Between Jazz, Cherry Blossoms, and Baseball: Transculturality in the Publications of Murakami Haruki

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Abstract

In this day and age a continuous flow of ideas and culture takes place, which is part of the globalisation process. These exchanges influence the development of a transcultural literature. Murakami Haruki is not only a transcultural writer, but one of the most popular and internationally acclaimed authors of contemporary Japanese literature who has changed the literary scene in Japan since the publication of his debut novel Kaze no uta o kike *(Hear the Wind Sing). Murakami has experimented with postmodern expressions and eventually developed his own writing style, which integrates elements of Western cultures into his works. This paper focuses on the author's transcultural strategy, which is often reflected in his choice of the setting and time frame, the frequent mentioning of cultural consumer goods and linguistic features such as the utilisation of loanwords. In particular, references to music and literature play a major role in Murakami's publications. This paper analyses how and to what extent transculturality influences the characters, their actions, and the storyline on the basis of the short story "Nemuri" (Sleep) published in 1989. In the process it is concluded that, above all, these references underpin aspects such as the search for identity, the escape into 'another world', and the rejection of societal norms and values.*

Keywords: Murakami Haruki, Japanese Literature, Transcultural Writer, Transculturality

Introduction

The Japanese author and translator Murakami Haruki 村上春樹 (b. 1949) is not only known in Japan, but has made a name for himself in America and Europe as well. The author is counted among a generation of writers who released their debut novels around 1980 and stroke a new path with their selection of topics and their experimentation with new writing styles. Therefore, Murakami is frequently referred to as 'a "postmodernist" by both Japanese and Western critics alike' (Iwamoto 1993: 295). Postmodernist writing is characterised by ambivalence, continuous destructuring and blending of norms and values—these are all aspects which are later on attributed to transnationalism and transculturality (Miyoshi 1989: 153). In other words, '[n]othing is stable any longer, anything is possible and may evolve in any direction' (Frentiu 2011: 62). Consequently, literary texts written in this mode do not only encourage change and transformation, but also aim at a new perspective on and the reconstruction of the world, societies, and cultures (ibid.: 64-65). Murakami grew up in a society infused with postmodern characteristics, viewed as responsible for the author's choice to rely strongly on postmodern methods within his literature: 'Murakami experiments with language, genre, realism, and fantasy, in order to explore the outer limits of postmodern expression' (Strecher 1998: 356). In this sense, the writer is described as a symbolic representative of his generation, who was able to use and appropriate postmodern literary practices to overcome cultural borders and expand into the area of transculturality (Frentiu 2011: 60).

The cultural scientist Iwabuchi Kōichi 岩渕功一 defines 'transnational' as complex, border-crossing 'culture flows under global forces' (2002: 16), which are not bound to international institutions or organisations, but may also be initiated by individuals such as authors. The writer Murakami Haruki has affiliated himself to these transnational flows by using references from different, mostly Western, cultures and therefore applying a transcultural strategy in his publications: this frequent usage of various intertextual references detaches them from their former attribution to a western cultural context and gives them a new and transnational meaning (Iwabuchi 2002: 16-17). The transcultural elements he uses can be described as inter-textual references to, e.g., music, literature, or events, which are embedded into a foreign culture and play an important role as integral part of the literary works (Walch 2004: 22).

Using one selected short story as an example and for a more detailed analysis, the paper explores the way these transcultural elements and reference points are used in Murakami's short fiction based on the concept of transculturality, and examines how and to what extent the story line, the characters, and their actions are affected. In other words, the following research questions will be kept in mind and will guide this paper: What kind of transcultural strategy does Murakami use? What roles do references to music and literature play for the characters and the story-line? In order

to analyse how Murakami evokes transculturality in his literature, the method of close reading is used.

Living and Writing in a Transnational and Transcultural World

Transnationalism as Part of the Globalisation Process

Due to the ongoing globalisation process, differences between societies or cultures become less and less distinctive. Today, advanced technologies and easily accessible means of long-distance transportation have contributed to an increasing convergence between societies and cultures. Furthermore, they lead to an increase of border-crossing practices and an intensified exchange. Identities, be they individual or collective, are changing, regardless of the degree of experience of individuals or groups with other cultures—either first-hand or through the media. This transformation is described by the term 'transnational' (Berg and Éigeartaigh 2010: 8-9). In general, transnationalism is considered 'an emergent phenomenon associated with the accelerating globalization process in the past several decades' (Yang 2000: 253). Theories of transnationalism therefore deal with the increasing intermixture of societies, when borders between nations become more and more blurred.

The British sociologist Stuart Hall has defined globalisation as a process 'by which the relatively separate areas of the globe come to intersect in a single imaginary "space" […] bridged by connections' (1995: 190). The continuing globalisation process is responsible for the transformation of certain aspects in our daily lives and, as a result, a 'transnational lifestyle may become not the exception but the rule' (Levitt 2001: 4). Furthermore, the theory of transnationalism also takes into account the international relations between individuals, who are subject to a constant flow of information. This mobility and flexibility of multi-directional and border-crossing flows generate a seemingly borderless world, where objects, cultural elements, ideas, and values are passed on from one society to another (Iwabuchi 2002: 16-17). Concurrently, this development leads to another interesting effect: 'Today in a culture's internal relations […] there exists as much foreignness as in its external relations with other cultures' (Welsch 1999: 197-198).[1] Both this foreignness within a single culture and the continuous blurring of borders between cultures is based on the above described concept of transnationalism and in this paper the term 'transcultural' is used to describe the occurring phenomenon worldwide as well as in Japan.

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[1] For a more detailed discussion on the development of transculturality, see Juen 2016: 12-21.

Although the term 'homogeneous'[2] has often been used to describe Japan, academics point out that the Japanese society is 'exceptionally prepared to be transcultural […] perhaps it even *is* transcultural in its structure' (Welsch 2002: 92). In fact, Japan has been deeply influenced throughout its history by the frequent import of cultural elements—first from Asia and later on from Europe and the United States—which coexisted and eventually became part of Japanese culture. This process of coexistence and adoption are important aspects of the transcultural age (ibid.: 93-94).

Transcultural Writers

In the last decade, the number of people crossing cultural and national borders is steadily increasing, which influences diverse areas of cultural production, such as literature. As a result, a new type of literature labelled 'transcultural writing' is emerging. The cultural identities of transcultural authors are ambiguous and, at the same time, they represent a part of the dynamic and mobile net of relations between diverse cultures. Transcultural writers find themselves amidst intercultural transactions, transnational exchange, and nomadic lifestyles, and they process these experiences in their literature (Dagnino 2013: 131-132).

More and more people 'are pursuing lives that link the local and the global' (Slimbach 2005: 205) and therefore decide to live their lives between different cultures: 'Today, who we are (by birth) and where we are (by choice) is not as relevant as it once was' (ibid.: 205). Their every-day lives are formed by transcultural experiences and a constant exposure to new knowledge and information, which are absorbed, adapted, or transformed. Consequently, transcultural writers point to the adaptable aspects of cultures and state that traditional dichotomies, such as North and South or the West and the Orient, are no longer sustainable concepts. Instead they are gradually replaced by 'transculturality'. This concept 'assumes that there is a process of change and of evolution which is necessary among different cultures' (Coleman 1996: 37).

Transcultural writers use not only their cultural origins or background but also refer to a multitude of elements of the societies and cultures they experienced in order to develop their writing-styles, settings, and plots. Often their characters live in transcultural worlds and have to deal with different cultures, views, and norms on a daily basis, which further shapes their identities (Dagnino 2013: 132-133). To a

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[2] Theories and discussions focusing on issues of Japanese national and cultural identity are part of the *nihonjinron* 日本人論, the discourse on what it means to be 'Japanese'. Many popular publications share the universal hypothesis of the homogeneity and uniqueness of Japan and its society and are aiming to analyse, explore, and explain Japanese mentality and culture. For critical accounts on the *nihonjinron*, see Befu 2001; Befu and Manabe 1991; Dale 1986.

certain extent, these writers have adapted to the developments and transformations in contemporary culture, and therefore to the accelerating transcultural world (Epstein 2009: 341).

Murakami Haruki: The Person Behind the Stories

Murakami Haruki grew up in the suburbs of Kōbe. Both his parents were teaching Japanese literature, which was accompanying Murakami from his childhood on. However, as soon as he was able to make his own decisions, he rebelled against the cultural traditions represented by his parents and turned to Western novels. Due to the port in his hometown, he had unlimited access to second-hand books, which were imported by the locally stationed American marines and soon became the focus of his life: 'I loved it − reading a foreign language. It was a new world to me' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 556).

After graduating from university, Murakami began writing and published his debut novel *Kaze no uta o kike* 風の歌をきけ (Hear the Wind Sing) in 1979. At the same time, he was running a Jazz-bar in Tōkyō and consequently was able to integrate two very important aspects of his life—namely American music such as Jazz and Rock and his love for Western literature—into the stories (Hirano 2011: 30). Although Murakami was awarded the *Gunzō Shinjin Bungakushō* 群像新人文学賞 (Gunzō New Writers' Prize) for his debut novel in the year 1979, he soon decided to leave Japan: 'I was so different from other writers here. I was a black sheep in the literary world of Japan' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 554). In diverse scientific articles, Murakami's journey to Europe and America is described as an escape or turning away from Japan, and terms such as 'detachment' are frequently used (Hirano 2011:73). However, for the writer himself, leaving Japan was like pressing a reset button, which allowed him to focus on his work, experience the American culture first-hand, and explore his own identity (ibid.: 73-74).

In 1995, Murakami returned to his country of birth in the aftermath of the Tōkyō subway sarin attack and the Kōbe earthquake, stating he wanted to take over social responsibilities and help the country and the people to overcome these crises: 'I felt I had to go back to Japan and do something' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 557). This change of heart from detachment to commitment affected Murakami's writing significantly: 'I am looking for a new image of myself, of my life. It's a turning point, I guess' (ibid.: 556). And although he did not change his transcultural writing strategy, the themes of his stories changed (Hirano 2011: 101).

In general, Murakami's publications capture the mood of his own generation and they are an example of the predominant spirit of the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, the story-line and characters are affected by emotions such as nostalgia and longing (*natsukashisa* 懐しさ) (Gebhardt 2001: 190-191). One of the author's favourite

subject matter is social transformation and the problematic relationship between the postmodern Japanese society and a given individual. In Japan, individuals are expected to submit themselves in order to be part of a group such as a household (*ie* 家) or a corporate culture (Kawakami 2002: 309-310). However, Murakami's characters do not want to be governed by rules enforced by tradition or societal norms. Instead, they decide to take their lives in their own hands and break out of the net of values and norms surrounding them (ibid.: 333-334). Other frequently used topics include loneliness, loss, separation, and the desire for individual fulfilment. In many cases, the characters explore the origins of their feelings to give their lives some meaning. Murakami's characters have common jobs, they are often not able to relate to the outside world, and prefer living in their own, isolated worlds filled with music or literature. In their lives there is nothing apparently wrong; however, something is seemingly missing and, as a result, the characters are constantly in search of this missing part of themselves, which may be love, a feeling of security, a soul mate, or fulfilment (Welch 2005: 55-56).

Murakami Haruki has made a significant contribution to the current literary age (Iwamoto 1993: 295): American critics distinguish his first novel as 'a significant turning point' and 'a revolutionary change in Japanese literature' (Seats 2006: 118). Today, he is counted among the most influential Japanese writers of his generation and is one of the most popular and frequently read Japanese contemporary authors worldwide. One major reason for this is his transcultural strategy, which balances familiar and unfamiliar elements for both Japanese and non-Japanese readers. The reference points in Murakami's publications are exotic and familiar at the same time, and they are firmly integrated into the storyline and the life of the characters (Suter 2008: 132-133).

Murakami's writing style represents the increasingly globalised and transcultural age we live in. Consequently, literary critics express the view that 'once borders are crossed, literary categories can so easily change' (Seats 2006: 25) and refer to a transcultural literary category, which is able to attract the attention of readers around the world through relatable themes and characters as well as the use of transcultural (intertextual) references. Debates surrounding the success of the writer are all part of the so-called *Murakami genshō* 村上現象 (Murakami phenomenon) (ibid.: 25-26). One aspect concerning the spread of the phenomenon stresses that with his publications he was able to adapt to a constantly transforming globalised world (ibid.: 28).

Murakami Haruki and his Transcultural Strategy

Murakami Haruki pursues a transcultural strategy, which is characterised by the use of different narrative means, like his choice of the setting and time-frame as well as the integration of cultural consumer goods and linguistic features such as *katakana*

カタカナ, a syllabary used for the writing of loan words and the transcription of foreign words into Japanese. Particularly, his references to music and literature play an important role in most of his publications.[3] Furthermore, this strategy is influenced by Murakami's activities as a translator of foreign—mostly American—literature into Japanese (Schiedges 2007: 310-311).

According to the American literary scholar Rebecca Suter (2008: 7), Murakami has taken over the responsibilities of a cultural mediator, who 'has introduced American culture to Japanese readers both by means of numerous translations and by incorporating elements of Western cultures into his texts'. Therefore, she suggests that his roles as translator and writer influence each other (ibid.: 7-8). Murakami himself acknowledged using each translation to advance and transform his writing style and get new inspirations and ideas for his own works (Murakami and Nakagami 1985: 30).

Another important aspect for Murakami's development as a writer is the cultural environment he was brought up and lived in. Since Murakami grew up in a postmodern Japan, he was constantly confronted with dynamic, divergent, and transcultural lifestyles. According to the writer, he was surrounded by foreign culture: 'American culture was strong. I didn't choose it. It was there' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 555); therefore, he used his knowledge and surroundings to integrate them into his own novels. His characters use the notion of transculturality not only to distinguish themselves from the Japanese culture; the concept rather helps them to pursue individuality and to give meaning and sense to the world they live in. Thus, transcultural elements merge with Murakami's setting and the characters accept this transcultural milieu without hesitation (Suter 2008: 139). Moreover, his transcultural strategy highlights that the Japanese society has already absorbed and adapted diverse cultural elements. In this sense, Murakami's utilisation of imported cultural consumer goods suggests that they are no longer viewed as something foreign (Walley 1999: 41-42). Instead they are perceived as part of the Japanese society and integrated 'in the form of consumable images which constitute the everyday life of the characters' (Ellis 1995: 151).

In this sense, Murakami uses transculturality to achieve a sense of alienation as part of his core strategies; the 'foreign', however, is never perceived as sonething exotic.. Readers are easily able to gather more information about the mentioned cultural references and are often able to identify with the characters and their actions are influenced by these (Suter 2008: 55). The used goods are described as 'easily recognizable icons that give his texts an exotic appeal and a connotation of sophistication and cosmopolitanism' (ibid.: 5). Therefore, Murakami mostly focuses on popular culture when choosing references from diverse cultures for his works, but

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[3] For a more detailed summary on the various references used in Murakami's short stories as of 2016, see Juen 2016: 127-129.

aspects relating to the so-called 'high culture' may also be found. However, since Murakami uses these esteemed cultural elements as consumer goods, which leads to their commercialisation, the former twofold separation between high and low culture becomes increasingly blurred (ibid.: 130). References to classical, philosophical, and literary traditions or writers appear for instance in his second story entitled *1973-nen no pinbōru 1973* 年のピンボール (Pinball, 1973), and include the French writer and critic '[Marcel] Proust' (Murakami 2015: 123) or the German philosopher '[Immanuel] Kant' (ibid.: 2015: 176). In his writings, he attempts to escape the conventional reality of life in Japan and uses the effect of alienation 'not to *create* a distance from the West but a distance *through* the West', which helps him to create a new, multi-layered version of reality (Suter 2008: 9).

Narrative Features

As already mentioned above, the writer Murakami Haruki uses different narrative features and the integration of cultural consumer goods as part of his transcultural strategy. The Nobel laureate in Literature Ōe Kenzaburō 大江健三郎 expressed in an interview that Murakami's stories, and especially their settings, are characterised by a high level of geographical mobility: 'If you translate it into American English it can be read very naturally in New York' (Ōe and Ishiguro 1991: 118)—thereby addressing one important aspect of Murakami's transcultural strategy. Murakami's literature seems to be flexible and cosmopolitan and, as a result, attracts readers from all over the world (ibid.: 118). Consequently, the setting of his stories is easily interchangeable with other settings and represents an independent variable. Confronted with this aspect of local ambiguity, the author explained his thoughts behind it: he wanted 'to depict Japanese society through that aspect of it that could just as well take place in New York or San Francisco' (Murakami, quoted after Loughman 1997: 90). Murakami uses different settings as well as the option of replacing them to show that the societies and cultures around the world are not that different. For instance, his characters could be living in New York, London, or Tōkyō and their everyday lives would not differ that much, because every culture is influenced by other cultures and adopts certain elements, which merge over time (Loughman 1997: 90). Often, the geographical distance to Japan is used to allow for recommencement or to open up new perspectives for the characters. The setting helps them to start a new phase in their lives like, e.g., the protagonist in the story "Rēdāhōzen" レーダーホーゼン (Lederhosen), who leaves her family behind after she goes on a trip to Germany by herself, where she discovers independency and reaches a new sense of self-fulfilment (Murakami 2003c).

The second characteristic of Murakami's transcultural strategy is related to the temporal setting of his stories. The writer uses mostly references which are linked to American songs, movies, or international popular events, instead of references to

historical incidents that are more common in Japanese literature (Suter 2008: 133). According to the literary critic Karatani Kōjin 柄谷行人, in "Pinball, 1973" Murakami uses a time frame, which evokes a feeling of nostalgia in the readers and helps them to put themselves in the protagonist's place. For instance, the year 1960 is described as 'the year Bobby Vee sang "Rubber Ball"' (Murakami 2015: 221). Karatani (1995: 102) observes that although Murakami knows exactly what the year 1960 means in Japanese history—it is the year of the controversial renewal of the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan—he chooses to ignore the significance of this event and concentrates on song titles and music in order to establish a time frame. As a matter of fact, the writer often prefers to use references to music like, e.g., in the short story "Hanarei Bei" ハナレイ・ベイ (Hanalei Bay), where he utilises the phrase 'The age of Elvis is long gone' (Murakami 2007b: 337) to capture the changing mood on the islands of Hawaii. He resorts to Elvis Presley (1935−1977), a cultural icon and the 'King of Rock and Roll', whose music was especially popular in the 1960s and 1970s, as reference in order to establish a time frame for the story. Referring to American culture which, in this case, is represented through Elvis is a means for Murakami to turn a blind eye on certain aspects of Japanese history and, instead, draw attention to an alternative version of reality (Suter 2008: 134). However, if he refers to a historical event, Murakami uses incidents of the Western world instead of events which have taken place in Japan. For instance, the writer refers to the year 1934 as the year when Hitler began to conquer Europe (Murakami 2003b: 115). According to Karatani (1995: 102), with this focus on incidents outside of Japan Murakami points out the importance of the connections between different cultures, and emphasises the ability 'to look beyond the confines of a single culture' (Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 553).

Another aspect of Murakami's transcultural strategy is the use of consumer goods from different cultures, which are integrated into the setting and inspire the protagonists. These goods represent 'the massive material of city life' (Kawakami 2002: 321), and Murakami applies them in a condensed form. His stories are filled with references to cultural consumer goods and his characters are not able to escape them, since they are part of their everyday life. Instead, they accept these goods and often use them to their advantage (ibid.: 321-322). Furthermore, the author points out the modernity and transculturality of the Japanese society. According to the British sociologist Mike Featherstone (1991: 86), Murakami uses transcultural consumer goods such as food, movies, brands, literature, and music to describe his characters as 'heroes of consumer culture'. In many cases the protagonists are completely absorbed in their worlds filled with consumer goods, and even their characteristic features, hobbies, or interests are based on them (Kawakami 2002: 323-324). For instance, in the short story "Hito kui neko" 人喰い猫 (Man-Eating Cats), the protagonist is an enthusiastic collector of jazz records:

> Most of the albums were out of print and it had taken a lot of time and money to collect them. I had diligently made the rounds of record shops, making trades with other collectors, slowly building up my archives. (Murakami 2007a: 157)

This passionate—and sometimes compulsive—consumption of cultural goods by the characters is frequently regarded as compensation for the missing social environment and the isolation of the protagonists (Kawakami 2002: 324).

Linguistic Features

Murakami also uses linguistic means, such as loan words from different languages, as part of his transcultural writing strategy. Since the opening of Japanese ports in connection with the *Meiji Ishin* 明治維新 (Meiji Restoration) in 1868, Japan has imported numerous words and phrases from different Western languages. As a result, the Japanese language is constantly transforming. The language does not only adopt various words on a regular basis—as the annual publication of new editions of dictionaries may indicate—but also the Japanese syntax tends to absorb foreign elements and consequently transforms itself (Birnbaum 2002: 2).

One of the languages Murakami most commonly refers to in his works is English. His Japanese texts not only integrate words and phrases based on the English language, but his writing style in general rests upon his knowledge and experience with American literature. Consequently, in some cases, the author makes use of typical phrases used in English novels to characterise his protagonists, like e.g. '*sore wa warukunai*' それは悪くない (Not Bad!) (Matsuoka 1993: 434). In the last decades, the Japanese language has transformed noticeably and Murakami has taken advantage of these developments, since his utilisation of different languages within the Japanese language can be used for a relatively authentic description of contemporary society. In fact, everyday life in Japan 'has become filled with so much of translation that his Japanese, which bears traces of American English, does not seem so very foreign anymore' (Matsuoka 1993: 435).

In addition, Murakami uses *katakana*-syllabary to indicate loanwords adopted from different foreign languages in both his own works and his translations. The examples of this strategy are numerous, they conform to the tendency in the contemporary linguistic usage, and mostly attract younger readers (Schiedges 2007: 318). Furthermore, *katakana*-words are viewed as appealing and interesting 'because they are associated with a modern and sophisticated lifestyle' (Suter 2008: 65).

Given that in Japan, in the 1980s, English loan words were mostly used in the area of marketing, Murakami Haruki appeared to be a pioneer in transferring this new vocabulary to the literary field. Moreover, his usage of loan words differs from the forms that are common in Japan. For instance, in the case of Murakami's transcriptions and adaptations of English words, the pronunciation is often quite similar

to the original. Thereby, the writer is able to emphasise the otherness or foreignness while at the same time gives them an individual touch: 'I don't like abbreviations like *wāpuro* or *pasokon* (especially in the case of foreign words), and I always use *wādopurosesā*, *konpyūtā* or *Makkintoshu* instead' (Murakami, quoted after Suter 2008: 69). In addition, Murakami also uses *katakana* in connection with the names of his characters: 'Each word [*kanji*] has its own image as a Chinese character. I wanted to avoid those characterizations. If I put the name in *katakana*, it's more anonymous […]' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 562). Thus, the writer tries to avoid both stereotypes and the categorisation of his protagonists on the basis of the used *kanji* 漢字, that is, Chinese characters. The Japanese literary critic Mitsuyoshi Numano 光吉沼野 analysed Murakami's first novel and asserted that the *katakana*-syllabary is mostly used in connection with food or meals and, as a result, sets itself apart from the Japanese language. However, it is stressed that although these consumer goods already are part of the everyday life in Japanese society, Murakami chooses to draw attention to them by letting his characters almost exclusively have foreign snacks as well as by using the syllabary to describe whole scenes (Mitsuyoshi 1989: 150). Although these examples are numerous they never overwhelm the setting, plot, or characters in the stories. On the contrary, Murakami stresses that his texts are not colonised by foreign languages, words, or phrases, but absorb, adapt, and transform them, thus being able to become part of both the Japanese language and his stories (Suter 2008: 72-73).

Music and Literature as Main Components

As already mentioned, Murakami Haruki uses numerous references related to musicians, song titles, and records as well as writers, book titles, and quotes. The author integrates these elements into his narrative by creating scenes in which his characters read books, carry on conversations about writers and musicians, or listen to different kinds of music. In nearly eighty per cent[4] of his short stories and novels published between 1979 and 2015, he integrated transcultural elements in the form of musical and literary references. Consequently, these two aspects account for the lion's share in Murakami's transcultural strategy (Suter 2008: 135).

Murakami is an enthusiastic music-fan, and especially likes Western music of all kinds, like Jazz, classical music, or rock music in particular (Rubin 2002: 13)—'I was influenced very strongly by music' (Murakami, quoted after Ellis and Hirabayashi 2005: 567). Already in his youth, Murakami was confronted with imported American music, and for the first time in 1963 he listened to the iconic song 'Surfing USA' from The Beach Boys, who were especially popular in the 1960s and

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[4] In all of the published novels Murakami refers to music or literature at some point (Juen 2016: 130), whereas 42 of the 57 released short stories use such references (ibid.: 64-65).

1970s. From this moment onwards American music accompanied him in his life and influenced his development as a writer. When he started to write his debut novel *Kaze no uta o kike*, he was short on experience and turned to music:

> At one point, I thought I should write the book as if I was playing good music. What good music requires is good rhythm, good harmony, good melody line. Three things. Writing is the same – rhythm, harmony, and melody. Once I realized that, it got easier for me to write. (Murakami, quoted after Ellis/Hirabayashi 2005: 567)

The writer uses the rhythm, harmony, and melody of a song to draw inspiration for his own stories, settings, and characters. Furthermore, for his debut novel he chose a title which calls upon the reader to take a break and listen to the music of the wind (Rubin 2002: 13).

However, it is not only Murakami's writing style that is based on the rhythm of music such as Jazz; his characters often embody the American culture and music of the 1960s and 1970s as well. The writer uses different song titles to trigger the emotion of nostalgia and, through the music, the protagonists often remember a certain feeling or sentiment. In a manner of speaking, music is often the key for the respective narrative (Aoki 1996: 266-267). For instance, in Murakami's short story "Gogo no saigo no shibafu" 午後の最後の芝生 (The Last Lawn of the Afternoon), the protagonist hears a song in the radio and remembers his college years: '[...] that's when Jim Morrison was singing "Light My Fire", or Paul McCartney "The Long and Winding Road" – maybe I'm scrambling my years a bit […]' (Murakami 2003d: 183). This passage is an example of how music and song titles help the characters think back to a certain moment of their life and, simultaneously, take the reader with them. Murakami uses this technique quite often to start off a narrative, describe a certain situation, and point out important aspects and moments in his characters' lives (Ōta 2013: 92).

Like in the case of music, Murakami also encountered Western literature and writers very early in his youth and read one American novel after another. As a result, the publications of American writers became the literary foundation on which Murakami not only bases his writing style, but his choice of topics as well. Especially F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896−1940) is described as being an important model, but authors such as Raymond Chandler (1888−1959), Raymond Carver (1938−1988), or John Irving (b. 1942) contributed to Murakami's curiosity of trying out various writing methods and styles while urging him to experiment with, e.g., realism, science fiction, romance, or mystery stories (Matsuoka 1993: 424-425). Other writers whose works Murakami admires and who had an influence on his own writing are the Russian novelists Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821−1881) and Leo Tolstoy (1828−1910) (Murakami and Nakagami 1985: 18).

Already in his first publications, the writer uses intertextual references to introduce the reader to some of his own favourite novels and the American and European

writers he is fond of. These references can be found in the form of the passing mentioning of titles of books, name-dropping of famous authors, or quotations of novels or phrases. For instance, the protagonist in "Pinball, 1973" is describing the smile of a woman like the one from the 'Cheshire Cat in *Alice in Wonderland* (Murakami 2015: 109) or he is reading the *Critique of Pure Reason* by Immanuel Kant and, from time to time, he is quoting certain phrases from it (ibid.: 176). Another option is the integration of literature into a more fictional setting to connect the narrative to reality. For instance, in the short story "Kaeru-kun, Tōkyō o sukuu" かえるくん、東京を救う (Frog Saves Tōkyō), the frog has a fondness for Russian classical literature such as Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (Murakami 2003e: 94). Furthermore, he starts a conversation with the protagonist about fear, power, and the imagination of humans while quoting intellectuals such as the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844−1900) or the American writer Ernest Hemingway (1899−1961) (Akins 2012: 64).[5]

Transculturality in the Short Story "Nemuri" 眠り (Sleep)

The following section represents an example of the in-depth analysis of Murakami's short stories undertaken in the master's thesis on which this paper is based.[6] For this purpose, I have chosen the short story "Nemuri", which was published in 1989 and translated as "Sleep" into English in 1993 as part of a collection of short stories in the volume *The Elephant Vanishes*. The narrative will be analysed by focussing on the characters, while keeping in mind the role of musical and literary references. In this short story, both the focal point and reference frame in connection with transculturality rest on literature, whereas musical references are passing allusions.

The narrative is written from the point of view of a woman and the protagonist-narrator uses the female form of 'I', *watashi* 私. The protagonist is married to a dentist and is raising a son. Furthermore, she is an exemplary housewife: every day she does the same chores, such as cooking, cleaning, washing, and basically dedicates her entire life to her family. One day she awakes from a nightmare and she is not able to get back to sleep. Therefore, she decides to read Leo Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*, published in 1877/1878. However, the sleep never comes and after a

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[5] Murakami not only applies musical and literary references within the narratives, but sometimes already in the titles of his publications. Whereas the novel *Noruwei no mori* ノルウェイの森 (Norwegian Wood) is titled after a mistranslation of a song by the English rock band The Beatles, which is common use in Japan (see Murakami 1987), the novel *Umibe no Kafuka* 海辺のカフカ (Kafka on the Shore) refers to Franz Kafka (1883−1924) and the narrative of Oedipus in the Greek mythology (see Murakami 2002).

[6] For further information and the complete case study, see Juen 2016: 63-106.

few days of sleeplessness *watashi* accepts the fact that she suffers from a strange form of sleep disorder—similar to the one she experienced while being a university student. From that moment onwards, she mechanically fulfils her duties of house-wife and mother by day, while dedicating herself to various novels during the night. While reading she remembers that she used to love and devour books, but then gave up reading completely and simply forgot them after she got married. She now wants to get back to the person she once was, because books have always been an im-portant part of her life. The short story ends with *watashi* sitting in her car at night looking at the ocean.

Search for Identity

Watashi's life is built around her family and she fulfils all their needs. Thereby, 'each day [was] pretty much a repetition of the one before' (Murakami 2003a: 81). Her life seems monotonous and is filled with repetitive tasks, until she has the nightmare and decides to read *Anna Karenina* to calm herself down: 'I chose Anna Karenina. I was in the mood for a long Russian novel […]' (ibid.: 86). The last time she sat down unhurriedly and concentrated on a book was during her time as a university student. Since then, her daily commitment as a wife and mother never stopped. However, her whole childhood and youth was accompanied by books, and *watashi* basically used to live in these literary worlds.

Early on books became the centre around which *watashi*'s life and existence evolved, and as a result she went to university to study English literature. She even wrote her thesis on the New Zealander writer Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923). However, the marriage changed everything: 'Without noticing it, I had become accustomed in this way to a life without books. How strange, now that I think of it' (ibid.: 87). Without actually realising it she gave up an important part of her life and, in particular, her own identity.

In the story's present, while reading, *watashi* discovers chocolate stains on the pages of the novel:

> Just after the middle of Volume 3, I found a few crumbling flakes of chocolate stuck between the pages. I must have been eating chocolate as I read the novel when I was in high school. I used to like to eat and read. (ibid.: 90)

These stains bring back memories and *watashi* recalls her ten-year-younger self, holed up in her dorm, immersing herself in one literary world after the other while, at the same time, eating titbits. *Watashi* used to have a sweet tooth, but suddenly she notices that 'I hadn't touched chocolate since my marriage. My husband doesn't like me to eat sweets […]' (ibid.: 90). As a result, *watashi* has not only abandoned literary works, but gradually changed her entire being, including her eating habits, after the marriage.

On the one hand, the novel *Anna Karenina* is the catalyst, which helps *watashi* to remember her former self and how much she loved to read and study literature. Now she realises that this part of her identity is missing and she has to find it again. On the other hand, the literary work represents the remains of the life she gave up and thus becomes a symbol of her desire to restore herself. At the beginning, she projects this sentiment on connecting elements, such as the chocolate stains she found, and expresses the feeling by explaining 'I felt a tremendous urge to have the real thing. I wanted to eat chocolate while reading *Anna Karenina*, the way I did back then' (ibid.: 90). As her insomnia lasts for some time and she reads night after night, *watashi* realises that she does not only crave sweets, but wants to move backwards and be the person she was before the marriage, who in fact is her true self.

Escape Into 'Another World'

When *watashi* is woken by her nightmare, she immediately seeks—possibly in her subconscious—shelter and comfort in something familiar and ends up in a literary world. The fictive world is her escape from reality, and with every page she reads she remembers more and more how she spent consecutive days reading in her room and avoiding all contact with her environment. Reading, thinking about the characters, and exploring the literary world were 'the center of my life' (Murakami 2003a: 87), and for some time *watashi* literally lived inside the narratives. Furthermore, the protagonist remembers that in her childhood she spent a lot of time alone, only with her books keeping her company:

> I was the third of five children, and both my parents worked, so nobody paid much attention to me. I could read alone as much as I liked. (ibid.: 87)

Watashi basically used to escape into the literary worlds, which represented her own world, because no one in her family paid close attention to her. These worlds allowed her to be herself, while at the same time protected her of the feeling of loneliness and provided her with everything she did not get from her family at home. *Anna Karenina* is a symbol of this world she could live in—or rather escape to—when she had to go through some rough times or needed a distraction.

As in the story's present, *watashi* discovers that she does no longer need sleep; she uses this time to expand further into the literary world: 'Now, the hours from ten at night to six in the morning belonged to me alone. […] I could use this time in any way I liked' (ibid. 100). Consequently, at nights, *watashi* immerses herself in this rediscovered world and becomes obsessed with the plot, setting, and the characters of the novel. As soon as her husband and son leave the house after breakfast, she sits down on the couch and reads from where she had to stop earlier. Page after page she lives inside the narrative, putting herself in the position of the characters and, as a result, almost forgets about reality. More than once she quickly has to prepare

something to eat, because she loses sight of the time her husband is expected to be home, and often her thoughts would drift off to the novel while having a conversation with him. In addition, the novel on the table is a constant reminder: '*Anna Karenina* lay there beside him, but he didn't seem to notice. He had no interest in whether I read books' (ibid.: 92). On the one hand, *watashi* would have loved to talk about the narrative and discuss the characters or the plot. But on the other hand, she is not ready to share her own secret world with anybody. She wants to have this world for herself.

Although the protagonist tries to exhaust herself—for example by swimming—in order to be able to sleep again, it proves futile and, thus, she continues to live on in her own world, until she consciously isolates herself from the outside world:

> If I met someone I knew, I hardly said a word – just the basic civilities. I refused all invitations. "Sorry," I'd say. "I'm going straight home today. There's something I have to do". I didn't want to get involved with anybody. I didn't want to have to waste time on endless gossiping. (2003a: 95)

She spends her whole free time reading and, since she does not have to sleep at nights, she uses this time as well: 'No one would get in my way. No one would make demands on me' (ibid.: 100).

Furthermore, *watashi* is able to find additional time by completing her tasks, such as household chores, without thinking about them:

> After I gave up sleeping, it occurred to me what a simple thing reality is, how easy it is to make it work. It's just reality. Just housework. Just a home. Like running a simple machine. Once you learn to run it, it's just a matter of repetition. (ibid: 96)

As a result, the protagonist is able to gain time, which she can spend by reading or thinking about the literary world she is experiencing. Even conversations with her husband or spending time with her son become mechanical re-enactments. However, although *watashi* has not slept in over a week and her thoughts are constantly wandering around, no one—family members and her circle of friends alike—realises that she is isolating herself from her environment and performs her daily obligations without any feelings:

> No one noticed that I had changed – that I had given up sleeping entirely, that I was spending all my time reading, that my mind was someplace a hundred years – and a hundreds of miles – from reality. (ibid.: 96)

Through her immersion into her own world, *watashi* is feeling better and better, while her chain of thoughts gets more logical with every day. As a result, the protagonist reads *Anna Karenina* three times in a row, and every time she discovers something new, such as a riddle or specific descriptions: 'Together, these worlds

made up a single universe, and the universe waited there in the book to be discovered by the reader' (ibid.: 100).

Although *watashi* accepts that she suffers from insomnia, she goes to a library to read up on symptoms, medical diagnosis, and possible risks instead of seeing a physician. The protagonist specifically chooses to seek help in books—in her own world—and not confide it to another person. She thus completely opens herself to literature and lives in this other world: 'I was expanding my life, and it was wonderful' (ibid.: 100). Eventually, she reaches a point where even the mechanically performed household chores are getting on her nerves, and she considers them to be a burden, which is hindering her from living her life the way she wants to: 'I just wanted to stay by myself and quietly read my book. I wanted to have my hour of swimming every day. I wanted my freedom' (ibid.: 98). *Anna Karenina* represents this freedom the protagonist wants to accomplish and is finally able to find it in her own, created, and full of literature world, which she prefers from reality, her family, and her friends:

> Here I was – alive, and I could feel it. It was real. I wasn't being consumed, and that was what gave me this intensely real feeling of being alive. (ibid.: 100)

Rejection of Societal Norms and Values

Reading *Anna Karenina* is a determining factor for *watashi* to put her life, which is dominated by norms and values predominant in the Japanese society, into question. The narrative literally opens her eyes while the ongoing insomnia disrupts her monotone and repetitive everyday life. Simultaneously, the protagonist remembers her time at the university, when she also experienced a period of sleeplessness:

> I was still a student in those days. It was still possible for me to get away with something like that. But not now, I thought. Now I'm a wife. A mother. I have responsibilities. (Murakami 2003a: 88)

With this statement *watashi* refers to her responsibility as housewife and mother, which are based on the predominant nineteenth-century ideal for womanhood, known as *ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母 ('Good Wife, Wise Mother'). Before starting to read *Anna Karenina*, the protagonist feels forced to live up to this role which is ascribed to her by society. Since her marriage, she had fulfilled her role as loving mother and loyal wife, and the family took the centre stage in her life. However, now *watashi* feels the urge to escape from these norms and values and shape her life the way she wants to. The novel represents this longing for independence and self-determination.

With every day, these feelings grow stronger and stronger, until one night—while she is watching her sleeping son—the protagonist is overwhelmed by a strange feeling. Only after careful consideration she is able to describe it:

> And then it hit me. What bothered me about my son's sleeping face was that it looked exactly like my husband's. And exactly like my mother-in-law's. Stubborn. Self-satisfied. It was in their blood – a kind of arrogance I hated in my husband's family. (ibid.: 105)

Watashi sees the counterpart of her husband in her son, who in turn is influenced by his mother—*watashi*'s mother-in-law. With her norms and values, she is constantly blaming *watashi* and giving her the feeling of being not good enough or not meeting the requirements of the family. While observing her son sleeping, the protagonist is not able to shake off the feeling that she has already lost him—not only to the norms and values of the society, but also to his father and grandmother. All those people are influencing his development while growing up as well as his views or opinions: 'Even after he grows up, he'll never be able to understand me, just as my husband can hardly understand what I feel now' (ibid.: 105). She fears that someday her own son will turn away from her and she will no longer know who, as a person, he is. Somewhere down the road, they will be strangers to one another. Both society with their norms and values as well as their own family will drive a wedge into their relationship and she will no longer be able to bridge the gap: this 'thought made me terribly sad' (ibid.: 105).

Transculturality – Present and Future?

Beginning with the *Meiji Ishin*, western ideas and culture were imported to Japan and especially after World War II the country was flooded with American literature and music, which transformed the daily life in Japanese society. The transcultural contemporary writer Murakami Haruki is only one example of a new generation of writers who reflect on these developments in their literary texts. The author relies on the concept of transculturality and bases on it the development of his literary worlds. The environments in his books include various transcultural references and his characters practically live in a world filled with transcultural consumer goods, such as music and literature. Consequently, their actions are influenced by these surroundings, which play a significant role in their search for identity. This may lead to a self-elected isolation from the environment or induce the escape in a world of music and literature, as well as challenge the social norms and values predominant in Japanese society.

The transmission of goods, ideas, and cultural artefacts from one country to another has a long history. However, it was not until recently that scholars focused on the concept of transculturality in connection with the studies on globalisation. In a

globalised and transcultural world, the borders between societies become increasingly blurred and tend to absorb elements from each other. Writers such as Murakami Haruki refer to this new reality by creating transcultural worlds in their literary texts. In Murakami's case, the development of these worlds is carried out on different levels: the linguistic usage as well as writing style and (transcultural) references. Today the Japanese language exhibits all signs of a hybrid language due to the various loanwords, which were and still are integrated on a regular basis into the active vocabulary of Japanese society. Murakami Haruki is only one author among many others, like Yoshimoto Banana 吉本ばなな or Yamada Eimi 山田詠美, who frequently use these loanwords in their works and, as a result, assume a multilingual approach. Murakami's writing style heavily relies on the English, and especially the American, language. He uses not only single words, but also English expressions or complex phrases to shape his stories. However, the everyday Japanese language has already adopted numerous expressions and terms; therefore, Murakami's descriptions, although in a condensed form, actually are an adequate description of the everyday life in Japan. Apart from this, transculturality is also an important feature of his use of cultural references. The majority of those references are linked to an American context, whereas connections to Africa, South-America, or other Asian countries are rare occurrences. Europe is the only exception, with a few references pointing to places such as Germany or Greece as already described.

The choice of references is often explained by the author's own experiences. American culture in the form of music and novels was a constant companion in Murakami's youth. Thus, the writer relies on numerous references to music and literature within his books and, in doing so, creates a world where his characters are surrounded and influenced by various cultures. His transcultural strategy manifests in different forms of narrative and linguistic features. Not only does he often resort to musical references or incidents outside Japan to establish a time frame for his stories, but his settings are quite flexible and mobile. In fact, the plot and the characters could be placed in different cultural settings, which emphasises that the story is not anchored to Japan specifically. Other manifestations of Murakami's transcultural strategy are the frequent use of cultural consumer goods—in particular, references to American music and literature—within the stories and the utilisation of the *katakana*-syllabary to integrate loanwords into his worlds. As a result, his narratives become more cosmopolitan, flexible, and dynamic, while readers are easily able to relate to the life of the characters.

In the short story "Nemuri", for example, the novel *Anna Karenina* written by the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy plays a major role for the protagonist, *watashi*. While reading she remembers how important literature once was in her life and that she gave this part of her up when she got married. In this sense, she is able to find that lost part of herself again through the means of reading this (supposedly foreign) novel. Apart from the search for identity, the two aspects of escaping to and living in

another world are also connected to the Western novel. *Watashi* sees the story as means of escaping from the reality in which she is bound by commitments, and so she spends more and more time in the literary world. She even isolates herself from her family and friends and, due to her insomnia, she is drifting further and further into her own world. Although *watashi* is gradually feeling better, she slowly loses touch with reality. The analysis of the use of transcultural elements in this short story further yielded that the character, by consuming (non-Japanese) literature, realises her own rejection of Japanese societal norms and values. According to the ideal of *ryōsai kenbo* in Japanese society, *watashi* is expected to be a loving mother and loyal wife, who takes care of the household and sacrifices herself for her family. For a long time, she assumed this role, but the novel challenged her views on society and she begins to crave more for her own life. In all these situations, *Anna Karenina* is either a symbol for the protagonist herself or a catalyst that highlights the aspects of a 'Japanese life' which *watashi* perceives as restrictive. Eventually, she disengages herself from the invisible restraints by dealing with something 'non-Japanese', which, however, *watashi* does not experience as something 'foreign' but, rather, as familiar.

Due to the increasing globalisation and the inevitable transformations of cultures and societies accompanying this process, the concept of transculturality has the potential to become a fruitful field of research also with regard to Japanese literature. The approach to analyse literary texts by Japanese authors, such as Murakami Haruki as well as others, in terms of their transcultural strategies offers a broad range of possibilities for further studies.

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GLOSSARY

1973-nen no pinbōru	1973 年のピンボール	Murakami Haruki's second novel published in 1980 as part of the 'Trilogy of the Rat'
"Gogo no saigo no shibafu"	午後の最後の芝生	One of Murakami's short stories, published in 1982, following the protagonist, *boku*, who is looking back to his time as a student
Gunzō Shinjin Bungakushō	群像新人文学賞	Gunzō New Writers' Prize, literary prize established in 1958 and awarded by the Japanese literary magazine *Gunzō* each year in two categories: novels and commentaries
"Hanarei Bei"	ハナレイ・ベイ	A short story following the female protagonist on her journey back to Hawaii, written by Murakami and published in 2005
"Hito kui neko"	人喰い猫	Short story written by Murakami, published in 1991, about the life of a Japanese couple in a small village in Greece
ie	家	Japanese household form established in the early twentieth century, consisting of up to three generations under the official authority of a household head, characteristics include Confucian influence, inheritance by the first son and patrilocal marriage
Iwabuchi Kōichi	岩渕功一	Cultural scientist (b. 1960), focusing on trans-Asian relations and dialogues in a global setting
"Kaeru-kun, Tōkyō o sukuu"	かえるくん、東京を救う	One of Murakami's short stories, published in 1999, describing the meeting between the protagonist and a frog, who together go on to saving Tōkyō
kanji	漢字	Logographic Chinese characters adopted by the Japanese writing system, characters used to write content words such as nouns, verb stems or adjective stems, between 2,000 and 3,000 are currently used on a regular basis in Japan.
Karatani Kōjin	柄谷行人	Japanese literary critic and philosopher (b. 1941), receiver of the Gunzō Prize for New Writers' (1968), best known for his philosophical concept "Transcritique" on Kant and Marx (2003).
katakana	カタカナ	Syllabary used in the modern Japanese writing system to point out loan words and the transcription of foreign words into Japanese, script consists of 48 characters
Kaze no uta o kike	風の歌をきけ	Murakami Haruki's debut novel published in 1979 as first part of the 'Trilogy of the Rat', awarded with the Gunzō Prize for New Writers' (1979)
kokugaku	国学	'National Studies', academic movement and philosophy originating during the Tokugawa

		period (1603−1868) with the aim to refocus the attention on research of early Japanese classics
konpyūtā	コンピューター	Loan word for computer in the Japanese language written in *katakana*.
Makkintoshu	マッキントッシュ	Word for a personal computer of the company Apple with the operation system MacOS in the Japanese language written in *katakana*
Meiji Ishin	明治維新	Meiji Restoration, restored practical imperial rule to Japan in 1868, led to fundamental changes in political and social structure as as well as to rapid modernisation and industrialisation of Japan
Mitsuyoshi Numano	光吉沼野	Japanese literary critic (b. 1954), awarded with the Yomiuri Literature Prize for "Utopian Literature" (2004)
Murakami genshō	村上現象	A phenomenon concerning the publishing success of the author Murakami Haruki and critical literature following his publications, also including complements such as music, films or collections promoted via Internet
natsukashisa	懐かしさ	Term to describe reminiscences or longing for something, feeling of nostalgia
"Nemuri"	眠り	One of Murakami's short stories, published in 1987, following the every day life of the female protagonist, *watashi*, while she rediscovers herself
nihonjinron	日本人論	Discourse and theories about the Japanese society, focusing on issues of Japanese national and cultural identity and emphasising assumptions of homogeneity of Japanese society; its roots date back to the *kokugaku* 国学 movement in the eighteenth century
Noruwei no mori	ノルウェイの森	One of Murakami's most successful novels, published in 1987, titled after a common Japanese mistranslation of a song by the English rock band The Beatles, narrative about loss
Ōe Kenzaburō	大江健三郎	One of the most influential Japanese writers of the twentieth century (b. 1935), highly awarded novelist, Nobel Prize laureate (1994)
pasokon	パソコン	Loan word for personal computer in the Japanese language written in *katakana*.
"Rēdāhōzen"	レーダーホーゼン	Short story written by Murakami, published in 1985, following the female protagonist on her journey to Germany, where she discovers her independence
ryōsai kenbo	良妻賢母	Ideology of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother', traditional role for women in Japan in the early 1900s, idealised womanhood

'sore wa warukunai'	それは悪くない	Phrase Murakami uses in his translations and novels, derived from the English expression 'Not bad!'
Tokugawa jidai	徳川時代	Period between 1603 and 1868, Tokugawa shoguns as rulers, characterised by stable population, strict social order, economic growth, development of arts and culture as well as isolation from foreign powers
Umibe no Kafuka	海辺のカフカ	Novel written by Murakami and published in 2002, narrative shows similarities to Oedipus of the greek mythology
watashi	私	Pronoun for "I", 1. person singular, primarily used by women.
wādopurosesā	ワードプロセサー	Loan word for word processor in the Japanese language written in *katakana*.
wāpuro	ワープロ	Abbreviation of the loan word for word processor in the Japanese language written in *katakana*.
Yamada Eimi	山田詠美	Contemporary Japanese author (b. 1959), addresses issues such as racism or interracial relationships
Yoshimoto Banana	吉本ばなな	Pen name of the Japanese writer Yoshimoto Mahoko 吉本真秀子 (b. 1964), often numbered among the same generation as Murakami, also uses a transcultural writing strategy