by making connections, by engaging in the dance of life, that the boku regains his sense of existence and becomes real again. He meets the receptionist Yumiyoshi in the new Dolphin Hotel. He makes friends with Yuki (a girl named snow; the boku describes his work throughout the novel as "shoveling snow" 199). He also reconnects with his old schoolmate Gotanda. The Sheep Man advises him to make connections: "Here was a clue. I had to get moving. I couldn't stand still. I had to dance" (104). The boku gains his identity by making decisions, by engaging in relationships and in action; he discovers reality in relationships and faces it. In the end, however, there is still that elusive open-ended conclusion. As in the beginning, at the end of the book the boku hears someone crying for him.

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41 It is this combination of supernatural and hard-boiled private eye story that suggests Murakami is parodying the hard-boiled private eye form. However, since there is no direct element of mockery, Murakami's blending of forms and use of humour cannot be defined as parody. See Margaret A. Rose, Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern.
III. Hard-Boiling the Plot

The characteristic of the alone, distanced boku is structurally supported by Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye plot. There are basic similarities to the hard-boiled private eye plot, discussed in the previous chapter, in many of Murakami’s novels. The protagonist in *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982, 1989; WSC) is pressurized into accepting a contract to find his missing friend, Rat. Glenn Most pointed out that this hiring of the private eye is typical of the hard-boiled genre. There exists the inner plot and the outer plot that Stephen Knight described: the private eye is hired by a client and sets the plot in motion (the outer plot); the private eye must unravel the past crime (the inner plot) that explains the present events (see Knight, *Form and Ideology*, and in Docherty). The boku in WSC unravels the connections between the Boss, the history of the special sheep, and his friend Rat. There is also the oblique suggestion of the inner world of the protagonist and the conflict that marks his own inner plot. Chandler's Philip Marlowe has his internal sexual inhibitions that create his difficulties in forming a satisfactory relationship with women. Macdonald's Lew Archer has similar problems for different reasons. The lonely, awkward boku is in good company. Generally, the hard-boiled private eye has some inner conflict that develops but remains unresolved throughout the story or series.

In *Dance, Dance, Dance* (1988, 1994; DDD), the same boku initiates his own inner plot by contracting himself to find his missing girlfriend (the girl with beautiful ears who ran out on him in *A Wild Sheep Chase*). He is "hired" to escort the thirteen year old Yuki Makimura in an outer plot which is entangled with a parallel outer plot: the murder case about which the boku is questioned and his subsequent hunt for the real killer. In typical hard-boiled private eye plot style, the boku's activity in searching for his missing girlfriend initiates the series of events that intersects with the murder. To resolve the murder, the boku must dig into the past to find the original crime and motive and connect them to the present circumstances. The boku's own inner conflict also has its roots in the past.

*Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1985, 1991; HBW&EW) is more complex, but the hard-boiled private eye search and chase plot can still be seen. In the HBW sections of the book, the watashi protagonist is hired in an outer plot to shuffle data and this involves him in the conflict between the System and the Factory, which reveals the past inner plot when the Professor reveals his past crime. In the EW sections, the protagonist boku has two contradictory "hirings." He is hired to read the dreams from the skulls of the unicorns and he is urged by his shadow to find the means to escape from the Town. The inner plot explaining the purpose of the Town, and its connection to the Hard-Boiled
Wonderland is finally understood in the context of the Professor’s past crime in the HBW section. Both the watashi and the boku have their own internal conflicts hampering their actions.

The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle (1995, 1997; WBC) returns to the more frequent outer missing person plot: the boku protagonist, Toru Okada, is asked by his wife to search for their missing cat and then he initiates his own search for his wife when she goes missing. There is also a second inner past narrative in this long novel. Mr. Honda indirectly pressurizes the boku to restore the missing flow of water between the parallel worlds of Lieutenant Mamiya and Noboru Wataya. The past crimes that disturbed the flow of water and allowed Noboru Wataya’s crimes must be understood and resolved by the boku before he can find his wife and cat. Again, the boku has his own life issues to face and his internal issues interweave with the plot.

Kafka on the Shore (2002, 2005; KOS) combines the hiring of the private eye with the plot structure of a coming-of-age narrative of fifteen year old Kafka Tamura who has a contract with himself (and his alter-ego, Crow) to run away from his father’s home to find his missing mother and sister, and thus avoid his father’s dire prophecy for him. The war-injured Nakata is hired in a second outer plot to find the missing cat, Goma. His search is aided by the truck driver Hoshino and they are crossed by the antagonistic, sinister, Johnnie Walker. The inner past plot here is the accidental opening of a stone portal by Miss Saeki (the entrance stone), which, again, links the two outer plot narratives.

A Wild Sheep Chase was Murakami’s first use of the double plot structure of the hard-boiled private eye narrative. In the subsequent novels, he complicates the structure; introducing sub-plots and secondary detective-type characters. HBW&EW is noticeably divided into the fast-paced hard-boiled narrative of the watashi and the distinctively different slower-paced, romantically descriptive narrative of the boku. The alternating chapters heighten the contrived nature of the writing. As the reader is drawn into trying to make narrative sense of the two parallel plots, reading closely for clues to their connection and overlap, the reader is also aware that this is indeed a constructed narrative, a contrived reality. The device of parallel plots is used to call attention to the meta-narrative of the writer’s work of narrative construction without recourse to self-reflectivity. Interestingly, the novel KOS also has a parallel plot device in which the narrative of the fifteen year old

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42 This structure is used to even more obvious effect in 1Q84 where the reflection on writing, ghost-editing, and publishing form an important theme interacting with the parallel worlds. The double, and later triple, points of view reinforce the parallel plots which the reader is waiting tensely to converge.
Kafka overlaps with the narrative of the elderly Nataka and the hard-boiled Hoshino. However, the two plots alternate and finally intersect smoothly. Without *HBW&EW*’s stark contrast in the setting and style of each of its two plots, *KOS* achieves a more conventional structuring and makes easier reading. The hard-boiled detective characteristics are minimised in *KOS* which merely maintains the search trope and the threat of murder in the Kafka narrative. The minor character Hoshino is delegated as the hard-boiled, tough-guy private eye who takes on Nataka’s search for the entrance stone. *HBW&EW* and *KOS* both illustrate Murakami’s delight in experimenting with the form of the hard-boiled private eye narrative and his openness to combine that form in a single novel with other narrative forms.

The inner life of the hard-boiled private eye always received sufficient treatment by the early writers to evoke a degree of sentimentality that tempered the tough-guy exterior. Sometimes by withholding emotional expression and merely inserting suggestive reactions, and other times by reporting the interior dialogue of the central character, the hard-boiled characters of the Continental Op, Sam Spade, Philip Marlow, and later Lew Archer showed a soft heart and a restrained emotion. The private eye character was made more complex and internal conflicts, psychological issues, past history, and human relationships added interest to the main character. Often this subtly suggested internal world provoked a conflict in the narrative or provided motive for the protagonist’s decisions and actions – especially when his personal values and integrity were threatened. Thus, Sam Spade infamously shoots Brigid O’Shaughnessy (*The Maltese Falcon*); Marlowe says goodbye to Anne Riordan (*Farewell, My Lovely*), and orders Carmen Sternwood out of his bed (*The Big Sleep*); while Lew Archer tries to protect the boy Ronny (*The Underground Man*), and the vulnerable Laurel Russo (*Sleeping Beauty*). In his article, "On Raymond Chandler," Fredric Jameson describes the hard-boiled private eye as a catalyst provoking through his intervention a collapse in a previously uneasily balanced social system (83). The latent violence, the suspicion, and corruption are "stirred up" by the private eye "to burst into flame on exposure to the open air" (Jameson 83). Jameson, in contrast to Knight, calls this "the secondary plot" (84), although the reader mistakenly assumes it is the primary plot. Jameson argues that the primary plot involves the private eye’s character, the challenge to his personal values through the relationship of the initial hiring or the close family circle. It is in the betrayal of the detective that the primary plot resides. This necessitates that the episodic plot that provides the forward momentum of the narrative has as its climax a "return to the beginning" (84). Jameson lists Chandler’s variations of betrayals:
the missing person is dead and the client did it, or the missing person is guilty and
the body found was that of somebody else, or both the client and a member of her
entourage are guilty and the missing person is not really missing at all, and so forth.

(84)

This betrayal of the private eye has become a conventional trope of the form which also
contributes to the indirect focus on the interior world of the private eye.

Murakami foregrounds the interior world of his version of the hard-boiled private
eye. The *boku* recounts endless internal monologues while expected emotional reactions
are often withheld. The pattern is taken from the hard-boiled private eye form (the
protagonist’s internal commentary and repressed emotion). However, in Murakami there is
a degree of exaggeration that is beyond the hard-boiled private eye conventions and
suggests either a self-reflective calling of attention to the hard-boiled style or its parody.
The trope of betrayal is also present in Murakami’s novels; however, it is not always seen as
an obvious betrayal. The *boku* in *WSC* is betrayed by his client when the sheep he was hired
to search for turns out not to have really been missing. Again, in *WSC*, the black-suited
secretary of the Boss knew all along where the Rat was hiding, but he needed the *boku*
"to lure him [the Rat] out of his lair" (292). The *boku* is also betrayed, in a way, by his friend the
Rat who needed the help of the *boku* to kill the sheep which he had trapped inside himself.

In *DDD*, the *boku* is betrayed by his friend Gotanda who knew the *boku*’s missing girlfriend
Kiki. The *boku*’s friend Yuki, whom the *boku* was hired to accompany, reveals Gotanda’s
guilt. The *watashi* in *HBW&EW* was clearly betrayed by the Professor and also by his grand-
daughter, the chubby girl in pink. The shadow is betrayed by the *boku* in the *EW* section and
the *boku* is betrayed by the Town. In the confusion of which circuit of the brain can be
considered the "real" world, either the mind of the *watashi* or the mind of the *boku*
betrays the other. (The lack of resolution of this enigma extravagantly betrays the reader’s desire
for closure.) *WBC* returns to a clear plot structure in which the *boku* is betrayed by the
missing wife who masquerades as the woman on the telephone and in room 208, and who
may not be really missing. He is certainly betrayed by the wife’s brother, Noboru Wataya,
the novel’s antagonist. *KOS* again shows a betrayal of the central character by those close to
him as Miss Saeki turns out to have been responsible for opening the entrance stone and
inadvertently allowing the murder of Kafka’s father and the murderous activity of Johnnie
Walker. The trope of betrayal is present in many of Murakami’s novels. Jameson’s list of
Chandler’s variations of betrayal is reflected in Murakami’s hard-boiled private eye plots
with their missing people and cats, least likely murderers, and series of betrayals.
The dual structure of *HBW* & *EW* also shows a curious cross doubling. The *watashi* of the *HBW* section is the more easily recognized hard-boiled private eye character; however, the pronoun *watashi* is slightly more formal than the more familiar, informal *boku* pronoun used in the less hard-boiled, more romantic fantasy section of *EW*. It would seem that the pronouns (names) should be switched. Nevertheless, the use of *watashi* draws attention to the formalities of a conventional form (the form of the hard-boiled private eye; though a lot less formal than the clue-puzzle form), while the use of the informal pronoun *boku* draws attention to the openness of the romantic adventure fantasy which borrows from a range of genres.

Strecher reads Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye form as a subversion of the resolution of crime (38). He notices that Murakami tends to have unresolved endings, inconclusive conclusions with undecidable meanings. This is also a characteristic of the hard-boiled private eye novel. Even if a particular crime is solved, the implication is that crime itself can never be finally solved, remains always unresolved. Nothing changes because crime is ongoing. It is a common feature of the form. Leonard Cassuto writes of the "ambiguity in the genre … hard-boiled novels don’t resolve … they create a fundamental ambiguity about whether order has in fact been restored and justice has been done … (for hard-boiled novels regularly question whether justice is even possible) … " (81). This inconclusiveness is doubled in the interior plot of the detective’s personal decisions. His own narrative remains inconclusive: "the hard-boiled protagonist struggles … to maintain control over his identity, his ability to make choices, to think, and to interpret" (45). The tension between the inner plot of the hero’s interior struggle and the outer dual plots of the crime present and crime past is repeated in the hard-boiled private eye serials. Sam Spade, Marlowe, and Archer never fully resolve their interior struggles against self-doubt to form a lasting relationship. Instead, they retain their anti-establishment stance and remain marginal to the corrupt city society whose values they oppose as fervently as they oppose the crime it breeds. The form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, then, leaves open the identity of the protagonist. There is no solution to the problems of his internal struggles. Murakami’s choice of this form allows him to assert that identity can never be closed, concluded, by a too easy solution. Identity remains undecidable. Instead, "the self emerges through a discursive process of constant interaction that is always fluid and flexible" (Strecher 60); and here Strecher is correct in observing that this open process that Murakami advocates is in opposition to the "too stable, too fixed, a ready-made, yet artificial substitute identity (as consumer, as worker bee) in Japan’s rapid capitalist state."
It may not be so important that Murakami depicts his narrator as a distanced, aloof character, since this is a trope of the hard-boiled private eye form. What may be more important to reading his comment on society, which may have been missed by many critics, is that the boku is willing to remain open in his inner search for identity in contrast to the dictates of any society that too quickly forces its individuals into assuming social roles. This is not necessarily a product of Murakami’s reflection on a specifically postmodern society.

III.1 The Clue to Objects

Similarly, the observation that the boku is overly focused on objects, numbers, lifestyle, and commodities is also taken as a result of the boku’s postmodern attitude:
"Boku’s perception of and response to people and things leans heavily on the side of the immediate, the physical, the sensual, mixed with not a little affection" (Iwamoto 298). Throughout the novels, there is a tendency to draw attention to objects (the commodities noticed by critics) in a way that both follows formulaic hard-boiled private eye conventions, and departs from those conventions. Iwamoto reads this as a postmodern avoidance: "Anything requiring sustained thought, spiritual input, or a committed stance bores him, perhaps even frightens him" (299). Consistently, the boku is understood as an individual who protects himself from reality; who hides from the responsibilities of subjectivity. Relationships and feelings would force him to perceive, to reflect, and to grow. Iwamoto sees this as a characteristic of the postmodern world, where commodities and relativity have fragmented the selfhood of human subjects. Thus, Murakami portrays a character who has withdrawn from relationships and feelings that might penetrate his emotional protection. Again, there may be truth in this reading, however, the hard-boiled private eye form that requires the displacement of emotion onto objects and objective description is ignored by Iwamoto and others.

In an essay entitled "Private Eye/Camera Eye," Peter Humm comments on the objective style of Hemingway, Faulkner, and Graham Greene, as precursor to the style of Hammett and Chandler. Humm compares the hard-boiled private eye to the camera eye of American documentary photographer, Walker Evans, and writer, James Agee. The protagonists function as a mechanical camera, giving minute detailed descriptions of people and objects and, in this way, distancing these characters from others and from the reader: "Even at their most violent, these figures remain mechanically distant and uninvolved, using objects to hold off the reality of others" (29). This style contributes to the Othering of the criminal character. Hammett and Chandler use similar techniques to distance their honest
heroes. In Hammett’s *Red Harvest*, the Continental Op gives a remorselessly objective description of waking up next to the dead body of Dinah Brand. The ice pick in the Op’s hand and the ladder in Dinah Brand’s stocking are objects that serve only to objectify the two bodies. Humm notes: “The Continental Op is a famously anonymous hero” (32) – the Op is nameless. He exists only for his work and his work defines him. The private detective in Hammett’s *The Maltese Falcon* is named; Sam Spade. However, Humm wryly quotes the physical description of Spade: he is reduced to a "V motif… [a] body like a bear’s … [and skin] childishly soft and pink" (32). Despite the naming of this detective, he remains distant. Chandler’s famous use of "the wisecracking simile of the tarantula on a slice of angel food … is the private eye’s best defence against a world that is always threatening …" (34). Murakami’s use of the first-person narrator with objective observations, sardonic humour, and impersonal dialogue does not seem out of place beside the work of Hammett, Chandler, Macdonald and others from the hard-boiled private eye school.

While Murakami does have his own purpose in foregrounding the surrounding objects (a purpose made clear in the next chapter), he is in the tradition of the hard-boiled private eye by using objects as a displacement of the emotional reactions of his *boku*. The writings of Hemingway, and also Raymond Carver, whom Murakami has translated and greatly admires, use descriptions of surrounding objects and banal details of daily life to establish the tough guy style. By focusing on setting, the character’s feelings are concealed. Beneath the objective first-person narration and mimetic dialogue lies the inner story of motivations, conflict, and pathos. The reader is forced to read between the lines to understand the point of Hemingway or Carver’s stories. A similar style is at play in the hard-boiled private eye form. In Murakami, also, nothing seems to be happening in the series of delayed actions that defuse the suspense of the plots. Critics who too quickly take the episodic plot structure as suggestive of the fragmentation of postmodern society fail to recognise Murakami’s dependence on the form of the hard-boiled private eye narrative. The plot form of the hard-boiled private eye novel has clearly influenced Murakami’s writing, and this must be considered in assessing Murakami’s comments on society. In addition, while the focus on objects and the aloof nature of the *boku* are important in Murakami’s work, they too must be contextualised within the form of the hard-boiled private eye narrative. The discourse between Murakami’s work and the hard-boiled private eye form is the primary location of any critique on modernisation or postmodernisation, and this has been neglected.
The fissures in Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled private eye form provide clues that have been overlooked by critics and an exploration of these fissures offers a rigorous foundation upon which to build an analysis of Murakami’s possible motivations and voice. The trope of work arises from the character and plot of hard-boiled private eye fiction. The private eye is a working man (or woman), contracted by an employer, to engage in a case. The following section examines how Murakami both appropriates and departs from the hard-boiled private eye form, and only then considers what Murakami might be saying about the nature of work in today’s world.

IV. The Boku at Work

It is important to understand the true concept of work for the hard-boiled private eye — not his employment, nor her profession. Traditionally in hard-boiled private eye fiction, work was necessary to the masculine values and identity of the hard-boiled private eye, since all the early hard-boiled private eye characters were male. Erin Smith, studying the value of work in hard-boiled private eye fiction, relates the importance of work in the form to the readers of the early stories and novels — working class men and women who dreamed of life beyond the factory. Leonard Cassuto traces the hard-boiled private eyes’ pride in their work from the earliest writers, Hammett and Chandler, to later writers and up to John D. MacDonald and Charles Willeford’s private eye Hoke Moseley: "The generations after Hammett’s Op and Chandler’s Marlowe, Lew Archer and Travis McGee endorse the middle-class value of having to work ... their heroes explicitly cast their lot with the classes of people who work for their bread" (182). Smith notices that the hard-boiled private eye idealizes the man who is self-employed: who works for himself and who takes pride in his work. There is an element of independence and freedom in the work of the hard-boiled private eye that lingers from the trace of the cowboy western. This contrasts with the everyday working lives of the factory worker readers. There is a general recognition among critics of the relationship between the hard-boiled private eye's sexuality and his work ethos: "work makes the man" quips Cassuto (59).

However, the hard-boiled convention that work defines a man is challenged. Work remains an important trope in Murakami’s work (oeuvre); indeed, it is highlighted. By having the protagonist boku out-of-work, or having him either self-employed or working in a small company with a partner, Murakami draws attention to work. He does not glamorize work as the hard-boiled private eye form does by alienating the work of the private private eye from social norms: in the hard-boiled private eye novel the private eye is sneered at by the police,
the criminals, and the public. He is mistrusted because he is not adverse to bending the law and engaging in violence; and he is looked down on because he is poor and he mixes with the poor and the criminal elements of society. For all this, the hard-boiled private eye is fiercely defensive of his work and proud of his professional values. Instead, in Murakami’s writing, work is merely "shoveling snow" (DDD 199). Work does not automatically confer masculinity, or wisdom, or enjoyment. It is possible to engage in snow shovelling without engaging in the process of learning ethical responsibility.

Ironically, in DDD, the *boku* discusses the values of work with Yuki’s father (*yuki* is Japanese for snow, 108). Yuki’s father is a writer named Hiraku Makimura (an anagram of Murakami Haruki’s own name). It is another rare example of self-reflectivity in the text. Murakami is possibly parodying himself rather unjustly. Makimura is described as a famous writer without any talent (118) who wrote "Pretty good stuff" when he was young and then went “downhill all the way.” He reinvented himself, changing his writing styles, adopting whatever was fashionable in order to sell, exchanging his identity for profit. Makimura is a writer who shovels snow. Similarly, he takes little responsibility for his daughter (snow) – attempting to contract the *boku* as a surrogate father to look after Yuki. When the *boku* demurely describes his own commercial writing for magazines, his work, as shovelling snow Makimura asks if he can use the phrase – he "buys" it from the *boku*, albeit without exchanging money for it. The phrase, like the work it represents, like his daughter, and like his life, have all become mere commodities that can be bought and sold. In contrast, the hard-boiled *boku* has his own interior integrity that cannot be exchanged for money. His work of searching, dancing, confers on him value beyond money. His life work, his impossible search, defines him, names him, and identifies him. "I just work according to my system" the *boku* tells Makimura when he offers money to buy the *boku*’s friendship for his daughter Yuki (204). The *boku*’s system may be old-fashioned in the "Advanced capitalist society" (204) but it represents the interior value system of the hard-boiled private eye (inherited perhaps from the cowboy and the frontier man of the American West). The *boku*’s identity is Murakami’s reinvention of the hard-boiled private eye form. Makimura is a famous wealthy middle-aged fat man who plays golf. The *boku* is an average thirty-four year old who is struggling to make connections and to learn how to dance. The conversation ends with a reversal. In the opening frame, Makimura recalls his own run-in with the police during the student riots (he had arranged the *boku*’s release from police custody). He attempts to style himself as an activist. He looks at his golf club and says: "Back in those times ... when a man knew what was right and what wasn’t right" (198). They are words that
echo traces of John Wayne westerns, and Humphrey Bogart machismo. The boku is neither convinced that the words are true about Makimura nor that the words are true about the student riots. The end frame has Makimura again look at his golf club while he says: "You remind me of something" (205). There is no explanation of this, and the boku simply responds with a silent flippant allusion to "Picasso’s Dutch Vase and Three Bearded Knights" – an ambiguous allusion that requires the reader to work. It is an obvious clue to the reader who can trace forward to the later reference to Picasso, as one of the few artists who can continue reinventing himself creatively "breaking ground until well past eighty" (210). Picasso, therefore, is in contrast to Makimura, who has forgotten how to live life responsibly, in ethical honesty. Makimura is not engaged in the struggle to constantly search and to hold open the question of identity. The boku is an average Everyman who has been advised by the Sheep Man to learn to dance: since there are "No promises that you’re gonna be happy ... So you gotta dance" (210). Unlike the surrounding consumer world that advocates buying happiness, the boku adheres to the belief in undecidability – he remains true to the search and that is his life’s work.

While work may shape who we are, we are more than what our work names us. In none of the novels is the boku a professional private detective; he merely acts like one. He maintains the form’s conventions of emotional distance, tough guy speech, anti-establishment marginality and a certain bravery against larger-than-life opponents. However, the boku is not the typical tough guy macho that shoots first and that can take that hard life of lack of sleep, hard drinking, and getting beaten up that the hard-boiled private eye has to endure. There are times when the boku does endure all this but it is not his lifestyle. Nevertheless, the trademark interest in cooking, music, clothes, and house cleaning that typifies Murakami’s boku is not foreign to the hard-boiled private eye fiction form.

Leonard Cassuto refers to "the male domesticated detective" (19). Despite the tough-guy image, hard-boiled private eyes have always displayed an interest in domestic affairs. The Continental Op kindly protects his female clients and regards his boss (the Old Man) as a father figure. Marlowe plays chess, chooses his clothes with care, and takes pride in his neat apartment. Lew Archer had a troubled childhood and a broken marriage that combine to make him sensitive to others with similar problems. He loves the beauty of his native southern California and knows the names of birds, plants, and trees. Travis McGee shows a love for his houseboat "The Busted Flush" that equals any stereotypical housewife. He also sentimentally names his truck after one of his school teachers, Miss Agnes. More
recently, Robert B. Parker’s private eye, Spenser, enjoys cooking as much as any Murakami character and has a troubled past in the Vietnam wars that makes him sensitive to troubled others. Contrary to the masculine stereotype, the hard-boiled tough guy private eye displays an interest in the domestic sphere usually reserved for women. In WSC, the boku makes an excuse to do housework, saying he needed the exercise; however the ensuing description shows his enjoyment and pride in the newly waxed floors, scrubbed bathroom, and sparkling windows: "I have never been one to object to cleaning and cooking" (268). The librarian girlfriend says to watashi in HBW&EW: "Ah yes, you like to cook, don’t you?" (361). Like the single male hard-boiled private eye before him, he also takes pride in his apartment. The protagonist in DDD cooks up a variety of dishes for Gotanda and lists a gourmet sandwich to Yuki with a touch of irony:

Smoked salmon with pedigreed lettuce and razor-sharp slices of onion that have been soaked in ice water, brushed with horseradish and mustard, served on French butter rolls baked in the hot ovens of Kinokuniya. (162) He nags Yuki to eat well. "Bad diet, bad periods" (163); he declares his knowledge of female menstruation. This is a topic that extends the domestic hard-boiled private eye.

Murakami’s domestic protagonist has an excess of domestication. The trope is exaggerated. WBC reverses the traditional roles of males and females: the boku stays at home and takes care of the house, cooking, cleaning, shopping, taking clothes to the dry cleaners and fussing around reading Home Journal’s recipes and listening to the radio (WBC 83). He becomes the housewife and enjoys it. Out-of-work, he discovers new work, housework. He not only reverses social stereotypes (the hard-boiled private eye becomes domestic housewife) but he reverses Cassuto’s quoted value "work makes the man" (59).

IV.I The Value of Work

Although the boku is not a professional private eye in any of Murakami’s novels, his plots do follow the tropes of the private eye at work. Where contracts and fees are mentioned, it is usually with the mix of dismissive sarcasm and put-down of the profession that is seen in Philip Marlowe’s paltry standard twenty-five dollars a day plus expenses. The boku in WSC is offered a ridiculously high sum of money by the black-suited secretary.

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43 Set in the 1990s, Sara Paretsky’s private eye, V.I. Warshawski, charges a hundred dollars an hour plus expenses and five hundred dollars as retainer (Total Recall 17-8). The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded the average rate at $160 a day in 2010. Skilled and semi-skilled workers in American manufacturing industry earned an average of $29-32 per day in the decade 1920 to 1930 (Smiley). This puts Marlowe’s daily rate a little below an industrial worker; not a good earning given the frequent danger to which he is exposed. It is a trope in the form that the private eye does not receive a high daily salary, despite the client’s complaints to the contrary.
"one hundred and fifty ... ten-thousand-yen notes" (130). At the end he is given an additional cheque (297). This contrast is seen again in DDD; Makimura offers the boku a fee for accompanying Yuki (203). The watashi in HBW&EW is explicit about his fee to the Professor, "I pull double-scale at my rank, ... I'm here on a matter of pure business" (29). He gets a "full triple-scale" bonus. In WBC, also, the boku receives a substantial payment for his first day's work for Nutmeg, "I had earned two-hundred thousand yen" (372). Even Hoshino is surprised to earn the services of a high class prostitute for his contract with the Colonel Sanders (286). It certainly seems from these references that the type of supernatural private eye work that Murakami’s narrators engage in pays better than the hard-boiled private eye work of the Op, Spade, Marlow, Archer, or even present day private eyes. Either Murakami is enjoying a parody of the hard-boiled private eye’s usually low wage for all the physical beatings and police abuse that he has to endure, or else he is signalling an underlying purpose. An interesting hint lies in the boku’s words from WBC: "I could slave away at the law office where I used to work, doing overtime every day for a month, and I might come home with a little over one-hundred-and-fifty-thousand yen" (372). Murakami breaks the hard-boiled private eye form in order to highlight the trope of work and what he wants to say about work.

The hard-boiled private eye prizes his integrity above money, and this is key to his definition of the true value of work. His personal values cannot be bought and sold. It does not matter to the hard-boiled private eye that he earns little and that his office is plain and often shabby. His independence is more important to him than tarnished money. The hard-boiled private eye has a tendency to shove his money into his desk drawer and to forget about it. The boku in DDD finally gives in to Makimura’s secretary with a hard-boiled weariness in the face of his earnings:

I mailed Hiraku Makimura the balance of his money and receipts from the trip. The next day I got a call from Boy Friday, begging me to take it all. It was too much trouble to go through the whole back-and-forth bow-and-scrape routine, so I gave in. If it made the Master happy, who was I to argue? And before you could say "money in the bank," Makimura had sent me a check for three hundred thousand yen. ... I placed the check for three hundred thousand yen on my desk to appreciate 8½ % dust. (300)

The boku in WBC also displays a disregard for money, despite needing money to buy the Miyawaki house. Tormented by scruples, and feeling like a prostitute, the boku in WBC says,
"I took the envelope containing the nineteen ten-thousand-yen notes out of my jacket pocket and put it in my desk drawer" (371). The drawer is the place to put money.

Earlier, the boku in DDD had explained to Makimura that his friendship with Yuki was not a job and that he valued his independence more than Makimura's money: "I have my own life to look after, ... I'll see her when I feel like it. I don't need your money, I don't want your money. ... I just work according to my system" (203-4). Makimura thinks the boku's system is old-fashioned but the values of the hard-boiled private eye, like the cowboy before him, are old-fashioned. Like the self-employed private eye, the boku likes to do things his own way and this places him at odds with the world. He has an old-fashioned attitude to work that contrasts with many of today's salary men.

Curiously, the boku from HBW&EW finds himself caught in an alternative expectation of work that opposes his personal values. When the Gatekeeper of the Town assigns him his work, the boku replies positively, "Work is no hardship. Better than having nothing to do" (39). He does not understand the significance of the Gatekeeper's words, "From now on you are the Dreamreader. You no longer have a name." Later, once the boku has begun his work in the library, he learns that he is merely hired to read the dreams and not to interpret them nor to do anything with them. There is no purpose to his work (59). This troubles him. Without a purpose, work cannot contribute to building self-respect or identity. Thus, the boku has lost his name. When the boku observes "six old men" digging a hole, he again wonders at their purposeless work (316-7). In WBC, the parents of Kumiko and Noboru Wataya exemplify such people who have spent their lives at meaningless work.

Kumiko's mother is described as lacking personality. She lived her life without having to struggle and, first her family gave her what she needed, and then her husband provided for her. She never had to work or earn her living. Thus, she never formed any opinions of her own; she was "lacking any internalized values of ... [her] own" (73). She followed her husband's opinions and gave her life to supporting him and her son. Kumiko's father has values that encourage competitiveness and ambition: her "father was convinced that the only way to live a full life in Japanese society was to earn the highest possible marks and to shove aside anyone and everyone standing in your path to the top" (72-3). Noboru Wataya was raised according to these values. He grew up financially secure but was pressurised to study hard in order to get his place in society. "He had to pour all his energies into maintaining his position as number one" (73). The out-of-work boku is accosted by the successful Noboru Wataya who accuses him of being a failure: the boku has nothing to show for his life (199). Since the story is told through the central consciousness of the boku, the
reader assumes his position and agrees that Noboru Wataya is nasty and evil and that his parents were mistaken. However, Noboru Wataya's assessment of the boku is justified and Noboru Wataya's parents are much like many parents anywhere in the world who do their best for their children. Similarly, the reader looks through the eyes of the boku at the hurrying businessmen commuting to work: "men with briefcases and folded umbrellas ... properly dressed in suits and ties and black shoes" (82). The tendency is to agree with the boku's subtle evaluation, "not one of them wore a Van Halen T-shirt." It is a Murakami style hard-boiled sarcastic put-down with a brand-named reference to detail. The comment succeeds in giving the boku's opinion indirectly, through the use of objects, and it wins over the reader to the boku's opinion. However, most capitalist societies value raising their children to work hard at school in order to do well, to compete for work, and to get a well-paying job that has status. Many of Murakami's readers may well fit the description of the salary men hurrying to work, and many may well have been raised by over-anxious mothers who did everything to encourage their children to study hard. (Certainly in Japan the dominant values favour Kumiko's parents and the salary men). Murakami stands apart, like the hard-boiled private eye character, in opposing what he sees as a corrupting society.

The values of the boku oppose the dominant values of capitalist, consumerist societies. Many may dream of quitting their work and taking time out to reflect on their lives and who they are, but few do it. We might sympathise with the boku, but not many of us would walk away from the hope of becoming a lawyer and the lifestyle that would accompany a lawyer's salary:

I was surer than ever that I didn’t want to become a lawyer. I knew, too, that I didn’t want to stay where I was and continue with the job I had. If I was going to quit, now was the time to do it. If I stayed with the firm any longer, I’d be there for the rest of my life. (9)

Instead, most people work like the character Ushikawa who is hired to negotiate with the boku: "I am being paid to wag my tail, so when my boss says 'Do it!' I have to try my best to do it. You understand" (435). Indeed, most readers do understand and that is how we live our lives, however we might dream. Murakami, however, seems to suggest that we pay attention to our dreams and take responsibility for the choices we make, or do not make.

The hard-boiled boku in Murakami's novels opposes the type of work that most societies depend on and he opposes the value of merely working for a living. The mindless work of "tossing out fluff" (WSC); or "shoveling snow" (DDD); or digging holes (HBW&EW); or becoming a "prostitute" (WBC); or the ruthless creativity of Kafka’s father in KOS is not the
kind of work that Murakami's hard-boiled \textit{boku} values. By extension, neither is the society that advocates such mindless work the kind of society valued by the \textit{boku}.

The extremity of mindless work results in cases of soldiers saying, "... orders were orders. So long as the army continued to exist, its orders had to be carried out" (\textit{WBC} 401). The gruesome narrative of the killing of the zoo animals in Hsin-ching city, Manchukuo, does not spare any details of the soldiers' thoughts and reactions to the shooting of "the tigers, the leopards, the wolves, and the bears ... on a miserably hot afternoon in August 1945" (346). Interpolated with this narrative are the future deaths of the soldiers themselves, equally gruesome and, the implication is clear, equally meaningless. The work that these men do, faithfully following orders, is as bizarre and purposeless as the men digging the hole (that the \textit{boku} correctly predicts will be full of snow the next day, 316; 348) in \textit{HBW&EW}. Of course, the Colonel tells the \textit{boku} that the purposeless hole "has no special meaning" but that this kind of work leads to a life where "We hurt no one and no one gets hurt" (317). The Town is a place with no memory and no will; therefore, the work of the townspeople cannot have meaning and purpose. It represents the mindless work referred to in many of Murakami's novels.

Identity is shaped and people become human through decision-making. Sometimes this involves mistakes and we do hurt others and get hurt ourselves. Just as the hard-boiled private eye must engage in his case and "stir things up," even if this leads to additional murders, the \textit{boku} also learns that he must engage in his various wild sheep chases and choose what work he wants to do. The dying \textit{watashi} in \textit{HBW&EW} is reminded of a classmate, "the girl who married the revolutionary, had two children, disappeared ... she'd quit life of her own will" (391). The \textit{watashi}, in contrast, can only name two decisions in his life: "to forgive the Professor and not to sleep with his granddaughter" (\textit{sic} 391). He is, perhaps, being a little hard on himself (he does make other decisions in the novel), but he questions himself, "I'd never decided to do a single thing of my own free will" (391). This is a good comment for the reader to consider, and Murakami may well be suggesting that the society that encourages mindless work does not encourage the work of decision-making.

The freedom to choose how to live life is a theme that runs through the novel \textit{Kafka on the Shore}. The boy Kafka has spent his life with the burden of his father's prophecy that he would kill his father and sleep with his mother and his sister (212-3). He is convinced that this is his fate, his life's work. He runs away from home (a decision) as soon as he is fifteen but he believes that he cannot outrun his fate. Oshima tries to reassure him but there is little he can say; it is Kafka's life to live. Much of what transpires happens in the border
world of the surreal, parallel world; however, there is the refrain that echoes through the novel that "In dreams begin responsibilities" (139) and Kafka is haunted by the fear that he is responsible for his father's death. The fifteen year old boy is more aware of the importance of decision-making than many adults. Reading "the trial of Adolf Eichmann" (138), Kafka likens himself to the Eichmann who infamously defended his work saying that he was just obeying orders. This is certainly an extreme example of "mindless work" and Murakami is indeed extreme in having the boy Kafka compare himself to Eichmann. Perhaps such extremities are necessary when questioning a society that promotes mindless work and trains mothers to raise their children to want above everything else the security of work as salary men.

Murakami uses these extreme examples to shake his readers into realizing that we are responsible for choosing whether or not to follow our dreams, and for choosing whether or not to engage in meaningful work. Reading Eichmann's trial, Kafka notes, "Apparently it barely crossed his mind to question the morality of what he was doing" (138). In contrast, the fifteen year old boy Kafka is tormented by questions of responsibility. Murakami's boku offer alternatives to the concept of work. Above all, the novels suggest the importance of taking time to think and to decide. Towards the end of DDD, the boku reflects "if, maybe, it was time to give up the shoveling habit. Do some writing for myself for a change. Without the deadlines. Something for myself. Not a novel or anything. But something for myself" (383). In solving their cases, the hard-boiled boku may not seem like their fast-paced counterparts, the hard-boiled private eye s, but they do make life-changing decisions and this is the work that matters. There is an irony in Murakami's use of the hard-boiled private eye form. The idealism of his concept of work is in sharp contrast to the gritty, tough work of the hard-boiled private eye. However, there is also a similarity between the boku and the hard-boiled private eye 's manner of proceeding that is in contrast to the clue-puzzle detectives of Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes, the boku ironically advocates waiting:

What was I supposed to do?

I could only wait, until something showed. Same as ever. There was no point in rushing. Something was bound to happen. Something was bound to show. You had merely to wait for it to stir, up from the haze. Call it a lesson from experience.

Very well, then, I would wait. (297)

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44 Murakami himself chose not to become a salary man, or a teacher, on completion of his degree in Theatre Arts and, instead, he took the risk of opening a jazz bar. Later, he again chose to risk becoming a full-time writer and he closed the bar. However, later in Chapter Six, it will be argued that he avoids risking extreme examples from Japan's war crimes in northern China and Mongolia.
The Continental Op would agree that his work was to nudge things until events stirred up and the criminals were revealed. However, unlike his hard-boiled counterpart, the *boku*, instead, often does his best work stirring up a spaghetti sauce or a stir fry.

**IV.II The Boku Stirs Things Up While Cooking**

*The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (*WBC*) is one long retardation of action; it is a book of delays, postponements. The *boku* must find his missing wife – a more urgent mission than finding the missing cat or the missing flow of water in the well. On the day his wife goes missing, the *boku* does not call the police but waits. Indeed, he is later advised by Malta Kano "... all you can do is wait" (179). Instead of leaping to action like most hard-boiled private eye heroes, the *boku* boils spaghetti – a task for which Murakami's protagonists are well-known. In a piece of meta-textual self-reflection, the *boku* recalls a detail in Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms* "in which the hero goes from meal to meal while waiting in a foreign country for his wife to have her baby" (181). He reflects that this description of mundane detail seemed more real to him than any description of a worried man who had lost his appetite: "It seemed far more real to me, as literature, for the character’s anxiety to cause this abnormal surge in appetite rather than to make him incapable of eating and drinking" (181). This is an ironic reflection. Murakami’s characters so often wait around cooking, eating, drinking, smoking, cleaning; waiting for things to happen. It is hardly surprising that the *boku* here loses his appetite for his freshly cooked spaghetti in tomato sauce with onion and garlic in olive oil. After all, Murakami undermines the mimetic writing of high literature (and is criticized precisely for this by Ōe, 49-52) and the *boku* wonders if his "failure to develop an appetite might be owing to the lack within me of this kind of literary reality. I felt as if I had become part of a badly written novel, that someone was taking me to task for being unreal. And perhaps it was true" (181). This is an example of obvious self-reflectivity in Murakami’s writing.

Contrary to critics that claim Murakami’s protagonists are indecisive, passive characters, the *boku* does make decisions, but they are made in an understated manner using an almost objective point of view that obscures the decision-making process. Quite often, the reader is excluded from the interior process and the reasons for decisions. This exclusion gives the *boku* the appearance of passivity that critics often accept unquestioningly. A little investigation, however, can reveal how Murakami plays with the character. In *WSC*, it was the activity of the *boku* that initiated the wild sheep chase. By honouring the requests of the character Rat, the *boku* attracted the attention of the Boss.
However, once he has been contracted by the black-suited secretary to find the sheep, the *boku* spends the rest of the day sitting in a hotel bar drinking Heineken, eating, and clipping his nails. It seems like he is doing nothing. This is typical of Murakami’s protagonists. A phone call from the Boss’s secretary urges him to work, "you waste too much time" (131). However, he returns to his apartment and there follows a list of a series of everyday actions – again the *boku* seems to be doing nothing productive. The change comes when his girlfriend arrives home. It seems as though she is the one who pushes the *boku* to action. She is ready to help him find the elusive sheep. However, a closer reading of the text shows that the *boku* phoned his girlfriend from the hotel bar but got no response. He spent the day waiting for her. Rather than hurry the plot to the conversation between the *boku* and his girlfriend, Murakami lingers in a description of the *boku*’s actions, slowing down the plot movement with a seemingly pointless detailed description that serves only to give the impression of the *boku*’s passivity. In the ensuing conversation, the girlfriend asks "So when do you leave?" (133). It turns out that the *boku* has actually decided not to leave. He had decided to quit his work, thus protecting his partner, and to ignore the wild sheep chase. As the conversation continues, it seems that the girlfriend persuades the *boku* to accept the job. There follows another list of the *boku*’s banal activities: the *boku* sits eating, drinking, reading the newspaper, and listening to Johnny Rivers. Again, it seems like he is doing nothing. However, earlier he had mentioned that he "was starting to get confused again" (134). Thus, what he is actually doing is reconsidering his decision. His reluctance seems to be that he doesn’t like being ordered and threatened and pushed around (135). This is quite typical of the hard-boiled tough guy private eye (and perhaps of people in general). The girlfriend again shows her eagerness to accompany him on the search for the sheep (foreshadowing Rat’s reason for sending her away from danger later in the novel; she is sensitive to the sheep’s call). The *boku* argues that his being hired to look for the sheep has something "that doesn’t sit right with me" (135). He trusts his instincts in a way that every good private detective does. This is the private eye’s intuition in the hard-boiled form that the clue-puzzle form of detective fiction is at pains to counter with examples of rational deduction. Finally, the girlfriend presents the argument that the hard-boiled *boku* cannot answer: "Isn’t that friend of yours already up to his neck in trouble?" (136). He ruefully comments to himself, "She’d seen straight through me" (136). What Murakami presents here is not a passive protagonist but a description of a protagonist who knows what he wants to do but has the sense to talk it over with someone whom he trusts. When she raises points that he has not considered, the *boku* is willing to change his mind and do what
he may think "doesn’t sit right" but what he believes is right. He acts according to personal values – the trait of the hard-boiled private detective.

This prolongation of the decision-making process is a trait that is repeated throughout Murakami’s novels, always retarding the plot momentum and thus increasing tension through postponement of decisive action. The novels of Chandler, Macdonald and other hard-boiled private eye novels omit such retardation of action. They are faster paced than Murakami’s novels. As a result, the decisions of their protagonists seem sharper and more spontaneous. Their characters seem more decisive than Murakami’s seemingly passive boku. However, the slowing down of action also acts as a dissection of the boku’s decisions allowing the attentive reader to examine the boku’s motivations and character. The novels create space to review the decision and the often unstated alternatives. By lulling the reader with the boku’s mundane daily life, the context of the decision-making, the reader is invited to enter into the boku’s process and to identify with his choices. The reader is seduced by the Everyman, the commonality of the boku and the banality of context, so that his decisions seem normative and the ghostly alternatives remain unarticulated shadows. The reader has time to reflect on the decisions and the values inherent in the decision-making. The boku illustrates a conscientious character who is professional (despite often being out of work) and who takes his work seriously. He is rarely over-hasty or impulsive. He considers carefully prior to action. This makes him an ethical person, a hard-boiled honest man in a dishonest world, and the reader is asked to identify and to ally with him.

IV.III The Boku Stirs Things Up While Waiting

When his brother-in-law, Noboru Wataya, meets him to say that his wife has left him and wants a divorce in WBC, our hard-boiled hero insults him as well as Lew Archer, Philip Marlowe, or any other hard-boiled private eye would insult their opponent. Afterwards, however, he spends time reading Lieutenant Mamiya’s long letter, meets Creta Kano, chats to May Kasahara on the phone, and goes to sit in the bottom of the well. The well is a wonderful place for the boku to sit quietly and think; but sitting and thinking are not the usual activities of the hard-boiled private eye hero. In Murakami’s novels, it is in such in-between places (the spaces between decision and non-decision) that the action takes place. At the bottom of the well, the boku finds the clues that will unravel the past plot that makes sense of his wife’s disappearance. In the bottom of the well, the boku also draws strength and power for his opposition to the evil that Noboru Wataya represents. If the professional
private eye has his shabby, run-down office and his uninterested and dim-witted secretary (or sometimes loyal and wise secretary), then the boku has his well and either May Kasahara or Cinnamon as his assistant secretary. The boku’s uncle also advises him to take his time and wait. He suggests that the boku should “start by thinking about the simplest things” (328), and this is what leads to the boku sitting in “a small, tiled plaza” (329) near Shinjuku station watching passers-by. In this way, he learns the art of waiting essential to decision-making and also meets Nutmeg – his new employer. His uncle tells the boku, “You’re not in any hurry to decide anything. It may be tough, but sometimes you’ve got to just stop and take time” (328). Earlier in his life, the boku was also advised that there are times when it is best to wait. After recounting his tale of Nomonhan, old Mr. Honda told the boku that there are times when all a person can do is wait: “when you have to wait, you have to wait” (52). This is especially true of times when there is no flow, no water, and at these times Mr. Honda advises the boku to “assume you’re dead”. Since this was before the events of his cat’s and wife’s disappearance, the boku had not yet learnt the art of decision-making and, in a sense, was not alive. His new work teaches him how to wait and this waiting allows him to learn how to make decisions and thus how to be a person, an individual, a subjective self. The boku becomes alive through the art of waiting and his new being is able to confront his opponent Noboru Wataya.

This is the alternative tough guy private eye action in Murakami’s novels. By allowing things to happen, as opposed to causing things to happen, the boku acts. This is his way of stirring things up.45 His "passivity" illustrates the work involved in decisions. The seeming coincidences of Murakami’s plots conceal the unarticulated decisions of human psychology and the reality of decisions taken in moments of apparent inaction. The human mind unconsciously is at work making decisions in the most mundane of activities and in moments of inaction. The boku mentions that after his uncle left "I was able to breathe deeply the air of realism or whatever it was that my uncle left behind" (328). The inactive waiting, of cooking, cleaning, eating is the reality of decision-making; not necessarily the wild activity of the hard-boiled private eye. This may not be the reality of engaged commitment urged by Ōe (1995), but it is the reality urged by Murakami for the postmodern world. Decision-making of any kind confers reality. The boku becomes real when he makes decisions. By advising him to wait, the boku’s uncle not only shows the boku how to trust the process of decision-making, but also shows him how to be a human person, how to exist.

45 In the novel, Red Harvest, Dashiell Hammett’s Continental Op remarks, "Plans are all right sometimes, ... And sometimes just stirring things up is all right – if you’re tough enough to survive" (57).
This is hard work. Thus, later with Nutmeg, the boku allows her to dress and clothe him for his new work, but he notices that he still cannot decide what to choose from the menu: "My reality was still having trouble locating me" (383). The boku still needs to practise working. In his own way, the boku takes his work just as seriously as any professional hard-boiled private eye. It is simply that the boku often does his best work when he appears to be doing nothing much at all – at his moments of seeming leisure, passivity, and inaction. Work, the physicality that helped identify the masculinity of hard-boiled, tough guy, post-war America, is reinterpreted and given new definition in a world that has used technology to replace physical labour.

The threat of violence is inherent in the hard-boiled private eye’s work – both the giving and receiving of physical violence. The private eye’s work tool is his gun. In the clue-puzzle detective’s world of unarmed criminals and police, the tool of trade is the intellect. The clue-puzzle detective thinks his/her way through the means, motive, and method of a crime to disclose the criminal. The hard-boiled private eye makes things happen until the criminal unmask himself/herself in a final act of violent betrayal. The licensed gun of the hard-boiled private eye is a trusted partner – a phallic symbol of the masculine strength and determination of the private eye that emphasizes his "private" nature: his gun is more important to him than any woman or partner. In WBC, the boku follows after the man with the guitar who he believes had been playing in Sapporo when Kumiko had her abortion and "the flow around me had begun to show signs of change" (332). The boku takes the man’s baseball bat and beats him to a bloody pulp. This is the baseball bat that he uses as a tool in his work for Nutmeg, complementing the "tool" he uses in unifying the divided women who come to him for healing. In the well, the bat is the boku’s gun; a personalized tool necessary for his work.

Iwamoto, Cassegard, Hirata, Carter, and Strecher all notice the apathetic, disengaged, passive nature of the boku, but they fail to consider how this plays with the fast-acting, snap decision-making, hard-boiled private eye stereotype. In defence of the critics, Iwamoto and the others may never have read that the fragmentary nature of Chandler’s plots was largely due to his "cannibalizing" his short stories and stitching together several short stories into a novel. Hard-boiled plots are episodic in nature and they have an additional inner/outer plot structure. These structural characteristics result in a plot that may be termed fragmentary, but is not necessarily postmodern. Of interest, however, are the ways in which Murakami breaks the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction and draws attention to the decision-making of the boku to make a statement about work and identity.
V. Re-name-ing the Purpose of Work

The boku’s work is professionalized by Nutmeg (he is hired); he receives new clothes and has a special mark on his cheek. Once hired and at work, his newly-returned cat can now be named Mackerel (Murakami’s cats are often named after fish – their food opposite) and Nutmeg and Cinnamon are also named. Work confers identity. As surely as the hard-boiled private eye depended on the professionalism of his work to make him a man, the boku is able to give names to all those around him. His own name that he gives himself when May Kasahara asks him for his nickname is Mr. Wind-up Bird (62). The clock-work bird winds up the world’s spring every morning – it sets the day to work. Without the workings of the clockwork Wind-up Bird the day cannot work, cannot exist. Similarly, the boku cannot exist without his work. His very identity (his name) depends on his doing meaningful work. The boku seeks a name that is "something concrete, something real, some thing you can really touch and see ... easy to remember" (385). Reality for him is tangible and requires names – but perhaps only to help him remember. He is aware that this process of arbitrarily assigning names is unconventional and would shock people (385). When Malta Kano hands him her name card, he is puzzled by her unusual name and her unusual card. She explains that she renamed herself after her experience of drinking the water of a mountain spring in Malta. This experience focused her psychic powers and gave her a new life: she began her work. She mentions, "It is not my profession, ... I do not take money for what I do. ... My work ... is an entirely nonprofit-making activity" (40).

Malta Kano’s name card is a repetition of the black-suited secretary giving the boku the name card of The Boss in WSC. Similarly, the naming of the returned cat Mackerel repeats the discussion and subsequent naming of the cat Kipper in WSC. The chauffeur in WSC argues, "Seems mighty strange that something that moves by its own will doesn’t have a name" (152). But that is precisely the point: those without the power of will, the ability to make decisions, do not have a name; do not exist. They are the identical, mass produced salary men dressed alike and engaged in meaningless work, "shovelling snow" or digging holes. In the ensuing philosophical discussion in WSC over the cat and the nature of names, the chauffeur contends that artifacts of mass production are not deserving of a name (153). Later, in WBC, the boku is given "One More Name Card" (the sub-title of chapter 46).

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46 Murakami’s novels are littered with traces of false simulacra: readers seek the hidden significance and meaning of cats’ names across the novels as clues to the interpretation of Murakami’s re/presentation of reality. The numerous fishy cats’ names are red-herrings. Similarly, the
two in book three, *WBC* 351) when he meets Nutmeg. This card is the opposite of the name cards of Malta Kano and The Boss: "The address ... was the only thing on the card. There was no name" (355). When the *boku* questions this, Nutmeg replies, "I believe that what you need is money. Does money have a name?" (355). Matthew Strecher, Elizabeth Carter and others argue that the *boku’s* namelessness calls attention to his purposeless existence in a commodified mass consumer society. Indeed it does, but it is also in the context of calling attention to the nature of work. As other characters are often named according to their work (the chauffeur, the Boss, the secretary, the Professor, the Gatekeeper), the *boku* is nameless because his work is under question. Until he has learnt the true nature of work, he cannot be named. Only as the *boku* learns to make decisions, albeit slowly, is he deserving of a name. Nutmeg’s name card gives an address, his new work place. Nutmeg suggests that names are unimportant (384); it is the work that a person does that matters. Ironically, identity does not depend on names. The often out-of-work nameless *boku* must learn to do the important work: to undertake the process of making whole; not the paid work of employment, but the endless work of decision-making. This work is a repeated and inconclusive process that forms the self, gives identity, and names the person in a process that has no conclusion and therefore offers no final name. It is the work that is important, the process.

Naming is likened to the act of creation: the calling into being, into existence, of a person. In *WSC* the nameless girl with beautiful ears comments on the naming of the cat, "It’s like being witness to the creation of heaven and earth" (152). In *WBC* the protagonist is told to recall the name of the mysterious telephone woman in room 208 in order to free her and to find his wife (246-7). He must use the mysterious woman's name to call her into existence, into the reality of his world. In asking her, "Who are you?" (245), he again demands "I need something concrete that I can get my hands on. Hard facts."

Kumiko, the wife in *WBC*, tells the *boku* that he need not do the meaningless salaried work in the law firm, since it is more important for him to be free to wait and to engage in the process of searching for his identity. He is bored with his work as a trainee lawyer; it is not who he is, not his true self. He needs time to discover himself. This is a dangerous luxury for society. If everyone took time to search for what they really wanted, society would have difficulty functioning. Certainly, there would be few who would want to be salary men. To take time out to discover yourself is a luxury only for dreams. Naming work as "shoveling snow" is dangerous because it calls attention to the number of wasted, proliferation of paperclips scattered throughout the novels. The world of mass production and late capitalism is the signified to which Murakami points.
meaningless lives. However, equally dangerous is the fear that prevents most of us from doing what the boku does – work is security and we are afraid that if we engage in the inner search for meaning, for identity, if we reflect on decision-making, we might find it is empty and that there is nothing. In Murakami’s imagery, the room beyond may be empty. The ethical life, the value advocated by the hard boiled boku, is dangerous. However, this is the work that is important in Murakami’s writing. The work that the hard-boiled boku is contracted to do and the work that gives him his identity and makes him a man and an ethical human person is to engage in life: searching and making connections, risking the journey into the in-between places where the supra-natural is encountered. In doing this work, the boku is not shovelling snow. Instead, he is doing the real work of life that confers identity.

It is not the stereotypical male or female work roles that will confer identity, bestow a name, make the man; it is only the work of remaining true to the search, open to possibility and undecidability. The character of the boku extends the trope of work in the hard-boiled private eye form. The work of the hard-boiled private eye illustrates his inner integrity, his personal values that contrast with the injustice and the corruption of the city. By calling attention to the boku’s work, Murakami’s texts suggest that the work that matters is the work involved in understanding, in remaining open, and in making responsible decisions.
Chapter Five

The Things Money Can't Buy

In the previous chapter, it was noted that objects were used to distance the boku from emotional display, and that this is in keeping with the character of the hard-boiled private eye. The focus is on the work and the ethical values of the hard-boiled private eye, and not on his internal state. To highlight the ethics of the private eye, in contrast to the corruption of the surrounding city and its people, he is set apart from other people. He is concentrated on his work, and above all, he remains true to his values. Thus, he cannot be bought. The acquisition of wealth, and the things money can buy, has little interest for the hard-boiled private eye. He resists the world of commercial gain and its fashions. Objects, then, have a prominent place in the form as a device to distance the protagonist; however, the value and meaning of objects are secondary to the ethics of the protagonist. The contradiction between the proliferation of material objects, and the ethical boku who is not for sale, is quite clear in Murakami’s texts. As society becomes more engrossed with commercial products, the influence of the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction on Murakami’s writing charges his texts with contrasting values of the non-commercial worth of human persons; values which draw more from modernity, than from postmodernity.

Japan’s transition into a capitalist consumer society during the years of rapid economic growth and the economic miracle, the 1950s to the 1960s, altered its social relations. As a post-industrial, market economy, Japan now depends on the manufacture and sale of consumer goods, both for national consumption and for international export. Commodities are goods that are produced for sale, or exchange. Marx introduced the changing historical conditions of labour in Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, describing the change from pre-industrial to industrial society. As workers began to produce goods for sale, the economy changed to a capitalist economy; and workers earned wages for producing goods for sale: commodities. Adorno, Horkheimer, and also Lukács, applied the Marxist social structure to the culture industry, realizing that cultural products like art, music, and literature, were also commodities made for sale. It is not only objects, products, which can become commodities. Baudrillard shifts away from Marx’s focus on materiality by considering the exchange value of individuals, services, knowledge; and, on a second level of representation: symbols, ideas, abstract states of being, and value judgements. Thus, his analysis of a fashion model who, through an indirect reading of

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47 See Adorno and Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry."
embedded signs, communicates to female readers how they should sexually please their partners. "The fashion model's body is no longer an object of desire, but a functional object, a forum of signs in which fashion and the erotic are mingled" (The Consumer Society 133). Advertisers often sell commodities by associating them with feelings, in Baudrillard's example, the feeling of guilt; but often through the feelings of desire and envy.

Commodification refers to the process whereby objects become valued, and desired, for exchange purposes. The spread of capitalist societies has meant the spread of the process of commodification; Roger Silverstone, in his study of the role of television in consumer society, defines the concept:

Commodification, then, refers to the industrial and commercial processes which create both material and symbolic artifacts and which turn them into commodities for sale in the formal market economy. It also refers to the ideological processes at work within those material and symbolic artifacts, work which defines them as the products and, in varying degrees, the expressions, of the dominant values and ideas of the societies that produce them. (124)

Applying the basic concepts of Marx's original thought to anthropology and social sciences, Appadurai acknowledges that, "Today, in general, the link of commodities to postindustrial social, financial, and exchange forms is taken for granted" (8). However, he continues to suggest that commodities can be exchanged for other valued goods, or for services, and not just for money (12-3). Appadurai extends the definition of commodity beyond the economic determinism of Marx, and suggests that non-monetary contexts can allow commodities to be produced and exchanged for things other than money.

As all consumers know, the price of particular goods (Marx terms this, their "exchange value"), is not the same as its production cost (Marx's "use value"). Exchange values vary according to fashion, availability, and other factors. Van Binsbergen reflects that the relationship between the function, and the monetary value of commodities, "is not straightforward and unequivocal, but complex, varied, sometimes unpredictable and enigmatic, and that it is not a one-way process either" (15). As post-industrial society has become ever more orientated towards consumption and profit, particular goods become ever more alienated from their original function and their use value: "the commodified object, devoid of its original meaning, must be endowed with new meaning in order to

48 Of course, Appadurai’s collection of essays in anthropology, The Social Life of Things, has the purpose of challenging the worldview that limits commodities to their financial exchange value.
49 Marx’s definition of commodity, and its relation to the means production and the relations of production, can be found in Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, volume 1, part 1. Marx’s definition of fetishism is also to be found there.
motivate people to covet it; that meaning is inevitably different from the one informing the thing's original context" (sic van Binsbergen 43). Thus, for example, shoes no longer function only to protect the foot, but become fashion accessories (a fetish); bags are no longer only for carrying things, but become designer fashion statements. Similarly, the price of a pair of shoes will depend on the manufacturer (the brand name), and will cost more than their nameless, unbranded, competitor. The commodity, the object for sale, becomes reified, and has a value independent of its production. Thus, the most expensive shoe will be handmade, from an exclusive, branded, company. However, in the process of commodification, both the consumer (the person), and the commodity (the object), lose their individuality. Silverberg summarises: "consumption, fashion and style are all seen to be expressions of a false reality, in which objects are no longer meaningful because they are useful but are only deemed useful because they are meaningful; and in which the image replaces reality as the basis for their, and all, value" (106). This Marxist reading has little place for any abstract desire for beauty. Murakami's texts illustrate a more complex discourse among objects, identity, and commodification in the post-industrial world. The boku shows that resistance is possible; but the texts also warn against the seductiveness of commercial products.

Advertising exemplifies how the human body can be objectified and exploited for commercial gain. In the representation of women in the media, a female body draped alluringly over a car is a commodification of the unknown woman's body; such advertisements also replace the original commodity (the car), with a second-order commodity (sex for sale). The suggestion is that the sexually desirable woman is for sale, and can be bought along with the car. Consumers, of course, know this is not true; but advertisers are not fools either; such advertisements sell products. Silverberg follows Baudrillard in commenting, "In this too we are deceived by the sign, seduced into believing that the image is the reality. But in that seduction we are also willing participants. We collude with it" (107). This seduction by commercial consumerism is important in Murakami's texts, as is our collusion as consumers: often we are willing participants in exploitation. It will be seen that Murakami's texts suggest the reciprocal nature of responsibility in the relationship between the consumer and the commodity; between the individual and consumer society. Despite the criticisms of advanced capitalism made by the character Gotanda in Dance, Dance, Dance, the boku gives no definite criticism of the commercial system of post-industrial society in any of Murakami's texts. Instead, there is a more complex insistence on the embedded collusion between the individual and society.
The isolated narrator, set apart from the corrupt city, is a trope from hard-boiled fiction that Murakami uses to contrast the values of his narrator against the values of commercial commodification. In a world changed from the simple rich/poor binary of the early hard-boiled writers, Murakami uses the interior values of the boku to depict a more complex world with its own threat of commodification. Bending the hard-boiled private eye formula, Murakami illustrates the hegemonic connections among the excessive drive for commercial profit in politics, business, and the media. Elements of fantasy and the fantastic merge with the noir cityscape of hard-boiled private eye fiction to make a statement urging resistance to the commodification of the individual. Murakami's boku shows an indifference to wealth. This again borrows from classic hard-boiled private eye tropes, but points beyond the form to a critique of the emptiness of wealth, and offers an almost spiritual indifference.

This chapter begins, therefore, with a brief overview of hard-boiled private eye fiction's depiction of wealth as a contrast to the integrity of the hard-boiled private eye. Objects and possessions play their part in Chandler's technique of emotionally distancing his protagonist. Fredric Jameson and Kawakami Chiyoko both write on the changing nature of social corruption and the need for the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, and writing in general, to change accordingly in order to remain relevant. In the rest of the chapter, these points on commodification, wealth, and changed social conditions are illustrated in the analysis of Murakami's texts. Since corruption has become more insidious in the cityscape of Murakami's society, new techniques are introduced to modify the various texts' application of the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction and its depiction of wealth.

I. Critical Assumptions

There is a general perception of hard-boiled private eye fiction as being gritty and realistic, as though the tough guy, hard-boiled style itself automatically confers a mimetic realism. The dark city setting with the private eye's shabby office in a run-down building, the city slums with gangland crime and gangster shootings, the poor people and the bribery; these hard-boiled cityscapes depict a world of poverty and despair. There is a competitive edge in the fight for survival and the eagerness to make a quick buck. In the noir world of the hard-boiled private eye's city, there is little or no justice, and there is none expected. The social institutions are corrupt (the police, the politicians, the legal system, the local government) and there is no honest way of attaining wealth. As Bernie Ohls, the honest cop

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50 Of course, this belies the constructed nature of the form's "realism." Hard-boiled crime fiction is no more "real" than clue-puzzle fiction. It is simply that the noir city seems more realistic than the country house setting of the clue-puzzle form. Neither, though, are closer to reality.
in Chandler’s *The Long Goodbye* famously says: "There ain’t no clean way to make a hundred million bucks" (648). The poor are depicted as either losers or else desperate, dirty fighters. The rich are little better: they too lead empty, unhappy lives despite the careless, amoral glamour of their wealth. Corruption and crime are the two constants in the various cities and they can never be resolved. In the hard-boiled private eye form, the private eye is often a self-employed, working man who charges for his services (Chandler’s Marlowe charges a $500 retainer and $25 a day plus expenses), and who always struggles to pay his bills. The private eye is thus set apart, alienated, from the other characters and their values. (In Chandler, especially, the private eye has an inner, honest, integrity.) The form itself, with its corrupt city setting, its open acknowledgement of human greed for power and possessions, and its lone defender of some sort of justice, seems to lend itself to a social analysis.

Dashiell Hammett was twice a member of the Communist Party and was later imprisoned for his refusal to testify against other suspected Communist sympathizers during the McCarthy trials. 51 His founding influence in the hard-boiled private eye form has led to the assumption that the form can be read as a social critique. (The Continental Op says in *Red Harvest*, "'It's not the money,' … 'it's the principle of the thing!" (25).) Warren Chernaik (2000) generalizes: "A strong element of social criticism links the novels of Hammett, Chandler, Macdonald, Mosely and Sarah Paretsky [sic], all working in the hard-boiled tradition" ("Mean Streets" 114). However, it would be a fallacy to assume descriptions of corrupt institutions and ill-gotten wealth imply an authorial socialist ideology.

The contrast between hard-boiled private eye fiction and clue-puzzle fiction also lends itself to the generalization that the American hard-boiled private eye form is radical and the British clue-puzzle form is conservative. For critics, like Grella ("The Hard-Boiled" 103-4); Slotkin (91-2); Landrum (12); and Tani (21-5), who see the hard-boiled private eye originating as a reaction to the presumed conservatism of the clue-puzzle form (and Chandler encouraged this opinion, "The Simple Art of Murder"), it is a corollary that the hard-boiled private eye form is critical of the social conditions it depicts. Thus, Peter J. Rabinowitz argues that Chandler deliberately broke the conventions of the classic clue-puzzle form as an act of rebellion against the British writers: "Chandler is a political writer, not because he promotes a particular political line, but because his novels challenge, in a dynamic and forceful way, the hidden political assumptions of other novels" ("Rats Behind the Wainscoting" 133). It is more logical and profitable to examine the text itself for evidence of Chandler and other hard-boiled private eye writers’ "hidden political

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51 See William Marling’s *The American Roman Noir*; and John Scaggs’s *Crime Fiction*.
assumptions" and this is what Stephen Knight does in his *Form and Ideology in Crime Fiction* (1980).

Poverty and wealth are not placed in a binary opposition in the hard-boiled private eye form. It is the character of the hard-boiled private eye protagonist that is placed opposite the corruption of both the poor and the wealthy. The binary is the values of the hard-boiled private eye against the values of almost everyone and everything else in the novel. Knight is correct in singling out Chandler as responsible for this binary opposition:

Chandler breaks with the genuinely objective stance that Hammett worked for, and sees contemporary disorder from the position of a disgusted and disengaged persona, whose own values are defined by his rejection of a social world viewed as a hostile and corrupt unit. (138)

Chandler emphasizes the distance between Marlowe and the city's corruption in order to heighten the moral integrity of Marlowe. However, by setting Marlowe apart from society, Chandler also emphasizes an individualist morality: Marlowe is responsible only for his own actions and personal integrity. He seems to have little involvement in any attempt to change society (represented as a task doomed to failure in hard-boiled private eye fiction). There is, therefore, no social morality. The effect is that Marlowe grimly endures corruption, fighting it in his own individual way, but in isolation from any socio-political stance. Since Murakami shows a close affinity to Chandler's writing, it is expected that Murakami's *boku* will exhibit similar characteristics. However, it will be seen that Murakami is not content and struggles with this individualistic morality, allowing the *boku* a greater degree of social awareness. In this way, Murakami bends the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction to suit his own purposes.

**I.1 Marlowe's Hard-Boiled Shell**

Within the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction are a variety of writers who use the form to express their own purposes and worldviews. Knight argues that Marlowe's witty criticisms of corruption and wealth arise, not from a radical political opinion, but from an interior unease and distrust of other people. Marlowe isolates and protects himself from other people (both rich and poor). Since the central consciousness of Chandler's fiction, the private eye Philip Marlowe, is "compensating for social fear and inadequacy" then "The patterns of inner-directed, intellectualizing self-defence, ... are realised in the style itself" (143).
The style of Chandler's first-person narrator is to use wise-crack retort, internal digressive monologue, descriptions of objects, hostility to wealth and institutions as distancing devices to protect the private eye narrator from possible relationships. The style ensures the narrator is held aloof from other characters who are perceived as threats. Marlowe rebuffs both female and male characters who threaten to form a friendship. Knight ascribes this self-protective distancing of the narrative's central consciousness to Chandler's "romantic individualism" (138) and "private morality" (164). The fear of engaging with other people, and society in general, means that Chandler may have been aware of corruption, injustice and inequality in his society but was not impelled to engage actively in any radical opposition to them nor to encourage his readers to active opposition. In this, Murakami's boku breaks from Chandler's mold because the boku does seem aware of a greater complexity to corruption, and he does set out to 'save the world' – from the complex power and evil of symbolic representations of the sheep, the tormented Gotanda, the Professor and the System, the evil of Noboru Wataya and Johnnie Walker. In contrast, Knight argues that the interior values that Chandler's hard-boiled private eye hero espouses are not those of the chivalric knight opposing all evil but the fearful individual afraid of intimacy.

There is a distinction to be made here in the positioning of the narrator in hard-boiled private eye fiction. The generic conventions require a protagonist who is an individual, active, subject capable of independent action and set apart from society. The protagonist is independent from social conditions and corruption. However, there is a tension in this because the protagonist is also symptomatic of society and its conditions. He is a passive object buffeted by larger powers which he cannot hope to oppose completely. (He is also symptomatic of the loneliness of individualism that longs for intimacy with others but is frustratingly afraid of it.) In Murakami's work, this tension is heightened between the boku who sets himself apart from the world, and the boku who is very much a consequence of conditions of globalization. This causes some readerly confusion, and acts as a site of textual aporia challenging readers to decide for themselves, since Murakami seems to offer no resolution for the paradox: how to oppose society yet remain an integral part of it? He is content to continually pose the question.

Knight sees Chandler's focus on descriptions of objects as another technique to distance the narrator from other characters. Rather than allow the narrator to state directly that Mrs. Florian was disgustingly dirty, or that Marriott was foppishly rich (Farewell, My

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52 This will cause Murakami problems when he writes on the Japanese military history in northern China and Mongolia; as seen later in Chapter Six.
Lovely); that Carmen was aggressively sexy, or that General Sternwood was pathetically near death (The Big Sleep); Chandler uses descriptions of the houses, the objects and furnishings, the details of dress, teeth, orchids and the litany of actions and philosophical thoughts to suggest the opinions and attitudes of Marlowe. Knight appreciates "what [Fredric] Jameson has aptly called an 'inventory' style ... [which] neatly implies the object-dominated consciousness of the narration" (143) and notes that "Chandler habitually uses the physical surroundings to foreground his hero's feelings" (144). There is a curious interplay here: in desiring to protect Marlowe from others by having him avoid giving direct emotional responses, Chandler heightens Marlowe's emotional responses through the exaggerated descriptions of objects, houses, precise details, and the wise-cracks. This technique is also used by Murakami to the same effect. However, it can be seen that Murakami expands on Chandler's use of objects to suggest a commodified world that both seduces the boku and must be resisted by him. In addition, as has been noted in the previous chapter, Murakami takes the opportunity to use the trope of objects as moments for the boku to work: to reflect and to make decisions.

Knight describes Chandler's Marlowe as:

a marginal bourgeois, below the professional classes, educated above the workers, but insisting on a freelance position to replicate his alienated attitude ... [having a] deliberately unostentatious life-style ... [and] secret domestic pleasures like chess and coffee-making ... an archetype of the educated urban alien. (161)

Ross Macdonald and later hard-boiled private eye fiction writers have tended to follow this characterization but have avoided Chandler's uneasy self-protective distancing and moral judgments of others. Since the form necessitates a protagonist who is distanced and who acts from an interior code of ethics, Macdonald and others give their protagonists a stronger back-story that explains their vulnerability and failed relationships. The barely suppressed antagonism to women and homosexuals is also less acceptable to writers (and perhaps readers) more recent than Chandler.

I.II  Jameson's Changing World

In his article "On Raymond Chandler," Fredric Jameson (1970) uses Chandler's writing to illustrate the transition from modernity to post-modernity. Despite its unquestioned acceptance of the developmental relationship between the clue-puzzle form and the hard-boiled private eye form, Jameson's work does retain some useful points. Indeed, both forms have had to grapple with adaptation to the changing world. Jameson
has clarified his thought substantially since this early publication, however, he points to crime fiction's heightened focus on objects and "insignificant daily experience" (67). Such detailed descriptive minutiae often act as important clues in the plot of the clue-puzzle novel (and in a different way in the hard-boiled private eye novel) and suggest to Jameson that the classic form is more rooted in modernist materialism (76-8). The more episodic plot of the hard-boiled private eye narrative adds to this attention to mundane daily life and its objects, resulting in an excess which foreshadows the fragmentary nature of the post-modern. Jameson writes here that,

Since there is no longer any privileged experience in which the whole of the social structure can be grasped, a figure must be invented who can be superimposed on the society as a whole, whose routine and life-pattern serve somehow to tie its separate and isolated parts together. (69)

The success of the character of Marlowe is that he has access to both the worlds of the rich and the poor, and yet belongs to neither. By belonging to neither, he unites both. Readers also have access to both worlds through their identification with Marlowe. Similarly, readers can access the world of corruption and can glimpse the romantic world of individual integrity; of a life lived according to honest inner values. The values of the hard-boiled private eye shine clearly in contrast to the noir world of corruption. The private eye's values, weighed against the corrupt values of the powerful and rich, seduce the reader: "the absence of greed becomes the feature which dazzles" (71). Marlowe does not desire wealth, and his opposition to wealth makes his hard-boiled character idealistically attractive.

Murakami inherits this combination of corrupt setting and aloof hero with interior values from Chandler – and from Macdonald. (The influence of Hammett is seen less.) However, the world has changed from the days of Chandler. Within the post-industrial world of corrupt wealth, Murakami’s boku must negotiate a path between recognizing himself as belonging to the world of commodities and the seduction of wealth and power, and also recognizing the need to resist the corruption and the threat to identity posed by that world. In this border position, the challenge for the boku is to hold himself aloof and to discover his personal values that define his identity – the work described in the previous chapter.

Jameson’s article explains that the attention given to objects in the hard-boiled form was not due so much to the importance of objects, as clues in a modern materialistic world. Instead, Jameson argues that by using objects to substitute for the direct expression of Marlowe's feelings and attitudes, objects become symbolic references with "style and
symbolic connotations" (78), in a world where advertising no longer responds to material needs, but creates illusory needs and desires which the advertised objects now symbolize. Advertised objects allude to the symbolic order, not to the material referent. In Jameson’s changing world,

The life problems ... are radically different in kind from those of the relatively simple world of needs and physical resistance which preceded it. They involve a struggle, not against things and relatively solid systems of power, but against ideological fantasms, bits and pieces of spiritualized matter, the solicitations of various dream-like mirages and cravings, a life to the second power, ... unable to find a footing in the reality of things. (78)

Jameson illustrates the challenge facing private eye fiction writers to give the form continued relevance in a world in transition from modernity to late modernity. His description explains well the experimentations of later writers of the metaphysical private eye story, but he is also persuasive in his description of the hard-boiled private eye as a catalyst that steps in, stirs things up, and causes chaos. Order is scattered by the activity of the hard-boiled private eye (as Hammett’s Continental Op claimed), and murder is "in its very essence accidental and without meaning" (86). Whether or not Jameson succeeds in arguing that such traces can be found in Chandler’s work, he sets the scene for Murakami’s adaptations of the hard-boiled private eye form. The solution of a murder becomes less relevant in Jameson’s changed world, and the search for meaning in the fragmentation of daily life and in the banality of the objectified symbolic order, becomes paramount. Murakami’s hard-boiled protagonists retain the private eye’s outer search for missing people, and his inner search for meaning and identity; but his plots and settings display a contemporary awareness of global corruption, the commodification of material objects and people, and a distrust of reality coupled with a willingness to explore the surreal.

I.III "The Unfinished Cartography ..."

Written in 2002, Kawakami Chiyoko’s article "The Unfinished Cartography: Murakami Haruki and the Postmodern Cognitive Map" has the advantage of being able to draw on the earlier writings of Johnson and others in assessing Murakami’s response to a rapidly changing world. In response to the Japanese critics Ōe Kenzaburō, Yoshimoto Takaaki, Watanabe Naomi, and Miyoshi Masao who argued that Murakami has failed to present any social critique of Japan in the 1980s and 1990s and has thus betrayed the national project of the junbun-gaku "which takes as its axiom the writer’s discursive practice
of social struggle" (Kawakami 310), Kawakami argues that the changed world calls for a changed writing. The power structures that dominate and control late capitalist society are fragmented and work by indirect methods. A single, unified authority (be it the state, America, or the World Bank or the IMF) no longer exists, and thus opposition is also dis-unified. The individual is likened to a Don Quixote figure tilting at windmills (312-3), engaged perhaps on *A Wild Sheep Chase*. Kawakami applauds Murakami for having responded to the changed conditions by experimenting with his narrative forms and by avoiding the sterilization of the confessional I-narrative: "... his narrative has evolved around invisible forms of power" (312).

Various forms of power can be traced through Murakami’s novels. There is the Boss, a supporter of right wing politicians, in *WSC* who sought to possess Rat, and to shift beyond linguistic persuasion into "conceptual anarchy" (234). The power of the media is obvious in *DDD*. The intricacies of the power of science and the control of information are explored in the moral decisions of *HBW&EW*. The combination of politics, the media and a charismatic personality is represented in *WBC*. *KOS* returns to the consequences of individual responsibilities and choices. To be relevant to his own time, Murakami has had to engage with the multiplicity of the powers that shape Japanese, and global, society. His response has been to devise a narrative form and content to address the complexity of the changing world. Therefore, he has extended the hard-boiled form through creative experimentation and mixing with other genres. These experiments with form have combined with his content, resulting in novels that are relevant to Japanese and global readers. Kawakami says, "Murakami … assumes a form of power that is unidentifiable … The site of power is simply beyond the individual’s comprehension" (318). To represent this complex site of power, Murakami’s *boku* is often disorientated, and often engages with a surreal opponent. The antagonists in Murakami’s novels most often remain unexplored background characters (with the exception of Gotanda in *DDD* who is portrayed almost as a tragic victim). This chasing after shadows is doomed to failure, as was the hard-boiled private eye ’s fight against city crime. The larger crime in Murakami’s work is not due to a criminal other, as much as it is due to a specified social condition. In Chandler and Macdonald, and frequently in hard-boiled private eye fiction, the social condition of corruption is generalized, unspecified. Murakami specifies that the corruption is wider than the greed for wealth and power, and wider than the cityscape. Corruption extends into the countryside of Hokkaido and Shikoku. Corruption is part of a complex interrelationship of commerce, culture, and historical conditions.
Murakami also admits the concept of pure, unaccountable evil, which interacts with human psychology. A major crime in Murakami’s writing is the threat to individuality and identity through the devaluing of people in a global, advanced capitalist system. Since corruption is so complex, Murakami represents it symbolically, using parallel worlds and psychic fantasy. The boku’s fight against invisible power structures cannot be won, just as the hard-boiled private eye cannot win against the corruption in the noir city, and this leaves the boku alone in an ending that has no satisfying closure. Indeed, the only way that identity can be formed is in the choice to fight against the dominant power structures; to engage in the ethical work described in the previous chapter.

Ironically, late capitalist power conceals itself by soothing individuals with a surplus of consumer goods to give the illusion of individuation through consumer choice. However, this life-style of consumption replaces the meaningful decision-making that once formed identity. In his analysis on HBW&EW, Kawakami concludes:

Watashi is a caricature of a man who lives in the limited fantasy of modern urban life, where the meticulous selection of consumer goods passes as the expression of subjectivity. The problem is that this act of selecting things with obsessive preciseness is becoming the sole existential 'experience' that provides the individual with the illusion of a self or subjectivity. (322-23)

Objects, then, surround the boku and he typifies the urban consumer who is threatened by a surplus of choice in an erasure of the capacity to make meaningful decisions necessary to assert identity. At times, Murakami stresses the boku’s belongings (his clothes, his choice of music, his food), almost to the point of erasure of his identity. However, there always remains the possibility of resistance. As seen in the previous chapter, the foregrounding of objects creates space, and moments of time, for decision-making during the mundane daily use of objects, like cooking pasta and ironing shirts. The saturation of the text with objects draws the reader’s attention to the proliferation of commodities in society, and allows both the reader and the boku to resist the reduction of self into the surrounding objects.

II. Murakami’s Hard-Boiled Wealth

The hard-boiled private eye novels of Hammett, Chandler, and Macdonald represented the corrupting power structures of their times quite clearly. Hammett and Chandler set up a hard-boiled private eye character whose internal values were in clear opposition to the corruption of wealth. The opponents, and the motives for crime, were obvious in the early novels. It was a simple dictum that there could be no wealth that was
honestly gained. All the rich had to be dishonest – to varying degrees. (This is not always so in Murakami’s texts, where there are wealthy supporters of the boku, like Nutmeg in WBC.)53 The motive for crime was wealth and the power it could buy. Rich and poor could be drawn into the desire for wealth and thus implicated in crime. Only the hard-boiled private eye remained aloof and pure. Contaminated by the investigation of crime, by mixing with criminals, by employing questionable methods, and by compromising himself, the private eye certainly was tainted in the early books. The Continental Op in Red Harvest struggles against the enjoyment of the lust for blood and Marlowe recognises he is part of the corruption in Farewell, My Lovely. However, the private eye maintains a steadfast lack of interest in money and in the attainment of wealth.

In using the form of the hard-boiled private eye narrative, Murakami’s content is influenced by the characteristics of the form. The private eye’s opposition to wealth is present in Murakami’s novels, and those seeking wealth and power are cast as antagonists. However, as the complexities of social power structures are acknowledged, an ambiguity often enters in Murakami’s texts, and the antagonists are not always presented as clear-cut bad people. In WSC, the sheep and the black-suited secretary are clear opponents, but neither is typical of the antagonists in hard-boiled fiction. The sheep is a symbolic opponent. Murakami asks the reader to accept this intrusion of a fantastic element into the hard-boiled form. The sheep signifies the amorphous, hegemonic power of commerce, media, politics and the military. The black-suited secretary, however, is all too familiar in the world of commercial management: a Stanford graduate with a cosmopolitan accent. He is at ease in forcing the dissolution of the partner’s small public relations company and smoothly talks philosophy with the boku while threatening him. Murakami suggests in these two antagonists that corruption is part of both everyday commercial reality and also the fantastic other.

The evil of Noboru Wataya in WBC is made obvious through the boku’s first-person narrative. Both the world of realistic power-politics and the world of the fantastic are represented in WBC. The reader is drawn into the central consciousness’s negative assessment of Noboru Wataya’s character. He is marked by his desire for power and by his psychic possession of women. He is an unlikable antagonist and the reader is not encouraged to enter into his thinking. However, even with this antagonist, Murakami sets him in a wider social context. Through the boku’s retrospective narration, the background of Noboru Wataya is suggested: his parents “pounded their questionable philosophy and their

53 The Dowager in 1Q84 is wealthy, also.
warped view of the world into the head of the young Noboru Wataya" (73). This is unusual in the hard-boiled form, although the crime is often traced to past events and relationships (especially in Macdonald's novels). The boku in WBC offers a socio-psychoanalysis of the character development of Noboru Wataya, and this is given early in the plot.

However, the character Gotanda, in DDD, is portrayed as a friend of the boku. The reader, through the central consciousness of the boku's narration, is invited to empathize with Gotanda. Naively entering the world of movie acting, Gotanda is caught in a web of other powers who make money out of him, commodifying him. His life is false; he lives acting a part, "I'm nothing but this image" (144). He resides in an apartment not of his own choosing and drives a car he did not choose; even his marriage was dictated by other people (135-6). His lifestyle is equally false; he lives on borrowed money managed by accountants as an "expense account" (134). The theme of trust reoccurs throughout Gotanda's conversations with the boku: he specializes in roles in which he exudes trust; he says he trusts the boku (146). The reader is lured into trusting the seemingly open Gotanda in return. However, the clues are placed in the text. He felt threatened by Kiki, who wanted to get close to him (142). Since Kiki is the infallible psychic girl with beautiful ears from WSC, the alert reader should have been warned not to trust Gotanda. Similarly, his profession of trust in the boku could arouse suspicions in readers familiar with Hamlet: "The lady doth protest too much, methinks" (Act 3, scene 2, line 254). Gotanda himself draws attention to the falsity of the image he presents: "Where's the first-person 'I'? ... My whole life is playing one role after another" (146). During the conversation on trust, Gotanda laughs, and says that trust is his "fatal flaw" (143), foreshadowing the later revelation that he is the murderer of Kiki, and hinting to the reader that his character should not be trusted. Immersed in the corruption of wealth and false imagery, Gotanda acts as a foil to the integrity of the hard-boiled boku. Finally, despite his complaints, Gotanda is unwilling to simply walk away from his wealthy lifestyle; and his complicity in this corrupt world leads him to murder women.

Similarly, in HBW&EW, the Professor and his grand-daughter are also quite likeable characters whose pleasant personalities conceal the decisions they made that cause the end of the watashī's life. The Professor's greed for the power of information, and his grand-daughter's careless complicity, are down-played and almost hidden in the narrative. Neither fit into the category of corrupt villain that the reader of hard-boiled private eye fiction expects. In none of this is there much of a similarity to the typical antagonists in hard-boiled private eye fiction.
The mistakes of Miss Saeki, in KOS, make her an even more ambiguous opponent to the young Kafka. She sought to regain her lost childhood lover, not wealth or power. However, once the entrance stone was opened through her past choices, it facilitated Johnnie Walker’s cruel avarice. He was free to possess the power from the dead cat’s souls to make a flute to collect human souls. His crime takes place in the surreal world of possession where souls can be stolen. (This is also the crime of Noboru Wataya.) Again, Murakami uses elements of the fantastic to point to the insidious nature of corruption and crime in the complex world of contemporary capitalist society. The criminal is not simply greedy and evil. Corruption is not only found in the urban city. The opposition to the greed for wealth and power remains in Murakami’s plots, but there are additional complications which suggest that Murakami is aware of larger realities. The early hard-boiled good/bad binary of Hammett and Chandler has been extended to reflect the complexities of a changing world.

II.I “Trilateral” Corruption

Murakami sets his novels in Tokyo city, with some very specific Tokyo landmarks and descriptions. The city may be Japanese, but the inclusion of American cultural references lends enough cosmopolity to the city setting to allow non-Japanese readers to identify with the city setting. Despite the street names and landmarks of Tokyo, the city is familiar to the reader. This ready identification seduces the reader to further accept the corruption of the city. There is a generalization that all business, all corporations, all cities are corrupt. Murakami borrows from the tradition of private eye fiction. His corrupt city signifies a corrupt world. Unlike Chandler’s brief, loving descriptions of the innocent loveliness of the San Francisco hills (The Big Sleep), or MacDonald’s bursts of nostalgia for the threatened nature in the Bay area of San Francisco (The Sleeping Beauty), or the glimpses of the old-world farms engulfed in flames and encroached upon by sprawling suburbs in The Underground Man, Murakami’s cityscapes have few relieving descriptions of beauty. His city is the site of big business and hence, the site of corruption. This is an assumption in Murakami’s novels; it is not made explicit by any hard-boiled noir of dark alleys or gangster-ridden slums. Neither is it made explicit in detailed descriptions of ostentatiously wealthy homes peopled by obnoxiously corrupt wealthy people (although there is an ironic description of the house of the Boss in WSC.) Murakami then extends the setting of the corrupt city because corruption is global.
The *boku* is very much at home in the Tokyo city setting, and yet the private eye form requires that the protagonist is distanced from the city's corruption. As explained earlier, Knight describes how Chandler used the narrative device of setting Marlowe's private morality in opposition to the social corruption of the city in order to heighten the image of one lone honest hero against the world. The effect was to emotionally distance Marlowe from social engagement, but the effect was also to distance Marlowe from moral engagement in challenging social corruption. In contrast, the *boku* is aware of the complexity of corruption and the interconnectedness of socio-economic and political corruption. The corruption of the city is no longer limited to the network of local business, local police, and local political crime. In Murakami's fiction, the reader is asked to identify with the wider nature of crime.

Although Murakami uses Tokyo and the suburbs of Tokyo, (he also uses Sapporo, Junitaki, Takamatsu and Honolulu) as his usual setting, the effect is to defamiliarise the city for Japanese readers, and to exoticify every city for other readers. The familiar city is taken out of its context (estranged) to shake the reader into realizing that crime is not just a consequence of urbanization, but it is a more complex global corruption. Thus, the *boku*'s contestation often takes place outside the city or in an in-between, parallel world; Hokkaido, the Dolphin Hotel, room 208, Manchuria, downtown Honolulu, in a well, below Tokyo city, or in the Town of *HBW&EW*. Murakami's city stands for every city. Instead of limiting himself to the hard-boiled trope of the corrupt city, Murakami sets his corruption in the professional workplace, and in the daily, mundane routine. He shows corruption has become embedded in the daily lives of ordinary people caught in the desire to make a comfortable living. The suggestion is that the desire for wealth and power is seductive.

The *boku*'s partner in *WSC* reflects on the changes in their business, changes that he introduced. "I just feel we’re engaged in some kind of exploitation. ... We’re just tossing out fluff" (48). The *boku* replies rather harshly to his partner’s attempts to seek reassurance: "Sure we’re tossing out fluff, but tell me, where does anyone deal in words with substance?" (49) It is not just the city that is corrupt in Murakami's novels, it is the world that has been corrupted by the interconnections between global commerce, politics, and media. Murakami may choose Tokyo as his usual city setting, but it is a universalized Tokyo; a city similar to any city in the world. By scattering American cultural references and by describing a middle-class average lifestyle, Murakami's *boku* is globalized, familiarized for universal readers (and defamiliarised for Japanese readers, as noted earlier). Urban readers east and west can readily identify with the *boku*, and in that identification, readers are opened to
identifying also with the *boku’s* knowledge of universal corruption. In describing the sheep-possessed Boss, the partner explains,

he was ... a Class A war criminal, his trial was cut short midway and never reconvened. ... [He] put an entire faction of the conservative party on his payroll. [He bought up] the advertising industry ... There’s not a branch of publishing or broadcasting that doesn’t depend in some way on advertising. ... the Boss sits squarely on top of a trilateral power base of politicians, information services, and the stock market. (57-9)

The description reads like a summary of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Greed for power and dominance has united state institutions and private enterprise in an entangled relationship of corruption. This identification of the criminal as a hegemonic system is made explicit here in *WSC*. Similarly, the crime is focused in the single character of the sheep (and its emissary the black-suited secretary), albeit that the sheep represents a "trilateral power base." The fantastic and the surreal combine with the hard-boiled trope of a corrupt cityscape to suggest a wider corruption. In later novels, corruption is spread through various characters and is also defused in abstract fantasy. However, even in *WSC*, there is a suggestion that the power symbolized by the sheep is not so easily destroyed. The black-suited secretary who hopes to inherit the power base is arrogant in his dismissal of the *boku* and ruthless in his planning. Anyone familiar with the formula of hard-boiled private eye novels will expect the *boku* to succeed in his opposition to the sheep and its emissaries, but will also expect the *boku* to realize that the fight against corruption can never be finally won. Thus, it is no surprise that the *boku* is alone at the end of the novel, sitting on a beach that has been deformed by commercial building projects on reclaimed land.

### III. Housing the Hard-Boiled

Descriptions of houses form a motif running through Murakami’s novels. As in hard-boiled private eye novels, the houses of the wealthy are foregrounded. In *WSC*, the visit to the house of the Boss is framed within the collection of the *boku* by a chauffeur driving "a giant submarine of a limousine" (64). The *boku* first provides a description of an impressive landscaped garden setting for the house of the Boss. However, the immediate response of the *boku* is an "impertinently" asked question: "And where is the mailbox?" (68). This sarcastic response to wealth is characteristic of the hard-boiled private eye. Murakami’s protagonist shows a degree of sarcasm and distaste in *WSC*. He describes an initial "Meiji-era Western-style manor" (69) to which additions were made in various architectural styles,
supplementing the initial style and detracting from any original beauty. The *boku* concludes his description with the comment, "The monstrosity stood simply for money, piles of it, to which a long line of second-rate talents, era after era, had availed themselves" 69-70). It is as though the rich cannot be credited with beauty, and the excess of money possessed by the wealthy is abhorrent.

The opening description of the Sternwood's hilltop residence in Chandler's *The Big Sleep* is Murakami's model, showing similarities in style and, again, relying on the narrator's descriptions. There is attention to detail and descriptions of furniture and the stained glass knight rescuing the maiden in distress. Marlowe's response is, again, a sarcastic flippancy: "Large hard chairs with rounded red plush seats were backed into the vacant spaces of the wall round about. They didn't look as if anybody ever sat in them" (589). Later, there is the narrator's description of General Sternwood's orchids in the hot house, equating the corruption of wealth and age with the orchid plants, "nasty meaty leaves and stalks like the newly washed fingers of dead men. They smelled as overpowering as boiling alcohol under a blanket" (592). The private eye's opposition to the wealth is also inserted through direct commentary: "... they could still look out of their front windows and see what had made them rich. If they wanted to. I didn't suppose they would want to" (603). Occasionally, there is a description of the houses of the poor but they receive no more sympathy or identification than those of the rich: "a dried-out brown house with a dried-out brown lawn in front of it" (783). Living in this house, (far from being "dried-out") is the alcoholic elderly Mrs. Florian, who is described as mean and slovenly. Her house reflects her character and Marlowe's distaste is evident, "I had enough of the scene, too much of it, far too much" (791). In contrast, Lindsay Marriot's house is described as "a nice little house with a salt-tarnished spiral of staircase going up to the front door" (800). However, Marlowe's dislike of the wealthy Marriot is expressed in a sarcastic put-down of Marriot's abstract sculpture: "I thought it was Klopstein's Two Warts on a Fanny,' I said" (802). There are of course other insecurities at play here in the Marlowe-Marriott discourse, however, the point here is that the houses of rich and poor alike are described with reference to the character of their owners.

The narrator's description of wealthy houses continues in the hard-boiled genre in the later novels of Ross Macdonald and others. Macdonald's narrator, Lew Archer, tends more frequently to contrast descriptions of wealthy residences with descriptions of the living conditions of the poor; and descriptions of houses are contrasted with descriptions of nature, the sea, the night sky, the mountains. The negative descriptions of the houses of the
rich are still retained: "I had already spent a long time in the hallway ... It was an ugly cold
dark room without any furniture, like a holding cell for prisoners waiting for paroles that
never came" (Sleeping Beauty 52); "A chandelier of yellowing crystal hung down from the
central beam like a mis-shaped stalactite" (The Drowning Pool 27). However, there tends to
be more pity for the rich in Macdonald's novels than in Chandler's. Macdonald is willing to
investigate the psychology of his characters, and so the past lives of his criminals are used to
suggest reasons for their corruption (as Murakami does for Noboru Wataya). Chandler
avoids this psychologising and so, while he also uses a past action as the initializing event for
a crime, he does not have the element of sympathy that Macdonald has for some of his
criminal characters. While Chandler does include some wealthy characters who are
portrayed sympathetically, he still displays a greater antagonism towards wealth and power
than Macdonald.

Murakami's use of the house motif is again evident in his next novel, Hard-Boiled
Wonderland and the End of the World. The description of the commodities in watashi's
apartment serves to illustrate his character. He identifies his life with his commodities and
he has made his eight year old apartment his home. However, events show him that his
house is not his home – it is easily possessed by the powerful other. Junior and Big Boy
break down his front door and enter into his home. Similarly, his mind has been taken over
by the experimentations of the Professor who broke in and inserted a "third circuit" that will
end his existence. So too, Junior and Big Boy, the "smart-ass young liaison" from the System,
the librarian, and the chubby girl in pink all enter the watashi's apartment freely. A strong
front door is no security in the corrupt world of Murakami, where the individual rarely has
the safe haven of a home as protection against the powers of state, commerce, and media
infiltration. "The swift and complete destruction of the door to Watashi's apartment attests
that the concept of privacy is a mere illusion" notes Kawakami (314). The watashi looks
around at the destruction of the belongings in his apartment and sees the destruction of
eight years of his life (187). The watashi is identified by the contents of his apartment – it is
his self. The destruction of his apartment reminds the reader that watashi's mind has been
broken into also, and that his life has been destroyed.

The motif of the house reappears strongly in the novel Dance, Dance, Dance. There
are a number of different houses and apartments throughout the novel, described in a more
subdued hard-boiled style, although retaining the same techniques of direct dialogue,
sarcastic responses, and indirect antagonistic comments. The character Gotanda complains
bitterly (and at length) about his fashionable Azabu apartment and his accompanying
wealthy life-style (149-151). Interestingly, the boku's description is more neutral here. By using the complaints of Gotanda, the formulaic need for the boku to be sarcastic in his description is removed. However, typical of the hard-boiled private eye stories, the wealthy characters in DDD (Yuki's parents as well as Gotanda) are not happy. They live empty, lonely lives in their expensive houses and apartments. Houses and apartments are a reoccurring motif throughout the novel. Gotanda lives in a serviced penthouse apartment in the wealthy inner-city district of Azabu in Tokyo. The boku mentions its Persian rugs, postmodern Italian lighting, and Ming plates (149). In contrast, Makimura's house in the suburbs of Tsujido is old world, landscaped with cherry trees and "the old charm of a Shonan resort villa" (196). Amé's place in Honolulu is set in "a private resort community" in the hills (238), a mixture of elegant tropical and modern "like something out of a Somerset Maughan novel" (239). Her house in Hakone, a hot-spring, tourist city outside of Tokyo where Amé retreats after the death of Dick North, is "too big for just a mother and daughter" (312).

In contrast with these wealthy settings, Dick North's room in Amé's Hakone house is "Upstairs, a long, narrow garret at the end of the hall, what had originally been the maid's room" (312). He keeps his room neat and clean in contrast to Amé's careless untidy mess. The boku says he packed Dick's possessions into a single suitcase and brought it to Dick's home, having "navigated my way into the suburbs of Setagaya by map" (316). There is no need for a map in driving to the Honolulu house of Amé:

Following Ame's instructions, I turned right off the highway before Makaha and headed toward the hills. Houses with roofs half ready to blow off in the next hurricane lined either side of the road, growing fewer and fewer until we reached the gate of a private resort community. The gatekeeper let us in at the mention of Ame's name. (238)

The contrast between the houses of the rich and those of the less rich echoes the technique of Ross Macdonald. His Los Angeles shows a vulnerable city, often under threat from fire, or oil spillages, or general urban decay. The houses of an older class of wealthy crumble and turn into the homes of the poor. The Love Hotels are described by Gotanda as dingy and dirty; they have been commodified:

the more you use those places, it gets to you. They're dark, windows all covered up. The place is only for fucking, so who needs windows, right? All you got is a bathroom and a bed—plus music and TV and a refrigerator—but it's all pretty blank and anonymous and artificial. (351)
Nevertheless, Murakami does not tend to describe inner-city poverty in the same dark depressing detail as Macdonald. Dick’s house is an "ordinary two-story suburban home, very small ... everything seemed to be in miniature". However, there is a noteworthy detail in the contrast of wealthy residences and Dick’s small house: "At least he had somewhere to come home to" (316). There is no mention of any of the wealthy characters being at home in their wealthy residences. Gotanda continually complains that his apartment is not a home. In the texts, a home is not a commodity that can be constructed or bought and sold. It carries the connotation of an abstract sentimental value. This value lifts it outside the exchange system of capitalist commerce. In contrast, Gotanda’s apartment has been constructed:

You leave things to an interior designer and it ends up looking like this. Something you want to photograph, not live in. I have to knock on the walls to make sure they’re not props. Antiseptic, no scent of life. (149)

In many of Gotanda’s descriptions, he mentions the artificiality of wealth. It can afford the construction of a façade, a rich, comfortable exterior that can hide the emptiness and poverty of the lives of the wealthy. Thus, there are in Murakami’s novels (as in Chandler’s and Macdonald’s) the spoiled little rich girl who sexually teases the *boku* (teases in an overt manner in Chandler and Macdonald). The young girls Yuki, Mai, and the Professor’s grand-daughter, the chubby girl in pink, are Murakami’s modified, more innocent, versions of this hard-boiled stock character.54 However, it is the chubby girl in pink who who enters the apartment of the *watashi* in *HBW&EW* and makes it her own. He is left homeless, sitting in a car on the seafront listening to Bob Dylan.

The *boku* in Murakami’s version of the hard-boiled private eye is not poor, and does not seem to have problems paying his bills. Instead, money seems to have very little meaning for him. Well-furnished apartments and wealthy houses are not home for the *boku* and he is not interested in making money. An unusual message for contemporary Japan.

III.1 Housing the Uncanny

Where Murakami does mention the poorer, more dangerous side of cities, his purpose is quite different from the rich/poor contrast of Chandler, Macdonald, and Chester Himes. In *DDD*, the *boku* finds himself driving with Yuki in downtown Honolulu. There is a

54 The representation of women in Murakami’s texts is a fascinating and complex topic that awaits serious study. The novel 1Q84 takes the more usual platonic relationship between the *boku* and the younger girl a step further when Tengo and Fuka-Eri have sex, although it could be read that Fuka-Eri is not fully present.
description of the corrupt city with a sarcastic indirect comment from the boku in a hard-boiled style:

Traffic was bad, but we were in no hurry, content to drive around and take in all the roadside attractions. Porno theaters, thrift shops, Chinese grocers, Vietnamese clothing stores, used book and record shops, old men playing go, guys with blurry eyes standing on street corners. Funny town, Honolulu. Full of cheap, good, interesting places to eat. But not a place for a girl to walk alone. (267)

However, Murakami has a purpose different from the conventions of the hard-boiled formula. His dark world is a setting for the border into the psychic otherworld – the crossing into the dangerous surreal. The boku glimpses his old girl friend Kiki and is taken into a dark room with six skeletons. Murakami crosses the boundary here between the genres of hard-boiled private eye fiction and the supernatural fantastic. The hard-boiled noir darkness trope of the corrupt city setting elides with the eerie psychic, surreal otherness of the fantastic.

It is perhaps the location of houses and the Dolphin Hotel in The Wind-up Bird Chronicle that best illustrates Murakami's shift from the use of houses to signal wealth, as in the hard-boiled private eye form, towards his use of the house motif for the purpose of signaling a border place into another world. The house the boku and his wife Kumiko rent cheaply from the uncle of the boku backs onto an alley that "used to have both an entrance and an exit" (12), but no longer has; blocked on both sides "the alley remained as a kind of abandoned canal, unused, serving as little more than a buffer zone between two rows of houses" (12). This uncanny alley connects the rented house of the boku with the house with the well that belonged to the Miyawaki family. These locations (and both the old and new Dolphin Hotels in WSC and DDD) represent a borderland, a "dead space" (Hantke 13), in Murakami's fiction, marking his separation from and his blending of the genres of the hard-boiled and the fantastic. However, it is also possible that Murakami's experimentation with the hard-boiled form opened him to other genres and interests. Whichever reading seems most valid, it can be agreed that Murakami is not satisfied with the limitations of a single generic formula in which to express his voice.

Both Rubin and Hantke read this blurring of generic boundaries as Murakami's critical commentary "on his own activity as a writer" (Hantke 7), and on Japan's "role within the global economy and emerging global culture" (7). Drawing on the genre of noir fiction and films, Hantke explains that genre's binary of a noir reality and an idealised utopian other space. The protagonist in the noir narrative attempts to escape the noir in order to cross
into the other utopia. Since noir is founded on a "cynicism" (12, 19), the escape is doomed to failure but the attempt is valuable in that it maps out the boundary, the limits, between the two worlds. This generic formula can be used as a metaphor by writers to suggest the exploration of an individual’s subconscious, or a nation’s past history, or the "forces of postindustrial capitalism associates with the urban environment" (12), or the 1960’s in Japan. It is part of the strength of Murakami’s fiction that this metaphor lends itself to a multitude of interpretations. Hantke argues that Murakami’s HBW&EW breaks the formulæ of noir. Although some critics point to the world of the watashi and the System as a futuristic "real" world, and so see the world of the boku and the Town as a subconscious other world, Hantke argues that both worlds are equally constructed, unreal, and lethally limiting; "they are equally inauthentic" (19). Hantke concludes that Murakami deconstructs "the motif of escape" in noir by leaving the reader in doubt without resolving what is reality. In this way, the reader is forced to work at reading the text, and in turn, forced to read the world in a continuing "process of negotiation between these multiple spaces" (19). Again, what is suggested here is that Murakami’s fiction encourages the work of moral decision-making.

It is in these "other" spaces that Murakami’s boku acts. In WBC, it is in the mysterious room 208 that the boku confronts, fights, and vanquishes his opponent and resolves his search for his missing wife. These "other" spaces are where the boku comes together as a moral person; they are places of agency. In Murakami’s corrupt cities and in his rural settings, there are places of resistance to the all-threatening amorphous power of commodification. Hantke says, "embedded in this totality [of noir postindustrial capitalism] are small niches or lacunae exempt from the forces that dominate the noir city" (Hantke 12). If these other spaces of Murakami’s surreal fantastic serve as spaces for the discovery of agency and resistance, then Murakami is suggesting that there is hope for the individual not to be overcome by the global spread of consumerism. Hantke argues that it is the spaces themselves which offer resistance: "The urban landscape in Murakami’s novels is riddled with such holes, neglected or unexplored pockets and enclosures, which function in radical opposition to the social and economic bustle around them" (13); but what is more accurate is that these border places offer space for the boku, and thus the reader, to discover their moral agency, and struggle to resist the dangers of wealth, power, and the loss of individuality in advanced capitalist society.

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55 In 1Q84, Aomane spends an inordinately long time hiding in an apartment, in contrast to her previous, assertive, activity as an assassin. She is waiting for Tengo to find her, and she is waiting for
The motif of houses illustrates Murakami’s foundation in the form of hard-boiled fiction. He begins within the hard-boiled practice of describing the houses of the wealthy and uses the hard-boiled private eye’s antagonistic witticisms to deride wealth and set the boku in opposition to the wealthy, outside their value systems. In this way, like Chandler’s "hard-boiled gentleman" (Farewell, My Lovely 815), the boku demonstrates his integrity. While the boku does not show much harsh criticism for the wealthy and their wealth, he remains an outsider. The abundance of references to commodities shows an awareness of the erosion of subjectivity in a world dominated by consumer goods. However, other meanings leak out from Murakami’s use of the hard-boiled motif of houses. Later hard-boiled writers, especially Robert B. Parker, Chester Himes, and Sara Paretsky, illustrate more sharply the contrast of house and home, bringing out important sentimental values that add to the popularity of their novels. Their private eye characters value their homes and their rough hewn families (see Cassuto Hard-Boiled Sentimentality). Murakami is not the only writer who is open to experiment beyond the generic borders of hard-boiled private eye fiction, although he is unusual in combining its form with that of the fantastic.

IV. Clues to Commodification

The changed social conditions between the corruption of Chandler’s cityscape and the increasingly complex, insidious corruption of Murakami’s commercial world that threatens to overwhelm the ability to engage in ethical decision-making, is most obvious in the treatment of objects and possessions in Murakami’s texts. In Chandler, objects served to distance Marlowe; in Murakami, objects are foregrounded to heighten their role as commodities: objects that are made to be bought and sold. In this commercial exchange, however, the identity of the individual is threatened: if individuals over-identify with their possessions, or if individuals become too greedy for possessions. Commodities also represent the growing commercialization of Murakami’s universal cityscape, where individuals are increasingly isolated, and where exploitation for profit is dominant, without always due consideration of the socio-cultural, ethical, or natural consequences.

A pattern is established in WSC. Early in the novel, the boku receives divorce papers from his ex-wife. Once she leaves, he goes to take a shower (19). He notices that he is "down to the bottom on just about everything – soap, shampoo, shaving cream" – commodities. He is of course "down to the bottom" of his marriage of eight years also. There follows an interplay of the hard-boiled distancing of emotions through reference to the birth of her baby, new life. Outside her apartment, there is the dark space of the park at night, where Tengo sits and sees the two moons.
objects, and the awareness that the seduction of such commodities threaten to replace
identity, and threaten to overwhelm the capacity for decision-making by the subject self.
The absence of toiletries reflects the emptiness in his life. He lists his post-shower activities
briefly, but with unnecessary detail. These everyday activities substitute for a reflection on
the visit. However, he then sits down in the kitchen where his wife had been. "Only to
discover: no one sitting at the opposite side of the table." The boku does report his feeling
indirectly here: "I felt like a tiny child ..." (19). This slippage in his emotional defence is
quietly erased, and he continues the sentence with a cultural reference, "in a De Chirico
painting all alone in a foreign country". This reference serves to distance the intrusion of
feelings, even as it expresses them. He retorts in hard-boiled tough guy style, "Of course, a
tiny child I was not. I decided I wouldn't think about it" and he attempts to suppress any
residual feelings. Again, a reference sneaks past his resolve in another slippage of his tough-
guy image: "The vacant chair in front of me made me think of an American novel I'd read a
while back." The absent shower toiletries, and the empty chair, both point to the absent
wife. This second cultural referent is separated/divorced from its cultural source (the novel
is not named), but it alludes to a possession, a thing: "After the wife walks out, the husband
keeps her slip draped over the chair" (19). The boku wants to have a tangible object to
remind him of his wife – her slip. The subject person, the wife, is fungible with her slip. This
desire to possess some object fungible with her, is made all the more urgent because we
learn that she has taken, removed, made absent, all possible signifiers of her presence. Her
absence is marked when she too associates her self with her belongings; she displaces her
identity onto objects, her possessions. Thus, their removal removes also her self. In the
emptied apartment, the numbed boku notices that:

Her cosmetics, toiletries, and curlers, her toothbrush, hairdryer, assortment of pills,
boots, sandals, slippers, hat boxes, accessories, handbags, shoulder bags, suitcases,
purses, her ever tidy stock of underwear, stockings, and socks, letters, everything ...
was gone ... A third of the books and records was gone too ... (20)
The wife is represented through her belongings; she identifies herself through these
commodities. Her absence is marked by the removal of these objects; her belongings, her
wealth. Lest these signifiers fail to remove her existence, even her tangible image is erased.
"Shots of the both of us together had been cut, the parts with her neatly trimmed away,
leaving my image behind". The wife exists through her belongings and their removal
removes her: "her choice was to leave not a single trace ... I could talk myself into believing
that she never existed". The human person is traced through the objects that surround
them, their belongings. Later, the Rat is traced through the Seven Stars cigarette butts (235, 247-8, 251,254). The boku equates his wife with an object, a slip; an absent slip. This is not a description devoid of emotion; instead, it illustrates the horror of a society that objectifies people, and exploits individuals. When identity is reduced to representation by objects, commodities, then, society has lost the value of personhood. The text points to the value of the individual beyond the production and consumption of commodities.

The later novel, KOS (2002, 2005), takes the replacement of individual identity by commercial objects a step further. In KOS, are two characters named after commercial products: Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders. The antagonist, Johnnie Walker, looks and dresses like the whiskey logo. The ambiguous Colonel Sanders is also like the old logo of the Kentucky Fried Chicken firm. His speech, in the English translation by Philip Gabriel, is styled like a brusque, southern state American. The reversal draws attention to the previous pattern established in the earlier novels: over-identification with possessions threatens individual identity with erasure. In KOS, the identities of these two characters exist only through their representation by commercial products, commodities, and their branded logo. This reversal suggests an explicit authorial awareness. The critique of commercial mass production and commodification is more direct than before: Johnnie walker devours souls (the hearts of living cats); he is a personification of evil, represented by a multinational whiskey brand.

Objects come alive in Murakami’s novels. There is a progression from the early use of the non-existent slip in WSC to call to mind the absent wife, to the the piece of paper in the disused warehouse in downtown Honolulu left by the ghostly Kiki in DDD. Objects are used in a variety of ways in Murakami’s fiction. As a smell can bring back a memory, so too an object can call into existence a person, event, or thing. The shadow in HBW&EW is a very real character and there is a very real world in the painting in KOS. Similarly, the memory of the wind-up bird in the mind of the boku in WBC becomes a real bird that he hears. The idea of a stone in the song "Kafka on the Shore" becomes a very real entrance stone for Hoshino in KOS. Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders are not all that unusual in Murakami’s novels, objects often have a life of their own.

Very often, the "objects-come-alive" act as gateways, portals to another, parallel world. Again, the entrance stone in KOS is an obvious example. Less obvious, perhaps, is the record that Kafka plays again and again in the same room in which the earlier, young lover of Miss Saeki slept. The playing of the record seems to turn back time, so that Miss Saeki becomes her younger self, making love to Kafka on the same bed in the same room.
The Maserati car in *DDD* objectifies the evil of its owner so strongly that it affects the girl psychic, Yuki. The elevator is the portal that transfers the *boku* between the old and the new Dolphin Hotels. Most effective is the abandoned lane between the houses in *WBC* that connects the *boku* to his strange, parallel world. *WBC* has an excess of objects that connect to the uncanny and have a supernatural life of their own. It is as if the horror of the threatened loss of individual identity in a commercial consumer world is so great that the characters of Johnnie Walker and Colonel Sanders are shifted into an uncanny, parallel world. There is an echo here of Poe’s combination of horror and clue-puzzle fiction. In many of Poe’s stories, objects fascinate, lead to madness, lure to death; but they can also provide detailed clues.

This use of the fantastic creates a space to negotiate the trauma of threat, horror, and loss; a technique that Murakami also uses in the treatment of the theme of history (see Chapter Six).

**IV.1 Commodities as Avoidance of Feelings**

Commodities are used to reinforce the hard-boiled convention of the isolated private eye – separated from the city’s corruption and separated from emotional ties to other people. In Chandler, the hard-boiled narrator avoids sharing feelings with the reader, maintaining a narrative distance, and displaying emotional detachment. This device helps establish the hard-boiled, tough guy, cool. The narrator often gives detailed descriptions of the objects surrounding him, so that it seems the narrator focuses on objects at times when the reader might expect an emotional reaction or an opinion. In Murakami, however, this use of objects is foregrounded, and the reader’s attention is drawn to the object itself. This is done by having a proliferation of objects, a list of things. It is also done by giving the brand name of the object. Since characters are often not named, the naming of objects is heightened. The attention given to objects in these ways almost conceals the fact that the objects are commodities that are bought and sold, commercially exchanged. Feelings, emotional reactions that reveal an aspect of identity, are concealed behind the commercial exchange of commodities. The hard-boiled trope of the distanced narrator has the side-effect of representing people as objects, commodities, in an effort to conceal the narrator’s emotional reactions.

There is an interesting conversation between the *boku* and his partner in *WSC*. The partner is described as "a happy drunk" who has now become "a moody drunk" (45). The reason that the *boku* gives for his partner’s addiction to the bottle is explained in terms of
his partner's identity: "it seemed that with alcohol in his system, he could more fully embody this idea of being that kind of guy". The partner is not happy with who he is, and so he drinks. Again, his subject self is made fungible with the object, a bottle. Unhappy with his existence, he depends on an addictive commodity, alcohol, to supplement his presence – he is absent to his self. In the ensuing discussion, which becomes quite sarcastic, the partner attempts to discuss the immorality of his business; advertising. He is caught up in the advertising of unnecessary commodities and in the false depiction of these commodities. "I just feel like we're engaged in some kind of exploitation" (48), he complains to the boku who has no sympathy for him and responds rather harshly. It was the partner who decided to expand their translation business into advertising. The partner focuses on a commodity, margarine, which they advertise but which neither of them eat. The boku challenges the partner by redirecting the conversation back onto alcohol and his drinking habit. The whole conversation is framed by the reference to the boku's divorce (46, 49). The conversation is an avoidance of discussing the divorce.

Objects and commodities are frequently used in association with characters, sometimes identifying a character – the Boss's secretary wears a black suit. The boku's psychic girlfriend is identified by her ears (which she has commodified in her job as an ear model). The character J owns a bar. Commodities are signifiers of people. Similarly, commodities and objects are scattered throughout the novels as traces that sometimes signify as clues, and other times fail to signify and remain as meaningless objects confusing the reader. The proliferation of commodities, objects that can be bought and sold, possessions, indicates lifestyle: the things money can buy.

This hard-boiled technique of using objects to conceal feelings is thus used to good effect by Murakami, and its application to the global capitalist society that commodifies people as well as objects has made Murakami's writing (itself commodified) relevant to contemporary readers. However, there is a fine line between retaining the hard-boiled convention of the aloof, unemotional narrator, and extending the use of objects to suggest a comment on advanced capitalist society. The distinction was made earlier between the hard-boiled narrator as an active agent independent from social conditions, and the hard-boiled narrator as a passive victim symptomatic of social conditions. At times, the text seems to be overwhelmed by one side or the other, emphasizing the boku's distance and loneliness, and at other times emphasizing his awareness and sarcastic response to consumer capitalism. Murakami is often reluctant to definitely resolve the tensions that he raises in his writing, leaving the readers to reflect and decide for themselves. Ultimately, the
texts suggest that tensions are not meant to be finally resolved but, instead, their undecidability needs to be continually negotiated.

IV.II The Boku is not Wealthy

The pattern of attention to commodities as signifiers of existence and wealth, the boku's lack of personal wealth, and his detachment from possessions is constant throughout the novels, but it is most obvious in the early novels, WSC, HBW&EW, and DDD. Other concerns dominate WBC and KOS, and the hard-boiled trope of antagonism to wealth is less marked. The form necessitates that the private eye is not wealthy, and that he distrusts the wealthy. This is part of the marginalization of the private eye, separating him from the corrupt city. The form of the hard-boiled private eye genre interacts with the content of Murakami’s novels. The generic character of the hard-boiled private eye and his personal values form a binary opposite to the wealthy and the values of the wealthy. The hard-boiled private eye earns his living through honest, hard, and physically demanding work. In contrast, the wealthy have made their money through corruption and exploitation. Sensitivity to class differences is highlighted and a private eye treads a midway between the rich and the working class. His education, or understanding of the social and power divide, places him outside of the working class and his lack of wealth and status places him outside of the wealthy class. This understanding of the status quo also serves to marginalize him. The private eye may sympathise with the lower class and the working class but he is never really one with them. Neither can he belong to the upper class. The hard-boiled private eye often sneers at the wealthy or, at least, pities them. Wealth is not part of his personal code of values and he keeps scrupulously to his contract of daily expenses. He will never become a rich person. Thus, the boku cannot be wealthy either and is instead only marginally financially secure – often resigning, out-of-work, or self-employed and dependent on others. The boku is also the world-weary cynic who is aware that the network of corruption in Japanese society is repeated universally. This is the wisdom that sets the hard-boiled boku apart from his companions.

In WSC, he is less well-off than his more successful partner. At the end of the novel he is without a job and has given away his payment received from the black-suited secretary. In HBW&EW, the hard-boiled watashi says of his apartment, "There's nothing here – nothing of any value" (141). In DDD, the boku speaks of his small apartment and Subaru car (289). Similarly, in WBC, the boku describes his "lonely life of a poor college student in Tokyo" (116) and reminisces about the early years of his marriage trying to make ends meet (114-116).
Having resigned from his job, Kumiko tells him "with my rise and occasional side jobs and our savings, we can get by OK if we are careful" (8). Thinking about it, the boku says "we would still have enough for extras such as eating out and paying the cleaning bill, and our lifestyle would hardly change" (10). They obviously live well enough. However, after he has been out-of-work for six months, he considers buying the Miyawaki house and says,

The amount of money I could realistically raise was close to zero. I still had a little of what my mother had left me, but that would evaporate soon in the course of living.

I had no job, nothing I could offer as collateral. (351)

Like many a poor person, the boku resorts to buying a lottery ticket in the hope of raising money (351). In all of Murakami’s novels, the boku may live a comfortable lifestyle surrounded by brand named commodities, showing that he has enough money; but he is never wealthy.

Despite all the attention given to commodities, and despite the freedom from financial concerns displayed by Murakami’s protagonists, they are not the financially stable upper middle class people that their lifestyles might suggest and that the critics often take them to be. However, it certainly cannot be said that they are poor or working class. They always know what they want and almost always have the money to buy it. They are middle class who seem alienated from their more usual class preoccupation with making a living and advancing up the social ladder.

IV.III Shopping for Vegetables

Murakami brings forward the mundane daily objects and activities of the boku for multiple purposes. In addition to the attention given to the displacement of identity in a post-industrial society, Murakami also refers to the wider context of mass production necessary in global capitalism. Dance, Dance, Dance is by far the most explicit of his novels in its description of corruption. There is an awareness of the complexity of the relationship between capitalism and the corruption, and our collusion as we are willingly seduced. In particular, when the drive to make money dominates values of integrity and justice, it is condemned in the texts. Interconnections between city planners, politicians and business cartels are suggested in the buying and rebuilding of the Dolphin Hotel. Gotanda is trapped in the web of debt to his manager, his accountant, his ex-wife, and the film industry. Yuki’s father, Hiraku Makimura, speaks casually of the international sex ring organized for travelling businessmen like some “International flower delivery” service (280). (The double meaning of “flower” alludes to the female genitals.) The small-time honest cop explains to
the *boku* that an investigation of the death of a prostitute is not a high priority with the police, especially when senior officers are also involved with the politicians and the businessmen who make use of the sex ring.

The *boku* lives in Shibuya, Tokyo (222); a bustling, noisy, shopping district. With the trademark laconic humour of the hard-boiled tough wise-guy, he observes how he himself is sucked into the pleasure and convenience of city-life shopping: "I admit it: I enjoy shopping at Kinokuniya. ... This is advanced capitalism, after all" (129). His initial puzzle about why the mass produced lettuce in the Kinokuniya large supermarkets lasts longer, "Maybe they round up the lettuce after they close for the day and give them special training" (129), turns more acerbic after he has heard Gotanda's tale of his false media image, failed marriage, and tax deductible expense accounts: "I went to Kinokuniya for some overpriced groceries and well-trained vegetables" (161). After he has been interrogated by the police for Mei's murder, listened to Yuki's father, met her mother in Hawai'i with Dick North, and had sex with June, the humour is gone completely; and the description of shopping for the mass produced lettuce deteriorates into a Foucauldian panopticon, coupled with a film reference and understated sarcasm:

More pedigreed vegetables, the latest shipment fresh from Kinokuniya's own pedigreed vegetable farms. Somewhere in the remote mountains of Nagano, pristine acres surrounded by barbed wire. Watchtower, guards with machine guns. A prison camp like in *The Great Escape*. Rows of lettuce and celery whipped into shape through unimaginably grueling supravegetable training. What a way to get your fiber. (280-1)

The *boku*'s reference brings to mind the image of Steve McQueen desperately riding his motorbike back and forth across the Swiss-German border before revving to take that last leap to freedom and death (*The Great Escape* 1963). Vegetables, of course, can also refer to the humans who have submitted to social structures which have reduced the human capacity for independent thought and decision-making. The *boku* recognizes the struggle to avoid becoming a mindless vegetable in the comfortable world of capitalist convenience. This recalls the *noir* motif of escape again. Murakami suggests a *noir* world behind the glamourized exterior of mundane daily life and shopping for vegetables. Despite the excess of references to western commodities, easy-living, and brand names, there is no hope of escape in any of his novels. Certainly, there is no easy escape from the world of advanced capitalism and commercial exploitation. The *boku* must negotiate with the hegemonic powers and continuously struggle to resist. Like the long line of hard-boiled heroes, the
boku can only chose to live life honourably and with his own inner integrity. In the tradition of the hard-boiled genre writers before him, the suggestion is that as crime never ends; so too, the constrictions of capitalism never end.

V. The Boku’s Indifference to Wealth

In establishing his protagonist as the ethical hero who adheres to a strict internal code despite being surrounded by dishonesty and corruption, Chandler exaggerated the contrast between the rich and the poor. Philip Marlowe may be "a man who daily crosses class boundaries with relative ease" (Hilgart 378), but he belongs to neither the rich nor the poor. He maintains his independence. He occupies a space between wealth and poverty. In this way, he can represent a critique of both. Hilgart also points out that Marlowe is a character who possesses "cultural capital" – he plays chess, makes literary references, shows taste for well-matched clothes, good food and drink. Often his criticism of his wealthy clients and suspects is based on their lack of taste and their lack of manners. It is as though Chandler’s Marlowe expects the nouveau riche of California to display the aristocratic style and manners of old Europe. This contrast sets Marlowe up as the example of chivalrous behavior to rich and poor alike. Marlowe may not be wealthy, but he behaves in the way the landed rich should behave.

The rich are berated because they are not the models they should be: "The rich are supposedly defined by mutually supporting wealth and sophistication, yet their money turns out to be dishonest, and they turn out to have less sophistication than Marlowe" (379). Possessing the education, manners, and taste of an upper class, well-bred gentleman, Marlowe is alienated from both the lower class and the crass Californian nouveau riche. Marlowe has more respect for the older wealthy generation, like General Sternwood and Mrs. Murdock, who at least have a certain dignity. Their wealth is not "fake" or "phoney" because their lifestyle displays a certain cultural elegance that wealth is supposed to display whether or not the person is honest. Hilgart writes:

Marlowe is a relatively highbrow intellectual who barely makes a living because he is generally honest. Faced with those more privileged than himself or with power over him, he trumps their abuse with an obscure reference or a complex insult. Marlowe is, in a sense, the real thing – a man with integrity and culture – but he goes unrewarded. (379)

Marlowe often mocks the wealthy, even if they are his clients, precisely because they have no style, no grandeur, indeed, no class.
This positioning of Marlowe between the rich and the poor makes him aloof from both and adds to his social isolation.

It is a characteristic that Murakami's boku shares. The boku makes sarcastic remarks in response to wealth and, although he can mix confidently with rich people, he sets himself apart from both rich and poor. However, the boku displays the cultural capital of a well-educated person with references to classical texts and cosmopolitan food, as well as to more modern music and novels, and more local Japanese food and international fast foods. If Chandler uses the middle ground between wealth and poverty to draw attention to his hero's ethical integrity, Murakami also makes use of this positioning to draw attention to the boku's indifference to wealth.

In WSC, the partner cannot let go of the lifestyle that his business in advertising has bought for him: "I got a new car, bought a condo, sent two kids to an expensive private school" (47). The boku is in stark contrast to this image of a successful entrepreneur. He tells the black-suited secretary that he has nothing, and therefore he has nothing to lose: "What have I got to feel threatened about? Next to nothing. I broke up with my wife, I plan to quit my job today, my apartment is rented, and I have no furnishings worth worrying about. ... I've got maybe two million yen in savings, a used car, and a cat ... My clothes are all out of fashion, and my records are ancient" (139). Lacking any signifiers of success, he has no existence that the consumer world recognises: "I've made no name for myself, have no social credibility, no sex appeal, no talent" (139). Having nothing, the boku is a nobody in a world where identity and status is dependent on the commodities possessed. The boku himself notes the freedom this gives him; having nothing to lose allows him to resist the black-suited secretary (139), but he does not mention that it also further marginalizes him. His social presence in the world is reduced and by even quitting his job, he loses whatever degree of friendship he had with his partner. Murakami is at pains to show that the boku is not wealthy, but more importantly, that he is not addicted to commodities. This is the quality that differentiates him from the other characters. Gotanda says to the boku in DDD, "You never wanted things to begin with. For instance, would you ever want a Maserati or a condo in Azabu?" (289). Like most people, the boku is surrounded by commodities, however, his sense of identity and presence does not depend on possessions. He enjoys his Subaru car, and quality food, and music, he has particular taste in clothing; but none of these control his life or identity. Indeed his lack of wealth makes him rich in other ways. The boku replies to Gotanda that "socially speaking, I've got nothing..." however, even if he feels "something's missing" he does have something that Gotanda lacks; he has learnt how
to engage in life according to his own values: "I'm dancing. I know the steps, and I'm dancing. It's all right" (292). By setting the boku in opposition to dependence on wealth and the things money can buy, Murakami uses the trope from hard-boiled fiction to question the value of wealth and consumption. The suggestion is that by wanting more the individual is led towards corruption. In contradiction, the boku is indifferent to wealth, and is not interested in the greed for wealth. Finally, in true hard-boiled private eye style, the boku gives away the money that the black-suited secretary gave him as his fee: "I pulled the check out of my pocket and passed it over to J, amount unseen" (297).

The novels of Ross Macdonald suggest an ambiguity to wealth that is different from Chandler's. The wealthy properties in Macdonald's novels are often threatened by the very nature that has been exploited for profit by the wealthy families. Oil spillages, fires, and desert heat threaten to engulf the homes of wealthy clients and suspects in Macdonald's plots. Oblivious to wealth, nature takes its revenge, reclaiming the properties that had reshaped the natural environment. Macdonald's novels suggest that wealth is not lasting; it erodes, crumbles, and decays. Those who were once rich will become poor. It is a scriptural, moral lesson, which seems to infuse Macdonald's novels.

This has a longer tradition in western literature, expressing the transitory nature of life and beauty. All things are passing and, "Golden lads and girls all must, /As chimney-sweepers, come to dust" (Shakespeare's Cymbeline Act IV, scene 2). If wealth, and the commodities it can buy, and the status accorded to the wealthy are all transitory, then the lasting values of personal integrity and ethical honesty are all the more praised. It is not just logical to be indifferent to wealth because it does not last, but indifference to wealth is also invested with a higher degree of morality. Marlowe, Archer, and the boku are imbued with additional moral integrity because they are indifferent to wealth. By borrowing the hard-boiled private eye form, Murakami's texts take on their values, and these values place the texts within modernity, not the postmodern world.

In DDD, Gotanda tells the boku that they are fundamentally different in their regard for the commodities wealth can buy: Gotanda says,

"Funny isn't it? I can get almost anything I want. Except the one thing I want the most."

"That's how it is," I said. "But I never could get everything I wanted, so I can't really talk."

"No, you've got it wrong," said Gotanda. "**You never wanted things to begin with.** For instance, would you ever want a Maserati or a condo in Azabu?"
"Well, if somebody forced them on me, . . . But I guess I can live without them. ..."  
(emphasis mine, 289)

In all Murakami’s novels, the boku enjoys the things that surround him. He is particular in his choice. His possessions reflect his personality and his lifestyle. However, the boku can let go and walk away from these things. In HBW&EW, the watashi certainly struggles to let go of his apartment and his treasured possessions, indeed most people would be horrified at the destruction of their home. Junior, the smaller of the two thugs who break in to destroy the watashi’s apartment, comments, "Cheap or not, it’s your life here, eh?” (141). Junior is stating the general belief that our belongings identify our selves. The objects that we chose to surround ourselves with, our commodities, reflect our identity, and we also identify ourselves with our choice of commodities. Following the destruction, the watashi philosophises: "I was reminded of a near-future world turned wasteland buried deep in its own garbage. ..." (165) His precious possessions carefully collected over the years are listed, highlighting the identification of individuals with objects, almost fetishizing them. Their destruction forces the watashi to conclude, "... All of it, useless garbage." The resulting uselessness of his destroyed belongings is in contrast with the usefulness of the oil and coal that results from natural decay (165). This binary of the natural contrasting with the artificial is used again in the hard-boiled description of watashi shaving with the branded toiletries that belonged to the librarian’s dead husband:

I located a Schick razor and a can of Gillette Lemon-Lime Foamy with a dry sputter of white around the nozzle. Death leaves cans of shaving cream half-used.
"Find it?" she called out.
"Yep," I said, returning to the kitchen with her husband’s effects and a towel. I heated some water and shaved. Afterwards I rinsed the razor, and some of the dead man’s stubble washed away with mine. (378)
The attention to objects, now named and branded, and the mundane daily act of shaving is typical of the hard-boiled style. The quotable aphorism ("Death leaves cans of shaving cream half-used") is Murakami’s version of Chandler’s wisecrack and simile. However, the use of the hard-boiled style also disguises the deeper message of the consequences of death, as well as the watashi’s emotional response to his approaching death. Letting go of his belongings, letting go of his apartment (claimed by the Professor’s chubby daughter in pink), letting go of his physical body (also claimed by the Professor’s daughter for deep-freezing), and letting go of his life is a theme that runs through the HBW plot. It is bleak and despairing. The watashi remarks, "Once again, life had a lesson to teach me: It takes years
to build up, it takes moments to destroy. … The splendor of the fields, the glory of the flowers, I recited under my breath" (187). Interestingly, Murakami includes a scriptural reference (Lk. 12: 27; Acts 17: 11), which again has a literary echo in Wordsworth’s *Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood*. It also reflects back to Macdonald’s spiritual awareness of the transience of wealth.

Murakami uses Chandler’s technique of contrasting the hard-boiled private eye with the wealthy to highlight the moral integrity and aloofness of the boku. Macdonald also uses this technique in his novels but adds an awareness of the loss caused by humanity’s commercial exploitation and destruction of the natural environment. Murakami’s novels, however, suggest two uses of this hard-boiled trope. First, Murakami illustrates how society has become so thoroughly commercialised that the individual self has become lost in the surrounding commodified objects. We have so identified with commodities that we believe they are who we are, and our existence is named through these possessions. Our identity is subsumed through referents. Gotanda explains to the boku the role of the media in this disintegration of self identity:

That's my world. Azabu, European sports car, first-class. Stupid, meaningless, idiotic bullshit. How did all this . . . this . . . this total nonsense get started? Well, it's very, very simple. You just repeat the message and repeat the message and repeat the message. You pound that baby in. Until everybody believes it. Like a mantra. Azabu, BMW, Rolex, Azabu, BMW, Rolex, Azabu, BMW, Rolex, Azabu, BMW, Rolex, Azabu, . . . That's how you get those poor suckers who actually believe the bullshit. But if they believe that, they're exactly like everybody else. They're blind; they got zero imagination. (290)

By believing and following the advertising world that has replaced material objects with what Jameson called symbolic referents, imaginary supplements, individual identity has been eroded; gradually erased by commodities. In *HBW&EW*, as the wataashi approaches his last day of existence, he destroys his credit cards, ”My world foreshortened, flattening into a credit card. ... Everything about me may have been crammed in there, but it was only plastic. Indecipherable except to some machine" (305). His identity is replaced by a plastic credit card that has meaning, can be deciphered, but only by a machine.

Second, Murakami extends Chandler’s concept of the "fake/phony" wealthy who may have money but who do not have culture. The commodities that Gotanda in *DDD* rails against are not real: "This stuff isn't natural. It's manufactured" (289) he argues. The basic human need for shelter is transformed through the world of commercial advertising into the desire for status. "Take that place where I live. A roof over your head is the point, not what
fancy part of town it's in. But the idiots at the agency say—Itabashi or Kameido or Nakano Toritsukasei? No status. You big star, you live Azabu" (289-90). This is what Jameson had referred to earlier when saying that objects are imbued with symbolic references, when advertising shifts away from focusing on material objects and basic needs towards the non-material symbolic connotations of referents and abstract desires (78). Baudrillard makes a similar point in Simulacra and Simulation, "It is no longer a question of imitation, nor duplication, nor even parody. It is a question of substituting the signs of the real for the real" (2); and see also his presentation of Disneyland and Watergate (13-16).

Gotanda claims his lifestyle is "fake" and laughs at his own particular Maserati car which is indeed fake, since "it's not new; they got it off some enka singer" (290). Again, Gotanda hints that the identity of the individual self is threatened in this replacement of the material world with the non-material symbolic world: "I'm fed up with it. I'm fed up with this life they have me living. I'm their life-size dress-up doll" (290). He is no longer an individual, a subject self; he has become a symbol, a plaything for media advertisers. More importantly, the boku points out, real deep needs are often not known and not met, leaving the individual dissatisfied and frustrated. Adorno and Horkheimer say, "The culture industry perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises ... the promise ... is illusory" (38). Certainly in the commercial world, needs are confused with wants, and we often lose sight of what we really need in the proliferation of so many advertised wants. It seems as though we have everything we want, but in reality we do not have the one thing we really need; and sometimes we do not even know what it is that we need. Gotanda says,

"... as long as I keep living like this, I can't get what I really want."

"Like, for instance, love?" I said.

"Yeah, like, for instance, love. And tranquillity. And a healthy family. And a simple life," he ran down the list. (291)

The list of objects with which Murakami usually surrounds the boku (Jameson called it an "inventory" 79) is replaced here with a list of deeper needs that the commercial world cannot supply, although advertisers will attempt to make use of these needs in order to sell products. If the boku is indifferent to wealth, he at least recognizes the things that money cannot buy. Ironically, though, the boku does not have a loving partner in his life; neither does he have a "healthy family" and he does not have much "tranquility". However, he knows these things are more important than commercial products. They are the treasures that cannot be bought or sold.
VI. The Special Case of Kafka

The novel *Kafka on the Shore* (2002, 2005) is structurally different from the hard-boiled private eye pattern of a single central consciousness who narrates the plot in first-person voice. In his early novels, Murakami experiments with introducing alternative narrative voices through the interpolation of meta-narrative letters and excerpts from books. *WSC* has the letters from the Rat and the excerpts from the *Authoritative History of Junitaki Township*. However, the dominant narrative voice remains the *boku*. *HBW&EW* dramatically experiments with the narrative voice by alternating between the *boku* and the *watashi* in an obvious way that draws attention to the constructed nature of the text. It also draws attention to the content of the novel: the reader continually works to understand the connection between the two narrators: are they the same individual and, if so, how? *DDD* is more conservative and maintains the central consciousness as the narrative voice throughout. *WBC* has the letters of May Kasahara and Lieutenant Mamiya to break the *boku*'s narrative. In none of these novels is an alternative point of view introduced; no alternative narrator is introduced and the central voice is not changed. *KOS*, therefore, marks a new direction by having a central narrator, and also a third-person narration.

The boy Kafka acts as the *boku* to narrate his sections of the story in the present tense. The sections of Nakata and Hoshino are narrated in the past tense and with a third-person omniscient narrator, as is more usual in novels. The two narrations in *KOS* elide together smoothly without the jarring breakage of *HBW&EW* that calls attention to the two narrators. The contradiction in *KOS* is more subtle: the hard-boiled character is Hoshino not Kafka; however, it is the section with Kafka that uses the hard-boiled, first-person narration. By combining the first-person narration with the use of the present tense, this section of the novel achieves a more lyrical quality which suits the content of the narrative. Despite the first-person narrator, there is a dream-like effect in Kafka's story that is complemented by the use of the present tense. The combination allows the Kafka section to hold its own against the more episodic hard-boiled action sections of Nakata and Hoshino that draw the whole narration forward at a faster pace, and threaten to dominate the more reflective Kafka sections. The interpolation of the U.S. army intelligence reports and the letter from the teacher Setsuko Okamochi to Professor Tsukayama provide retrospective information that tease the reader like clues to the plot. However, the letter of the young female teacher turns out to be more like a prolepsis, foreshadowing the love scenes between Kafka and Miss Saeeki and the violence in the scenes between Nakata and Johnnie Walker. Like the prelude in *WSC*, Okamochi’s letter encapsulates the whole novel.
The trope of wealth, and its contrast to the values of the major heroic characters, is treated in much the same way in KOS as in the other novels. The hard-boiled conventions are retained. Wealth is suspect and none of the three main characters are conspicuously wealthy, although none are obviously poor either. There is the exception of Hoshino who is a truck driver and who has little interest in education. Kafka and the characters in his section, Oshima and Miss Saeki, are all well-educated and display knowledge of literature and the arts. Nakata repeats that he is not smart, "Nakata's not very bright, ... when I was little I was in an accident and I've been dumb ever since" (51). Nakata and Hoshino are two exceptions to Murakami's usually middle-class, well-educated narrator and this too undermines the force of their narratives, allowing the Kafka section to dominate the novel.

In KOS, the fifteen year old boy Kafka is in a particular financial situation because he has run away from home. Not wanting to attract attention to himself, he cannot use his father's credit card for finances. His preoccupation with money is a case of survival and an avoidance of the police. He only takes with him useful items, and he thinks constantly of food, accommodation, and security. He is tempted to take his father's Rolex watch (7), but he leaves it because it would attract attention. Instead, he takes the more useful pocket knife.

The character Nataka depends on the National Health (335). He had been cheated out of his savings by a cousin after thirty-seven years of carpentry in a small furniture workshop (222-26). Being "retarded" (226), Nakata has no concept of money or numbers bigger than "fifty dollars or so" and he "lived a contented life in the small apartment his brother provided, receiving his monthly subsidy, using his special bus pass, going to the local park to chat to the cats" (225). Nakata's needs are simple: "The Governor gives me money. I live in a little room ... And I eat three meals a day ... I have everything I need" (51). The luxury he permits himself from his supplemental earnings from cat hunting is the occasional meal of eel: "Nakata loves eel" (52).

Hoshino is quite different from the typical Murakami boku. He has regular work as a truck driver and he is not from the city. He "was born into a farming family" (245), and he joined the Japanese Self-Defense Force. As a youth, Hoshino admits he was in trouble with the police and had "trouble with a girl" (245). He shows no interest in books ("he couldn't remember reading anything except manga" 285), or cooking (though he seems to like good food). The description of him having sex with the philosophizing part-time prostitute supplied by Colonel Sanders reads like a farce, and Colonel Sanders condescendingly explains things to the ignorant Hoshino. He is not the all-knowing, smart hard-boiled private
eye, even if he talks and acts a little like one. Later, he comes to appreciate some classical music, "Beethoven's Archduke Trio" (sic 339), and he realizes that being "a great fan of the Chunichi Dragons" (338) is meaningless; and that his life is "worse than empty!" Hoshino has nothing much to let go of, but he undergoes a learning experience in following and helping Nakata. Commodities and possessions are unimportant in the lives of Nakata and Hoshino. They are both more interested in things that money cannot buy, and they are indifferent to the pursuit of wealth.

In the Kafka section of the plot, the boy Kafka finds refuge in the Komura library – a private family library that is open to the public. The Komura family, Oshima explains, were patrons to poets and novelists (39). "They enjoyed their hobby, in its place, but made sure the family business did well." The "family business" was sake. In the tour of the library, Miss Saeki defends the patronage system by saying that without the Kamura family the local cultural arts would not have been as well developed, since the government did not do much to assist artists and writers. The library has mementos "poems, sketches, and paintings" (43) given "in gratitude for having been allowed to stay ..." (emphasis mine 43). Miss Saeki explains that the patronage system was based on "favor" and tells the story of how "the haiku poet Taneda Santoka" (44) did not find favour, and so any of his works that the family had were destroyed. She beams when an Osaka visitor declares this was "a terrible waste ... [because] ... Nowadays Santoka fetches a hefty price" (44). The context of the library is set in the patronage system of cultural exchange, the commercialisation of art. This is not obviously stated, although Kafka’s blunt statement, "So they were rich" is met with a slight smile from Oshima (39). The library may be a place of refuge for Kafka but, like the artists before him, he must pay a price for his stay. Initially, he is allowed to stay in a room in exchange for simple work assisting Oshima, Later, the price he pays is to facilitate Miss Saeki’s return through the entrance stone, and the restoration of time.

*Kafka on the Shore* seems less of a hard-boiled private eye novel than the earlier novels, *WSC, HBW&EW*, and *DDD*. However, it is more accurate to see each novel as an exploration of elements from hard-boiled private eye fiction. Murakami does not develop in any progressive way in his use of the genre; instead he displays an openness to use elements from the genre that suit his specific purpose in writing each novel.56 This play with the elements from hard-boiled private eye fiction began in *WSC*, and continued in later novels, to greater or lesser degrees. It cannot be said that Murakami has grown away from the use of the hard-boiled private eye, or that he has developed in his use of the hard-boiled. He

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56 Murakami’s progress as an author stems from his willingness to explore new areas, themes (consumerism, identity, history, sexual integration, social responsibility).
seems more like a writer who continually tries out ideas and uses elements that suit his purposes.
Chapter Six
Past Crimes

There is a strong argument for the usefulness of reading Murakami through the form of the hard-boiled private eye novel. It serves well to explain the characteristics of his protagonist and it adds insight to the texts’ attitude to wealth. By situating at least some of Murakami’s major novels within the context of the hard-boiled private eye form, criticism can be more accurate and fair. Throughout this thesis, it has been acknowledged that Murakami’s oeuvre is not limited to the form of the hard-boiled private eye novel; and, indeed, the theme of history, especially, illustrates that even within the novels closest to the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, the form cannot contain all of what Murakami’s texts seek to explore.

This chapter will show how history was a theme in Murakami’s early novels and how the textual interest in Japan’s military involvement in Manchuria expanded to consider the reliability of memory and the trauma of remembering events from Japan’s military past. In the same way that the hard-boiled private eye struggles with his own unresolved past issues, it seems that Murakami the writer is confronted with events in the past that cast a shadow over the text. In untangling these complex traces throughout the texts, the strain between the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction and the narrative devices employed in Murakami’s texts becomes increasingly obvious. It is precisely within these instances of slippage that Murakami is most creative, joining elements of fantasy and the supernatural to the form of the hard-boiled private eye novel. Hard-boiled private eye fiction is itself a changing genre and contemporary international authors have expanded the form considerably to include specific interests and cultures. Nevertheless, Murakami’s texts do step beyond the form. The roots in the hard-boiled private eye form remain but the theme of history exposes issues (content) that overburdens the form, at times threatening narrative collapse, as in the abrupt and over-long interpolations. To cover these complex issues, this chapter will differ in size and structure from the previous two chapters to consider the more extensive instances of slippage in the treatment of the theme of history, particularly in the treatment of interpolations; the reoccurring themes of violence, war, and trauma; and considerations of what is included in memory and what remains excluded.

The postmodern discourse within the study of history also illustrates complications which are reflected in Murakami’s texts. The documents and sources that are the basis of historical research had been previously emphasized through the work of Lucien Febvre, Marc Bloc, and the approach of the Annales school. The work of Alan Nevins and the
Columbia and Berkeley oral history projects, as well as the British Oral History Society, heightened the importance of memory for individuals and repressed minority groups. The methodology of historical research was opened up to debate through these various historians and groups. E.H. Carr represented an early extreme among historians who began to question the objectivity of history. From a Marxist perspective, Carr questioned the selection of facts upon which historians based their readings of the past and argued the unacknowledged bias of presumed objective historians, "... when we take up a work of history, our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it" (22). Hayden White later developed this debate by showing how the urge for narrative coherence shapes the writing of history (The Content of the Form 4). Drawing on narrative theory, White (1973) investigated the progress of narrative devices from historical "chronicles" into "stories:" emplotment, repeated tropes, indirect ideological expression, and poetics of the written history (see Metahistory, "Introduction" 1-42). White's argument pushed towards the relativism of historical records and interpretations of past events.\footnote{For discussions on relativism in White, see Wulf Kansteiner, "Hayden White's Critique of the Writing of History;" Keith Jenkins, On "What is History?": From Carr and Elton to Rorty and White 134-179.}

Frank Ankersmit (1983) distinguished between the reliance on documentary sources and artifacts to investigate the historical past, the "detective-like approach" to historical research, (Narrative Logic 9)\footnote{Although Historical Representation was published in 2001, and is almost beyond the time-frame of the novels considered in this thesis, this quotation is merely a simplified explanation of ideas expressed in Ankersmit's earlier book Narrative Logic (1983). It is not argued here that any of these historians were read by Murakami, but that these ideas on historiography were discussed at the time when Murakami's texts considered here were written, 1982 - 2002, and thus provide a context for some issues arising from Murakami's texts.} and the integration of such research into a synthesis (the written narrative of history, the narratio). Such writings on the past (narratio) are beyond the binary of true/false since "determinacy and complete precision can never really be achieved in historical writing" (Historical Representation 16) and thus the metaphor remains as the most appropriate literary device for writing historical narratio. Later, Dominick LaCapra drew together the influences of psychoanalysis and ethics in his readings of the accounts and interpretations of traumatic events and the possible blocks to memories of such traumatic events. LaCapra argued the difficulties of integrating guilt and memory in national identity formation following major trauma (Representing the Holocaust 1996). A traumatic event, such as the Holocaust (or in Japan's case, the Nanking massacre or the biological and chemical experimentations in northern China and Manchuria), may cause a nation to erase its memories and avoid its responsibilities, and thus the nation as subject becomes stuck in an unhealthy repression rather than face the traumatic event in a healthy
"working through" of the past (10-13). LaCapra’s awareness of the unconscious in psychoanalytic theory has given him an interdisciplinary approach and a more nuanced appreciation of the place of history studies in the wider context of cultural studies and post-structuralism.

Over the last decades, these historians and others have reframed the study of past events (history) to consider the writing of history (historiography). Variously termed postmodern history or deconstructionist history, questions now arising in the study of history include the choices of matter for inclusion/exclusion; the narrative structuring of past events into a coherent, meaningful story; and the distinctions between the academic history of historians and the people's memories. These many issues raised by academic historians had consequences for writers engaged in narrations of memories of the past; they became more aware of the processes of memory in the retrieval and writing of history. Are all events in the past equally important, thus opening up various equally valid possibilities for interpretation and making history relative; and is history, therefore, a purely subjective exercise, making attempts of objective history impossible? For many, however, the arguments of academics engaged in deconstruction of history were too extreme, and there seems to be a resistance in Murakami’s texts to the relativism of Hayden White’s position and the indeterminacy of Derrida, even if there are also signs of their attractiveness. The tension in the texts over whether or not the past can be accurately represented is one of the reasons for naming Murakami as postmodern. However, the texts show an ambiguous stance to historical relativism and there are alternative possibilities to explain Murakami’s mix of historical facts and fictional historiography, casting doubt on the categorization of him as postmodern.

I. Plotting the Past

In the merger of these complex discourses in history, individual memory, and the writing of history, Murakami adds the narrative form of the hard-boiled private eye. All detective fiction is constructed around the forward movement of an investigation into a past crime that occurred prior to the present moment of the investigation. Hard-boiled private eye fiction often has the private eye hired to investigate some near-present crime. The investigation involves the private eye in uncovering an older past crime which serves as a motive and an explanation for the present crime. Those responsible for the past crime are shown to be guilty and those guilty of the present crime are held accountable. The case is
resolved when both the past and the present guilty are confronted. The history of past events, therefore, is central to the plot of hard-boiled private eye fiction.

**History**

Guilt – Innocence

**Past Crime** ← Responsibility ---- Accountability → **Present Crime**

The investigation also highlights unresolved past issues in the private eye as the external investigation provokes internal conflict for the hard-boiled private eye. In the hard-boiled private eye novel, there exists an uneasy alliance with the narrative convention of cathartic resolution: few hard-boiled private eye novels have a strong conclusion, since they do not focus on whodunit. Crime is never fully resolved, and the hard-boiled private eye never fully confronts his own past. However, there is the insistence that the solution to the client’s problem, and the solution to the crime, lies in the past.

This formulaic structure in Murakami’s texts is applied to the Japanese nation as an allegory for its resolution of past trauma. Murakami’s texts suggest that as the individual can be healed by facing and reconciling with the past, so too can the nation be healed. There is a parallel, then, between the individual, personal journey of the protagonist, and the necessary journey of the national collective, society.

This correlates with the structure of the hard-boiled novel with its inner plot involving the private eye’s own personal history, and the external plot of detecting the original past crime which provoked the present series of crimes in the narrative. These are represented in Murakami’s texts as an interest in past historical events (the past crimes) and the act of remembering (the investigation of the crime). There is an additional inter-connection between the personal journey of remembering by the individual and the collective memory of the Japanese nation. This double interest again corresponds to the inner/outer structure of the hard-boiled private eye formula. The text suggests that the protagonist is challenged to confront the past, and the reader and the nation are similarly challenged. The parallels between the hard-boiled private eye plot structure, Murakami’s texts, and the themes from history form the following binarries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hard-boiled private eye novels</th>
<th>inner plot (internal)</th>
<th>outer plot (external)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Murakami’s novels</td>
<td>the boku’s personal past issues</td>
<td>the boku searches for lost person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>historical events and national history</em></td>
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<td>individual memory</td>
<td>national collective memory</td>
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Beginning with an overview of how historical material is incorporated into the inner/outer plots of Chandler and Macdonald, this next section will then move onto how Murakami develops this device from hard-boiled private eye fiction into a critique of Japan's collective memory of its past military imperialism in Manchuria.

II. Looking Back to the Hard-Boiled

In Chandler, the past romantic involvement between Moose Malloy and his lost "little Velma" is the cause for the subsequent crimes of the forlorn Moose and the more dangerous Velma in the outer plot of *Farewell, My Lovely*. In his article "Philip Marlowe Speaking," R.W. Lid describes the method of Marlowe's detection:

Marlowe's discovery of the identity of Velma is far from direct, almost accidental in one sense, and involved people who seemingly have no relation to one another until Marlowe, digging into the past and beneath the surface of events, demonstrates those relations. (47)

This description of detection-by-accident could just as easily apply to Murakami's *boku* but, more importantly, it tells that the solution to the mystery lies in the past. In *The Big Sleep* there is the well-known stained glass window of the knight – an allusion to the past values of chivalry that contrast with the text's present corrupt values of California. The descriptions of Colonel Sternwood are filled with allusions to decay and death and past dreams of purity. It is in the history of his family that the key to the crimes in the outer plot is to be found. The missing Rusty Regan has an honorable war record that earns him Marlowe's respect. However, the Colonel's own war history is not detailed, and his greatest concern is about his family blood line. He is very different from the second world war veterans of Ross Macdonald novels. Chandler's *The Long Goodbye* (1955) depends on the identity switching of Terry Lennox following a murder implicating Marlowe. Convinced of his missing friend's innocence, Marlowe investigates his past in the outer plot while he is hired to work on another case by Roger and Eileen Wades. Elements of the past fall into place finally as identities are revealed and Lennox's second world war past connects the two investigations. The tangled identities of Muriel Chess and Crystal Kingsley in the outer plot of *The Lady in the Lake* are also sorted out by unraveling the past murders of Muriel Chess and Florence Almore. Consistently, the private eye finds the solution to the case in history, in past events.

The past war forms a background situating Chandler's characters historically, and also morally. In *The Lady in the Lake*, Bill Chess is a war veteran on an army pension. Also, one of the corrupt policemen who frame Marlowe for false arrest complains that he has only
two weeks to wait before army service. Sheriff Jim Patton, the rare honest police officer, discusses the character of Chess with Marlowe in the context of the war:

He had a government pension and he would have to run away from that too. And most men can stand what they’ve got to stand, when it steps up and looks them straight in the eye. Like they’re doing all over the world right now. (64)

The war is seen as a duty that can produce heroes, and war veterans are respected in Chandler’s novels. There is a suggestion of sympathy evoked by pairing a character to his war history: Regan, Chess, Lennox.

Ross Macdonald, writing later than Chandler, makes more deliberate reference to the second world war past of many of his characters. There is less of Chandler’s admiration for army veterans in Macdonald’s novels. Instead, involvement in the past war is offered as an explanation for the motives and personalities of characters, often their weaknesses and mistakes. The war is a past that haunts Macdonald’s characters and acts as a skeleton in the cupboard (quite literally in The Ivory Grin 77), providing motivation for crime and concealment. Bess Benning met both Charles Singleton and Sam Benning in 1943, and married Benning when he was the first to return from the war (The Ivory Grin 233-4).

However, the past cannot be avoided or concealed, and the past has a habit of returning and repeating itself. As Archer traces the repeated murders he remarks, "I had a bad feeling that history was repeating itself, in spades" (74). Similarly, in The Blue Hammer, Archer mentions, "I felt for a moment that some ancient story was being repeated, that we had all been here before" (187). Repetitions will feature in Murakami’s fiction also. Again, Archer must unravel the concealed identities of the various characters and their past relationships that trace back to two artist brothers and an unresolved wartime murder (132-5). The rivalry between the two brothers, the "ancient story" of Cain and Abel, is the suggested source of the crime. As Archer says to a suspect, "We want to talk about some of the things that happened in the past" (246). To identify the killer, Archer must trace and reveal the true identities and past relationships of the various characters. Macdonald’s novels show an appreciation of psychology and the importance of an individual’s past. Unresolved past issues form the neurosis that can explain why a character turns towards crime. The private eye is akin to a psychoanalyst in Macdonald’s novels. The connections between the various suspects must all be traced back to their common past and revealed in a narrative dénouement.

Chandler sets his novels and short stories in his own lifetime – in the 1920s and 1930s, and up to the 1940s. The characters, and the plot, look back to the near past; within
the lifespan of the characters. Plots deal with hidden secrets of a principal character that explain the subsequent actions. The private eye, then, has to discover the hidden secret to unravel the plot. Chandler draws from what he knew best—the secrets of the rich oil families, the tawdry lives of gamblers and crooks—set in southern California. Chandler’s background in the oil business and land development gave him access to the lives of the rich and his gambling and alcoholic nature put him in touch with the lives of the prohibitionists and crooks. Ross Macdonald also draws from what he knew best in providing background material for his novels: the war, environmental issues, and local politics in the southern California area of Santa Barbara. Murakami, however, includes historical references to the Japanese political and military involvement in Manchuria, an aspect of Japan’s past which has no necessary link to the hard-boiled plots of his novels. Unlike Macdonald, there are only a few hidden family secrets to be unearthed in Murakami’s plots. This makes the interpolations of historical material distinct from typical hard-boiled private eye novelists like Chandler and Macdonald. Both these novelists, and other subsequent hard-boiled writers, also include historical material in the city setting of their work to help establish the corruption that is taken for granted in the tone of the noir city setting. Readers are expected either to share the knowledge of the corrupt setting, or to know enough general history to accept the setting as corrupt, and thus identify with the tone subconsciously. The combined corruption of local politics, wealthy business families, law enforcement, and crime is a formulaic setting accepted by readers as universally applicable to any city anywhere in the world. This allows a variety of city locations with readers knowing what to expect and with writers only needing to provide some additional local characteristics. Thus, William Marshall’s humorous Yellowthread Street police procedurals describe the Hong Kong bay and crowded narrow streets, as well as peculiarities of family relationships and histories of rival feuding gangs. Scottish writer, Ian Rankin includes background on class divisions and social tensions in Edinburgh as local material for his Rebus novels. John D. MacDonald has information on the history of Miami land development and Puerto Rican drug dealing to give colourful, local flavor to his hard-boiled novels. Over time, additional elements were included in the criminal mix: land dealers, stock market manipulations, media corruption, and tax evasion; depending on the author’s personal background and political interests. The reader can easily adjust to these shifts in the basic form. A brief history gives the necessary information, and the form carries the reader.

These techniques of familiarizing his reader with local historical settings and adding to the general corruption by including media or land development are also found in
Murakami’s work, but again, he extends his setting beyond the generic form of the hard-boiled. Murakami’s settings are deliberately globalized, not localized, by his American referents. Because his settings have a universal component, the inclusions of Japanese history stand out more obviously; drawing attention to Japan’s involvement in colonization, and war on the Chinese continent. The historical insertions are not part of the setting, and they are not necessary to explain character motivation for the plot. Murakami’s purpose is different from his hard-boiled fore-fathers from whom he draws his techniques.

While an historical backstory is an essential element of the plot of the hard-boiled private eye narrative, an analysis of Murakami’s texts will show an extension beyond the generic plot device, suggesting a personal and social purpose beyond narrative technique. Murakami is in keeping with hard-boiled writers who include a social agenda in their writing; writers who advocate for colour, gender, race, or social minorities. Historical referencing begins as a subtle social commentary often disguised initially in nostalgic sentimentality or intertextual references. In the later books, a more direct interest in the past emerges and the criticism is sharper. For example, the musical references Murakami plants in the novels WSC and HBW&EW reflect back to the 1960s, but 1970s - 1980s’ singers and bands appear in DDD, and the musical references that dominate the later novels WBC and KOS are classical.

This suggests that as history becomes of greater interest in the later novels, the inclusion of musical references to evoke background nostalgia lessens. Perhaps, this is because Murakami distinguishes for himself that his interest lies in the themes of history, memory, and historiography, and so his writing focuses less on nostalgic descriptions and more on historical interpolations and personal memories. The interest in certain aspects of Japan’s history may have been present in the early novels (WSC has its references to Japan’s conflicts with the Chinese and Russians in Manchuria), but it is the evocation of nostalgia that dominates in the background descriptions. WSC is often regarded by critics as a book that looks back sentimentally to the 1960s and HBW&EW has the deeply nostalgic boku who searches the Town for his lost memories. The novel DDD also has the boku looking back for a lost past (and a lost girlfriend), and there are references to past rock bands, but the character Yuki brings the boku forward to a contemporary time (in the 1980s) and its musical references.

Among the many possible readings of the purpose of the young (and often not so innocent) girls in the novels, is to root the boku in the contemporary world, and to bring the contemporary world to the foreground in the novel. The boku is so firmly retrospective in his thinking and interests and values (inevitable due to his basis in the hard-boiled private eye), that another character is needed to contemporize the novels. These female
characters also serve as the catalysts to bring healing and integration to the protagonist. The young Kafka is an attempt to similarly contemporize KOS. The later novels, WBC and KOS have a much more direct focus on historical events than WSC or HBW&EW, and DDD marks a transition away from nostalgia towards a critique of capitalist consumerism and the hegemony of politics, media, and private commerce; themes still of interest in WBC and KOS.

The musical references seem almost to plot the progression of the texts’ thematic interests.

II.I Inner / Outer Plot Structure

It has been described in an earlier chapter how the hard-boiled private eye is a single, isolated character with no, or few, family ties or relationships. Focused on work and alienated from the corrupt city by his ethics, the private eye is aloof. Chandler’s Marlow had a past in the police force and he drank and played chess to escape bitter memories and loneliness. Macdonald's Lew Archer had a failed marriage and also a past in the police force. He too drank and avoided lasting relationships. Many of their clients, especially the rich, lost themselves in drugs or drink. Later writers have made much of the inner plot of the private eye’s personal story, combining elements from romantic fiction with the hard-boiled form. However, Ross Macdonald, more than Chandler, interested himself in the inner plot of his novels. Macdonald's plots often included psychological allusions and had Freudian undertones. There is the suggestion that the past must be faced and resolved. Macdonald's interest in the inner plot of his hard-boiled private eye stories shows itself in multiple psychological references as he plays with the themes of identity, memory, and revelation. Archer’s own past catches up with him in The Ivory Grin in the person of Max Heiss whom Archer cannot at first remember until Heiss reminds him of a past murder trial (33-4). Later, Heiss's identity is again erased when his face is burned beyond recognition and Archer needs another witness to identify him (196). Another of the key victims is difficult to identify because, "There wasn't much left of his face" (113). Clarifying the hidden identity of a woman in a lost painting in The Blue Hammer, Archer "felt that the thirty-two-year case was completing a long curve back to its source" (245) – the wartime murder of an army soldier by his jealous brother. The lost painting is "found ... in Johnson's attic, where it originated" (258). As Archer traces the connections between the past relationships and events, the investigating Sheriff Brotherton slowly remembers and Archer describes, "The sheriff became quite still again, as if he were listening to voices from the past that I couldn't hear" (113). It is only later when Archer has dug into these past memories himself that he begins to understand the language of history as he speaks to Brotherton on the phone, "The sheriff
was silent for a while. I could hear faint voices somewhere on the line, like half-forgotten memories coming home to roost" (227). The attic of memory identifies the potential for murder between every human brother and the experience of war testifies to this murderous potential in humankind. The crimes of war show that ordinary, average people are capable of murderous atrocities. For Archer, the revelation "coming together in my mind gave me a kind of subterranean jolt, like an earthquake fault beginning to make its first tentative move. I was breathing quickly and my head was pounding" (153). The description echoes Murakami’s experience described to Ian Buruma following his visit to the site of the Nanking massacre:

... he felt as though the building were being rocked in an earthquake. The room went dark, and he could hardly stand. His heart racing, he crawled into the hall, where, astonishingly, all was still. There had been no earthquake. This, Murakami said, ... was his second revelation. ("Becoming Japanese" 70)

Murakami told Buruma that he had learned that "The most important thing ... is to face our history, and that means the history of the war" (70). However, in facing the past events of the Japanese military involvement in China, Murakami had glimpsed the potential for violence in each human person. War and the exploration of violence, as well as the trauma of their confrontation, become frequent themes in his novels.

History is not a foreign element in the hard-boiled private eye form. The very structure of the form, in which a past event motivates a present crime, necessitates the investigation of the past and the relevance of memory. There is an essentially psychological process in this structure of the hard-boiled private eye form: it is only by revealing the hidden past event that the crime can be solved and truth and healing can be gained. The hard-boiled form offers its own redemption. Corrupt society may never be healed, but revealing and facing the truth of the past is presented as an honourable and healing activity, what Tim Libretti calls "the psycho-historical therapeutic recovery and analysis to which the characters subject themselves" (72). This is a liberal humanist perspective of history that stresses the importance of memory and the need to learn from the past. On a more political level, Walter Mosley, Lucha Corpi, Sara Paretsky, and other hard-boiled private eye writers of minority groups and vested interests have shown that history itself can be revisioned and re-presented from a minority perspective in an attempt to redeem the past and to give voice to silenced minorities. T. Jefferson Parker’s Laguna Heat and Little Saigon are explicit in linking the history of those involved in the Vietnam war to the corruption of politics, the
intelligence forces, and business. History is not a neutral, objective science, and the hard-boiled private eye form has proven itself as a useful form for the investigation of history.

Murakami, too, uses the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction to insert his own commentary on the crimes of the past that require healing. His boku is driven by his own personal issues, giving ample scope in his inner plots for a social critique of urban alienation, marital breakdown, consumer society, and the human potential for violence. Some of these issues are not merely personal to the boku, but reflect social problems; and the need for the nation, also, to be healed. Issues evolve in the inner plot which speak to national concerns. In the outer plot, also, issues about national memory are paralleled by individual memories. The inner/outer plot distinctions of the hard-boiled private eye form break down, and a sharper social critique is seen in the later texts.

In the outer plot of Murakami’s novels, what is represented as objective history cannot be trusted as an authentic, non-fictive, accurate representation of the past (as in the hard-boiled private eye narrative, the past crime is lied about and hidden). Thus, the national collective history is subtly undermined. This is a political statement in Japan where many details in the history of Japanese military imperialism have been erased from the national memory and thereby silenced in the personal memories of many Japanese people.59 Murakami’s choice to write the stories (histories) of ordinary people is a giving voice to the memories of long silenced Japanese individuals. The texts thus privilege the individual over the national. Susan Fisher’s reading of WBC remarks that "Murakami seems deliberately intent on making his young readership discover the truth (or truths) about Japan’s war – to understand how this 'historical karma' still affects them" (163). The narrative (a fictive narration) plays with the truth/falsehood binary of history and memory.60 If the represented facts of history are suspect, then individual stories can creatively stand in the place of a national collective history – a simulacrum of the displaced history. In this way, Murakami’s fiction can allow Japanese readers, especially, access to events that have been suppressed. The popularity of his fiction also allows him to access a wide range of readers, in large numbers; readers who might not usually read factual history books.61 However, the danger of this emphasis on the individual is that not only is the national collective history

60 Frank Ankersmit provides a useful discussion on the differences between fact-based history and historical novels, see Narrative Logic 19-27.
61 Despite the Ministry for Education’s strict control over the choice of wording in school history text books, there does exist a significant interest in Japanese war history, including factual accounts of war crimes. See Seaton’s, Japan’s Contested War Memories 118-35.
undermined, but that the national collective identity is also undermined to the point of collapse. Murakami’s texts tread a fine line between privileging the individual and undermining the nation – and there are often points of contradiction and slippage. In order to assert the responsibility of the nation in its collective history, the texts must allow the existence of a collective memory for the national identity. When the individual memory is over-stressed, the national collective memory is sometimes threatened.

As the interest in certain themes becomes clearer in Murakami’s texts, it seems the form of the hard-boiled private eye fiction can no longer contain the discourse. Nostalgia and interpolations of references to historical material interrupt the forward momentum of the hard-boiled private eye search and chase plot. Themes of memory, violence and trauma, and potential healing (all inherent in the hard-boiled private eye form) push against the limitations of the form in Murakami’s texts, as questions raised in the discourse on memory and history find their way into the texts.

The following sections, therefore, will first consider nostalgia and the various types of interpolations in the texts; followed by the themes of memory, violence and trauma; and finally, healing.

III. The Nostalgic Past

Murakami’s earliest novels were praised for their evocation of nostalgia through references to popular music, personal events, and a sad atmosphere of loss that haunted his protagonists. Initially, critics were quick to refer to nostalgia for the student culture of the 1960s as a general context for the boku’s longing for past realities. This nostalgia for the 1960s as a time of hope for a better future was accepted as an innocence beloved by many readers of Murakami. A closer reading of the text would show that Murakami’s protagonists never sided with the Japanese student activists of 1968-9 but instead maintained a somewhat cynical distance.

WSC (1982, 1989) opens with a prologue recalling the boku’s past student relationship with the “girl who would sleep with anyone” and continues with the meeting between the boku and his ex-wife. Later, the boku looks back with his partner on the early days of their translating business. In all these recollections, the past is represented as simpler and more honest. The boku looks back and longs for a glamorized past that has been lost and is unattainable. This is the nostalgia with which the reader identifies and it endears the boku to many readers. Having gained the reader’s sympathy, the nostalgia has served its purpose and the text then commences to challenge and criticize in an oblique
manner. The unspoken question in each of these three retrospections is, "What went wrong?" The *boku* says the student uprising ended and the students gave up and went on to become part of the establishment. He and his wife could no longer communicate and their relationship stagnated. The partner expanded their business and they took on meaningless work for commercial gain. Beneath the nostalgia are three clear statements of opinion. Many of those involved in the 1960s student uprising proved to be hypocritical; too easily reneging on their values when their future careers were threatened. Second, marriage requires committed, ongoing work by both partners; and third, work should be ethical and not just for the sake of profit. What critics have taken as nostalgia is descriptions that employ nostalgia but that also act as an indirect opportunity for social critique and commentary.

Nostalgia became an accepted hallmark of Murakami’s style. Strecher’s introduction to Aoki Tamotsu puts it: "One of Murakami’s trademarks is his manipulation of nostalgia" (265). He explains that nostalgia is combined with irony in a manner that calls attention to itself. This ironic nostalgia is also highlighted by the American references in the nostalgic descriptions. Thus, the day of Mishima’s death ("that eerie afternoon. The twenty-fifth of November" (*WSC* 7)), is marked by an important conversation between the *boku* and his unnamed girlfriend; and the television report on Mishima "didn’t matter to us one way or the other" (8). The 1968-9 student demonstrations and riots are barely mentioned and instead the era is described as: "Those were the days of the Doors, the Stones, the Byrds, Deep Purple, and the Moody Blues" (4).

Strecher provides his own reading of "that eerie afternoon. The twenty-fifth of November" (*WSC* 7), pointing out that the date alone is sufficient to signify to most Japanese the date of Mishima’s death and the end of the 1960s’ student protest movement which Mishima opposed. However, it is also "one signifier for the end of Japan’s ‘postwar’ period" (*Dances With Sheep* 172); since Mishima’s death was meant as a counter protest, not just against the left-wing ideals of the protest movement, but as a rally to return to the more right-wing ideals of loyalty to the emperor and military purism. The failure of his death, as a signifier, to reawaken the nationalist ideals of war-time loyalty marks a death (and, thereby, a failure of the signifier) of those wartime ideals. By pushing these all too prominent signifiers attached to Mishima’s death into the background and, instead, foregrounding the

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62 For an example of an alternative reading of Murakami’s nostalgia, see Baik: "By erasing the memory that mediates past and present, Haruki enables the 1960s to become an eternal past, a place of fantasy where no reality exists ... Thus, reality becomes the present discarded of its memories and history" (68-9).
supposedly insignificant relationship of the *boku* and his nameless girlfriend (the girl who would sleep with anyone), the text radically challenges the naming of historical significance. The question is posed: why is Mishima's death deemed by conventional history as more important than the individual story of the *boku*'s relationship? As if to conclude the indirect discussion of historical references, the Prelude ends with a reference to the death of the girlfriend "eight years later" (9). She was killed by a truck – an accidental, meaningless death, in contrast with Mishima's deliberate, dramatic death.

There is much Strecher could enjoy in playing with his reading of this incident, but he contains himself to using it as a brief example of "the distinctly political tone" (175) of Murakami's historiographic metafiction. Strecher contends that Murakami is making a political statement in his historiography and, in this way, differs from authors who limit themselves to exploring the process of re/construction of history.

Murakami is far less content merely to accept that different 'versions' of history exist. ... he is determined instead to expose the collusive efforts on part of political and media enterprises to whitewash those events ... Murakami, then, presents an aggressive critique of the contemporary Japanese state and its manipulative role in the invention of both historical and current events. (179)

In this, Strecher recognizes that Murakami is taking a political stand, and he is showing the moral significance of accurate representations of past events – and not mere "whitewash". However, a history based only on individual memories is open to the same dangers as a state-sanctioned reading of past events. While it is important to train readers in moral decision-making, by stressing individual memories and by questioning state constructed historiography, yet individual memory remains biased and fallible. These weaknesses make individual memory no more reliable than the collective memory of the state. While the relationship of the *boku* and his nameless girlfriend is as important as the death of Mishima on a human level, however, the afternoon of his death had a greater impact on the lives of the Japanese collective; and, at this level, it can be said to have had a greater importance. Strecher reminds the reader that the re/writing of history is especially significant in Japan where "the Ministry of Education serves as the final arbitrator of what is 'true,' and more importantly, what is passed on to the next generation" (180). This is not an especially postmodern view of history. Murakami seems to be closer to a liberal view of the role of history in educating and developing readers. That Strecher traces this to Murakami's early novels, (WSC), shows that Murakami's political involvement in Japanese affairs is not recent, nor is it a sudden change, nor a new departure.
III.I A Reading of Nostalgia

Once the technique of reading the episodes of nostalgia as textual occasions signaling social commentary is understood, the richness of the text is revealed. Again in *WSC*, there is an inconspicuous example of nostalgia which can be read as an underlying social critique. The history of the three bars owned by the character J (87-8) reflects Japan’s post-war economic history, as does the history of sheep farming noted by the black-suited secretary (*WSC* 111). Again, beneath the nostalgic sentiment lies a deeper level of analysis of the past and a criticism of past failures. The first J’s bar dated back to the American occupation and reflected Japan’s small, struggling economy that depended on the Americans. The second J’s bar was the place of juke-boxes and pinball machines where the young adult *boku*, his girl-friend, and Rat would meet and discuss the problems of their lives and the world. The economy was also growing up and discovering independence and self-determination. The third J’s bar of *WSC* was a step up from the past, requiring an elevator access. It reflected the prosperity of the economically thriving Japan during the 1980s. In these descriptions the *boku* nostalgically looks back to the good old days when he hung out with his friends in the second J’s bar. Since this was the J’s bar known to readers of the early novels *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979), and *Pinball, 1973* (1980), there is an empathy between the reader and the central consciousness, despite the description of it as a sweaty "dank place in the basement of an old building by the highway" (87). Threaded through these recollections is a reference to "the line of hills and the area where the ocean used to be" (88). The *boku* remembers going swimming in the now erased ocean: "The oceanfront had been filled in a few years back, and the whole mile there was packed with gravestone rows of tall buildings" (88). Economic prosperity, signified in cities worldwide by business centers of skyscrapers, is here associated with symbols of death: the gravestones mark the ecological price of Japan’s economic prosperity. It is not just that the *boku* has lost his childhood home (87) and feels "out of place" (89), there is a cycle of exploitation that depresses the *boku* and leaves him feeling hopeless. His only resistance (even if he says "that’s fine ... No complaints" (89) to J) is to forgo providing additional consumers; he will not bring children into this world (90). The *boku* is bleak about the future: "Kids grow up, generations take their place. What does it all come to? More hills bulldozed and more oceanfront filled in? Faster cars and more cats run over? Who needs that?" (90). In a novel that sentimentally looks back on the student uprising and anti-nuclear demonstrations, this nostalgic memory of the *boku* adroitly criticizes those who graduated from university, entered business, and contributed to the exploitive institutions that they had protested
against: "The giraffe and the bear have traded hats, and the bear’s switched scarves with the zebra" (89). Nothing has changed. It sounds as though the depressed boku has given up and become cynical, but this conversation turns out to be another of Murakami’s pauses in the plot to allow the reader to see the boku make a decision.

Of interest in this social commentary is the character J. As many critics have pointed out, J is one of the nameless characters in the novel. In the cycle of economic history, the small-time bar owner is not deserving of a name: he is a pawn in the big wheels of capital. However, he is also Chinese with "some unpronounceable Chinese polysyllable" (87) nicknamed by the Americans. The Japanese accepted this American naming and J gained his new name.

Leaving J’s bar, the boku indulges in a nostalgic walk along the river that runs into where the sea was and where there is now reclaimed land due for commercial redevelopment. The description is lyrical: "a moist breeze was blowing in slow and easy from the south. Same as it used to. ..." (90) The sea and its natural coastline, like so many things in the boku’s life, has been lost; the girl who’d sleep with anyone, his wife, his marriage, his girlfriend with the beautiful ears, his friend Rat, his partner and the simple life they had have all been lost. The associations between the lonely boku, the commentary on the river, the town, and the commodified coastline draw on sentimentality. It is a curious pause in the forward movement of plot action. In previous chapters, it has been argued that such moments allow for decision-making. Here, the pause allows for a glimpse into the character of the boku and his values as he approaches his decision. He grieves for his lost shoreline. The river’s journey to the sea is evoked to remind the reader of the "many hundreds of thousands of years" (91) that it took the river to form the landscape. The boku first asserts the force and power of the river in contrast with the power of the developers. The river "was alive" and was responsible for "creating the town" and the "town belonged to the river" (91). This romantic belief in the power of nature is the first step in the reflection of the boku. Next, he walks along the newly developed reclaimed land; along what was the coastline. He sits on a remaining relic of the sea, "a jetty without an ocean" (92) to drink a can or two of beer. He looks at "a vast expanse of reclaimed land and housing developments" that are the commercial attempts to create a new town, "an attempt to build a neighborhood ...a wonderful community center. Everything brand new, everything unnatural" (92). The natural power of the river and the sea "was history" and the new power of commerce has overcome nature: "stupid little transplanted trees and plots of grass

63 For an alternative reading of the character J, see Kwai-Cheung Lo, "Return to what One Imagines to be There: Masculinity and Otherness in Haruki Murakami’s Writings about China."
tried their artificial best to blend in" (92). What was natural is now artificial. Reading history involves tracing the exchange of power and beneath this sentimental interlude, a social critique is being made and both the boku and the reader are invited to decide on their position.

As in the earlier conversation with J, the boku suggests that the exchange of power cannot be opposed: "Already it was a whole new game played by new rules. No one could stop it now" (92). The simplicity of student opposition and civil disturbance in resistance to established power forces is no longer a possible option and the boku has no suggestions or hope for resistance now. The resistance and hope of the 1960s is also "history" – over and done with; the moment has passed. As though to confirm the boku’s pessimism, he is accosted by a stern security guard who threatens him with the law for having thrown his empty beer cans "towards where the sea used to be" (92). His action recalls the students throwing rocks at riot police during the demonstrations. "That was back then" (92). Now, he claims that he had "No particular reason" to throw his empty beer can and his action is named unlawful. The signifier of throwing is renamed "to discard rubbish" and is deemed unlawful since the land now belongs to "city property" (92). The authorities of the city, not a town nor a community, forbid the rubbish of the boku’s opposition to their lawful creation of land stolen from the sea for commercial housing development. The boku has a moment of recognition: "For a moment something inside me trembled, then stopped" – he recognizes that what the security guard is telling him about the new arrangement of power, the present socioeconomic and political power structure, "makes sense" and this is indeed frightening. "It’s the law," says the security guard. The boku thinks back, recalling the 1960s, and wonders if he was tougher then, concluding "maybe not. What difference would it make anyway?" (93) This indeed is the central question: is opposition to the new social conditions possible at all? The boku seems resigned here that opposition is not possible; however, the reader familiar with the hard-boiled private eye should suspect the boku’s resignation. This decision would contradict his opposition to the black-suited secretary and it would also contradict the traditional opposition of the hard-boiled private eye to ruling authorities and the establishment. As a hard-boiled hero, the boku cannot give up: it is the role of the hard-boiled private eye to unearth memories and past events in order to advance truth and justice.

Instead, the form of hard-boiled private eye provides an important reading of this episode. This extended retardation of action and moment of decision-making provides time for the boku and the reader to recognize the cost of opposition, the price the boku (and the
reader) may have to pay—and this accounts for the inconclusiveness of the scene. The boku is both frightened and depressed that he may have to lose so much in his continued life of opposition—the loneliness and the isolation of the hard-boiled private eye. When the boku finally returns to this coastline at the end of the novel, he is indeed alone and he has lost everything. His opposition may have had some temporary success against the endless corruption but the boku, like the hard-boiled private eye, has had to pay the price—and the boku sits on the beach alone at the end of WSC and cries for all he has lost. The decision had been made in the earlier guise of sentimentalizing over the lost childhood coastline and the petty resistance to the security guard.

In the novel Dance, Dance, Dance (1988, 1994), the boku journeys back to Hokkaido to stay at the Dolphin Hotel. As Strecher and others have noted, the boku finds he cannot journey back into the past: the old Dolphin Hotel has been replaced by the new commercialized L'Hôtel Dauphin. The boku is sentimental in his memories of the old Dolphin Hotel, winning the reader's sympathy in his indirect critique of capitalism and progress. The efficient sophistication of the new hotel is described as cold, impersonal, hostile even; and the role of the hotel in the chain of corporate growth can be seen as symbolizing the drive for progress of Japan's rapid-growth economy in the 1980s. This is another example of Murakami's technique of eliding sentimental nostalgia with political critique. However, the two hotels also reflect the plot structure: the inner plot of the hard-boiled private eye, boku's personal conflicts, is externalized in the imagery of the two hotels. The corruption of the present hotel contains seeds of unresolved past corruption; just as the internal problems of the present boku arise from unresolved past problems. In the plot of the hard-boiled private eye formula, the present crime is always a consequence of a hidden past crime; impelling the private eye to explore the suspects' histories and to dig into past events. Similarly, the present L'Hôtel Dauphin draws attention to the failure of the boku to stop the crime of capitalistic progress that drowns the sea in reclaiming land for housing, murders the small, private advertising company in blackmail plots and corporate take-overs, and covers up the history of collusion between a war-crimes business mogul and both the American army and Japanese politicians. The texts suggest that such complex crimes cannot be solved by the lone, heroic, honest boku, but that it is a matter of personal integrity to oppose such crimes. The complexity of these societal crimes threatens to overwhelm the boku and the reader, and the resulting trauma threatens aporia. The text circumvents this by the sudden intrusions of the fantastic and the uncanny into the realism of the text to address the trauma. It is the present world, the modern L'Hôtel Dauphin, that becomes an uncanny
space for the *boku*. To face the horror of present society’s crimes, he seeks strength by slipping into the past Dolphin Hotel where he receives advice from the Sheep Man. However, he cannot remain in the in-between world of the memory; in the same way that readers cannot remain in the world of nostalgia. L'Hôtel Dauphin reminds the *boku* and the reader that the wild sheep chase is never over and that the case remains unsolved. The crimes of the advanced capitalist society are represented in the new hotel but their roots remain in the corruption of Japan’s post-war past. Similarly, the *boku* is reminded that his own unresolved past issues must be faced and cannot remain buried in a sentimental nostalgia.

The dangers of entrapment in a sentimentalized past are even more evident in the later novel *KOS* (2002, 2005). Miss Saeki has trapped herself in her memories of her romantic past with her boyfriend who was killed in the 1968/9 student uprising. Nakata is trapped by a past event during the war in which he lost his memory. The unnamed school teacher is also trapped by the memory of that afternoon event and the secret of what really happened. Kafka is haunted by his abandonment by his mother who ran away and left him with his father. The memory of his father’s curse also haunts him, dooming him to repeat the past actions of Oedipus. The sentimental song and painting of *Kafka on the Shore* conceal the horrors that can arise either by dwelling too much in the past or by repressing the past. Either can cause a neurosis that can cripple decision-making and subsequent action, for the individual or for the nation. The romantic tale of a teenage boy who falls in love with a beautiful older woman, or the older woman who nostalgically relives her childhood love with that vulnerable teenage boy, masks the novel’s warnings about the dangers of the past.

Nostalgia, and the mere sentimentalizing of the past, is not what Murakami cares about. The descriptions of past lost innocence provide contrast to the corruption of the present. Chandler, Macdonald and many other hard-boiled private eye writers use the same technique. In addition, Murakami gives a warning against glorifying memories, wallowing in the past, and becoming ensnared. Murakami’s writing of the hard-boiled form suggests that the past may have answers to present crimes, but that it can also present problems for the individual and the nation.

### IV. Interpolations, Repetitions, and Erasures

In the hard-boiled private eye novels, reference to a collective history is a method of lending credibility to a plot by providing a localized setting and by giving background and
motivation to characters, as in the Californian settings and war references of Chandler and Macdonald, noted earlier in this chapter. However, even in the earliest hard-boiled novels, it can be seen that historiography was already a thematic interest that escaped its stylistic purposes and threatened to dominate certain authors' novels. There are many examples where Murakami uses historical references to establish background through the interpolation of facts from credible sources. It very quickly becomes obvious, however, that the interpolation of historical details in the text serves a larger purpose than the provision of historical background. Japan's past becomes a dominant theme in some of the novels, raising questions about the role of sources, memory, and the distinction between fact and fiction. Once the setting of mainland China is introduced, it seems that Murakami's own memories struggle in the background of the text (as an inner authorial plot to the outer plot of the writing) and historicity itself is interrogated in an authorial working out of personal issues.

In WSC, the history of the poor farmers escaping debt and being led across the Hokkaido mountains by an Ainu guide is recounted by the boku reading from the Authoritative History of Junitaki Township. The very title of the source lends credibility and reads like a conventional piece of local history writing. (The book does not exist.) In HBW&EW (1985, 1991), the watashi consults in a library for books on unicorns and, is rewarded by the librarian reading to him in bed from two books on unicorns: Burtland Cooper’s Archeology of Animals and Jorge Luis Borges’s Book of Imaginary Beings. Cooper’s book follows scientific method on the historic possibilities of unicorn-like beings. It has theories and photographs and only when it recounts the discovery of a unicorn skull during the 1917 Russian revolution and its rediscovery later while cleaning out the storeroom of a hockey shop (101) does the unwary reader suspect that this source is an invention. For the unsuspecting, the characters hint, "Hockey? ... In the Soviet thirties?"

"... But who knows? Post-Revolution Leningrad was quite your modern grad. Maybe hockey was all the rage." (101)

The reader is being teased by these metatextual interpolations into wondering which is the authentic source. These fictive sources (and even the extant Borges, famous for his parodic intertextuality) suggest that all sources are subjective, and that there can never be an authentic or accurate factual record of past events; history. There are only narrations of selected perceived events. Such a reading would argue that the text here points to a
postmodern understanding of history, and indeed it seems that the text is seduced by historical indeterminacy.

This suggestion of history as indeterminate, however, is negated by the representations of history in *WBC* (1995, 1997); as though in this later text, Murakami draws back from committing himself to the postmodern indeterminacy of history. Instead, the six historical sources listed at the end of the English translation of the novel all exist, and also included are conventional, factual accounts of the various Japanese military campaigns in Manchuria, particularly Nomonhan. *WBC* does not make any references to fictive history books (it simply leaves the book referencing Noboru Wataya's uncle unnamed (494)), but it does have fictive characters who narrate individual fictive personal accounts of involvement in Manchuria: Mr. Honda, Lieutenant Mamiya, and the father of Nutmeg. David Palmer notes that "Murakami's World War II characters are always searching for someone who will listen to their story and will somehow understand it, and thus validate a historical reality for them" (8). Like the Sheep Man in *WSC*, the war characters in *WBC* require the *boku* (and through him, the reader) to listen to their personal accounts, as a type of oral history. These sources demand to be taken seriously and trusted. Here, there is the suggestion that individual experiences can be trusted, and that national historiographies and written histories cannot be trusted. The history of Manchuria that can be pieced together from the textual representations in *WBC* is from individual accounts, fragmented memories, private letters, and spoken stories. The factual bibliography listed at the end acts as source material in the text itself,\(^64\) and serves in the usual way to lend credibility to the text; to lend credibility to fiction. However, within the text of *WBC* there are direct discussions on history and memory; more direct than in the other novels, again making the treatment of these themes distinct in *WBC*.

Following *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, there is a return to the earlier questioning treatment of historical texts. Official records are parodied in *KOS*. Interpolated through the opening of the novel are purportedly official documents from the American Department of Defense, Army Intelligence, recording interviews with a Japanese army lieutenant, a psychiatric doctor, and a primary teacher about an incident where the teacher and her students saw a bright flash in the sky and then lost consciousness (The Rice Bowl Hill Incident). Although the narration makes it obvious that this "flash" cannot be from the

\(^{64}\) The descriptions of the Mongolian plains, the importance and need for accurate maps, the summary of military thinking given in Lieutenant Mayimia’s various narrations to the *boku* all draw from Alvin D. Coxx’s history of Nomonhan, as cited in the bibliography of *WBC*: Alvin D. Coxx. *Nomonhan: Japan against Russia*, 1939. 2 vols. Stanford, Cal.: Stanford UP, 1985.
atomic bombing of Nagasaki or Hiroshima, many readers will associate a flash from a bomb in the sky with the atomic bombing; a factual event. That this event was meticulously catalogued and detailed by American military medical researchers in records that were long censored is an historical fact. Each document in Murakami’s fiction is complete with numbering and access codes. Certain names, place names, and dates have been erased, as though officially censored. The interpolated material is represented as authentic, non-fictional, but it is not. However, the ghostly trace of the historical event of the atomic bombing and its documentation is authentic fact, shadowing the fictive events in Murakami’s text where leeches and fish rain from the sky, instead of atomic ash. The interpolated material acts as an introduction to the character Nakata, but it also contributes to the novel’s theme of historiography. Nakata’s memory was wiped clean (erased) following the bright flash in the sky. The American military censorship of the effects of the atomic bombings contributed to the shame and trauma that long erased the bombing from the Japanese postwar consciousness. Later in the text, there are literary references to works from Japanese authors and poets which are authentic, Wakayama Bokusui, Ishikawa Takuboku, Shiga Naoya and Tanizaki Jun’ichirō (KOS 39; 45), and provide a credible setting for the fictive Komura library. This playful mixing of authentic and inauthentic, non-fictional and fictive, referencing serves to foreground the historical references. It subtly highlights for the reader the question of historiography – whose memories are recorded, by whom, and for what purpose? Historiography is political. Murakami’s texts show an interest in the histories of marginalised peoples and places (the Ainu, the Japanese in Mongolia and northern China, Korean-Japanese), and the histories of ordinary people; as well as famous politicians and events whose identities are hidden behind concealed allusions.

It can be seen, then, from this tracing of historical references and interpolations in the texts over the years, that there is no standard position on historical determinacy or relativism. It is interesting, however, to note that the text that deals most specifically with Japanese military aggression in Manchuria (WBC), tends also to side with a more conventional representation of history; and plays less with postmodern questioning of history, memory, and historiography.

Underlying the nostalgia in the various texts, a social critique can be read. So too, the various interpolations act as signals to a critique of Japanese policy in moments of history. Earlier, Ross Macdonald’s Lew Archer said to himself that history was repeating

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65 See Fujiwara Kiichi, "Ways of Remembering" for a discussion on how the victims of the atomic bombings were first ignored and hidden, prior to Japan’s use of the bombing as a source of identity as war victim.
itself: "... some ancient story was being repeated, ..." *(The Blue Hammer* 187). Repeated in three separate novels by Murakami, *WSC*, *WBC*, and *KOS*, is the mention of research undertaken by government administrators with the aim of improving military efficiency. Thus, sheep were reared in Hokkaido to provide Japanese soldiers with warm wool clothing to withstand the Manchurian winters (*WSC* 180; 205). In *WBC*, there is a repetition of this reference to research into the necessary provisions for the military campaign in Manchuria.

As early as 1920, according to the author, Japan’s imperial army was looking into the possibility of amassing a huge stock of winter survival gear in anticipation of all-out war with the Soviets. ... The research team calculated the number of sheep necessary to manufacture sufficient effective winter clothing to outfit ten divisions (the joke making the rounds of the team then being that they were too busy counting sheep to sleep), and they submitted this in their report, along with estimates of the scale of mechanical equipment that would be needed to process the wool. (494-5)

Reference to similar research is repeated in *KOS* in Oshima's story of the Japanese conducting "training exercises here [in the forest], staging mock battles with the Soviet army in the Siberian forests" (365). Kafka points out the differences between the Japanese forests and the Siberian forests and Oshima replies, "I guess the military didn’t worry about details. The point was to march into the forest in full battle gear and conduct their war games." It is not research that is being questioned in these repeated references; it is the lack of responsibility of researchers for the purpose and the consequences of their research. While logistic information may indeed have proven useful and could have helped save the lives of soldiers and the lives of civilian populations, the attention drawn to the military research serves only to highlight the absence in Murakami's texts, and in Japan's national historiography, of the medical research crimes of General Ishii Shiro and the Units 731 and 1644, in Manchuria and northern China. (Similarly, the absence of attention given to Nanking challenges the choice to highlight Nomonhan.) The texts suggest that Murakami is making different point, and is not intending to engage in shocking revelations.66

The uncle of Noboru Wataya (Yoshitaka Wataya) in *WBC* was engaged in research for military planning prior to his entry into post-war politics. This alignment of "Yoshitaka Wataya’s precise and meticulous report on sheep farming and wool processing in

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66 Stacey M. Olster shows Murakami’s coverage of Japan’s military history in northern China and Mongolia to be remarkably extensive (135-44). Olster argues that Murakami extends his critique of the waste of human life in Nomonhan, to parallel the waste of human potential and individuality in a mass consumer society.
Manchukuo" (WBC 496-7) with the novel’s major antagonist suggests the evil inherent in bureaucratic research that is conducted with no regard for the purposes to which it may be put. What speaks loudly from the texts, however, is the absence of reference to the political and bureaucratic decisions of America and Japan not to prosecute General Ishii and members of the Units 731 and 1644 in silent exchange for research documentation.

Yoshitaka Wataya’s report was stated as "one factor" in the military’s decision to pull out of Manchuria (497), a decision Mr. Honda earlier in the novel refers to as in disregard of the sacrifice of the Japanese soldiers who were slaughtered in the ill-conceived battle of Nomonhan against "the superior Soviet mechanized forces" (53). The naive boku is still of the traditional opinion that the Japanese military showed its honour and purity in such acts of reckless sacrifice against overwhelming forces (bushidō spirit), and he is puzzled by the military’s embarrassment over Nomonhan (54). As the boku gains experience of the effects of violence, listens to the stories of Lieutenant Mamiya and Nutmeg’s father, and engages in his healing of possessed women, the boku’s opinion is clarified and he is more sympathetic to Lieutenant Mamiya. The boku learns gradually that war, any kind of war, is violent and far from being "a magnificent battle" (53). From knowing "almost nothing about the battle of Nomonhan," the boku and the reader are taken back to the past to understand how the past crime has influenced current events – it is the journey the hard-boiled private eye is called to make in the formulaic narration. The history of Nomonhan initially "sounded more like fairy tales" having "lost the ring of reality" (53). However, the boku understands the importance of history by the end of the novel, and recognises Cinnamon’s alternative research:

> He was engaged in a search for the meaning of his own existence. And he was hoping to find it by looking into the events that had preceded his birth.

> To do that, Cinnamon had to fill in those blank spots in the past that he could not reach with his own hands. By using those hands to make a story, he was trying to supply the missing links. From the stories he had heard over and over again from his mother, he derived further stories ... He inherited from his mother’s stories ... the assumption that fact may not be truth, and truth may not be factual. (525)

The research of administrators like Yoshitaka Wataya that facilitated war with disregard for the suffering of wartime violence is associated with the evil of the nephew, Noboru Wataya, that the boku opposes. Such researchers are akin to soldiers who were merely doing their job, or following orders without questioning the morality of their actions. As stated in earlier chapters, such researchers fail to do the work of ethically responsible
persons. Thus, Noboru Wataya's uncle may have provided accurate research which made clear the lack of provisions of the Japanese military in Manchuria, but the research did not question the military's presence in Manchuria. Such questions would be beyond the scope of objective research, and beyond the research commission, but the text implies that this does not excuse the researchers. Yoshitaka Wataya did believe in the right of Japanese imperialism, but was merely "banned from holding public office by MacArthur's Occupation after the war" (WBC 497), until later encouraged to enter politics and represent the people in government. Many Japanese officials and military leaders were similarly elected to office after the war. In contrast, the lieutenant who followed his orders to shoot the zoo animals and to kill the Chinese, did question with the vet, and in his own mind (401; 518); but he was hanged later for war crimes by the Chinese (521). The shift in point of view allows the reader access to the lieutenant's thoughts and emotions, and thus gains him the readers' sympathy. At the time, dissent would not have been tolerated and could have resulted in execution. However, by showing the characters' beliefs and opinions the text makes clear that the lieutenant, who was directly responsible for crimes more violent than those of Yoshitaka Wataya, is the more admirable character. However, the past crimes of the researcher, Yoshitaka Wataya, remained unpunished. Without the detection of past crimes and their exposure to justice, the past cannot be resolved and past crimes will then facilitate further crime. Thus, the false Noboru Wataya was set to take his uncle's seat in government, "Now his political constituency had been inherited by his nephew, Noboru Wataya" (497). Unresolved historical crimes are doomed to repetition. The crimes of the present Noboru Wataya find their roots in the unresolved past crimes of his wartime uncle — true to the form of the hard-boiled private eye novel.

Despite the validity of this defensive reading, Murakami's choices not to dwell on Nanking, nor to mention biological and chemical warfare,\(^\text{67}\) beg to question a past crime that the author may be avoiding. The themes of history, memory, and historicity recede in Murakami's oeuvre and the war crimes of Japan in Manchuria and the crime of American and British complicity in a cover-up in exchange for research information remains undetected in the more recent novels. The text may be making a different point by focusing on Nomonhan\(^\text{68}\) and sheep research, but this seems insufficient when far greater crimes are

\[^{67}\text{See Sheldon H. Harris, Factories of Death. This was published after Murakami had written WBC, but many accounts from Japanese soldiers had previously circulated in Japan.}\]

\[^{68}\text{Murakami cites Alvin D. Coox, who acknowledges reports of Japanese and Soviet biological warfare in Nomonhan by "Japanese leftist writers" but accepts that "Ishii himself explained privately to the new Kwantung Army chief of staff, Endō, that the central authorities had directed him to undertake bacteriological warfare operations but that he had declined to do so because studies of}\]
silenced. The moral challenge implicit in the hard-boiled private eye form of Murakami's texts should apply also to the content. If the reader is challenged to take a moral stand in much of Murakami's writing, so too, the author is equally challenged by the textual erasures to reconsider the ethics of his choices.

V. Identifying Memory

The hard-boiled private eye form lends to Murakami's texts the ethical character of the private eye that assumes the moral responsibility of remembering and facing the past. Again, the hard-boiled private eye form necessitates that Murakami's boku take the ethical challenge of retrieving past memories. In addition, the hard-boiled form asserts that the solution to the plot's crime lies in the past and so it is in the memories of individuals that the solution resides. Paralleling the national collective memory, Murakami's texts are structurally (generically) impelled to assert that the solutions to present national difficulties lie in recalling and resolving crimes buried in the past. The processes of forgetting, lying, and creating false memories are more familiar to readers of hard-boiled private eye fiction and comprise the outer sub-plots of various suspects' memories and stories that the hard-boiled private eye must unravel while facing his own inner nemesis of repressed memories. The form of the hard-boiled private eye novel influences the content of Murakami's texts.

Memory, recall, and forgetting are themes throughout Murakami's writing, interweaving with the often nostalgic search for something or someone lost. In this mix also are lies and allusions and fictional historical sources. Occasional repetitions of research and past events add to the overall effect of calling attention to historical events and their historiography, and to the ambiguities between fact and fiction that challenge scientific reductionism.

There is no careful eliding of historical facts in Murakami's work. Instead, the historical references are often blunt insertions abruptly interpolated into the plot. In WSC, the boku begins reading from his book, *Authoritative History of Junitaki Township* on the train to Asahikawa in northern Hakkaido. He mentions that the book is a first edition and "probably the only edition" (199). This is the only warning the unsuspecting reader will get before being subjected to a lengthy, and seemingly irrelevant, digression on the story of an Ainu who guided the first, poor, Japanese mainland farmers to settle in the inland mountains of Hokkaido. It may seem to a first-time reader of Murakami to be one of the many countermeasures had not been completed by that time" (1021-2). For Sheldon Harris's contrasting use of this information, see Harris, *Factories of Death* 96.

69 See Buruma's, *Inventing Japan* 119-20, for a brief summary.
digressions that regresses the plot action and that should have been erased by a strict editor prior to publication. Even the boku’s reaction to this insertion of historical data questions its place in a hard-boiled formula: "I closed the book, yawned, and fell asleep" (208). As such interpolations became standard in many of Murakami’s novels, critics took notice.

In WSC, the boku suggests the author of the Authoritative History of Junitaki Township makes too many hypotheses (202). This is ironic considering that the reference itself is fictive. It is impossible to tell exactly from the boku’s summaries what is from the source book and what is from the boku’s interpretation of the book. The boku also hypothesizes. The boku notes the irony of the cycle of deforestation of the land by the farmers and its eventual reforestation by the farmers following government intervention (208). It is the environment that wins in the on-going struggle between the Hokkaido land and the farmers. The endless cycle of history, in which individual lives are erased in the repetition of events that form trends in history, is itself finally erased by the land, the environment. Humanity and its history will be erased in a final irony of un-recordable history. Meanwhile, the doings of the farmers (their history) are collected "into the Pioneer Museum" (208), a collection of artifacts – objects which act as commodities to attract paying visitors – the factual historical sources upon which the narration of history is based. The boku seems more interested in individual life stories of the Ainu youth, the village youths who fought in China, and the life of the Sheep Professor. Individual lives of relatively unimportant people and unimportant moments are highlighted. Each individual and each moment is important in contrast to the national historiography which has traditionally focused on key individuals and key moments in time. The parody of historiography that underlies this critique of the fictive Authoritative History of Junitaki Township is suggested in the comment on the importance of each single day to the concept of history: "For if a today ceased to be today, history could not exist as history" (207). The boku makes a dual column timeline of important events from Junitaki and Japanese history and his nameless girlfriend with the beautiful ears summarizes their conclusions from these factual records of this alternative authoritative history: "'Looking at things this way,' she said, comparing left and right sides of the chronology, 'we Japanese seem to live from war to war'" (210). There are two points of interest in this comment: a collective national historiography is a particular way of looking at past events; and it is not the only way of looking at the past. This may suggest a postmodern relativism; but it need not. Secondly, the Japanese are named "we" precisely through a shared national historiography that erases particular individuals and events in favour of what is considered important to the national collective. Combining these
two ways of looking at things, the nameless girlfriend (she cannot be named if she belongs to this collective "we Japanese") draws attention to the importance that historiography’s way of looking at things gives to war and the importance of war to the definition of "we Japanese". A collective historiography names people and events and gives identity to, (names), the collective nation, Japan. Naming is a creative action, a calling into being. It shares a creative common root with narrative fiction.

These issues are found throughout Murakami’s novels, but especially in those novels that emphasize the hard-boiled private eye form that lends itself to retrospective plots, the exploration of personal history, and the search for lost people, hidden motivation and clues. The hard-boiled private eye plot relies on suspects who lie and forget, and on the private eye who realizes the importance of a seemingly unimportant recollection and who hypothesizes (makes a narrative, a fiction) from a perceived connection between unrelated facts. The private eye has his own way of looking at events. The unimportant people and their memories are often crucial to solving the case and restoring lost history.

The novel Dance, Dance, Dance illustrates the creative combination of the theme of past memories with the exploration of the conventions of the hard-boiled private eye structures. Closely aligned to the hard-boiled private eye plot, DDD follows the boku in the search for the missing girlfriend with the beautiful ears – now named Kiki. The novel opens by looking back at the earlier novel A Wild Sheep Chase. The boku initiates the search himself, hiring himself to return to the Dolphin Hotel. The missing Kiki also hires him to search for her – haunting his dreams and memories by calling to him (DDD 5). The boku recounts his life since Kiki went missing, since the wild sheep chase ended. (The wild sheep chase never ends.) The plot, therefore, opens retrospectively; recounting a past event. This is a departure from the characteristic openings of the classic hard-boiled private eye plot: the woman walks into the private eye’s office, or the private eye walks into the house of the rich client. Additionally, in DDD (7-10), the boku describes his depression and breakdown following the events of WSC. This extended prologue serves the purpose of detailing the personal inner plot of the private eye, usually only briefly glimpsed or alluded to in the classic hard-boiled private eye plot. This excess of detail highlights the personal history of the boku, alias the hard-boiled private eye, in Murakami’s plots. The ordinary person has a history that is important. This value is important enough to Murakami that he departs from the hard-boiled private eye novel’s convention of portraying the tough guy’s inner struggle only through suggestion. The extended description of the boku’s inner conflicts is also necessary to establish a credible foundation for the inclusion of fantastic material. The
reader almost expects the uncanny to emerge in the search for Kiki. The combination of retrospection, memory, and the past, with the uncanny appears to be characteristic of Murakami’s writing.

The corruption described in DDD forms an overt critique of Japan’s political and economic policies during the 1980s, almost a diatribe against rapid commercial growth. The novel requires a strong episodic plot to sustain readers’ interest and thus the plot of DDD depends strongly on the hard-boiled private eye chase to catch a murderer who is gradually revealed to the reader. The horror and suspense of the six skeletons in the uncanny room in Honolulu also serves to retain interest. The boku appears again and again as a character out-of-time and out-of-place in his opposition to capitalism and its values of irresponsible self-indulgence. The wealthy lifestyles and success of Gotanda and Makimura illustrate their roles as foils to the out-dated boku whose values are not fashionable (30; 113; 195; 205). Similarly, history is a narrative that requires the dramatizing of characters and events to sustain interest.

Forgetting and recalling are major themes in HBW&EW: the watashi approaches the total erasure of his memories and his identity in the end of his existence while the boku struggles to rejoin his shadow and recall his mind’s past memories (149; 399). However, a careful reading of the text shows that the Professor has "edited" (265) the memories of the watashi creating a fictive assembly of memories that have been to the watashi a part of his identity. With the criminal tampering of the Professor, the watashi can no longer trust if the memories that he is recalling are fact or fiction (239-9; 265; 283-4). The Professor tells the watashi that he will "reassemble a world out of these new memories" (283), presumably the world of the Town, and that this world is not "any out-of-this-world science-fiction type parallel universe" (284). This suggests a clue to the interpretation of this complex text that, despite its title, radically experiments with the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. The Professor explains that watashi’s inner world (the Town) is about the "world as perceived" (284). Memory, and therefore history which depends on the selection of memories, statistics, and artifacts, is a matter of perception. Interestingly, there are no interpolations of history in this text and the setting is not historically, or geographically, specific.

The inner/outer structure of the hard-boiled private eye form is complicated in the doubt about which world (and which protagonist) is "real" – the "I" of the watashi and his hard-boiled world, or the "I" of the boku and his more lyrical world. The conclusion is ambiguous: do the watashi and the boku end their existence in the closed circuit of

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70 The later section on trauma will offer a reading of the fantastic and the uncanny in Murakami’s texts.
consciousness, or does the shadow achieve freedom? Kawakami and Napier read the hard-boiled *watashi* as escaping into an impossible, utopist inner world of the Town, avoiding his responsibility to work for change. Murakami Fuminobu sees the novel as a description of the schizophrenia of postmodern identity and the alienation of individuals. It is possible, however, to read the conclusion more positively.

Suter reads the conclusion as hopefully optimistic (177-8), since the *boku* declares that he is responsible for the world that he has imagined. "Imagination is therefore central to Murakami's definition of social commitment," argues Suter. "It is only by descending into our inner selves and passing through 'other worlds' that we can reach towards others and really 'do something.' Social responsibility is thus strongly situated in the realm of imagination and interiority" (177-8). In the context of history and memory, Suter would urge a reading of Murakami that acknowledges the social responsibility to verify and to reclaim memory. Individually, this means digging deep inside the self to uncover memory. Social responsibility means a conscious, honest representation of the past. Suter understands Murakami's use of the fantastic, not as escapist, but as an injection of social commitment.

Patricia Welch is also generally positive in her reading of the conclusion, which she acknowledges is ambiguous (57). She considers the choices of both protagonists in *HBW&EW* as heroic. Her interpretation also hinges on the conscious choices made by the protagonists: "Murakami's texts also suggest that knowledge can be used responsibly if one chooses to act wisely ... fore-knowledge of how ideology operates might allow the human subject a degree of psychic autonomy, even as he or she operates within the social order"(57-8). In this, Welch realizes that she differs from Strecher who is more inclined to see the threat ideology poses to individual identity.

Strecher's more cautious reading (*Dances* 131; 173) is justified within the context of memory. The *boku*, who ends the novel by deciding to remain in the Town, is firm in his belief that he can and will "remember, ... [and] find the key to my own creation, and to its undoing" (399). He is warned by his shadow that he "will never know the clarity of distance without me" (399). This "clarity of distance" can be read as either objectivity or time – neither seems to be preferred. Perhaps, the text suggests that both are required in remembering the past in order to balance the mind's tendency to depend on perception. Memory cannot be trusted completely in Murakami's texts. Even as historical memory is undermined, there is the suggestion that prudence is required, a clinging to past, modern scientific methodology. This belies postmodern interpretations of the text and again illustrates the textual contradictions in relation to postmodern questions of history.
History cannot be trusted because the unconscious can create false memories and the conscious can deliberately lie. In the later novels WBC and KOS, the theme of history and memory is more strongly developed and the questions raised obliquely in the earlier novels are more directly presented. The boku’s wife, Kumiko, in WBC has deliberately withheld events from her past from the boku and is haunted by the memories of these past events which threaten to destroy their marriage. Memories of the past return to the boku as he gradually pieces together the fragments of his relationship with the lost Kumiko. He re-members the events surrounding the weekend when Kumiko aborted their child while he was in Sapporo listening to the guitarist who concluded his performance by holding his hand in a burning candle flame. The boku is frustrated in his task of re-assembling the fragmented past to provide an accurate, factual account of the events and the hidden past crime buried in the history of the Wataya family. He is frustrated because he cannot access Kumiko’s memories and struggles to recall his own relevant memories – memories are lost to him and thus the past crime is lost also.

V.I Naming Memories

The development of the theme of history and memory (present in most of Murakami’s work) is evident in the later books, WBC and KOS. Acknowledgement of memory, with the mistakes of a nation’s past, is necessary for identity. The practice of namelessness common to Murakami’s previous novels is inverted in both WBC and KOS. Not only have the novels’ central consciousness (the boku) been given a name, many of the other characters are named also. It is as if once Murakami’s writing had achieved attention for its absence of names, and therefore provoked discussion on identity, individuality, and names, then Murakami deliberately reverses the process to produce novels that are full of names. As Murakami expands his treatment of violence and historicity, the use of names is altered. Similarly, the nostalgia for which Murakami was known in his earlier works is replaced by more direct descriptions (often violent) and the nostalgia that is evident in KOS is presented in a manner that warns of the dangers of entrapment: of being seduced by the past.

KOS has an excess of names. The name "Kafka" refers to the author Franz Kafka. Murakami’s work is named “Kafkaesque” by many newspaper critics. The boy Kafka Tamura discusses Kafka’s "In the Penal Colony" and believes that the guillotine is "actually here, all around me" (62), not just as a metaphor or allegory "for explaining the kind of lives we lead" (61). In this way Murakami’s technique of fantasy pushes against the conventional
understanding of creative, imaginative writing and challenges the very meaning of historical writing and the reality that it represents. There is the suggestion that the supernatural world that Murakami's characters cross into is somehow as real as the world we live in and name reality.

Whatever the metaphysics of this might be, it gives urgency to the text. The decisions we make in the imaginary world affect the real world in the same way as the past affects the present and the future. The male/female Oshima reacts angrily to the dogmatic feminists who will not listen but instead make condemnations based on their prior assumptions. Such people, Oshima says, lack imagination (KOS 192) and have limited interpretations of the past. Identity is formed by perception and the consequent decisions we make: "... where there's no power to imagine, no responsibility can arise" (sic 139). We look back from our present moment at past events and we imagine future possibilities, alternatives, and we decide who we are and how best to live our lives. "It's just like Yeats said: In dreams begin responsibilities" (sic 139). The boy Kafka chose his own name (167) and thus takes responsibility for his identity: the decisions he makes in his life. This allows Kafka to choose his own path despite his father's prophecies for him (212). Oshima explains that life is ironic and that it is in the struggle with the varied meanings (the interpretations, the possibilities, the decisions) that individuals achieve identity and "grow and become deeper human beings" (210). This is true also of the nation.

The one character in KOS who is not named is the boy in the painting, Miss Saeki's nameless childhood lover. The old man Nataka who talks to cats says that names help him to remember (50). Miss Saeki is caught in the memory of her nameless boyfriend's death and needs to be released. By crossing into the imaginary world of Miss Saeki, the boy Kafka takes the place of this nameless other boy. Oshima recalls the memory of the death of the nameless boy. He was killed violently by student activists during the 1968 university sit-in. They mistook the boy for a spy and beat him to death (167-8). The first cat that Nakata speaks to in the novel says that he has forgotten his name; he had one once in the past. From this Nakata infers that the cat does not "belong to some family somewhere" (50). Thus a number of possible meanings are suggested for re-member-ing: to recall, to reassemble, to belong again. The mistakes and reckless violent cruelty of the student protest days are re-membered. The whole of that history is put together again. The negativity of the past

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71 This brief recounting in KOS of the brutal killing during the student demonstrations is in sharp contrast to the nostalgic, descriptive backgrounding of the student demonstrations in the earlier novel WSC. Perhaps, over the years of writing about the past, Murakami's texts are freed to represent the trauma of violence, and so have lost their innocent nostalgia.
violence is brought into Japan's identity. The text names the student riots as a member/part of Japan, and names Japan more fully. By remembering its past Japan becomes a more whole nation; it is healed. Similarly, Miss Saeki is called upon to accept the death of her boyhood lover and to be responsible for her life's decisions. The boy Kafka, who crossed over into her imaginary world, learns that it is a place without memory (458) and so he does not belong there. He is called upon by Miss Saeki to remember her (460) and to cross back into the world of the library where he belongs (the world of reality, the world of decisions). In this way Kafka can live life fully and become "the toughest fifteen-year-old in the world" (489). What Kafka does is what the nation Japan is called to do in remembering more fully its history of violence and war.

History is political in that it directly involves perception, identity, and choice. By so obviously interpolating sections of historical material that interrupt the plot and call the readers' attention, Murakami deliberately breaks generic expectations. The reader is called upon to read deeply, attentively. Clues to meaning lie buried in the text and the reader must actively investigate the repetitions, the allusions, the references, as well as the memories of the past that have been excluded. Rebecca Suter is representative of this interpretation of Murakami's historiography as a writerly text. Following her collection of Murakami's substitutions of individual memories for important dates, she comments that "American culture is a means that enables the author to refuse the official version of history and to construct an alternative version of the past" (134). Suter contends that Murakami's purpose here is to contest the official versions of history and to empty them of meaning (139). In this, the text draws attention to the process of history's construction: that some authority has selected what is deemed important from the past and has given it an official collective interpretation. While this may be true in general for all nations, it is a specifically sensitive issue in Japan, where the selection of content and the wording in Japanese school text books is strictly decided by the state through the Department of Education. The cultural references and individual stories in Murakami's texts that replace the expected, collective historical references draw attention to the constructed nature of history. Therefore, Murakami's texts encourage the individual in identity formation through the selection of and interpretation of individual memories. In a sense, history has been treated much like a consumer good: the national historians have selected, constructed, and sold to the public their version of past events complete with meaning and national identity. Murakami, as seen in previous chapters, encourages the readers not to buy commodities blindly; but, instead, to choose for themselves by remembering and recounting their own memories, and
so develop their own opinions and identities. However, it must be acknowledged that the past is not just a convenient selection of events fashioned into a narrative to support a dominant power group. In the writing of fiction, Murakami’s texts at times fail to acknowledge all the facts of past events (as was noted earlier in the discussion on interpolations).

There is another danger in the criticism of authoritative history. Murakami himself is not above re/presenting his own constructed version of past events and this, arguably, is what he is doing in his fiction. Following his list of the popular rock bands in the Prelude of WSC, the next sentence has a poignant description that is filled with nostalgic longing: "The air was alive, even as everything seemed poised on the verge of collapse, waiting for the final push" (4). Murakami’s readers who had experienced the 1960s will remember exactly the atmosphere evoked by this heady mix of excitement, hope for radical change, and frisson of fear. In this nostalgic depiction, the text appeals to the memories of readers, but it also appeals to a conventional representation of the students’ protests in the 1960s. There is a contradiction here in the representations of history. Murakami’s text seems to suggest that history is a commodity that can be bought and sold, and thus replaced at will by alternative references. The text also seems to suggest that history is an agreed collective memory that can be evoked through descriptions, references, and shared interpretations – hence the nostalgia. If Murakami’s texts are asserting both these positions in regard to historiography, then he leaves it to his readers to choose among the versions. The only validity Murakami seems to offer in his representations of history is the validity of individual memory and individual interpretation. The danger of this is that this stress on the individual could result in multiplicities of individual historical readings, lacking any collective learning and any collective responsibility. This danger of over-stressing the individual is akin to the dangers of postmodern emphasis on relativism: if each historiography is equal, then none is prioritized and no one is responsible. However, there is subtle support for the nostalgic version of collective memory in this and other examples. Murakami ignores the possibility that this nostalgic description of the time of the student protest is merely another construction among the many possible popularized representations. Elsewhere, the subtle bias slips through in the positioning of the characters who remember and interpret events as

72 It is possible to read Underground as an example of separate individual memories linked to the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo underground, 1995. These disparate memories can be read as representations of fragmented postmodern culture lacking a collective conscious identity. By bringing together interviews of both the victims and the attackers in the Underground collection, a unity of sorts is attempted as a representation of a collective consciousness. Murakami spoke of the need of Japan’s postmodern youth for a story to provide cohesion and meaning in their lives (Miller, and George, “The Outsider: The Salon Interview”).
either heroes or villains, winning or losing the reader's sympathy. By reading these slippages in the text, the underlying bias of Murakami's own issues with historiography can also be read.

VI. Violence & Trauma

Violence is a conventional trope in the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. It is not a trope that has easily found a place in the fiction of Murakami. The Japanese military involvement in Manchuria and northern China occurs frequently enough in Murakami's oeuvre to be regarded as an important sub-trope. The repetition acts as an unobtrusive teaching: here is a memory that must be acknowledged and here are violent actions that must be judged. The military activity of the Japanese in Manchuria was first represented as a distant, gentle referencing, giving the background of the Sheep and the Boss, and the Sheep Man (WSC), that became sharper as it approached the consciousness in the much more direct, violent descriptions in WBC. With each novel, each representation, the repetition effects a gradual acknowledgement of the horrific violence of Japanese history in Manchuria and northern China; the crimes of Nanking, Nomonhan, and the nameless loci of suffering. Ironically, these repetitions hope to act to prevent history from repeating itself.

Another repetition found in WSC, WBC, and KOS is the trope of the reluctant soldier. The Sheep Man in WSC (he reappears in DDD) explains that he was a village youth who did not want to go to war (263-4). In WBC, Lieutenant Mamiya recounts the dangerously frank discussion that he and Sergeant Hamano engaged in regarding the war:

"I don't mind fighting," he said. "I'm a soldier. And I don't mind dying in battle for my country, because that's my job. But this war we're fighting now, Lieutenant—well, it's just not right. ... we kill a lot of innocent people in the name of flushing out 'renegades' or 'remnant troops,' and we commandeers provisions. We have to steal their food, because the line moves forward so fast our supplies can't catch up with us. And we have to kill our prisoners, because we don't have anyplace to keep them or any food to feed them. It's wrong, Lieutenant. We did some terrible things in Nanking. My own unit did. We threw dozens of people into a well and dropped hand grenades in after them. Some of the things we did I couldn't bring myself to talk about. I'm telling you, Lieutenant, this is one war that doesn't have any Righteous Cause. It's just two sides killing each other. And the ones who get stepped on are the poor farmers, the ones without politics or ideology. ... I can't

73 This is the only reference to Nanking in Murakami's oeuvre.
believe that killing these people for no reason at all is going to do Japan one bit of
good.” (143)

Such honest questioning is considered treasonable during wartime and both men could have
been shot for voicing their opinions. Lieutenant Mayama realized that many Japanese would
have agreed with him but did not dare speak out against the war:

Most Japanese realized that the war with China would turn into a muddy swamp
from which we could never extricate ourselves, I believe – or at least any Japanese
with a brain in his head realized this. It didn’t matter how many local battles we
won: there was no way Japan could continue to occupy and rule over such a huge
country. It was obvious if you thought about it. And sure enough, as the fighting
continued, the number of dead and wounded began to multiply. Relations with
America went from bad to worse. Even at home, the shadows of war grew darker
with every passing day. Those were dark years then: 1937, 1938. (WBC 136)

This may be only the wisdom of retrospection, of people who look back after the
events and wonder how and why they could have allowed and participated in such a terrible
war with its horrendous acts of violence.74 However, it is a question that haunts Murakami’s
texts, repeating itself in various guises. The direct violence of evil people is considered (the
Sheep, Noboru Wataya, Johnnie Walker); the almost excusable violence of nice people (the
Rat, Gotanda, the Professor, the two thugs, Kafka); the reluctant violence of desperate
people (the boku, Nakata, Hoshino); and the bureaucratic violence of administrators who
facilitate collective violence (the researchers, business people, politicians, and scientists).
The boy Kafka in the forest where the Japanese military practiced for war in Manchuria asks
the questions:

Why do people wage war? Why do hundreds of thousands, even millions of
people group together and try to annihilate each other? Do people start wars out of
anger? Or fear? Or are anger and fear just two aspects of the same spirit? (KOS 403)

These questions are never addressed directly and the questions themselves avoid the
specificity of the Japanese engagement in Manchuria. By avoiding the full horror of the

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74 Although the question is raised, there remains no deeper analysis of reasons for the violence of
Japanese (or other) soldiers during the war. It is certain that the behaviour of Japanese soldiers in
Nanking, and elsewhere, was in marked contrast to their earlier military behaviour, and at least partly
due to orders not to take prisoners. For an analysis, see Rotem Kowner, “Imperial Japan and its
POWs.”
analysis necessary to suggest answers. Instead, the text withdraws from the specific crimes and generalizes about the individual's interior propensity for violence.

Kafka recognizes that violence is within each person and that each one has the potential to become a Nobaru Wataya or a Johnnie Walker. War is reduced to a metaphor for life. Johnnie Walker tells Nakata that life is like a war:

"When a war starts people are forced to become soldiers. They carry guns and go to the front lines and have to kill soldiers on the other side. As many as they possibly can. Nobody cares whether you like killing other people or not. It's just something you have to do. Otherwise you're the one who gets killed." Johnnie Walker pointed his index finger at Nakata's chest. "Bang!" he said. "Human history in a nutshell."

In convincing Nakata to take the knife and kill him, Johnnie Walker puts forward a dominant metaphor that underlies the competitiveness of consumer society. He is saying that we live in a dog-eat-dog world where each person must be violent and selfish in order to survive. This competitive perspective, like the bureaucrats, media, and politicians, facilitates the commodified, consumerist society that rejects the potential for choice and decision-making that resides in the individual subject.

Evil and violence may exist, but so also does the potential to resist evil and violence. As Crow tells Kafka, each person can choose (404-5; 418-9). This may be true but again it avoids Kafka's earlier question "Why do people wage war?" and it again avoids the silenced question: Why did people commit such atrocities in Manchuria? The mass compliance that allows war is a nationalist madness that the Murakami texts reject. There is no excuse for war; no mere following orders. Crow tells Kafka:

"Listen up--there's no war that will end all wars," Crow tells me. "War breeds war. Lapping up the blood shed by violence, feeding on wounded flesh. War is a perfect, self contained being. You need to know that."

"Sakura--my sister," I say. I shouldn't have raped her. Even if it was in a dream. "What should I do?" I ask, staring at the ground in front of me. (KOS 404)

Figuring out alternatives is what history has to teach individuals. The history lessons in the texts teach that violence gives rise to the evils of society – the national collective, social, and personal individual evils from unresolved past issues. The heroes in the text are those who resist war and violence, the soldiers who ran away from war. There is sympathy for the human condition, for the various protagonists who struggle with their fear, loss, and violence. There is sympathy also for those situations where the protagonist believes he
must resort to violence. However, ultimately, it is the anti-war sentiment that dominates the text and the various protagonists all require forms of cleansing after having engaged in violence.

This anti-war sentiment, while honourable, seems yet another avoidance of the war crimes committed throughout China. Crow's reply to Kafka, ironically, is advice that could be given to anyone who writes about wartime crime and trauma:

"You have to overcome the fear and anger inside you," the boy named Crow says. "Let a bright light shine in and melt the coldness in your heart. That's what being tough is all about. Do that and you really will be the toughest fifteen-year-old on the planet. You following me? There's still time. You can still get your self back. Use your head. Think about what you've got to do. You're no dunce. You should be able to figure it out."

The advice to face the past fully and honestly is central to the making of a hard-boiled hero and it is necessary also for the fulfilment of Murakami's treatment of the history of the Japanese in Manchuria and China.

The formula of the hard-boiled private eye genre insists on a hard-boiled protagonist with an interior history in need of resolution that interacts with an exterior crime in an episodic plot structure and depends on the revelation of a past crime. This formula both suits and shapes the themes of Murakami's novels. The wartime crimes of the collective Japanese nation, as well as the crimes of individual people (of various nationalities) in wartime Manchuria and China can be accommodated in the use Murakami makes of the hard-boiled private eye formula. The collective crime of human propensity for violence and individual narrations of violence also find their place easily within the formula. In none of Murakami's work is violence glamorized, as in some hard-boiled work. Instead, violence is portrayed as horrifying and traumatic, threatening to dehumanize and to destroy whatever is good. The focus is not so much on the barbarism of extraordinary characters like Johnnie Walker and Boris-the-Skinner, but rather on the more ordinary characters who find themselves caught up in the war against their own preferences: the Sheep Man, Lieutenant Mamiya, Mr. Honda, the reluctant clerical lieutenant, Nutmeg's father, and individual soldiers. In addition, the hard-boiled genre's distrust of institutions and political bureaucrats and administrators (police, politicians, administration) allows the questioning of acts of administrative violence and the collusion of administrators in wartime crimes.

There is a hidden horror that needs to be revealed, a crime. The violence of this past crime creates a trauma for the individual and the collective psyche. Thus, memories are
forgotten, lost, or hidden, and characters sometimes lie. The facts of the past threaten to
overwhelm and must be repressed, censored. Fictions are created and presented as reality.
Norboru Wataya falsely presents himself as an intellectual and is elected as a member of
parliament. He conceals his past violence against his sisters and his uncle's past war crimes
in China; and, in concealing his past, his true identity is also concealed. Facts are revealed as
fiction and the fiction of Lieutenant Mamiya's encounters with Boris-the-Skinner is
congruent with the known facts of wartime violence; much of which has been concealed by
present (now past, yet ongoing) Japanese politicians and government officials. The lies and
forgetfulness depicted in the fiction, WBC, are all too close to the facts of the history of the
concealed actions of the Japanese, Russians, and Chinese in the wartime conflicts on the
Chinese mainland.

In emphasizing these past crimes of individuals, the collective crimes of the nation
remain an unwritten ghost haunting the text. Perhaps it is a narrative necessity that the
violence be represented by an individual antagonist (Noboru Wataya, Boris-the-Skinner, the
Sheep, ...). The result is a distancing of the paralleled collective national crimes, and this is
unfortunate. Indeed, Strecher admits this: "It might well be noted that Murakami's
depictions of the events in Asia during the war do not go far enough in elucidating Japanese
war atrocities there" (183). The boku can only regain the lost Kumiko, and his marriage, by
remembering the past and renaming, giving identity to, both himself and his wife. Similarly,
the text allegorically suggests, Japan can only regain its lost identity and become whole by
remembering its repressed history of violence and horror during its wartime activities on
mainland China and elsewhere.

Murakami's texts avoid engagement in national crimes and focus instead on the
propensity for violence within the individual. This limits his analysis of wartime violence and
the war crimes perpetrated in North China. Instead of addressing the relationships between
science, business, military, and politics that allowed Japanese experiments on the local
Chinese population and prisoners-of-war, there is the individual account of the atrocities of
Boris-the-Skinner. Strecher concludes that:

[Murakami's] purpose is more a determination to contrast the two extremes of
"humanity" and "bestiality" that often emerge in war, and to understand that all ...
are equally human, equally bestial, ... and attempting to understand them as
individuals, with real motivations and real emotions behind them. (183)

Murakami's texts do successfully focus on the interior life of individual people who happen
to have been drawn into war, often against their own wills. He reveals the inner dilemma
that individual soldiers may have felt. While this is a laudable theme, and while war does indeed, as Strecher noted, lead people of all nations to engage in brutality, Murakami has lost an opportunity to make a more direct contribution to the analysis of Japanese wartime decision-making.

Other critics have addressed this issue. Hosea Hirata recognizes both levels of the individual and the national collective in history and uses this parallel to challenge the individual reader:

One criticizes the 'crude' erasure of history by those in power, such as the denial of the 'rape of Nanking' by right-wing factions in Japan. The other is much more subtle, uncovering, as it were, the unconscious of the writer (or the text) and finding his/her (or its) latent complicity with forces that constantly attempt to replace history with myths. (45)

In this, Hirata goes further than most critics who recognize the same two levels of historical questioning. Hirata notes the critique in Murakami’s texts of interpolated official historical records as narrations constructed in the service of state goals and dominant powers. In addition, Hirata acknowledges the individual's similar process of construction of personal histories in the furthering of individual goals. The suppression and even repression of personal memories, and their reconstruction into altered memories, are the individual's unconscious censorship of personal history that parallels the state modeling of collective history. Perhaps such constructions are inevitable given human perception and psychology, but when human subjectivity is "forgotten" in the ideology of a single state-supported "authoritative history," then censorship is legitimized; and a false history becomes the single accepted reading. This issue becomes important in Murakami’s treatment of memories of Japanese military violence in Manchuria.

Hirata draws attention to how an individual's memory can parallel the state's constructed memory. Both these forms of memory are discussed by Strecher, Seats, Rubin, Napier, Fisher, Suter, and Hantke. Hirata's contribution is that the writer (and therefore the reader also) is, in some sense, in collusion with state or socio-cultural attempts to re/construct history. As noted earlier, Murakami the writer colludes in his choice of representations of the past; he too chooses what to include from the past and what to exclude. By choosing Nomonhan, he excludes the biological and chemical warfare and the atrocities of Nanking. (However, the military mistakes in Nomonhan that resulted in unnecessary loss of life have also been neglected in official historiographies, and, therefore, deserve attention.) The reader, too, can collude with this authorial choice and read of
Nomonhan without regard for what has been excluded, Nanking. The text, however, remains neutral, independent; the content can be read as highlighting what has been excluded, or it can be read as colluding in the concealment of past events.

Hirata asserts the indescribability of history (a postmodern concept) and thus negates the possibility of objective, accurate, factual history (a modern concept). History as belonging to the past is indeterminable. This is the aspect of history that Murakami’s *boku* represents by neither engaging in the interiority of history (urged by Karatani), nor the exteriority of active engagement in history (urged by Ōe). Instead, the *boku* engages in the political and moral questioning of the collective readings of history; questioning Japan’s national historiography and offering instead individual stories from unspoken memories and unacknowledged reports. In doing this, Murakami’s texts do offer a description of history that determines an interpretation. There is a moral stand taken in Murakami’s texts and in this the texts cannot be taken as postmodern nor can history be taken as indeterminable. This emphasis on the individual (individual memory and individual responsibility) can be attributed to the influence of the hard-boiled form on Murakami’s writing.

If *WBC* struggles to represent the Japanese lost memories of their military involvement in China, *KOS* represents the interior struggle with individual memories and the desire for violence. The boy Kafka must face his memories of his lost mother and sister and his hurt surrounding his relationship with his father. Nakata’s memory has been mysteriously erased along with the deliberate falsification of the events on The Rice Bowl Hill by his school teacher. Even the hard-boiled hero, Hoshino, recalls the misadventures of his youth and the debt he owes to his grandfather. These are all personal issues, interior memories. However, *KOS* also has its share of violence. Kafka especially is faced with the potential for destruction contained in his subconscious violence. He is capable of killing his father and he does rape his sister – even if the rape takes place in a border world, it is represented very much as an incestuous rape and Kafka knows that he is doing something wrong. The text tells the reader that each person is capable of great violence; none of us are exempt. The inherent violence within is a crime and can give rise to further crimes. Thus the personal, interior aspects of individual violence must be resolved as much as the external, collective, historical violence of the Japanese nation. The various texts’ discourse with violence filters the fact that violence is a basic element of humanity and this historical fact is so horrendous that it can only be approached through fiction.

The elements of the fantastic and the uncanny slip into the text, providing a clue to the reading: the fact of violence within humanity threatens to so overwhelm that a non-
realistic style becomes necessary to admit and to deflect this truth. Matthew Strecher was among the first of the critics in the English language to consider Murakami’s "... ability to mingle the elements of fantasy, of magical realism, of historical and fictional narrative, into an imaginative presentation of 'real' historical moments" (Dances With Sheep 160). Drawing on the theories of Hayden White and Linda Hutcheon, Strecher fits Murakami into a postmodern response to Japan’s official history of the fifteen years war in the style of "historiographic metafiction, [that attempts] ... a deconstruction of 'history' as the holder of ultimate truth" (164-5). Strecher also noticed that Murakami’s texts adapted the hard-boiled private eye form to suit the purposes of social criticism and that the privileging of this purpose resulted in genre transgression and genre mixing. It is pointed out here that it is precisely at the moment when the recounting of past memories becomes too traumatic that the genre of the fantastic is introduced. The moment of greatest challenge to the individual or national psyche is disguised by the shifting into the uncanny or into a parallel borderland. Strecher notes that Murakami’s historiography is a radical breakage of the hard-boiled private eye form: "the literature of Murakami is not about genre, but it is about genre transgression. It is not about formula, but the abuse of formula" (27). In this, Strecher is not criticizing Murakami but is pointing out that Murakami has adapted the genre of the hard-boiled private eye for his own political purposes: to recover forgotten Japanese memories and to awaken a debate about those memories. However, when these memories become too traumatic for either the individual or the collective national psyche to admit, then the realism of the hard-boiled form gives way to the introduction of the fantastic and the uncanny into the text.

As seen earlier in DDD, the revelation of the crime can produce a trauma that threatens to destabilize identity and reality and this requires the literary devices of the fantastic and the element of the uncanny for its expression. Violence shifts reality into a neutral borderland because, the texts slowly admit, violence can be both a source of energy and destruction; both positive and negative. Violence gives rise to this binary so often seen in the form of the hard-boiled novel. The hard-boiled private eye both uses violence and is a victim of other people’s violence. The negative destructiveness of violence is abhorred in Murakami’s texts (possession, rape, murder, beating, cutting, skinning, eating cats’ hearts). However, the texts resist the over-simplification of associating violence with antagonists. In keeping with the tradition of the hard-boiled private eye, there are also examples of the power that violence can give that can be turned to good: the hard-boiled boku blows up the black-suited secretary (WSC); beats up a man who may have been the guitar player and
another opponent who may have been Noboru Wataya in room 207 with the same baseball bat that may have been used by the soldiers in Nutmeg's father's stories (WBC). Kafka learns from his rape of Sakura; Nakata kills Johnnie Walker to save Kafka; Crow also attacks Johnnie Walker; and Hoshino kills the thing that emerges from the dead Nakata (KOS). The early ambiguity that surrounds the potential positive energy of violence is clarified in these later novels. Violence is not always simply bad or wrong, even if it is often irrational and difficult to control. Indeed, it is partly this unpredictability and irrational loss of control that makes violence so traumatic.

Violence is also represented as institutional in Murakami's novels; again asserting the parallel between the individual and the state. In DDD, the inherent violence of the "advanced capitalist society" is represented in the cold, newly renovated L'Hôtel Dauphin, "a gleaming twenty-six-story Bauhaus Modern-Art Deco symphony of glass and steel" (21). From the beginning, the boku clearly states his opposition, "To be honest, this new Dolphin Hotel wasn't my kind of hotel" (24). Through narrative sympathy, the reader is seduced into opposition to the commercialism of the new hotel. Gone is the inefficient, somewhat dingy (but oh so loveably human) old hotel. The boku nostalgically sighs, "I missed the old dive" (28). It turns out that the new hotel group pressurized the old owner to sell out and used influence in the city hall planning (52-56; 58-61). This is quite usual in hard-boiled private eye crime and the boku seems resigned to this hegemonic crime, "Latter-day capitalism. Like it or not, it's the society we live in" (55). However, the text slips from the hard-boiled private eye form and there is a resistance to the inevitability of institutional crime. Within the new hotel resides the Sheep Man who awaits the boku on the sixteenth floor; within the new hotel there exists a borderland of the old hotel. The uncanny of the misplaced familiar, the repetition of the Sheep Man from WSC reintroduced into DDD like a déjà vu, jolts the reader away from the formulaic expectations of the hard-boiled private eye novel into wondering at the violence of the Goliath new Dolphin chain of hotels against the small, old, insignificant Dolphin Hotel owner. Perhaps, the text suggests, opposition is possible and violence can be opposed. The fantastic parallel worlds of the old and new Dolphin Hotels call attention to an example of resistance to institutionalized crime in a slippage of the hard-boiled private eye form. The text suggests that the "advanced capitalist society" is a crime as violent as any in the hard-boiled private eye city setting. By inserting elements of the

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75 In 1Q84, Aomane trains women to defend themselves against violence. She uses a highly focused form of violence to murder perpetrators of violence against women. Her violent retribution (justice?) is never deeply questioned in the novel, and at the end of the novel, Aomane learns the power of love. There is no resolution to whether or not she will continue her association with the Dowager.
uncanny and the fantastic, the text creates a space, a borderland, where resistance is possible and thereby breaks the convention of the hard-boiled form.

The structure of the hard-boiled novel has been appropriated to give a moral lesson for both the individual and the national collective. In the hard-boiled novel, the past crime must be revealed in the outer plot and the forgotten past memory must be faced in the inner plot. In Murakami’s novels, this structure brings to the surface a moral point: the individual must acknowledge repressed memories. This application of the hard-boiled structure is then extended to parallel the process of memory generally and the conflicts surrounding the repression of Japan’s war past more specifically. The novels vary in their privileging the protagonists’ interior conflicts (HBW&EW and DDD), or the external conflicts of war memories (WBC), or combining both (WSC and KOS). It may well be that Murakami’s interest in Japan’s war history in Manchuria is his own authorial issue that he explores in his writing and, as he finds his own resolution for his and his family's repressed memories, his interest in the national history and its representation in his novels will diminish. Certainly in KOS, the attention is on internal violence, despite Johnnie Walker and the war references; and in subsequent novels, the themes of memory and history, and the hard-boiled private eye form, are less obvious. As Murakami resolves the interior dilemma of the individual's potential for violence, he also seems to resolve the expression of violence in Japan’s wartime past. There is a progression in the novels' treatment of memory, history, and violence that suggests an author working through the ghosts of his own past.

VII. Healing

The violence of unresolved past crimes causes trauma for individuals and nations that can lead to the erasure of history, the memory loss and subsequent loss of identity in many of Murakami's characters. Facing past crimes can bring healing to the individual and to the national collective in the same way that the hard-boiled private eye novel advocates the resolution of the narrative. However, the horror of past events, or a single past event, can so traumatize that we seek the escape of forgetfulness, we seek to avoid responsibility for our history. We erase, censor our text books, and forget the crimes and the wars of bygone years. Unfortunately, there are times when we do not learn from the past and we chose instead to live with faint, half shadows. The protagonists in Murakami’s novels resist this avoidance of their past. They work at growing through past issues and, in this, the protagonists are dynamic, active characters. They are changed by their encounters with loss and by other people's memories, and they grow and develop. In this inner plot, Murakami’s
protagonists are much more assertive than their hard-boiled counterparts who often trail through their series without resolving their personal issues.  

The character Kafka believes he is driven by the fate of his father's curse: "My father polluted everything he touched, damaged everyone around him. ... And half my genes are made up of that" (213). He is overwhelmed by his past and by the trauma of his memory of his father's words. He is seduced by fatalism, believing that he cannot resist his father's curse, and he allows his responsibility for his decision-making to slide through his grasp – most especially as he rapes Sakura. Kafka says, "All kinds of things are happening to me, ... Some I chose, some I didn’t. ... it feels like everything's been decided in advance--that I'm following a path somebody else has already mapped out for me" (209). Such fatalism is rejected by Oshima who encourages Kafka to take responsibility for his dreams and his life.

The books Kafka reads also assert such responsibility. Oshima's answer to Kafka is complex. Explaining the irony of Greek tragedy, Oshima urges a transcendence: "It’s the entrance to salvation on a higher plane, to a place where you can find a more universal kind of hope" (210). Having looked back at the past, the next step is to understand and to decide what to do with the lessons from history. Oshima argues that history need not be a depressing cycle of repeated wars and exploitation but that it can open up new perspectives and choices; therefore, history offers hope.

Initially, his explanation sounds a little like Kafka's fatalism:
There are a lot of things that aren't your fault. Or mine, either. Not the fault of prophecies, or curses, or DNA, or absurdity. Not the fault of Structuralism or the Third Industrial Revolution. We all die and disappear, but that's because the mechanism of the world itself is built on destruction and loss. Our lives are just shadows of that guiding principle. (349)

However, Oshima's transcendence is not fatalistic. He advocates decision-making:
Say the wind blows. It can be a strong, violent wind or a gentle breeze. But eventually every kind of wind dies out and disappears. Wind doesn't have form. It's just a movement of air. You should listen carefully, and then you'll understand the metaphor.

History is not simply a series of events, it is an active narration. It requires memory, recall, selection, interpretation, and finally, decision-making. These are all active behaviors. Trauma can block a memory. Censorship can silence memory. Government administrations can insist on state-sanctioned interpretations. Oshima still retains hope in the human

76 This is especially true for the character, Tengo, in 1Q84, who is completely caught up with his need to resolve past issues: his relationship with his father, his search for Aomane.
subject: it is the individual who decides and this gives Oshima hope. He believes in the individual.

The hard-boiled Hoshino learns that it is the human person who gives "form" to the winds of history. Having looked back at his memories of his life and relationships, he discovers hope through the world of music. His past life seemed empty and his life had lost all meaning. Realising that this is not how life should be, Hoshino asks himself: "Isn't it possible to shift direction, to change where I'm headed?" (341). In an act of self-healing, he reaches out to the owner of the coffee shop and asks about Haydn. Miss Saeki also learns that while it is possible to live always in the past, it is not healthy; it is not life-giving.

Memories need not control life. She must let go of her past and burn her memories. Later, in his discussion with Oshima, Hoshino asks, "Do you think music has the power to change people? Like you listen to a piece and go through some major change inside?" (395). Oshima agrees,

Sure, that can happen. We have an experience--like a chemical reaction--that transforms something inside us. When we examine ourselves later on, we discover that all the standards we've lived by have shot up another notch and the world's opened up in unexpected ways. (395).

Hoshino has been transformed by his journey with Nakata. He regards this chance encounter with Nakata as fate but he asserts, "I'm the one who chose this path, and I've got to see it through to the end" (471). Fate offers him material but he gives his life form through the decisions he makes. The individual makes the music out of the possible sounds. Hoshino transcends his past and his previous historical perspective which identified him as an aimless truck driver. Similarly, Kafka is firmly told by Crow that "It's not too late to recover" (418). He need not be ruled by his past mistakes. Crow tells Kafka that he must transcend his memories and forgive his mother for abandoning him; he must also forgive himself. Looking back on the past offers healing, if the individual is willing to engage in the work of taking responsibility for life.

Whatever the trauma, Murakami’s texts suggest that healing is possible. An interesting repetition is worth noting. In WBC and in KOS, a soldier remembers being taught how to use a bayonet correctly. The incident occurs in WBC when the young lieutenant army clerk is ordered to bayonet the Chinese deserters, orders that he disliked and with which he disagreed. The lieutenant explains to Nutmeg's father, the vet, in a technically precise manner how and where to insert the bayonet and twist it. He comments that bayoneting is "a lot cheaper than tanks and planes and cannons" (WBC 515-6) and that it is
"the pride of the Imperial Army" (515). The lieutenant concludes, "These soldiers have never actually killed a human being that way. And neither have I" (516). The bitterness of his sarcasm and the trauma of what he is about to do are revealed in the bluntness of his statement. The soldiers in KOS who teach Kafka how to bayonet in the forest also suggest the trauma of this violent killing of another person, "The guy dies a horrible, slow, painful death" (KOS 434). They allude to the rules of war (to kill or be killed) that Johnnie Walker had spoken of to Nakata previously (150-1), and recognize "That's the kind of world we were in" (434). The text does not say what helped these two soldiers to transcend their trauma but they chose to desert rather than endure the violence of war:

I don't care who the enemy is--Chinese soldiers, Russians, Americans. I never wanted to rip open their guts. But that's the kind of world we lived in, and that's why we ran away. Don't get me wrong, the two of us weren't cowards. We were actually pretty good soldiers. We just couldn't put up with that rush to violence. I don't imagine you're a coward, either. (434)

These heroes of the text acknowledge that the world is more than violence but that it is essential to learn "right from wrong" (465) and that, having learnt from the past and committed one's self to a life of healing, it does no good to dwell in retrospection: "Once you leave here, don't ever look back until you reach your destination. Not even once, do you understand?" (465).

This repetition illustrates two contrasting responses to traumatic violence: the lieutenant who endured and followed his orders (WBC) and the two soldiers who ran away rather than endure the violence of the war (KOS). The lieutenant would have been considered the better soldier; the two soldiers were army deserters who would have been shot. Since Japan lost to the Chinese, it was the lieutenant who was hung for war crimes (WBC 521). War is not glorified in any of Murakami's texts; it is represented as a trauma requiring healing. There is no suggestion of what particular kind of transcendence may offer healing for the memories of the trauma of Japan's war history, but the narration of individual stories is an important first step. The re-membering of war stories can heal the psyche of individuals and the national collective; and thus heal the eroded identity of the Japanese. What works for the individual, the texts suggest, can work for the nation.

Strecher is quite explicit about Murakami's intentions:

... first, that he wishes to present a version of history of 1969/1970 ... to remind his contemporaries ... and thus encourage them to recuperate and account for their silent history. Second, Murakami's historiographic depiction of this moment is
accusatory, directing our attention not only to the mainstream consumerist culture of the present, but to the role played by that system in the past ... the author incriminates the social establishment that guided Japan down a path of almost unmitigated emphasis on economic prosperity, smoothed over critical questions about Japan’s modern history, and homogenized Japan’s dissidents into ‘good’ citizens. At the same time, ... he incriminates the dissidents themselves for the ease with which they were so homogenized. (174)

Streicher, then, is in keeping with Hirata’s reading that Murakami’s texts suggest a challenge to both the reader and the writer to address their collusion in the re/construction of history.

VIII. Conclusion

Reflection on the past can be used to strengthen decision-making and commitment. This is inherent in the retrospective structure of the hard-boiled novel. Murakami foregrounds this by highlighting the themes of memory and historicity, by the element of nostalgia, and by genre-mixing. When the past contains memories too traumatic for the psyche to face, then sentimentality can be a safe way to approach topics fearful to the psyche. Similarly, the introduction of the fantastic and the uncanny can be used to distance realities too disturbing and overwhelming. All of these techniques enter into the style of Murakami’s writing, extending the form of his novels far beyond their origins in the hard-boiled form. The inner/outer plot structure of the hard-boiled form emerges as a device allowing the paralleling of the individual and the national collective. Thus, as the individual must seek the past crime in order to understand present difficulties, so too it is implied that the nation must also look back to its past crimes in order to engage responsibly with the present. Memory, therefore, is an essential component of identity. The hard-boiled form also offers a strict morality that compels its protagonists in an honest search, to do their best, and this binds the author and the reader, as well as the protagonist and the nation, in a similar ethic to be honest to the past. That these themes converge with Murakami’s own personal interest in identity, memory, and Japanese military history in Manchuria may explain some of his attraction to the hard-boiled form.
Chapter Seven

Conclusion: Identifying the Collective

This thesis opened with a consideration of the pronouns in Japanese. Murakami Haruki has been noted for his use of the informal first person pronoun, *boku*. The impact of his deliberate choice of this informal pronoun is lost in the translation into English, since the English language no longer marks formality in its pronouns. As there is no single Japanese word for the first person pronoun "I," so too, there is no single word for the collective pronoun "we." Pronouns work differently in the Japanese language. In all languages, there are examples where translation is difficult. Between Japanese and English, the translation of words is complicated by the differences in the two cultures. The Japanese language uses different pronouns according to the relationship between the speaker and the listener: the gender and the formality. Often, pronouns are not used at all and the context determines the understanding.

The writing of history (historiography) is not a simple matter either; it involves more than the recitation of facts and dates. Choices must be made. Some events are deemed significant and others are not; the meaning of events must be agreed. History is also an act involving translation and interpretation. So too, the defining of genres is proving to be more complex than previously thought. Characteristics are rarely exclusive to a single genre. Although all genres have much in common (as do all cultures and all humans), there exist definitive features that distinguish genres. The choice of whether to focus on universals or on differences (I or you; us or them) has been central to literary theory (structuralism, or deconstruction). History, and genre, and theory show there are no easy answers, and the texts of Murakami Haruki also show that there is no single reading. The "I" that approaches the texts affects the reading as much as the choice of the hard-boiled private eye form has affected their writing, and as much as the Japanese context (history and language) has affected their writing. There are no solitary individuals, isolated from context. Despite the pronouns, there is no "I," there is only "we." The *boku* is really *bokutachi*, 僕たち.

I. Thesis Summary

This thesis has examined the confluence of problems in three main areas: the generic definition and historiography of crime fiction and hard-boiled private eye fiction; the self-definition of Japan in the drive towards western modernization; and, the defining of the textual voice and social critique of Murakami Haruki’s fiction. The assumption has been that
the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction and the socio-historical context of contemporary Japan would shed light on a reading of Murakami’s fiction. The novels which most closely adhere to the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction were chosen: *A Wild Sheep Chase; Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World; Dance, Dance, Dance; The Wind-up Bird Chronicle;* and *Kafka on the Shore.* A brief summary of the previous chapters is presented here, first setting the thesis in the over-arching theme of identity and then summarizing the previous chapters; and finally, applying the themes of work, wealth, and history to Murakami’s most recent novel, *1Q84.*

I.I Identity Parade

The crisis of identity in Japan is a reoccurring dilemma in a nation that committed itself towards a turning to the west. To gain political parity with western nations, the Japanese engaged in a project of modernization in which the Japanese outlook had to be reformed into an image of the modern mind: if the people thought like modern people they would gain the economic, political, and military power associated with western modernity. The measure of national development in the subsequence competition against the west varied from military conquest, economic prosperity, technological competency, and more recently, cultural ascendancy. By positioning the other as superior (first China and then Europe, and more recently, America), the Japanese were left with the position of inferior. The nation and the individual psyche, then, engaged in a battle between acceptance of western modernization and resistance. Compelled to follow the principles of Civilization and Enlightenment in the modernization project, Japanese authors explored the genre of the western novel and were embroiled in conflict between copying the west in order to gain recognition and acceptance, and being rejected amid the possible scorn of mimicry. There has been a tension between curbing previous literary trends and explorative creativity in order to attain praise as conventional western-style novelists, and continuing previous creative cross-generic explorations and hybrid Chinese influences despite the risk of producing literature that lies outside conventional western-style forms. This tension was especially evident during the early decades of the twentieth century. In negotiating these issues, Japanese writers have struggled to name what it means to be a Japanese writer; identity is a delicate creature easily threatened.

Resistance to the national project of modernization did find expression in techniques of disguised criticism and creative experimentation. The traditions of hybrid literary forms
and creative mixing of realism and the fantastic have long existed in Japanese literature and are not new. This is the context of Murakami's writing.

Japan's attempt to name itself as the leading colonial power in Asia before and during the Asia Pacific war, the subsequent American occupation, the decades of rapid economic growth, the anti-ANPO demonstrations and student riots, and the empty affluence of the 1980s, were all occasions for the repetition of the same basic identity crisis. It is not surprising that Murakami's fiction is marked by the theme of identity, integrity, and naming of the subject self. The problem in looking to others in order to define the self, or the nation, is that others can never replace the self-confidence necessary to identity formation.

Clue-puzzle fiction has suffered from its own crisis of identity. Initially named the generic prototype, clue-puzzle fiction was given a definition it could not fulfil, since it was not accurate. Subsumed in this false identification was the history and form of hard-boiled private eye fiction. Identified as "American" (and this may have been initially correct as a country of origin), hard-boiled private eye fiction was also named as a form in rebellion against its dominant parent, clue-puzzle fiction; in the same way as America itself had been identified in reaction to its parent nation, Britain (and also Europe). Much of the early literary criticism of hard-boiled private eye fiction applied the same characteristics to hard-boiled private eye fiction as had been identified in the classic form. The distinct history and identity of hard-boiled private eye fiction were over-shadowed. Difference is a constituent of identity, despite universalities in form.

The fiction of Murakami Haruki has also been greeted with a crisis in identification. Deeply concerned with the theme of identity, it is ironic that Murakami's texts have frustrated critics as difficult to classify and have been identified with forms as various as hard-boiled private eye fiction, supernatural and the fantastic, postmodern (for want of a better name), and as, both or either, Japanese/American. The texts are a mix of all these influences. Critics of Murakami's fiction have also failed to agree on its standard: is it literature deserving of a Nobel Prize, or is it merely clever, commercial writing? The texts determinedly resist any too-easy identification. They name themselves as hybrid.

The decision to refashion the nation according to the principles of Civilization and Enlightenment may have succeeded but, if so, it has been at a high cost for Japan. Refashioning the national identity according to western modernization has meant more than aligning politics to democracy, economics to industrialisation (and now to a post-industrial service industry), fashion to western dress, and a divine emperor to a constitutional monarchy. Japan struggles to identify itself. Writers initially turned to the western novel in
order to gain the respect of the west, and then suffered from the doubt of being mere copies of what they admired. The attempt to copy and to be all things western was an individual and a national project. Therefore, both the individual and the nation were confronted with the consequential fractured identity long before the contemporary era, named postmodern, claimed fractured identity among its characteristics. The characteristics of postmodernism merely highlight the existing confusion of identity in Japan. Murakami's texts illustrate this confusion of identity, but that does not make him either a postmodern author or an overly American author.

Resistance has always found subtle and creative expression in Japanese literature. Japanese crime fiction continues the pattern of both copying closely the form of clue-puzzle fiction, and experimenting radically with other forms; as in the fiction influenced by the Chinese Wise Magistrate stories, or the fiction of the ero-guro nansensu movement. The variety in experimentation in Japanese crime fiction is an example of the wider socio-cultural conflict in the desire for, and the resistance against, western culture and methods of thought associated with post-industrial societies. Although Murakami's texts do not deliberately follow the traditions or forms of Japanese crime fiction, they do express a similar tension between acceptance and resistance, particularly towards the culture of affluence and the relentless drive for progress at any cost.

II. Themes in Hard-Boiled Private Eye Fiction

The form of the hard-boiled private eye novel is quite distinctive. It is episodic in nature and it has a dual inner/outer plot structure. There is an outer past crime that the private eye is hired to solve. His engagement in the solution to this past crime gives tension and forward momentum to the novel. The private eye is challenged by an interior crisis provoked by his relationships and his actions. This interior crisis has its roots in his personal past and is rarely resolved completely. The corrupt city setting of the novel ensures that crime is never resolved and, thus, the hard-boiled private eye has a cynical, or world-weary, detached personality, with a personal ethical standard that sets him/her in opposition to the corruption of the city. The form suggests the value of working for a living, especially self-employment; an ambiguous stance towards wealth, especially the false association of wealth with culture or ethics; and a preoccupation with memory, looking back to the past for the cause and the solution to present “crimes” as well as the impossibility of ever fully knowing any truth or fully understanding past events. The themes of work, wealth, and history, therefore, became topics for subsequent chapters for this thesis, in an analysis of
the texts of Murakami that most closely adhere to the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction: *A Wild Sheep Chase; Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World; Dance, Dance, Dance; The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*; and, *Kafka on the Shore*.

II.I The Working Boku

The negotiation between Murakami's texts and the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction has resulted in a protagonist who is an antithesis of the Japanese salary-man and who is marginal to the conventional Japanese notions of productivity or career advancement. The *boku* is often self-employed, out-of-work, or in partnership. He happily engages in domestic work usually associated with women: cooking, ironing, cleaning. Work is idealized: the *boku* never lacks accommodation or sufficient money to live. However, there is no critique of unemployment, no criticism of unequal access to meaningful work, nor is there any analysis of the relationship of work to the capitalist economy. No such issues are directly engaged in the texts. Instead, there is a portrayal of an individual who is free from the demand to work, and who exists simply outside the socio-economic necessity to work. The texts share the technique of digressive delays in the plot action as the *boku* stops to consider and to make decisions. This highlighting of decision-making is the productivity of the *boku* and it is coupled in the texts with the personal ethics of the hard-boiled *boku*. The work of ethical decision-making is central to the distinct identity of the *boku* and is presented for the reader to emulate in a co-identification with the *boku*. The result is a textual assertion that it is a moral responsibility for the human person to engage in the work of ethical decision-making.

II.II The Theme of Wealth

The ambiguous attitude towards wealth found in the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction also finds its expression in Murakami's texts. Chandler's novels, especially, illustrated the empty, unhappy lives of wealthy people living a *faux* culture that they had the money to imitate, but not the understanding to animate. Ross Macdonald's novels also depict the unhappy, broken lives of families that have money but no unity or love. The *boku*, in contrast, has his own sophistication of fashion and taste that owes nothing to the culture of wealth but is an expression of his individuality. (It remains true that this depends most frequently on western music, literature, food, clothing, and artifacts. However, there is no argument against any dominant, universal, post-industrial culture.)
Objects receive a considerable amount of attention in Murakami’s texts. They act as second-order representations of needs, reified desires, to call attention to a subtle critique of the promotion of uncontrolled desire in advanced capitalist, consumerist, societies. The material existence of the object is lost in its representation; it is no longer itself. Similarly, in being represented as material commodities to be bought and sold, needs and desires also lose their existence. The world of simulation is removed from the material world (like Murakami’s in-between places) and both reality and identity are displaced. Japan is a world of simulation and hyperreality. The excess of commodification in the decades of rapid economic growth caused a dual breakdown in individual and national identity. The boku has the ability to traverse realities and he has a certain grasp of his own identity (even if he is presented as an ordinary person, "mediocre" WSC 108, 113). These traits make him ideally suited to oppose the process of advanced post-industrial capitalism, represented in the texts as an opposition to his antagonists’ greed for wealth and power.

The boku displays occasional scorn against the pretentiousness of wealth and opposes those who greedily seek personal gain. Selfish desires for wealth and power are causes of corruption. In contrast, the boku’s indifference to wealth and power allows him to make use of either wealth or power to assist others. The texts indirectly oppose the capitalist consumer society that propagates selfish gain and the texts show how the accumulation of commodities can threaten identity. The antagonists in the texts, the Boss, Gotanda, the Professor and the System, the Town, Noboru Wataya, and Johnnie Walker are all caught up in a focus on their own personal desires for wealth, security, power, domination; even the scientific desire for understanding is portrayed as selfish and harmful if pursued in neglect of the rights of the individual person. These textual antagonists are represented as a threat to the individual; specifically, a threat to their being, their identity, their personhood. The opposition is presented, not so much as a confrontation between life and death, but between existence and non-existence.

The world of the fantastic creates a space for the boku’s opposition, an in-between world where he can choose to act, and where he can thus forge an identity for himself. His aloofness and his indifference to wealth allow him to avoid being commodified himself – he cannot be bought or sold. The ethical hard-boiled private eye is not for sale. His ability to choose freely, to decide for himself, is the ethical core that makes the boku’s identity.

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77 There is no direct criticism of the gap between wealth and poverty; little exploration of its causes; and no direct suggestion of the injustice of the unequal distribution of wealth in any of the texts.

78 This is as close as the text (in Hard-boiled Wonderland and the End of the World) gets to the condemnation of chemical and biological warfare; and the criticism in the texts can be applied equally well to ecological, economic, or ideological exploitation.
Without clinging to objects, people, or commodities, the *boku* has his own alternative interior wealth.

II.III  Summarizing the Theme of History

An interest in Japan’s military history in China and Manchuria is evident throughout Murakami’s *oeuvre*, including Murakami’s early novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase*. Thus, there has been no dramatic change in his concern for Japan and his responsibility as a writer, contrary to the claims of some critics; although there has been an increasing emphasis on these references, culminating in *WBC* and *KOS* before diminishing again in *1Q84*. The form of hard-boiled private eye fiction allows the texts to parallel the individual with the Japanese nation. As the hard-boiled private eye must solve the past crime in the outer plot, so too Japanese society must name and confront its past crimes. As the hard-boiled private eye must face his own past in the inner plot, so too must the individual and the national collective resolve their past. Individual and collective memory is an important, repeated theme throughout the texts.

Early textual descriptions evoked nostalgia that was read as a glorification of student radicalism in the 1960s in Japan. However, the nostalgia can also be read as a disguised critique of social conditions. Nostalgic descriptions often serve as instances of digressive decision-making, as the *boku* exemplifies the process of ethical choice. The textual repetitions, attitudes to war and violence, and the selections of past imagery all attest to the responsibility and ethical obligation in the writing of history and in reflection on the past. The form of hard-boiled private eye fiction demands accountability for past crimes, and this is a responsibility that the ethical individual cannot shirk. Naming the past is essential to naming the individual and the national identity.

Nostalgic descriptions and interpolated references also illustrate the unreliability of memory. Individuals forget, make mistakes, and create false memories. Fictive sources can appear realistic, while reality can be estranged. The nation can censor and can also refashion the past in its historiographies. Memory is thus questioned. The significance of agreed collective memory is challenged by textual examples of individual memory dominating over established historical dates and events. Songs, personal memories, individual interpretations represent moments in time in the place of agreed historical standards. The date of Mishima’s death is “that eerie afternoon” (*WSC*), and the Nanking massacre is suggested by the killing of zoo animals (*WBC*). The significance of collective memories is challenged, and historical relativism is explored, but resisted.
Memory is tricky and the writing of history is never complete. Past experiences of war and violence, individual and national, can often cause trauma so great that it threatens to overwhelm and erase memory. Therefore, the past can threaten identity, since memory is necessary for identity. Thus, trauma destabilizes identity. However, failure to confront the past will only lead to continued erasure of identity; as well as erasure of the past itself. This is unacceptable to the integrity of the hard-boiled boku. The texts often make use of the fantastic and the uncanny to approach traumatic past memories and to create a space to confront past crimes. In the search for meaning to the violence of war, the only answer given is by the character Crow to the boy Kafka, "You must overcome the fear and anger inside you ... That's what being tough is all about" (KOS 404). Facing past "crime" is a courageous act worthy of the hard-boiled boku, and, if the individual and the nation follow this way of the hard-boiled tough guy, it will bring healing.

III. Hard-Boiled Private Eye Themes in 1Q84

In October, 2011, the English translation of Murakami’s 1Q84 was published. The large, three book, novel moves further away from the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction but retains certain structural characteristics and tropes that make it familiar to readers of the previous novels. 1Q84 has an alternating double plot, each with its own named protagonist, closer to the smooth chapter transitions of KOS than the abrupt alternating transitions of HBW&EW. The double plots interact more smoothly, perhaps, because the reality depicted in the worlds of each plot is more similar to present day reality than the worlds described in HBW&EW. The world of 1Q84 is the everyday world of Tokyo in 1984–or any large city in 1984. The search and chase motif replaces the more specific detection plot of hard-boiled private eye fiction. Although Aomame is hired to kill the Leader, she is not a hard-boiled private eye. She is tough and cool, and she is a loner; but her character is influenced more by the romantic longings of the parted lovers plot. It is the plot of the parted lovers that drives the novel, not the plot of hard-boiled private eye fiction.79 Tengo and Aomame are separated lovers in search of each other, and this provides the plot tension. However, in searching for each other, there is the implication that each will resolve his/her individual identity.

1Q84 retains the dual inner/outer plot structure of Murakami’s earlier, more hard-boiled private eye fiction; it provides a useful narrative device to explore the interior motivation of his protagonists while allowing the outer plot to advance. Both Aomame and

79 If, arguably, Murakami’s oeuvre can be said to be divided between romantic plots and action plots, then 1Q84 is a combination of elements from each.
Tengo have a past childhood trauma that must be revealed and healed. These past "crimes" act as reflective commentaries on the outer crimes. Aomame was raised by strict believers known as the Society of Witnesses (obviously patterned on the Jehovah Witnesses but echoing the Aum Shinrikyo cult) and the practice of their beliefs alienated her from her classmates at school. Tengo was raised by a man who he doubted was his father, and whose work as a licence collector for NHK, the state television company, dominated over his responsibilities to his son (as loyalty to the employer, or to the state during war, alienated fathers from their children). Tengo was also isolated from his classmates by his father’s insistence that he accompany him on his Sunday rounds collecting license fees.

Neither of these childhood pasts are dramatically abusive, but each are sufficient to mark the memories and personalities of Tengo and Aomame. Hartman mentions in his article on Ross Macdonald, "The real violence ... is perpetrated on the psyche" (116). The "crime" in Aomame's case was the narrow-minded fundamentalism of her parents' religious beliefs (reminiscent of the depiction of the feminist lesbians in KOS whose ideological anger blinded them to individual, ethical thought – their "crime"). Aomame's childhood, her ability to make ethical decisions, and her identity as an individual were effaced by her parents' religious beliefs and practices. Unable to make her own decisions, Aomame repressed her personality, seeking to blend in with her classmates (even though her faith practices made her distinctive) and denying her intellectual abilities in order to avoid drawing attention to herself. She can only become a person by separating herself from her parents and their faith – leaving them and living her own life, making her own decisions. Her identity and her childhood had been stolen from her and her life became a search for the self that was lost in her past. This past inner "crime" reflects the outer crimes committed by the cult religion, Sakigake. Its followers relinquish their past lives and their past identities when they enter the enclosed community. They are no longer free to make their own decisions. They cut themselves off from the world and are absorbed by the community of the Sakigate, losing their independence and their individuality. The blind faith of its adherents sanctions child rape, murder, and kidnap. Their Leader is paralysed and his body is used by the voices, the Little People, whether or not his will agrees. He is not given the choice to submit. Again, he is unable to engage in decision-making. Tengo's father, who followed the Japanese government's promise of new life in Manchuria, returned disappointed only to devote himself, in turn, to the Japanese national broadcasting company. His blind faith in the state is equated to the mindless faith of the Sakigake followers. In the narrative, both are condemned. The individual faith arrived at by Aomame is approved. She arrives at this faith
as she asserts her identity and actively moves to oppose the fate that the Leader said has trapped her in the world of 1Q84. Similarly, Tengo persists in questioning his father to learn his true identity and, even if he never learns the complete story of his parentage, he too gains a degree of self-assurance. Resolution of their childhood traumas resolves the identities of both protagonists and frees them to love one another. The suggestion is that a blind faith, in either a religion or the national ideology, robs an individual of identity. There is also the suggestion that resistance is possible: the Leader does manage to bargain with Aomame and his effort, combined with the effort of his daughter, succeeds in bringing Tengo into the 1Q84 world.

The text of 1Q84 also plays with the reader in metatextual reflections on authorship and originality. Tengo is hired by the editor, Komatsu, to re-write the story dictated by Fuka-Eri (a pseudonym of Eriko Fukada, a dyslexic teenage girl). The subsequent re-written text is entered into a literary competition (with further references to the Akutagawa Prize) where it risks exposure to the crime of plagiarism. Continuing the tortured metatextuality, the final re-written text, Air Chrysalis, is wrongly named since it more accurately describes a cocoon. Within the text of 1Q84, the reader must work to decipher the intertextuality, as well as understanding the fantastically doubled worlds of 1984 and 1Q84. Like Aomame, the reader is challenged to claim the text:

> And if this story is mine as well as Tengo’s, then I should be able to write the story line too. I should be able to comment on what’s there, maybe even rewrite part of it. I have to be able to. Most of all, I should be able to decide how it’s going to turn out. Right? (856)

The challenge to the reader is to engage the text instead of being passively carried by it – to become critical readers. The application to the ethics of life is obvious.

Meanwhile, the reader learns that the content of Air Chrysalis, a story-with-a-story, is relevant to the plot of the novel 1Q84. The tension of the withheld Air Chrysalis story teases the reader until Aomame finally, casually, provides the reader with a reflection on the story in chapter nineteen of the second book. The story itself contains references to the splitting of the girl into doubles – as Aomame herself is split and the 1984 world is split into a double 1Q84 world. The originality, the identity, of the author and the text is playfully heightened by these self-reflective textual jokes. Tengo explains to Fuka-Eri the work of the protagonist in Orwell’s original novel 1984, “The protagonist works in a government office, 80 Akutagawa’s story "In a Grove" famously plays with the credibility of witnesses to a murder. Murakami wrote an introduction to a collection of Akutagawa’s short stories, translated by Jay Rubin, one of the translators of 1Q84.
and I'm pretty sure his job is to rewrite words" (257). Beneath the metatextual teasing lies the deeper question, what is true/real and what is false/unreal? This question affects the themes of work, wealth, and history identified in the earlier novels that were more strongly influenced by hard-boiled private eye fiction. Although 1Q84 moves away from the form of hard-boiled private eye fiction, these themes are retained but are less dominant in the text.

There is no single boku in 1Q84. Instead the three central characters, Aomame, Tengo, and later in book three, Ushikawa, all have paid employment. Aomame is quite well-established as a physical trainer and as a massage therapist. Tengo works part-time as a teacher of mathematics and Ushikawa is a private investigator, employed by Sakigake. Aomame most closely resembles the character of the hard-boiled private eye in her detached cool and in her sense of ethics in her hired job of assassinating rapists. However, none of the central consciousnesses conform to the trope of the hard-boiled private eye character. There are less of the digressions into cooking and cleaning (Tengo does cook and he also engages in housework) but plot momentum is slowed down occasionally to provide one or another protagonist time to think and to make decisions. The inner monologues are italicised in the text and important moments of decision-making are made clear in the text:

"I’m not afraid to die. If it comes to that, I’ll do it without hesitation. I can die smiling. But Aomame did not want to die ignorant, failing to grasp how things worked. I want to push myself to my limits, and if things don’t work out, then I can give up. But I will do everything I can until the bitter end. That’s how I live." (sic 572-3)

This is the attitude of the hard-boiled private eye engaged in the work of honest engagement with the self and with life. Tengo also has a moment when he explicitly decides to confront himself: "He couldn’t live forever like a frightened child, averting his eyes from the things before him. Only by learning the truth – whatever the truth might be – could people be given the right power" (589). Distinguishing what is true/real from what is false/unreal is the work that shapes the identities of Aomame and Tengo, allowing them to confront themselves and to develop in self-confidence. Tengo, certainly, develops from his youth, "... he had no idea what path he should pursue. His life seemed to lose its center of gravity ... His life had no purpose. He had no close friends. He was drifting ..." (579-80).

Once Tengo begins writing, his life settles: "Writing – especially fiction writing – is well suited to my personality, I think. It’s good to have something you want to do, and now I finally have it" (582). Tengo understands that meaningful work that engages the person is more

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81 The private detective, Ushikawa, appeared in WBC, where he was hired by Noboru Wataya to negotiate with the boku for a divorce.
worthwhile than a highly paid career that is meaningless to the individual. Work must satisfy. As Tengo visits his father and confronts his past, his identity coalesces; he becomes "a new person" (426) and feels "he had lowered a great burden from his back." Aomame also must make choices and work to gain her self-identity. The distinctive mix of italics, normal print, and bold in the text highlights the moment of decision-making in the interior dialogue. Confronting her fate, she decides:

    I wasn't brought here by chance ... I'm here because I'm supposed to be.

    Up until now, she thought, I believed I was dragged into this 1Q84 world not by my own will. ... But that's not the whole picture, Aomame told herself. That's not the whole picture at all.

    I am not just some passive being mixed up in this because someone else willed it. That might be partly true. But at the same time I chose to be here.

    I chose to be here of my own free will. (sic 855)

It is this decision by Aomame that allows the lovers to reunite and allows the resolution of their place in the "real" world of 1984. As in KOS, fate must be confronted and the characters must choose their own life, shape their own destiny.

The ambivalent hard-boiled attitude to wealth is also present in 1Q84, but again less obvious than in other earlier novels. Aomame, who is paid for her work as an assassin, gives a startled taxi driver a ten thousand yen note saying, "Never mind, just take it. Don't worry, I have more money than I know what to do with" (573). Her money, in true hard-boiled private eye style, is sitting in a safe deposit box. Although she uses the safe deposit box for security reasons, to avoid attracting attention to her profession of murder, Aomame is uninterested in money. She may wear some designer label clothes but she rejects the commodification of a goldfish: "Aomame felt incapable of buying one. She could not help but feel that paying money to take ownership of a living organism was inappropriate" (552). She buys a neglected rubber plant instead. Tengo, in true boku style, "was always hard up for money and wasn't at all stylish" (580). He declines Ushikawa's offer of a scholarship, "First of all, I don't like the idea of taking money from people I hardly know. Secondly, ... I really don't need the money. I have managed well enough so far ..." (336). In contrast, Ushikawa realizes the importance of commodities in the 1Q84 world where nothing is as it seems. He acknowledges to Tengo that "Money, ultimately, is just a kind of symbol of something else" (386). Money is a representation of the commodities that it can buy. When Tengo tells him that he has no interest in a life filled with commodities, Ushikawa explains the purpose of simulated commodities, "... we all need some kind of insurance, something to
lean on, a shelter from the wind." Commodities insulate people from reality, from self-confrontation. They distract. In contrast to Tengo's priorities, Ushikawa suggests that money is more reliable because age will rob Tengo of the things money cannot buy:

Once you pass a certain age, life becomes nothing more than a process of continual loss. Things that are important to your life begin to slip out of your grasp, one after another, like a comb losing teeth. And the only things that come to take their place are worthless imitations. Your physical strength, your hopes, your dreams, your ideals, your convictions, all meaning, or, there again, the people you love: one by one, they fade away. ... And once you lose them you can never get them back. Your search for replacements never goes well. (386)

This is an ironic twist to the more usual argument that money cannot buy love, health, friendship, integrity, happiness. Ushikawa had practiced debating when he was young (731) and had lost his sense of truth and identity. Staking his life on the acquisition of wealth, having lost his law license and his wife and family, Ushikawa has built his life on coldly and efficiently working as a private eye – he is not the ethical hard-boiled private eye hero.

Fuka-Eri's gaze reveals the emptiness of his life and morals to him, and the emptiness of his identity: "That beautiful girl saw me, my misshapen head and dirty spirit, hiding here, secretly snapping photos. ... The pain of her gaze still stabbed at him" (770). The self of the commodified individual is represented by Ushikawa and his life principles, "Be thick-skinned, have a hard shell around my heart, take one day at a time, go by the book. I'm just a machine. A capable, patient, unfeeling machine. ... It exists in order to exist" (771).

Ushikawa negatively parallels the values of the ethical hard-boiled private eye as the world of 1Q84 parallels 1984.

The theme of history is noticeably diminished in 1Q84 in contrast to the earlier novels WBC and KOS. While 1Q84 does retain the plot inner/outer plot structure of a past crime and past personal issues for the two protagonists to investigate and resolve, there is a second plot structure interwoven through the narration; the two lost childhood lovers who seek to be reunited. This combination of generic influences from hard-boiled private eye fiction and romance lessens the impact of the investigation into the past. In addition, there are fewer historical references and digressions throughout the text. The opening of 1Q84 does have a strong historical reference. There is the coincidence of Aomame hearing the opening of Janáček's Sinfonietta and uncannily knowing that it was written in 1926 which was the date of the death of the Taisho Emperor and the end of the Showa era: "It was the beginning of a terrible, dark time in this country, too [Japan]. The short interlude of
modernism and democracy was ending, giving way to fascism" (10). However, this is the only historical reference until chapter eight when Tengo's father is introduced and a brief background is given of his settlement and escape from Manchuria. Much less is made of wartime Manchuria in this novel than in either WBC or KOS. The secondary character, Tamaru, also receives a brief background sketch of his complicated multi-minority status. He was born from migrant Korean workers on the island of Sakhalin (disputed territory between Russia and Japan, and initially inhabited by the Ainu in the south and by the Nivkh people in the north, referred to as the Gilyak in the factual Chekhov reference). Tamaru was entrusted to a Japanese family who brought him to Hokkaido where he was given his Japanese name and placed in a Catholic orphanage. His story is a retelling of the many migrant minorities in Japanese history. Tamaru is also gay – representing a sexual minority. Waves of people (collective identities) pass over the land in Manchuria, Sakhalin, or Hokkaido, existing in a border-land that is represented in the fantastic world of 1Q84. It is as though the existence of such minorities is as tenuous to the dominant national reality as the existence of the parallel 1Q84 world is to the real world of 1984. These character backgrounds receive far less historical content than the more lengthy historical digressions in the previous novels, WBC and KOS. The digressive historical references are less in 1Q84.

Perhaps, it is more accurate to say that the theme of history is treated differently in the novel 1Q84. The whole narrative reflects on the past and the writing of history. Again, the question of what is true/real and what is false/unreal underlies the textual treatment of historiography. In chapter nine, the confused Aomame researches in newspapers about events from 1981 until 1984. She reads of the Yubari coal mine fire and deaths in Hokkaido (factual event), the knifing of a student by a NHK fee collector (fictional event), a joint American-Russian project to build a moon-base (fictional event), and the deaths of police and cult members in a shootout near Lake Motoso (fictional event recalling the factual events of the police-student shootout in Mount Asama (1972), and the riot police attack on the Aum Shinrikyo headquarters on Mount Fuji, 1995). Aomame concludes that her memory cannot be trusted and she is confronted with the distorted history of the 1Q84 world. Meanwhile, Tengo has spoken earlier to Fuka-Eri about Orwell's novel, Nineteen Eighty-Four. He explains:

"...Whenever a new history is written, the old histories all have to be thrown out. In the process, words are remade, and the meanings of current words are changed. What with history being rewritten so often, nobody knows what is true anymore. ..."

"They rewrite history."
"Robbing people of their actual history is the same as robbing them of part of themselves. It's a crime."

Fuka-Eri thought about that for a moment.

Tengo went on, "Our memory is made up of our individual memories and our collective memories. The two are intimately linked. And history is our collective memory. If our collective memory is taken from us – is rewritten – we lose the ability to sustain our true selves." (257)

This is a clear statement by Murakami of his interest in the writing of history. The official historiography of Japan's wartime activities is important to the formation of identity; both individual and national. In the background of the minor character, Ayumi, is her personal history of sexual abuse by her brother and her uncle. Ayumi tells Aomame that forgetting is a convenient balm for the memories of perpetrators of violence, a convenience not so easily available for the victims. Ayumi declares:

"I bet they don't even remember that something like that ever happened."

"Don't remember?"

"Sure, they can forget about it," Ayumi said. "I never can."

"Of course not," Aomame said.

"It's like some historic massacre."

"Massacre?"

"The ones who did it can always rationalize their actions and even forget what they did. They can turn away from things they don't want to see. But the surviving victims can never forget. They can't turn away. Their memories are passed on from parent to child. That's what the world is, after all: an endless battle of contrasting memories." (293)

It is a crime, therefore, to engage in the writing of history that deliberately distorts the presentation of past events for personal or for political purposes. Tengo learns that the honest work of the individual (the hard-boiled private eye) is to "take a hard, honest look at the past while standing at the crossroads of the present. Then he could create a future, as though he were rewriting the past. It was the only way." (364) Attempting to escape the past, or to rewrite the past, Tengo learns, will change nothing. It will not work.

IV. Conclusion

Murakami Haruki is not usually described as a political writer. This is certainly partly due to the popularity and the sales of his books. Only recently has he spoken publically
about political issues, in his acceptance speeches in Jerusalem (2009) and in Barcelona (2010). Stephen Snyder (1996) wrote regarding *HBW&EW*, that the walled Town could be read "as a metaphor for a Japan that hesitates to come to terms with its past or actively define a global role for its future" (75), but he adds in parenthesis "(though such a reading would be crediting Murakami with greater political consciousness than he is usually allowed.)" The significant word here is "allowed." Readers can be so set in their generic expectations that they will be blinkered to the boundaries of a form. Hard-boiled private eye fiction, and indeed all fiction, is political. Murakami’s texts have suffered from their delegation to entertainment writing, but only because the category "entertainment writing" was first placed in an inferior position in the genre hierarchy.

The new novel by Murakami, *1Q84*, is written in the third person pronoun. This is an unusual step since most of Murakami's work is in the first person; the events seen through the eyes of a central consciousness. The shift in consciousness may represent a desire to see events in an ever broader perspective, beyond boundaries. Learning to understand more deeply the functions and possibilities of genres, historiography, language and nationality, and the crimes of work, wealth, and the past would be a worthwhile project. It would be a step towards a unity of *bokutachi*.
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