

**Who We Are Reading When We Are Reading Haruki Murakami:
The Role of Various ‘Rewriters’ in Translating Haruki Murakami for the
Anglophone Market**

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This article examines how Haruki Murakami—the most widely read contemporary Japanese author in the world today—is translated in the Anglophone world. We suggest that the highly networked world of Haruki Murakami, which transcends literary spaces still largely divided along lines of language and nation state, may be seen as a kind of grand experiment in “contemporary literature”, and that while Japan and the United States are no doubt key centers in the laboratory that operates this experiment, this network comprises diverse “rewriters” across the globe that include translators, editors, agents, designers, critics as well as readers, bringing additional complexity to the question of who we are reading when we are reading Haruki Murakami.

Described in the Anglophone press as “the most anticipated literary event of the year” (Barra, 2011) and “a global event in itself [that] passionately defends the power of the novel” (Haddow, 2011), Murakami’s novel *IQ84* arrived in English in the fall of 2011 “with all the razzmatazz associated with a Harry Potter novel” (Cummins, 2011). Ardent fans in London queued for the midnight launch at Foyles bookstore (Flood, 2011) and New Yorkers flocked to bookstores (Kyodo, 2011) to get hold of a copy of Murakami’s “mega-novel” (Miller, 2011)—initially published in Japan as three separate volumes—packaged into a single eye-catching volume by the popular designer Chip Kidd, pushing the book to open at number two for hardcover fiction on The *New York Times* bestseller list (New York Times, 2011). Despite being an almost 1000-page work of literature in translation, the book could have very well opened at the top of the list if the publication date of Walter Isaacson’s biography of Steve Jobs—the face of the company that produced the popular Mac computers on which Murakami composed his similarly popular novels—had not been moved up to the same week following the charismatic business icon’s

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untimely death (Lowensohn, 2011).

The major newspapers, magazines, and other print and on-line media—almost without exception—gave the book and its author prominent coverage (The Complete Review, 2011). Practically all of the quality UK newspapers including *The Economist*, *Financial Times*, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *Observer*, and *Times of London* and culture/book magazines such as the *Spectator*, *London Review of Books* and *Times Literary Supplement* reviewed the book as did the major US newspapers such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Seattle Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Boston Globe* and *Philadelphia Inquirer* and magazines such as the *Atlantic*, *Salon*, and the *New York Review of Books*. As a matter of fact, one would be hard pressed to find a major newspaper or book magazine in the US and UK that did not review it. The *New York Times* alone covered the book three times, with a review in their *Sunday Book Review* supplement (Schulz, 2011), a second review in the paper's regular review column (Maslin, 2011), and a long profile in the *New York Times Magazine* (Anderson, 2011). The major newspapers in Japan in turn reported on the coverage in the US and UK media, sporting headlines with catchy phrases such as “*kakushi zessan*” [rave reviews all around]” (Asahi Shimbun, 2011) and “*daininki*” [highly popular]” (Yanagisawa & Ozaki, 2011), and picking out particularly positive quotes from reviews, and even going as far as directly quoting the blurbs on the book, further fuelling the myth of Murakami's invincibility on the international stage.

In reality, however, the reviews were mixed. They ranged from glowing to far-from-enthusiastic to downright scathing. Boyd Tonkin, Literary Editor of *The Independent*, who has judged numerous literary awards including the *Booker Prize* and *Independent Foreign Fiction Prize*, praised the book (or more precisely the author) stating “Which other author can remind you simultaneously of Fyodor Dostoyevsky and JK Rowling, not merely within the same chapter but on the same page?” (Tonkin, 2011). Kathryn Schulz, author and book critic for *New York Magazine*, was far less sympathetic, suggesting in her review for the *New York Times* that while in George Orwell's *1984* “the story serves to convey ideas about power, injustice and cruelty” in Murakami's *1Q84* “power, injustice and cruelty are fantasy elements in service of a story” (Schulz, 2011). Many of the other reviews, including those that were generally favorable to the book—while politely recognizing Murakami's talent and pointing to stand-out moments—expressed similar frustrations with the repetition, loose ends, and flat prose.

But the content of the coverage, at least in this particular instance, may not have mattered all that much. Many of the reviews were surprisingly (or perhaps not so surprisingly) alike. Most provided similar overviews about Murakami's background and the attention surrounding the book's publication in Japan and the rest of the world, a brief summary of the novel's plot together with a few examples, a quip or two about the translation, and a few words about what the reviewer personally thought about the book. What is of greater significance here is the fact that

the vast majority of mainstream (particularly print and on-line) media outlets gave *IQ84* extensive coverage, utilizing striking visuals including portraits by celebrity photographers and artwork specially commissioned for the occasion.

While the approximately 200,000 copies that *IQ84* sold in the United States in just the first couple of months (Publishers Weekly, 2012) is an impressive figure, particularly for a thousand-page work of literature-in-translation, the number of people who read the reviews, profiles, and interviews in the media obviously far outnumber those who actually read the book. To put things in perspective, for example, in the US, as of September 2011, the daily circulation (for print and digital combined) was over 2.6 million (2,633,638) for the *Wall Street Journal*, over 1.5 million (1,530,592) for the *New York Times*, and over half a million for several other publications that also reviewed the book such as the *New York Daily News* (771,118), *Los Angeles Times* (611,153) and *Washington Post* (534,620) (Lulofs, 2011). Across the Atlantic in the UK, the monthly print and on-line readership (as of April 2012) was estimated at around 9 million (8,949,000) for the *Guardian* and *Telegraph* and just over five million for the *Independent* (5,317,900) and the *Times of London* (5,737,000) (Rogers, 2012). What is also significant is that the digital (and particularly on-line) editions of these stories—unlike the actual book itself—could then be emailed, blogged, buzzed, tweeted, retweeted, posted, shared, liked, and so on, often using the social media icons embedded next to the on-line reviews, reaching millions of people in various shapes and forms. Many of those who read these reviews, interviews, profiles, etc., and their various spinoffs—all “rewritings” of *IQ84*—may never read the book (or anything by Haruki Murakami for that matter) and yet still get a glimpse into Murakami’s world.

The English translation of *IQ84*—like its Japanese original and many of the translations into other languages—was destined to become a bestseller well before the book(s) hit stores. When *Book 1* and *Book 2* of *IQ84* were published in Japan in May 2009, the Japanese publisher Shinchosha decided to order a second print-run even before the publication date, then continued to reprint copies to meet the steep demand, printing a million copies in the first two weeks despite (or according to some partially owing to) the fact that the only thing about the book that had been revealed beforehand was its title. When *Book 3* was published a year later, Shinchosha once again upped the initial print run from 500,000 to 700,000 copies even before the book went on sale. A year later, Murakami’s US publisher Knopf made a similar decision, upping the print-run by 15,000 copies to 90,000 copies more than a month before the publication date to meet high demand from booksellers (Alter, 2011). Meanwhile, Sam Anderson, the critic at large for *The New York Times Magazine*, made his first-ever trip to Japan to interview Murakami several months before the book’s publication (Anderson, 2011). Emma Brockes, an award-winning journalist with *The Guardian*, first opened her review copy of *IQ84* on her flight to Hawaii where she was scheduled to interview Murakami and managed to get through about half of the book before landing (Brockes, 2011). Given the timing and scope of the English media coverage,

it seems safe to assume that many of the other publications had commissioned reviews and articles before the book had been read based on Murakami's rising popularity and reports of the books "phenomenal" success back in Japan (Page, 2011). As Jay Rubin—Emeritus Professor of Harvard University and English translator of numerous Murakami works including *Book 1* and *Book 2* of *IQ84*—commented in an interview with CNN, it seems that "Murakami can get away with anything now. If he scribbled on his toilet paper, they would publish it" (Rutledge, 2011).

In his review of *IQ84* in the *Guardian*, the journalist Douglas Haddow described Murakami as "the only living writer who can sell a million copies in a month and still be in the running for the Nobel Prize" (Haddow, 2011). Murakami is often referred to as a "critical and commercial success". But what does this actually mean? "Commercial success" is perhaps the easier of the two to put a finger on. In the simplest terms, the phrase suggests that Murakami's books have sold well—that they made money for both the author and the publisher. *IQ84* sold exceptionally well for a work of literature in translation, and following the rise in Murakami's popularity in the later 2000s, his backlist sales have also increased significantly with the release of each new title. "Critical success" for contemporary fiction, on the other hand, may be a little trickier to define. What is clear is that both "commercial success" and "critical success" are determined by readers. The conventional thinking is that "commercial success" is something that is determined by the "general readers" (or André Lefevere's "non-professional reader") whose response is recognized in the most simple of terms: whether or not they buy the book. "Critical success", on the other hand, is determined by individuals with the authority to perform a "critical" reading: Lefevere's "professional readers" and Bourdieu's well-educated (high cultural capital) but not so wealthy (low economic capital) occupants of the "cultural pole" of the "literary field". But can the critical and commercial be separated so neatly in contemporary international publishing and in particular the case of an internationally "renowned" author such as Haruki Murakami? Who are the authorized critics who determine the critical success of a work of literature? In Japan, where the literary field is structured fairly rigidly around literary prizes judged by senior authors, these "literary prizes" function as one clear indicator of "critical success". You only have to take a look at the long list of literary awards amassed by the authors on the jury of the *Akutagawa Prize*—arguably the most 'influential' (though by no means the most prestigious) prize for writers of "serious literature" in Japan—to get a general idea as to how the Japanese literary field is structured. The typical "elite track" consists of making one's debut by winning a (submission-based) new writer prize administered by one of the five main literary magazines (published by the large publishers in Japan), then winning the *Akutagawa Prize*, followed by one of the more senior prizes sponsored by the main publishers and/or newspapers (*Tanizaki Prize*, *Yomiuri Literary Prize*, *Mainichi Publishing Culture Award*, etc.). Murakami has emphasized in interviews with the foreign press that he was ignored by the Japanese literary establishment. But

you would not know it just by looking at his list of awards. With the exception of having missed out on the *Akutagawa Prize* (despite being short-listed twice) and the hiatus following the commotion surrounding the huge popularity of *Norwei no mori* (Norwegian Wood), Murakami seems to have been cruising quite comfortably along the “elite track” of serious literature. He made his debut by winning Kodansha’s *Gunzo New Writers Prize*, then won the *Noma New Writers Literary Prize* just three years later, followed by the prestigious *Tanizaki Prize*, becoming the youngest ever recipient of the prize. Murakami was also awarded the *Yomiuri Literary Prize* for *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *Mainichi Publishing Culture Award* for *1Q84*, as well more recently numerous awards including the *Asahi Prize* that essentially recognize lifetime achievement (as opposed to individual works).

Literary prizes, however, are less useful when it comes to measuring Murakami’s “critical success” in the US and UK. The only major literary award Murakami has received in the Anglophone sphere is the *Frank O’Connor International Short Story Award* funded by the Cork City Council of Ireland, which he was awarded in 2006 for the story collection *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* compiled by his US publisher Knopf. One reason Murakami has not been awarded any (traditional) “literary prizes” in the US or UK is that, as a Japanese author published in (English) translation, he simply is not eligible for most of them. Eligibility for most of the prominent literary awards in the United States is limited to works by living citizens of the country (although there are a few exceptions such as the *National Book Critics Circle Awards*). In the UK, most major literary awards has been limited to authors who are citizens of the Commonwealth and the Republic of Ireland (although the influential *Booker Prize* announced that beginning 2014 they would expand eligibility to all English-language Writers” (Brown, 2013)). Literature-in-translation is essentially considered a “genre” of its own to be judged separately through initiatives such as the Arts Council funded *Independent Foreign Fiction Prize* (which *1Q84* was long-listed for but did not win).

If literary prizes cannot be used to gage Murakami’s “critical success” in the US and UK, what about critical writing by academics? There are hundreds of scholars in US universities researching Japanese literature and Haruki Murakami is a staple on syllabi of modern and contemporary Japanese literature courses at the institutions where they teach. The amount of scholarly research done on Murakami at American universities, however, is surprisingly (or again perhaps not so surprisingly) limited (Stretcher, 1998), and it is also not clear how widely what *is* written is read outside of the relatively small field of Japanese literary studies. The situation across the Atlantic is even less helpful as there are only a handful of scholars at UK institutions doing research on contemporary Japanese literature. And while there are countless academic books and articles written about Murakami in Japanese, very few of them have been translated into English. One would imagine that the fact that Murakami is being taught and studied in universities would have a positive effect on establishing his literary legitimacy. Just how much of

an impact scholarly research has had on Murakami's "critical success" within the contemporary context, however, remains unclear.

It seems that whether a foreign author such as Haruki Murakami is considered a "critical success" in the Anglophone sphere or not depends largely on the coverage their work receives in "quality" US and UK media outlets. But while many of the US/UK papers and magazines devote more space to book reviews than do their Japanese counterparts, reviewers are still restricted by various factors including space and readership, meaning they do not always provide the most ideal venues for in-depth analyses. Furthermore, reviews on the websites of the major papers are often also linked to on-line booksellers (often operated by the same media organization) so that readers can purchase the book easily after reading the review. While one would not want to go as far as to suggest that these reviews function as promotional copy, it seems fair to ask whether there is truly an environment where reviewers—many of whom are commissioned on an assignment basis—are able to write "critical" reviews. So what then constitutes "critical success"? A variety of factors, no doubt, but one key indicator appears to be the level of coverage a book and author receive in prestigious—symbolic capital-rich—media outlets such as *The New York Times Book Review*, *Times Literary Supplement* and the *New Yorker*. The content of the media coverage—whether it was a positive or negative review, an interview/profile, or an article about the translation process—is perhaps not as important as its "scope". And setting the stage so that the publication of *IQ84* would become *the* "literary event" of the year, all but guaranteed that the book would become both a "commercial" and "critical" success.

With the exception of rare cases such as *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, which he chose to serialize in the monthly literary magazine *Shincho*, Murakami is known for not sharing his work with his editors while it is still in progress. In principle, Murakami shows his work to his Japanese editors only after the entire manuscript is "complete". Assuming that the Japanese manuscript of *IQ84* was not edited significantly by the editors at Shinchosha, the book that the readers of the Japanese version of *IQ84* are reading may not be all that different from the final draft that the Japanese author saved onto his trusty Mac. The same obviously cannot be said for those reading Murakami in translation. As André Lefevere has emphasized, most readers experience literary works through translations and other forms of rewriting. Haruki Murakami, whose work is translated into almost fifty languages, is an excellent example of an author who is read primarily through "rewritings". Most foreign readers already read Murakami in translation, and given his rising popularity overseas, it is more than likely that the number of people reading Murakami in translation will eventually far outnumber those reading him in the original Japanese. So then it seems only natural to ask: who are we (actually) reading when we are reading "Haruki Murakami"?

Needless to say, there are many people involved in producing the translated versions of Murakami's work. In the case of the English translation of *IQ84*, first you have the two

translators. The initial plan had been for Jay Rubin, who had translated many of Murakami's works including *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* and *After Dark*, to translate all three volumes of *IQ84*. However, in order to speed up the translation process so that they could bring the book—which Murakami's agent Amanda Urban together with the publisher Knopf decided to publish as one volume in the US—to eagerly awaiting fans (who had been hearing about the book's success in Japan) as soon as possible, the translation of Book 3 was assigned to Philip Gabriel, Murakami's other main translator. Lexy Bloom, who succeeded the veteran editor Gary Fisketjon as Murakami's editor at Knopf, spent three months editing the book, putting together a “glossary of terms” (Bloom, 2013) and working with the two translators to give the two parts unity and also identify repetitious passages that seemed unnecessary given that the three volumes were being published as one book (unlike the original where the third book came out a year after the first two books) (Alter, 2011). The UK version of the book published by Harvill Secker was Anglicized and also separated into two volumes, with Book 1 and Book 2 being published as one volume and Book 3 being published as one volume a week later. All of this, of course, was before the line editors, proofreaders, graphic designers, printers, and others came in to do their part. The individuals and institutions involved in the production of the English editions of Murakami's books are not the only ones “rewriting” Murakami for the English readership. *The New Yorker*—which had published over twenty of Murakami's short stories in just over twenty years—published an approximately 8000-word excerpt from *IQ84* entitled “Town of Cats” in its pages a month before the publication of the book. And “general readers” have played their part as well. There are almost five hundred “customer reviews” of *IQ84* on Amazon.com, a number of which have been identified by hundreds of users as being “helpful” reviews.

And this is just for one book in one language. Similar situations no doubt exist for the approximately fifty other languages that Murakami's work has been translated into. When an author is so widely “rewritten” in this manner, the name “Haruki Murakami” becomes a kind of brand name that gives identity to the complex network of texts, writers, rewriters, and readers. And as these networks expand and the production centers become more diverse and decentralized, it seems inevitable (and only natural) that the degree of “authority” and “authorship” attributed to the “author” weakens. But even today, many years after the “death of the author” was first proclaimed, the notion that the “authority” lies with the author remains strong (though it appears to be a privilege reserved for authors of “serious” literature only). The romantic notion of the author sitting alone at his desk composing his masterpiece still has a wide appeal, naturally to writers, but also to many readers who appear to find satisfaction in belonging to a community created around this author[ity] figure. This in turn requires authors to emphasize and project their own “authority”—to show the world that the author is far from dead—by participating in interviews, readings, and other public events. This is important even for an American author writing primarily for an English-speaking audience. It is, however, all the more

important for an author such as Haruki Murakami, whose network of creators (of translations, jackets, communities, meanings, etc.) spans the globe.

The impact of visuals in projecting this image of the author is also significant. Many of the articles and reviews of *IQ84* in the US/UK press were accompanied by photographs of Murakami—who is famous for avoiding the press and public appearances in Japan—posing like a model. The black and white photographs by the internationally renowned photographer Nobuyoshi Araki that accompanied the long profile of the author in the *New York Times Magazine* are particularly arresting (Anderson, 2011). The contrast between the lean, stubble-faced man casting a sharp gaze at the camera and the simple sketches of *Murakami-san* (by the illustrator Mizumaru Anzai who provided illustrations and cover art for many of Murakami's earlier works) which used to function as the author's "face" early on in his career is striking. Murakami's transformation into an "international writer" over the thirty-plus years since he first made his debut with *Kaze no uta wo kike* (*Hear the Wind Sing*) concern not just the shift in his work (from short first-person novellas to grand third-person novel) and readership (from a domestic readership of thousands to an international readership of millions), but also his "image" as a writer.

In addition to visual images, "events" are another important means for cementing the "authority", "authorship", and "authenticity" of an author. Although Murakami has occasionally interacted with his Japanese readers via the Internet, as a general rule of thumb he does not make public appearances in his home country. The talk he gave in Kyoto in May 2013 to commemorate the establishment of the *Kawai Hayao Monogatari-sho/Gakugei-sho* (Kawai Hayao Story Prize and Literary Prize) was his first public event in Japan in eighteen years (Kubota, 2013). Outside of Japan, however, Murakami has been known to participate in public talks at universities and book signings at bookstores, and to interact with his readers in person at these "events". Through these "real-life" encounters with the author or through hearing accounts of these "live" encounters (often through virtual networks), Murakami's readers are able to confirm that Haruki Murakami is indeed an individual living and writing in the same time and space as them. In other words, they are able to confirm that Murakami is indeed a "contemporary" of theirs.

One place where these two factors—the "visual" and the "event"—converge to provide readers with a venue for community building is the official Haruki Murakami Facebook page. While there are countless websites in various languages dedicated to Murakami, his official Facebook page managed by his American publisher Knopf is perhaps the most "dynamic", with over 830,000 registered fans or "likes" (as of July 2014). This may be less than a third of the staggering 3.5 million "likes" J.K. Rowling's Facebook Page has garnered, but it is impressive even when compared to the pages of other internationally renowned "literary" authors similarly managed by their US/UK publishers, including Kazuo Ishiguro (approx. 46,000 Likes), Philip Roth (approx. 62,000 Likes), and Peter Carey (approx. 5500 Likes). And when "Haruki

Murakami”—in reality staff at his US publisher—posts the latest news or quote from one of his works together with a photograph, cover art or some other kind of visual image, hundreds of fans immediately express their approval by “liking” the post, leave comments, and communicate amongst themselves. For example, when the quote “I want you always to remember me. Will you remember that I existed, and that I stood next to you here like this?” from his novel *Norwegian Wood* was posted on the site together with the image of the cover art for a new Vintage paperback edition, more than 10,000 people “liked” the post, close to 2000 “shared” it, and over 250 posted comments. When the English translation of *1Q84* was published, the opening chapter was made available on the Haruki Murakami Facebook page, and almost 1700 people entered the sweepstakes held on the Facebook page where they could win a “limited edition uncorrected proof” of the novel. The lucky fan who won the sweepstakes was able to deepen his connection to the author by holding the collector’s item, signed by the author—proof again that he is a living author—himself, in his or her hands.

What is perhaps most striking is that many of these diverse rewritings—the interviews and profiles in the mainstream media that have retold time and time again the same episode about the precise moment at a baseball game when Murakami “knew he would become a novelist”, the regular posts of quotes from Murakami’s body of work on the author’s Facebook page, the five-star Customer Reviews on Amazon by ardent fans—that represent the decentralization and diversification of the author “Haruki Murakami”, appear to further establish the authority and authorship of the author by emphasizing his individual genius and talent. What is interesting about the case of Haruki Murakami is how two seemingly contradictory states coexist with perfect ease: The “authority” of the author is strengthened while production centers are diversified, and the “celebrity” of the author is bolstered while the man at the center of it all retreats from public life. The image of Haruki Murakami running shirtless adorns the hardcover versions of both the English and Japanese editions of his memoir *What I Talk About When I Talk About Running*. This image of the “lonely long distance runner/writer” is spreading far and wide with the help of striking visuals, events, technology, and most importantly, countless “rewriters” across the world.

Murakami has an impressive team composed of the top professionals in the US and UK publishing fields working on the English editions of his books. Needless to say, their collective expertise, networks and reputation—social, cultural, symbolic capital—have played a vital role in Murakami’s success in the Anglophone publishing world (and the languages and cultures that discovered Murakami through English). The fact that the almost 1000-page (in hardcover and over 1300-page in paperback) book was published in translation with only the most minor of cuts—at least compared to previous translations—demonstrates the position that the “author” Haruki Murakami has come to occupy within the Anglophone publishing field. Needless to say, this kind of environment was not always there. The translation of Murakami’s first two books,

Hear the Wind Sing and *Pinball, 1973*, were published by a Japanese publisher with grammar notes in Japanese for English-language learners in Japan (Marx, 2010). *A Wild Sheep Chase* was published in the US by the Japanese (funded) publisher Kodansha International with significant edits aimed at making the book more “contemporary” and more “American”, and *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* was abridged by “something like a hundred pages” (Birnbaum, 2012) to create a fast-paced narrative. The American and British publishers of *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* (initially published in three volumes in Japan) cut the novel by 25,000 words (Rubin, 2001) and put together the non-fiction book *Underground* by combining two books (published by different publishers in Japan) and cutting a third of the interviews Murakami conducted with victims of the 1995 subway sarin attacks in Tokyo. *The New Yorker* has been consistently publishing Murakami’s short stories, novel excerpts, non-fiction, profiles and reviews, often editing the translations heavily to create stand-alone pieces in line with the magazine’s needs. What is worthy of note is how these normally less visible (at least outside of the field) rewriters—the editors, translators, agents, etc.—have become more visible together with the rise of Murakami’s popularity. Murakami’s readers are known for being particularly passionate fans whose interest extend to all things Murakami, including the music, food, and places that appear in his books. This has spawned various Murakami spin-off products, ranging from the more conventional collector’s editions of his books (some of which are being sold at used bookstores for over 10,000 dollars) (Davies, 2013) to recipe books of dishes featured in his fiction (Okamoto, 2012). And it appears that their fascination with Murakami “paraphernalia” does not end with what is found in his books, but also extends to the translators, editors, jacket designers, and others who help make them. In the case of *IQ84*, the two English translators, Jay Rubin and Philip Gabriel, were interviewed by the mainstream media in the US, UK and Japan about the translation process, and were invited to give a talk on the topic together at the *Centre for the Art of Translation* in San Francisco (Chang, 2012). Even the two editors in the US and UK appeared in the press to offer insight into the book and the translation process (Beaumont, 2011; Alter, 2011). The You-Tube video on the *Random House* website in which the designer Chip Kidd talks about his design of the *IQ84* jacket was picked up by the mainstream press (Los Angeles Times 2011, Witt 2011), specialized media (featuring a large photograph of the designer) (Lanks, 2013) as well as influential individual blogs, and has been viewed over 20,000 times (as of July 2014) (Kidd, 2013).

The level of “visibility” of these individual rewriters depends on numerous factors including professional stature, personal stance towards publicity, role in the literary production process, etc. Flipping through the first few pages of English versions of Murakami’s novels it is interesting to note that there seems to be a hierarchy of “visibility” among the individuals involved in the collaborative production of the English translation based on perceived levels of “authorship”. For example, in the (2003 Vintage UK paperback version of) the English edition of *Hard-Boiled*

Wonderland and the End of the World—which the translator Alfred Birnbaum and editor Elmer Luke translated and adapted by working side-by-side five days a week—Haruki Murakami’s name appears on the cover prominently in a font larger than the title of the book. The translator’s name does not feature on either the front or back covers. This means that at first glance the casual bookstore browser would not be able to tell that the book was a translation. Open the book and on the first page are biographies of the author Haruki Murakami and the translator Alfred Birnbaum. Flip another page, and the title page features the names of the author and translator. Haruki Murakami comes at the top, above the title, below which are the words in a smaller font: TRANSLATED FROM THE JAPANESE BY Alfred Birnbaum. Flip yet another page to the copyright page, where a range of technical matters are squeezed in using a very small font, we learn that the book has been “Translated and adapted by Alfred Birnbaum with the participation of the author”. On the same page, there is also the following note: The translator wishes to acknowledge the assistance of the editor Elmer Luke. There are several things of note regarding these acknowledgements. The first is the acknowledgement that the book has not only been translated, but has also been “adapted” with the “participation of the author”. Even more unusual is the acknowledgement of the editor by name (by not the author but the translator). The editor’s name generally does not appear on this page (or any other page for that matter with the exception perhaps of the author’s acknowledgments page). If we take the example of another Murakami book, Gary Fisketjon’s name does not appear anywhere in *The Elephant Vanishes*, despite the fact that he was responsible for editing and compiling the collection. The fact that Luke’s name appears on this page seems to acknowledge the level of collaboration between the translator and editor on the translation of *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*. Luke is not credited, for example, in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, which he also edited, but starting with a complete manuscript. The hierarchy of “visibility” here is very clear with the author at the top, the translator in the middle, and the editor at the bottom. And there are, of course, many other rewriters including line editors, proofreaders, designers, etc., who generally do not get “visible” credit. While scholarship in the field of Translation Studies has tended to emphasize the “invisibility” of the translator, in fact the translator is one of the more visible “rewriters” involved in the production of literary translations.

There is something else worth noting regarding the copyright page of Murakami’s English translations. While authors generally retain copyright of the translated editions of their work, the translation copyright usually remains with the translator. With Murakami’s English translations, however, even the translation copyright is in the author’s name. In other words, the translation is essentially a work-for-hire and the translator has no say in how the translation may or may not be used. While the earlier English translations of Murakami’s works published by Kodansha International gave the English translation copyright to the translator Alfred Birnbaum, these rights have also been reverted to the author. The Czech author Milan Kundera famously rewrote

the translations of his own works. Venuti gives the example of the English (re)translation of his novel *The Joke* that the author “cobbled together not just from his own English and French renderings, but also from the ‘many fine solutions’ and the ‘great many faithful renderings and good formulations’ in the previous translations” (Venuti, 1998: 6). Venuti mentions that it is not clear if the translators gave Kundera permission to reuse parts of their translations to patch together a new version but that the title page does not give the translators recognition. In this instance, Kundera has essentially taken the words of the translators to create a new version by patching together the two existing versions and even adding some sentences of his own. Stuart Glover has suggested that “there is a growing tension between an ever more distributed or (collaborative writing process) and the requirement for a super-cohesive authorial identity (a single author) around which a book is branded or marketed” and that the complexity of the relations between the various individuals involved in producing a text “disappears as we construct the Author in order to hide the complexity” (Glover, 2011: 65). Retaining translation rights would essentially allow Murakami to similarly “rewrite” the translations. And while Murakami himself has made no attempts to date to rewrite his English translations the way Kundera has, the Murakami brand in its English manifestation is being gradually “rewritten” or “upgraded” in more subtle ways. This should perhaps come as no surprise given Murakami’s belief that “it is imperative that new versions [of translations] appear periodically in the same way that computer programs are regularly updated” (Murakami, 2013: 171). For example, when Knopf published the collection *The Elephant Vanishes*—comprising seventeen stories, ten translated by Alfred Birnbaum and seven translated by Jay Rubin—in 1993, the editor Gary Fisketjon used Birnbaum’s translation of “Kangaroo Communique” and “Barn Burning” rather than the translations by Philip Gabriel published first in *ZYZZVA* and the *New Yorker*. A similar strategy seems to have been applied when Fisketjon compiled and published *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* in 2006. This time the two translators published in the collection were Jay Rubin and Philip Gabriel. And this time it was Gabriel’s new translations that replaced existing translations that had been published in various magazines and anthologies. A story initially published in the June 9 2003 issue of the *New Yorker* in Alfred Birnbaum’s translation as “The Folklore of our Times” was also retranslated by Gabriel as “The Folklore of My Generation: A Pre-History of Late-Stage Capitalism” for the same 2006 collection. The new translations published in *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* also include several stories initially translated by translators other than Murakami’s three “main” translators. Ted Goossen, a professor at York University in Toronto and editor of the *Oxford Book of Japanese Literature*, has translated several stories and essays by Murakami. Goossen first came across Murakami’s work when he was doing research in Japan in the early 1980s for his PhD in Japanese literature (for the University of Toronto). Murakami’s work, and particularly the opening of *Hitsuji wo meguru bouken* (*A Wild Sheep Chase*) felt familiar to Goossen, who had been an exchange student at

Waseda for a year starting June 1968, the same year that Murakami had entered the university (Goossen, 2013). He translated a number of stories by Murakami in the early 1990s as well as contributing the essay “Murakami Haruki’s Tokyo” to the Japanese magazine *Tokyo-jin* (Goossen, 1993). At least a couple of stories that Goossen translated early on have been retranslated by the two current translators, Rubin and Gabriel. Goossen’s translation of “A Perfect Day for Kangaroos” (Kangaroo biyori) was initially published in 1990 in the anthology *Soho Square III* alongside stories by a range of international writers including Gunter Grass, Jorge Luis Borges, and Margaret Atwood. The volume was edited by the Argentinian/Canadian author and translator Alberto Manguel, who had asked Goossen to recommend a story by a Japanese author (Goossen, 2013). The story was retranslated by Philip Gabriel for the 2006 Knopf anthology *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* from a slightly updated version of the story (where reference to the popular Japanese manga character *Doraemon* has been removed). In 1992, Goossen’s translation of the Murakami story *In the Year of Spaghetti* was published in issue 133 of the Toronto-based journal *Descant*. Goossen had immediately thought of the story when the editor of the journal asked him if he had any suggestions for their “Food Issue” (Goossen, 2013). The story was retranslated by Jay Rubin with the slightly revised title “The Year of Spaghetti” and first published in the Nov. 21 2005 issue of the *New Yorker* and later also compiled in the collection *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman*. The story “Ice Man”, initially published in the February 10, 2003 issue of the *New Yorker* and later in the collection *Vintage Murakami* in a translation by yet another translator Richard L. Peterson, was retranslated by Gabriel for the Knopf anthology. Most of the original magazines and anthologies that these earlier translations were published in are now out of print. The Peterson translation is available to *New Yorker* subscribers who know exactly which issue to look at in their digital archives. A search of the magazine’s archives for “Haruki Murakami,” however, brings up all of the stories, novel excerpts and essays by Murakami (as well as numerous articles about him by others) but not Peterson’s translation of “Ice Man”. In the meantime, Ted Goossen began translating Murakami again after almost twenty years. He published a translation of the short story ‘Samsa in Love’ in the October 28, 2014 issue of the *New Yorker* and is currently working on new translations of Murakami’s first two books, *Hear the Wind Sing* and *Pinball, 1973*, which were published by Kodansha in the 1980s for a domestic audience, but will be published outside of Japan for the first time (as a single volume) in the fall of 2015 (Curtis Brown, 2015). In this way, it appears that with the rise of Murakami’s authorial presence in the Anglophone world, some “rewriters” are becoming more “visible”, while others are “reappearing”, and still others are quietly being “disappeared”.

The publication of Murakami’s work in the international arena over the past quarter century can be (very broadly) divided into three phases and flows: publication in (mostly East) Asia, followed

by publication in English and other major European countries, and finally, publication in smaller European countries and the rest of the world. A number of countries in East Asia, such as South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, began to translate Murakami in the mid to late 1980s. South Korea started by publishing *Noruvei no mori* (Norwegian Wood) around 1986 (Kim 2009: 7), which became popular after being republished under another title that translates roughly as “The Age of Loss” in 1989 (Kim 2009: 10). In 1994, the first two books of *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* trilogy were published almost immediately after they were first serialized in the Japanese literary magazine *Shincho* and even before the Japanese book version was published. Translations and sales of Murakami’s work increased dramatically following the gradual lifting of restrictions on importation of Japanese cultural products starting in 1998 (Kim 2009:11-12). Taiwan was the first country to publish Murakami in translation. Three short stories were published by a monthly magazine as a part of a feature on the author, which also included literary criticism by Saburo Kawamoto (Chang 2009: 39-40). This was followed by the publication of the first book-length Chinese translation, *Pinball, 1973*, in 1986. Following the phenomenal success of *Noruvei no mori* (Norwegian Wood) in Japan (published in September 1987), a Taiwanese publisher commissioned five translators to translate different sections of the book, and published an unauthorized translation in three volumes just a year and a half later in February 1989 (Chang 2009: 43), kicking off a boom in Murakami literature not only in Taiwan but across Chinese-speaking countries (Fujii 2009: 3). Hong Kong also started with *Noruvei no mori* (Norwegian Wood) in 1991, and also published “Hong Kong original” translations of *Dansu dansu dansu* (Dance Dance Dance) and *Hitsuji wo meguru bouken* (A Wild Sheep Chase), before shifting to publishing translations produced by Taiwanese publishers (Kwan 2009: 70).

The direct impact that Murakami’s success in the US, UK and the rest of the world has had on the way that his works have been translated, published and read in East Asia is difficult to measure. While one assumes that the high profile of Murakami in the international arena can only help the author’s reputation in East Asia, the Anglophone publishing/literary community does not appear to be serving as a gateway for East Asia the way it is, for example, for countries in Europe. In other words, the translation flows of Murakami’s works in Asia appear to have their own logic. Even just the Chinese translations appear to have their own flow (most likely unrelated to the English translations), with works going from Taiwan to Hong Kong to Shanghai to Beijing (Fujii 2009: 3). And while in the West Murakami’s more experimental and/or historically engaged novels, such as *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* and *Kafka on the Shore*, which have received the most attention, Margaret Hillenbrand has suggested that Chinese-speaking readers seem to “tend to prefer ‘Murakami lite’” and that “Murakami lies at the heart of a transnational fan culture, a broad-based collective that exhibits many of the traits shared by other aficionado communities across the world—whether their tastes run to basketball, early Bruce Springsteen, or *Buffy the*

Vampire Slayer” (Hillenbrand 2009: 720-721).

Many European countries, on the other hand, first started publishing Murakami after he was published in English. Although detailed information about this is difficult to come by (since this is the realm of current business), it seems that many European publishers were introduced to Murakami’s work via English, a language which many publishing professionals in Europe can read, either through published translations, translation samples and proofs of upcoming books, or simply summaries written in English. Data available from the Japan Foundation’s *Japanese Literature in Translation Search* seems to suggest that the first two books published in the US by Kodansha International have helped get the same books published in other European languages. *Hitsuji wo meguru bouken* (A Wild Sheep Chase), first published in the US in 1989, then in the UK and France a year later in 1990, in Germany and Holland in 1991, and Sweden, Spain and Italy in 1992, and in Norway, Finland and Greece in 1993 (Japan Foundation 2013). The same pattern holds for *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, the second Murakami book that was published in the US (in 1991 by Kodansha International). The novel was published the same year in the UK, a year later in 1992 in France, in Holland in 1994, in Germany in 1995, and in Greece in 1996 (Japan Foundation 2013). The countries that began to consistently publish Murakami in translation following the author’s initial (more critical than commercial) success in the US in the early to mid-90s were mostly larger European countries such as France, Germany, and Italy. France published *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1990, a *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* in 1992, followed by *Norwegian Wood* and *Dance Dance Dance* (all soon after they were available in English translation). The next three books published in French translation, *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, and *Sputnik Sweetheart*, were also all published a few years after they were first published in English. Italy first published *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1992, and went on to publish Murakami fairly consistently. It is interesting to note that several countries such as Spain, Holland, and Norway began publishing Murakami immediately after he was published in the US, but stopped publishing him for a number of years, before starting to publish him again, most probably after the critical success of the English translation of *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*. Spain published *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1991 but did not publish another book by Murakami for another ten years when they published *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* in 2002, and then went on to publish Murakami’s work at the pace of almost a book a year. Holland published *A Wild Sheep Chase* in 1991 and *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* in 1993, clearly taking the lead from the English publications, but then did not publish another book for another eight years. In 2002, a new publisher republished the first two translations and immediately followed up with *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* in 2003, then began publishing his books consistently at a pace of one every couple of years. Greece similarly published *A Wild Sheep Chase* (in 1991) and *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (in 1994), but did not publish another book until 2005 when they published *The Wind-up Bird*

Chronicle. *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* was first published in the US in 1997, bolstering Murakami's reputation as a serious writer among English speaking literary circles. Within the next few years this massive novel—published as three volumes in the original Japanese but published as one volume (abridged by 25,000 words) in the English translation—was published in a range of European countries including the UK, Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Norway, and Denmark (Japan Foundation 2013).

It was also around this time—when Murakami's reputation was becoming established among literary circles in the Anglophone and larger European countries—that a slew of other countries such as Israel, Russia, Latvia, Croatia, and Brazil began to publish Murakami for the first time, and countries that had been publishing Murakami intermittently, such as Italy, Spain, Norway, France, Denmark, and Holland, began to do so more consistently, often at a pace of one book every year or two. It is interesting to note that many of the countries that started publishing Murakami at the turn of the century started with his “lighter” novels. Israel started with *Norwegian Wood* in 2000 and *South of the Border, West of the Sun* in 2001, Iceland with *South of the Border, West of the Sun* in 2001, Croatia, the Czech Republic in 2002 with *Norwegian Wood*, and Sweden in 2003 with *Norwegian Wood*, to give a few examples (Japan Foundation 2006). While the publication order in these countries does not strictly follow those of Japan or the US/UK, it does not necessarily mean that they were not taking their cue from the US/UK. As a matter of fact, the books that many of these countries had started with were the titles that had most recently been published in English translation: *South of the Border, West of the Sun* in 1999, *Norwegian Wood* in 2000, and *Sputnik Sweetheart* in 2001. Other countries that began publishing Murakami in the first years of the 21st century include many smaller European countries including Latvia, Romania, Ukraine, Slovakia, and Lithuania. In 1999, a couple of years after the publication and critical success of *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* in the US, Murakami's work had been translated into 16 languages (Kelts 1999). By 2005, when the English translation of *Kafka on the Shore* was published, the official count was up to thirty-four languages. This number increased to forty-two by the fall of 2011 when the English edition of *1Q84* was published (Murakami, 2011), and “more than fifty” by the summer of 2014 when the English edition of *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and his Years of Pilgrimage* was released (Murakami, 2014).

Even this brief look at publication dates and titles from around the world suggests certain trends. The publications derived from the international conference “A Wild Haruki Chase: How the World is Reading and Translating Murakami” organized by the Japan Foundation in 2006, which brought together nineteen of Murakami's translators (from fifteen countries), provides some interesting anecdotes that seem to point to the importance of conducting further (collaborative) research into local cases. The Polish translator Anna Zielinska-Elliott, for example, was introduced to Murakami's work in 1987 by a friend who suggested it as an easy read. Her translation of *A Wild Sheep Chase*—the first Murakami book to be translated into

Polish—was published in 1995 (six years after the English translation was published in the US) by a small publisher specializing in children’s literature as part of their series of books from Japan. The publisher’s marketing resources were limited and readers were limited to those with people with a special interest in Japan and the translator’s friends. In 2003 a major publisher took over the publication of Murakami’s work and began to publish him successfully. According to Zielinska-Elliott, the publisher noticed Murakami’s rising popularity around the world and decided that they wanted to make him into a bestseller in Poland as well (Japan Foundation 2006: 125). Mette Holm, who has translated *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle*, *Sputnik Sweetheart* and other Murakami titles into Danish, first approached a major Danish publisher with a proposal to publish *Norwegian Wood* but was turned down. She was surprised when soon afterwards a Danish translation of *A Wild Sheep Chase* was published (Japan Foundation 2006: 148). The translation turned out to be a re-translation from Birnbaum’s English translation. She approached the publisher offering to translate the next Murakami book from the original Japanese (Japan Foundation 2006: 148-9). The French translator Corinne Atlan first came across Murakami’s book when a friend recommended *Norwegian Wood* as an “easy read” the year the book came out in Japan. Several years later, Atlan was approached by a publisher to translate *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, which was published in France in 1992, and she has since translated many of Murakami’s works (Japan Foundation 2006: 97). Atlan suggests that Murakami’s popularity in France tipped following the publication of *Kafka on the Shore* in 2006. While this paper has focused primarily on the Anglophone market, conducting further case studies for languages other than English would no doubt provide valuable insight into issues such as translation flows through intermediary languages, retranlations, “upgrading” of publishers, etc., that would help generate a more comprehensive picture and understanding of how literature is produced, circulated and consumed in the world today.

Murakami’s international network has now reached the point where his books are (almost automatically) translated and published in dozens of languages and countries as soon as his latest book is published in Japanese. It seems entirely possible that in the future, as with Walter Isaacson’s biography of Steve Jobs, the “original” Japanese manuscript of the latest Murakami book will be shared with publishers around the world even before it is published in Japan, and released simultaneously around the world. The highly networked world of Haruki Murakami, which transcends literary spaces still largely divided along lines of language and nation state, providing a place for readers to communicate with each other, may be seen as a kind of grand experiment in “contemporary literature”. Japan and the US are no doubt key centers in the laboratory that operates this grand experiment, but this network comprises diverse creators across the globe—creators that include, obviously, translators, editors, agents, designers, critics, and perhaps less obviously, also readers as creators of meaning, bringing additional depth and complexity to the question of who we are reading when we are reading Haruki Murakami.

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David Karashima is Assistant Professor of Creative Writing at the School of International Liberal Studies, Waseda University. He has translated into English a wide range of works by contemporary Japanese authors such as Hitomi Kanehara, Yasutaka Tsutsui, and Shinji Ishii. He serves as the International Editor of the literary magazine *Granta Japan* and co-edited (with Elmer Luke) the anthology *March Was Made of Yarn: Writers Respond to the Japanese Earthquake, Tsunami, and Nuclear Meltdown*.

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