Short Paper

A Psychological Reading of Haruki Murakami's *After Dark*: Presentation of the Individuation Process

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Abstract

    This paper shows how the novel After Dark by Haruki Murakami employs strong symbols like music, night, light, cameras, and references to popular culture to express the identity and personality of the Japanese people as one, rather than that of an individual Japanese typical in most psychological readings. In particular, the aforementioned symbols were analyzed through the frame of Jungian psychological reading in an endeavor to uncover the author's intention, particularly that the novel itself is a reflection of the disparity and evolution of the common Japanese psyche. The main characters are analyzed through the four main concepts of Jungian psychology, namely the Persona, the Shadow, the Anima or Animus, and the Self. The archetypal images that Jung theorized classify the symbolisms used by humans are also drawn out from the main characters as a result of the analysis. Subsequently, a separate analysis is conducted on the main character, Mari Asai, and her sister, Eri Asai, putting a due focus on their interactions. From these, the "Self" of the characters is presented as, for Mari Asai, the product of her interactions, even as these interactions are a method of negotiation/modulation of her Shadow and Persona, and for Eri Asai, the meaning of her slumber, the interactions with the shadowy figure, and her eventual awakening in the end. Finally, the paper also analyzes the dominant themes utilized in the novel through the Jungian concept of "collective unconscious". Through the

symbols and archetypes identified in the first and second layer of analysis, it shows that the encounters and events that happen in the novel are evocatively used to represent and, in some ways, violate the norms of symbolism, all of which have been done to portray the ongoing identity transaction.

Keywords – Haruki Murakami, Cark Jung, Jungian Analysis, After Dark

INTRODUCTION

Originally published in Japan in 2004, and later published in English in 2007, *After Dark* is a novel by renowned Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami that is set in Metropolitan Tokyo, Japan over the course of one night, particularly from 11:56 P.M. to 6:52 A.M. The story is presented from the point of view of a third-person omniscient imaginary camera, able to transcend spatial boundaries but unable to intervene in any way.

The focus of the story shifts back and forth between the main character, Mari Asai, a 19-year-old student trying to pass the night reading in a diner-style restaurant, and her sister, Eri Asai, who soundly slumbers in her room. Each chapter is presented in varying lengths but is always preceded by a clock indicating the time the events of the chapter take place, clearly establishing a real-time timeline.

The story starts with Mari Asai passing time in a *Denny's* being approached by Tetsuya Takahashi, a student and trombone player, who introduces himself as someone who knows her sister, Eri Asai. The two talk over several topics, starting with Eri Asai, whom Takahashi admits he was interested in, to music and the concept of *intellectual curiosity*. The encounter ends with Takahashi providing Mari with his number and telling her that he will be spending his night playing and practicing with his band in a nearby place.

Several minutes after Takahashi's departure, Mari is then approached by a large, constructed woman with broad and strong shoulders. She introduces herself as Kaoru and solicits her help after being told by Takahashi that Mari is fluent in Chinese. From here, Mari is pulled into a series of events involving a Chinese prostitute who was beaten up in the *Alphaville* love hotel that Kaoru manages. Mari, Kaoru, and the other workers of the love hotel try to help the young Chinese prostitute and even involve the Chinese mafia who "owns" the prostitute.

Shirakawa, the man responsible for beating up the Chinese prostitute, is then introduced as an office worker at a nearby software company. Mari is then reunited with Takahashi, and they discuss her sister Eri. Takahashi even admits that he once visited *Alphaville*, implying that he did so with Eri. He also reveals that Eri once admitted to him she desired to be close to Mari. Throughout the conversation, the story cuts from time to time to Eri soundly sleeping in her room, slowly being absorbed by the television in her

room. She is also seemingly being stalked by a figure on the television in the room. The narrator drops allusions that the figure was Shirakawa.

Ultimately, it is revealed that Eri, though healthy, has been sleeping continuously for two months already, with very few short moments of gaining consciousness. As the morning approaches, Mari is escorted by Takahashi to the train station, and he musters the courage to ask her out on a date. Mari, however, responds that she will be staying in Beijing for 6 months but also agrees to let him write to her. Upon arriving home, Mari enters Eri's room and lies down on the bed beside her, falling asleep, only for Eri to finally begin waking up. The story ends with anticipation for the next night, for the next darkness to come.

Throughout the telling of the story, Murakami characterizes the setting and events through the use of numerous symbols that portray the ongoing identity transactions of the characters. This theme of identity transaction was a chief element of what Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Carl Jung referred to as the process of *individuation*. From Mari being introduced as an introvert and eventually being roped into affairs of the nightlife, to Takahashi admitting his past feelings for Eri Asai and ultimately asking Mari out on a date, the characters show the process by which certain elements of their personality arise for reasons of adaptation as the situation demands (thereby corresponding to Jung's concept of *Persona*), and certain elements of their personality remain repressed (thereby corresponding to Jung's concept of *Shadow*).

The identity transaction is not limited to the main character and Takahashi but is also evident in other characters like Kaoru, Shirakawa, and even the unconscious Eri. In actuality, all the characters are shown to be in negotiation/modulation with their identity, with themes recurring for all characters, which can be viewed as Jung's concept of *Collective Unconscious*.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Literary Analysis of Murakami's Works

In trying to understand further the implications and significance of Murakami's characters, literary critics often utilize psychological reading through various lenses. Abulencia (2016) sought to understand the feelings of Mari Asai, the main character in After Dark, particularly how her isolation and loneliness act as a mirror of contemporary Japanese society. On the other hand, Amanda et al. (2019) utilized Bal's Focalization Tool to understand the same character (Mari Asai in After Dark), particularly against Mijuskovic's (2015) theory on the Philosophy and Psychology of Loneliness. Finally, Septiyani et al. (2015) analyzed the prostitution phenomena in the story using the Feminist approach.

Alternatively, Ferreira (2018) analyzed Murakami's short stories by performing Freudian psychoanalysis. In another vein, Islam (2018) analyzed how the themes of suicide, memory, and trauma are depicted in Norwegian Wood. Additionally, Dil (2018) looked into the process of recovery from childhood trauma as depicted in another Murakami novel, Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage.

On Jungian Analytic Psychology

One of the most prominent ideas from Jung's psychological theories is his distinction of psychological types. These psychological types, anchored on the two main attitudes (introversion vs. extroversion) and on the four functions of the psyche (sensing, intuiting, thinking, feeling), became the basis of the modern personality type test of Briggs Meyers (Cochrane et al., 2014).

Another psychological concept of Jung's that is widely utilized in the field of analytical psychology (a separate and distinct field from Freud's psychoanalysis) is the concept of archetypes. Jung notes that all humans share a "collective unconscious" that contains ancient experiences that manifest in recurring themes, particularly in art and literature. Of these archetypes, Jung notes four that are in constant flux with each other and form a person's overall psyche; the Persona, the Shadow, the Animus/Anima, and the Self (Dawson, 2008).

Finally, Jung also introduced the psychological process he terms "individuation." Emanating from his belief that every individual is distinct from each other and at the same time part of the collective (as in collective unconscious), individuation is the psychological process of coming into one's self. Jung defines it as a life-long endeavor to bring "wholeness" to one's psyche by accepting and manifesting both the conscious and unconscious (Jeffrey, n.d.).

METHODOLOGY

The analysis of the characters, along with their experiences and encounters, is done using the psychoanalytic approach of Carl Jung, employing the Jungian principles of psychology in a piece of literature. This is mainly done in three layers.

First Layer of Analysis (Shadow, Persona, Animus/Anima, and the Self)

First, the four main concepts of Jungian psychology, namely the Shadow, the Persona, the Animus or Anima, and the Self, were used to analyze the concept of identity of the main characters, Mari Asai, Tetsuya Takahashi, Kaoru, Shirakawa, and Eri Asai.

Second Layer of Analysis (The Personality Mediation of the Main Characters)

Next, the focus is drawn to the main character, Mari Asai, and her sister, Eri Asai. This was done as the perspective of the novel regularly shifts focus between the two sisters. For Mari Asai, the experiences and interactions she has been analyzed as mediation of her Shadow (the repressed aspects of her personality) and her Persona (the elements of her personality that arise out of the need for the situations), eventually drawing out her Self (the central archetype of her psychology and a result of the whole individuation process. Subsequently, the analysis of Eri Asai centered on the events surrounding her slumber, the interactions with the shadowy figure, and her eventual awakening at the end.

Third Layer of Analysis (The Collective Unconscious)

Finally, the dominant themes utilized by the author in the presentation of the interactions of the characters are given a closer analysis, in particular through the Jungian view that there exists a collective unconscious, a driving force underneath everyone's personalities that develops through the shared history and interaction of all humans. As Jung called it, these ancestral memories are universal themes that are expressed through various modes, including in this particular piece of literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part presents the analysis of the findings of the conducted study. As mentioned in the previous part, the results will be presented in three layers.

First Layer (Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, and the Self)

The four main concepts in Jungian psychology are the Persona, Shadow, Anima/Animus, and the Self. Accordingly, the Persona is, as its Latin-derived counterpart meaning "mask", the aspects of personality an individual consciously projects to other people and the world. The metaphor of "masks" perfectly encapsulates this concept, as people may wear more than one Persona to deal with different groups and situations.

In direct opposition and constant mediation with the Persona is the Shadow. Jung describes the shadow as"... a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. Becoming conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real. This act is the essential condition for any kind of self-knowledge (Jung, 1951). Simply put, it is the collection of repressed aspects of a person's identity. Consequently, most people do not admit aspects of their personality that form part of the Shadow, rather, it is consciously repressed, only ever showing/manifesting in certain circumstances.

The Animus and the Anima refer to the inner force that "animates" (hence the term) people into acting, particularly when following gender roles. Because most of Jung's work

was done when gender roles were generally traditional and stereotyped, certain understandings from the Animus and Anima may not apply today. In general, Animus refers to the traditional male aspects of personality that are imbued or integrated into a female's psyche, while Anima refers to the traditional female aspects of personality that are imbued or integrated into a male's psyche.

With the Persona in constant mediation with the Shadow, and with the psyche being imbued by the Animus and Anima, it is then understandable to say that individuals undergo a struggle to come to terms with their Self. This process was referred to by Jung as Individuation, or the act of becoming a distinct and integrated unity of all the aforementioned aspects of personality.

Mari Asai

Mari Asai is the main character of the novel, with more than half of the story focused on her encounters. She is nineteen years old and studies Chinese at the University of Foreign Studies.

For Mari, the Persona that she is projecting to the world is that of an independent and aloof college student. By choosing to dress in plain clothes (navy blue baseball cap, black-rimmed glasses, hooded gray parka, varsity jacket, blue jeans, and brown leather shoulder bag), she hopes to depict herself as being distant and plain. This, however, is undercut by the repressed aspects of her personality (her Shadow) gradually coming into the fore, as exemplified in several interactions where she is coaxed into divulging her feelings and relationship with her sister, Eri.

As for the masculine aspects of her psyche (her Animus), hers are shown through her interactions with Kaoru (where she reveals her smoking habit, her independence and determination, and her rational ability), Takahashi (her clear and non-emotional responses that seemed distant), and her sister Eri (the ending where she seemingly takes her place sleeping, showing great resolve).

Tetsuya Takahashi

Mari Asai interacts three times at length with Tetsuya Takahashi, another main character in the novel. He introduces himself as a law student and a trombone player in a band. Furthermore, he connects with Mari through her sister, with whom Tetsuya was in a class for a year in high school. He also recollects that he had once interacted with Mari while going on a double-date with another friend and Eri at a hotel swimming pool.

As is shown in his desire/intention to strike up a conversation with her at the start of the novel, and his recommendation of Mari to Kaoru after the incident with the Chinese prostitute, Tetsuya projects himself as an open, approachable, and reliable friend (or a

personal acquaintance) to Mari. However, unlike Mari, Tetsuya openly reveals certain aspects of his personality and memories once he has established even the faintest of connections (he openly discusses his attraction to her sister after explaining his order of chicken salad).

As for elements of femininity in his personality (his Anima), it can be noted that he shows empathy and relates to the circumstances of Mari's relationship with her sister. His current hobby of playing the trombone, as it readily provides him with a sense of purpose and happiness, is also noteworthy.

Kaoru

Kaoru is the manager of a "love hotel" named Alphaville. She was a professional wrestler several years ago. Kaoru solicits the help of Mari in translating to and from Chinese (after being mentioned by Tetsuya) to deal with a beaten-up Chinese prostitute.

Due to her history as a former professional wrestler, Kaoru has a powerful appearance that draws people's attention. Her choice of attire (black woolen hat, big leather jacket, and orange pants) is seen to greatly compliment her actual body build, being solidly built and with broad and strong-looking shoulders. Her manner of speaking with other people is also in consonance with her appearance; direct, no-nonsense, and at times blunt, with seemingly little to no regard for formalities and courtesies. Despite the seemingly thick and impenetrable exterior, Kaoru's repressed personality also comes to the fore while discussing personal history with Mari, and her desire for justice for the beaten-up Chinese prostitute.

Kaoru is also shown as one of the few characters who is fully in touch and has integrated her Animus into her psyche, as exemplified in her interactions with Mari, the beaten-up Chinese prostitute, and the Chinese mafia gang member.

Shirakawa

Shirakawa is introduced as a married and seemingly hard-working IT employee for a company called VERITECH. He never interacts with any other main characters, aside from the Chinese prostitute that he beats up in the Alphaville "love hotel".

While not much of the story focuses on his character, the few chapters where he is discussed show important aspects of his personality. For his Persona, he chooses to depict the image of a hardworking and dedicated employee of a company (he appears to have volunteered to stay the night working to correct a colleague's mistake to avoid any other hiccups in their work). His general attire also does not leave a lasting impression or draw attention (dark blue necktie over light gray shirt with light gray trench coat). His

relationship and interaction with his wife (as revealed over a phone call) are also portrayed to be that of a dedicated, albeit overworked husband.

However, due to the circumstances of him regularly rendering overtime, he is losing precious time to spend with his family (his wife reveals that this has been going on for more than a month now). As such, his Shadow rises from this seeming depression in the form of engaging in prostitution (and choosing a young Chinese girl) and violence.

Eri Asai

Eri is the older sister of Mari Asai. As she is two years older than Mari, she is a 21-year-old college student who has appeared in several magazines as a model ever since she was in junior high school. The peculiarity of Eri's character comes from the fact that, over the past two months since the start of the novel, she has been doing nothing but sleeping, but not much explanation in the medical sense has been given.

Since most of Eri's scenes were her sleeping (with only the final scene depicting her waking up from sleep), not much can be said about her Persona, aside from Mari and Tetsuya's recollections and memories. According to Mari, Eri is the typical *Snow White*; charming, pretty, and beautiful enough to be modeled in several magazines since her junior high school years.

Additionally, as the narrator in the story puts it, besides her sleeping figure in her room that appears to be "too pure, too perfect," not much information can be gleaned about Eri's personality based on the artifacts in her room (sparsely decorated and does not look like that of a young girl's). The narrator even goes on to say that deliberate preparations have seemingly been made to make sure that her personality is not revealed through said artifacts (with the predominant color themes being black and white; black *Sony* television, black desk lamp, and pure white plain bed sheets).

Personality Mediation (Individuation) of Mari Asai

Although Mari Asai projects the image of a strong-headed, independent, and aloof student, this is nothing more than a carefully chosen and meticulously woven Persona, borne out of a desire to conform to her idea of whom she ought to be and what others expect her to be. The continuous and overt transaction between her Persona and Shadow and the struggle to integrate her Animus into her psyche is what Jung was referring to as the *Individuation* process.

The first event that Mari is mentioned in the novel was her sitting and reading inside a family restaurant. The temporal setting is at 11:56 PM (as made manifest by the image of a clock that appears at the beginning of every chapter, establishing the chronology of the events in the novel), making it unusual and at the same time intriguing. Mari is described in

the first chapter as "naturally attracting our attention" even as the provided description of her is very nondescript. Her act of reading a large thick hardbound is only sometimes interrupted by her drinking a cup of coffee, as it is her "role as a customer." The persona being projected here is problematic and at odds with her shadow, which is also manifesting. Her choice of staying in a family restaurant and her indistinctive choice of clothes, plus the act of reading a thick hardbound book, can be viewed as a conscious choice to project distance and detachment, as in to try and not attract any attention at all. This, however, is counteracted by the very act itself as her presence, that of being alone in a restaurant designed and catering to small groups and families, is already bound to attract attention. Adding to this is the fact that the artifacts she is using point to the fact that she is a student who complicates things when the current temporal factor is considered, making her whole presence a juxtaposition and mediation between her Persona and her Shadow. Another way to look at it is the way Mari appears to blend in with the crowd in Denny's, making her anonymous as a parallel to her journey of individuation, which at this point in the novel, has barely begun and is in turmoil.

Mari is then singled out, much like the point of view of the novel, by another character that comes into Denny's. Introducing himself as Tetsuya Takahashi, an acquaintance of her sister, he joins Mari at the table and unsuspectingly sets off a chain of events that results in both of them divulging their innermost, darkest secrets. For the most part, their initial interaction at Denny's can be seen as that between acquaintances. However, partly due to Tetsuya's nature of being open about his thoughts, Mari eventually opens up little aspects of her personality and history through her reactions to his thinking and philosophy. This meet-up and eventual momentary separation between Mari and Tetsuya will be repeated two more times in the story.

The next event of note in the individuation of Mari is her encounter with the beaten-up Chinese prostitute in the Alphaville love hotel. While she was originally solicited for her linguistic ability, she also ends up being opened up to a world she knows exists but has not given much thought to. Mari is by no means innocent, as she is not surprised or baffled by being in a love hotel, just taking in the admittedly new artifacts. What unsettles Mari is the sight of a female of her age naked and bloodied on the floor of a love hotel. This uncomfortable and unsettling feeling disturbs the composure of Mari (as evident in her biting her lip upon being told the circumstances of the Chinese prostitute). This particular scene rattles her to her core and puts her into a greater/wider perspective of who she is in the world. As individuation is generally concerned with bringing the unconscious to the conscious, the experience of helping a prostitute her age forces her to confront a reality that is not hers. This becomes evident later on in Mari's conversations with Korogi and Tetsuya.

After several chapters, Mari is staying in Skylark, a bar not far from Alphaville, where she is again approached by Tetsuya, who is on a break from practicing with his band. Most of their conversation in the bar revolves around the history of Tetsuya, his desires, and his rationalization of human society and identity. Mari listens intently and internalizes his

points of view that seem to be at odds with her own. This serves to provide Mari with additional input and information in her individuation, particularly on how a certain event in Tetsuya's past pushed him to re-evaluate his life's direction.

The pair then change location to a park, where Tetsuya divulges to Mari his encounter with Eri last April. While Tetsuya goes on to elaborate on the peculiarities of this encounter, While the two of them could barely be considered acquaintances, Tetsuya narrates how Eri seemingly poured her emotions and feelings out to him, which serves to confound Mari as this goes against her idea and knowledge of who Eri is and what she normally does and does not. This is even more aggravated when Tetsuya reveals to Eri how her sister desired to be close to her, again disturbing and seemingly contradicting Eri's notion of her sister.

Additionally, Tetsuya also confesses to Mari the weird, distant feeling he felt when he was talking with Eri. This serves to be another connection between Mari and Tetsuya, as Eri admits that she has felt the same thing for a long time whenever she interacts with her sister. Subsequently, Mari reminisces again on the circumstances of the beaten-up Chinese prostitute who was her age back in Alphaville. With it finally coming, the source of Mari's troubled individuation journey is coming to the fore; her estranged relationship with her sister.

Before they separate yet again, Mari reveals to Tetsuya the actual situation of her sister, Eri, who has gone to sleep and refuses to wake up. Although Tetsuya prods Mari for more details, she hesitates and changes the topic to Tetsuya's family history, all the while walking back to Alphaville. From this interaction, the cycle is repeated yet again, with Mari and Tetsuya meeting each other, each divulging information about their emotions, feelings, and history, only to later on go about their way.

The conversation between Korogi and Mari serves to enlighten further the circumstances surrounding Eri's slumber. It is revealed that Eri unilaterally announced to the family that she would be sleeping, and has since remained so. The family solicits medical help from a general practitioner doctor but finds that Eri, despite sleeping for months, remains in perfectly good health. This exchange between Korogi and Mari (particularly the latter parts) highlights the role of memories and past experiences in deciphering and understanding oneself; the process of individuation.

Of particular important note is the shortest chapter that follows, which details how Mari appears while napping in a room in Alphaville. In the chapter, however, the individuation process that Mari is undergoing is at its height. It can be inferred that Mari originally left their house to get away from the seemingly suffocating situation of her sister sleeping for hours on end. She even expresses in the previous chapters her lack of desire to sleep, knowing that her sister remains sleeping with no clear signs of waking. However, Mari finally gives in to "sleep", or in this case, to fully immersing herself in making sense of all the realizations and revelations she has thus far experienced. While Mari sleeps, the

most important aspect is how she is sleeping with the light on, going against the very principle of human survival she later lectures Tetsuya on. With it, the second cycle of her meeting Tetsuya and eventually going further in her individuation journey.

Mari is then woken up by a call from Tetsuya, seemingly interrupting her slumber and, in a way, the individuation process that she is undergoing. While they initially meet up for Tetsuya's invitation for breakfast, they eventually decide to walk to the station instead. During this walk, Mari remains reluctant to fully divulge Eri's circumstances. She, however, recalls an important event between her and Eri, wherein they were left trapped in an elevator during an earthquake. She shares that she was deathly scared but was greatly comforted by her sister, who even went on to sing songs so as not to scare her further, all the while reassuring her that everything would be fine. This event from their past can be seen as in direct opposition to her perceived image of her sister's desires and personality, which she has resolutely decided to be in direct contrast to (her sister being the beautiful and delicate Snow White, and her being the sturdy sheep maid). Furthermore, this particular recollection can be seen to have been brought to the fore due to Mari's short immersion into her individuation.

The pair then separate for the third time when Mari boards the train going home. This is after Tetsuya asks Mari out on data, only to learn that it would be impossible as Mari would soon be leaving the country to be an exchange student in China for six months. The pair resolve to write to one another and meet up when Mari returns to Japan. This separation is the third and final in the novel. In the words of Korogi, *"Memories are like fuel that we burn,"* and in Mari's case, all the needed fuel has been accumulated in the form of realizations, memories, and emotions. All that remains is the final immersion and confrontation in her individuation journey.

Upon arriving home, Mari goes inside her sister's room and gets in bed with her. She unknowingly sheds tears and is initially taken aback by the rush of emotions and realizations. This is the final stumbling block she must overcome in order to fully realize her individuation. It can be seen that every event that happened to Mari over the course of the night was for her to finally understand her true feelings towards her sister, thereby making her whole individuation process centered on her relationship with her sister.

The final event for Mari is her succumbing finally to the desire to reconnect with her sister, to finally come into a full realization of her actual feelings for her sister. This is made manifest when she earnestly requests that she wake up and come back. The interrupted process of individuation in the Alphaville room is finally resumed when she succumbs to sleep, the very concept that she has been avoiding and that prompted her to leave their house in the first place, and with it comes the promise of embracing her true self upon waking.

Slumber and Awakening of Eri Asai

The other half of the novel focuses on Eri Asai, her slumber, events surrounding her slumber, her transport to another dimension/reality, and her eventual awakening at the end of the novel. In general, it can be said that Eri Asai also shares the same journey as her sister, Mari, and that both their journeys are strikingly different. The whole reason and meaning behind her decision to sleep and remain asleep is her whole individuation process.

For Eri Asai, most of her characterization comes from the point of view of her sister, Mari. She is described as a college student taking up sociology at an old missionary college for rich girls. According to Mari, Eri has no special interest in sociology nor is she an intellectual student, knowing just enough to pass her exams, even soliciting Mari to write reports for her in exchange for a little money. The most striking and dominant description of hers, however, is focused on her looks, particularly how stunningly beautiful she is. Most of her time is spent modeling for magazines and several TV shows.

The crux of Eri Asai's struggle in the novel lies in the fact that she decided to go to sleep and has not woken since. As such, it can be said that she has been undergoing the whole individuation process without much progress for several months now. The struggle of her identity crisis lies in her manufactured persona that corresponds to society's view of what she should be. In the several chapters where she is introduced by either the narrator, Mari, or Tetsuya, the overarching theme is that of her immense and seemingly unnatural beauty that captivates just about anyone. It is from this characteristic of hers that she dons the persona of the "perfect Snow White". Korogi, in her conversation with Mari, notes that ever since she was a little girl, Eri had to play her assigned role and satisfy the people around her. This was not contradicted by Mari, as she also knew, albeit maybe on a subconscious level due to her connection with her sister.

This persona is not enough in and of itself to trigger and trap Eri in slumber. The reason lies in what triggered it in the first place. Mari notes in her conversation with Korogi that her sister has had a lively modeling career for several magazines and frequently appeared on a TV show for some time. After some time, though, the TV show ended and she was not able to find any more opportunities like it. Then, it can be said that Eri's identity up until that point has remained loyal to the idea of Snow White, appearing beautiful and pleasing people, and that when it ended, she was forced to deal with the possibility of who she is when her Snow White persona is removed. This uncertainty about her true self is exacerbated by the artifacts in her room, which the narrator describes as lacking in any material that would suggest the occupant's taste or individuality.The only artifacts that could be closely regarded as decorative in nature were five framed selfies, all alone, without any friends or family, speaking immensely to the loneliness and isolation she was subconsciously feeling by donning her Snow White persona.

This persona of hers starts to crack on one particular occasion before her slumber, in her peculiar encounter with Tetsuya, where she pours her emotions out and confesses

several things to him. This can be seen as her shadow slowly breaking into the seams of her persona; her subconscious impulse to express her emotions, particularly her desire to be close to Mari. Tetsuya in this situation was not a requirement; rather, it can be seen as Eri recognizing Tetsuya and regarding him as someone not intimately close to her and therefore would be good enough. No special requirements were needed, besides the fact that someone was willing to listen.

When Eri finally surrenders herself to sleep to focus on her individuation, it can be said that she has done so to retreat from the world where her trusted and seemingly unbreakable Snow White persona has started to unravel. In the darkness of her sleep, she communes with herself, the expectations of who she should be and whom she wants to be.

It is in this darkness that another character is seen interacting with Eri while she sleeps. The faceless man in a suit originally appears on television, seemingly drawing a connection to Eri's public image as a beautiful model that appears in magazines and TV shows. Additionally, the role and intention of the faceless man can be seen in the consciousness of the audience that watches her. The man represents the "faceless" crows beyond the TV cameras. Of important note also is how Eri never interacts with the faceless man, further solidifying the faceless man's role as an observer that never interacts or connects with her but exerts her expectations on her, as evidenced by his heavy and constant gaze.

In the climactic events of Eri's slumber, her consciousness is seemingly transported to another dimension or reality. Here, she is trapped and unable to escape no matter what she tries to do. In it, she finds a dulled pencil with the same label as the pen that Shirakawa was using. This was deliberately done to cement the connection between Shirakawa and Eri, and, in extension, the beaten-up Chinese prostitute.

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Shirakawa can be thought of as the physical representation of the masses in terms of expectations of Eri. If an assumption is made that Shirakawa was an avid fan of Eri when she was still appearing in magazines and TV shows, the timeline fits perfectly, as Eri started sleeping two months before the novel's events, which also coincides with the time that Shirakawa started working overtime exhaustively. As such, it can be assumed that he has had an unhealthy obsession with Eri (or in extension, another female model that regularly appears in mainstream media), and when he can no longer see her as she has dropped out of the limelight, he sinks deeper into depravity and engages in prostitution to relieve his desires.

His choice to work overtime exhaustively is nothing more than a ploy to cover his base sexual desire, hence the prostitute. Even his choice of prostitute seems to mirror that of his obsession with Eri. This also serves as the explanation as to why he started beating the prostitute when her period suddenly started; that he had been waiting a long time to exert some form of violence on someone remotely resembling his obsession, Eri. Additionally, Eri's struggle to escape the dimension/reality she has been transported to also happens in the same chapter as Shirakawa watching the television in his home, and as the narrator states, he seems to be watching something beyond the television.

The next time Eri is focused on in the novel is when she is finally transported back into her home dimension/reality, in her actual room. She sleeps, as the narrator puts it, free from confusion and decorously on her bed. Whether she was successful in completing her individuation journey (that is, if she was able to escape the dimension/reality her consciousness was transported to), or whether it ended in failure (that is, if it was not her actual consciousness that now possesses her body).

Finally, when Mari accepts and fully surrenders herself to individuation by calling out to Eri to wake up and come back, Eri herself is seen to be manifesting the first physical signs of waking up. Mari was able to rescue, or at the very least nudge, Eri into coming into her own and accepting her true self by reaching out and finally admitting that she, too, desired to be close to her sister.

Final Layer (The Collective Unconscious)

While the Anima/Animus, Persona, and Shadow are specific to individuals, Jung mentions that there exist common themes amongst all people that arise out of shared experiences and history, and he termed it the *Collective Unconscious*. Murakami also takes advantage of this concept by making use of imagery, symbolism, and metaphors that enable readers to easily connect and force them to ponder its meanings.

The Night/Darkness and The Daybreak/Light

Perhaps the most obvious theme that dominates the entire novel is the use of the interplay between dark and light, night and day. This is best represented by the very setting of the story, as it happens over the course of one night and is represented by the image of a clock at the start of every chapter. The subversion is hidden within this seemingly obvious and well-known theme.

Among average humans, most of what happens that is of note happens during the day, and the night is reserved for rest and slumber. This is immediately subverted by the author by choosing Tokyo as the setting, as Tokyo is most known for having a very vibrant and distinctive nightlife. The novel itself opens up by providing a vivid description of the pre-midnight scene. Night has therefore been chosen to represent what is dynamic and

enlightening, and the day was assigned as the foreboding end of a journey, as is evident in the characters' concluding their affairs come morning (Mari makes it clear to Tetsuya that she will go home once trains become available by daybreak, Tetsuya is determined to practice all night, Kaoru considers the night as the peak of business for love hotels, Shirakawa has overtime through the night and goes home via taxi in the morning).

Daybreak serves to be the natural end of the novel, as the characters have all undergone individuation at varying levels. The status quo presented at the start is only subverted/inversed at the end, with Mari coming into terms with her real feelings towards her sister, Tetsuya deciding to forge a connection with Mari after being suspicious of the nature of personal connections, and most importantly, Eri finally showing signs of waking up from her several-month-long slumber.

Snow White

Whenever Mari describes her sister to anyone, it is always in reference and focuses on how beautiful she is, and how distinctly different both of them are from each other. Mari even goes on to describe Eri as Snow White, and herself as the sturdy sheep maid. This usage of the popular Disney character was done to evoke the seeming "peak" of femininity in Eri, and the lack thereof in Mari.

Mari's Snow White persona is also evident when her identity struggle is revealed. Just like the fairy tale heroine, Mari is the object of admiration and adoration in the many TV show appearances and magazine photoshoots. This becomes her identity, and she works hard to maintain this said identity. This, however, is not made to last.

In his dialogue with Mari, he comments on this nature of Eri, noting that she (Eri) worked hard to be a perfect Snow White. It can therefore be said that to Tetsuya, and in extension, the public world, Eri's identity has been based on appearing beautiful, just as Snow White's identity has been based on appearing "the fairest one of all".

The parallel between Eri and Snow White can also be seen in her slumber as a direct reference to Snow White's. Unlike the fairy tale character, however, who succumbed to a curse, Eri's slumber is in direct opposition as it was self-imposed and resulted from an inner turmoil of identity. In the end, even the eventual waking up is directly mirrored, though Eri's is much more enigmatic and uncertain, as she is not woken up by a "true love's kiss", but rather the honest plea and desire of her sister, Mari.

The Faceless Man

The observer and seeming tormentor of Eri as she sleeps is described as having faceless features. The mask he is wearing is described as form-fitting and translucent. Interestingly, the origin of the mark is also revealed as being "handed down from ancient

times", establishing that the man is not to be taken as a unique individual but rather represents a concept that has existed since ancient times.

The masked man, therefore, can be thought of as the representation of the public psyche, born as an amalgamation of everyone's nature and desires, the vast, faceless collective of humanity. His torment of Eri in her room can be seen as how public pressure and expectations violate her even in her most private space. His gaze is akin to the lecherous and desirous gazes of the public, wanting anything and everything there is about Eri to conform to their selfish desires.

Of Meetings and Separations

A common theme that prevails throughout the novel is how the characters meet and disclose certain parts of their history and identity, only to, later on, be separated from each other for individuation to happen.

Mari first meets with Tetsuya at Denny's restaurant. Not much is revealed about Mari's motivations, history, and personality at this point. However, as Tetsuya only went to the restaurant to eat a snack, he leaves Mari behind a short while after. This can be noted as the first meeting between the two, which is immediately followed by their separation. As to the individuation that happens in the separation phase, Mari is exposed to a world she is aware of that exists but has not given much thought to. Mari's individuation happens here, forcing her to consider her circumstances and how distinct and different they are from others her age.

The second meeting between Tetsuya and Mari happens in the Skylark bar, the nearby par, and eventually, the separation in front of the Alphaville hotel. During their second meeting, more information comes to the fore; Mari's feelings about her sister are given more light; and most importantly, Tetsuya reveals to Mari his encounter with Eri, where she divulges that she desires to be close to her. This particular information rattles the foundation of Mari's current identity as being the direct opposite and borne out of disdain towards her sister. Thereafter follows another instance of individuation, this time in the form of Mari's interaction with Korogi, where she is forced to confront and unearth a particular memory that she had been unknowingly suppressing; a memory of how Eri protected and comforted her when they were children. This is subsequently followed by Mari finally sleeping, despite her initial apprehension, seemingly borne out of Eri's ceaseless slumber.

When Mari is awakened by a call from Tetsuya, daybreak has already arrived. While it can be said that her individuation has yet to be fully accomplished, she has made great strides, as evidenced by her relaxed expression while sleeping.

The final meeting between Tetsuya and Mari happens as they walk toward the train station. In matters of information relating to individual identity and personality, not much

was explored. Instead, the focus of this encounter is to give both characters an event to anchor on for the future in the form of a promise to keep in contact through a letter during Mari's stay in Beijing and to finally go on an actual date when she returns to Tokyo six months after. With it, all the necessary information, history, and emotions have been poured out and made to surface, ready for the final act of individuation.

The final separation between the two is immediately followed by Mari confronting head-on her feelings and emotions towards her sister. As Mari can be seen as someone without an actual identity, since she admits that her current identity was borne out of the need to differentiate herself from her sister. Her insecurities and uncertainties are all borne out of her sister's circumstances, whether it be her sheep maid persona running in contrast to Eri's Snow White persona, or her self-imposed insomnia as in direct opposition to Eri's slumber. Individuation comes to fruition when she finally admits to herself that she too, like her sister, desires for them to go back to how close they are with each other. She even breaks into tears when finally calling out to her sister. She has been avoiding coming back to her.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Applying the principles of Jungian psychology to analyzing Haruki Murakami's After Dark results in a deeper understanding of how the author makes use of universally accepted themes and symbolism, merged with the contemporary setting, to deliver a narrative on the individuation process that everyone must undergo. The analysis revealed that the main characters of the novel all possess the same personality elements that are always in flux and in constant mediation with each other. Whether it be between the Animus and Anima, or the Persona and the Shadow, the characters continuously build on and work towards individuation through their interaction with each other.

As to the circumstances of the two main characters, Eri and Mari Asai, the novel presents the intricacies and hardships accompanying the process of individuation. While their circumstances can be seen as the direct opposite of each other, they are actually on the same journey, opposite sides of the same coin.

Also, the themes utilized in the telling of the story manipulate elements that are normally common and widely accepted amongst all people (the collective unconscious) and upend them to show the duality and complexity of the characters. The use of famous characters like Snow White and the Faceless Men evokes the imagination and provides much-needed depth in characterizing the struggles of the characters.

At its core, *After Dark* presents seemingly normal and pedestrian characters against a bustling landscape that is the Tokyo nightscape. With the characters interacting in unique circumstances, the night serves as the perfect setting to tell a story of repressed emotions and desires, manufactured and suppressed identities, and ongoing personality mediation and individuation.

DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

All authors declared that they have no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent

All authors declare that this study is covered by the exceptions in the need of informed consent as no personal details are obtained.

Ethics Approval

No ethics approval is necessary for this piece of work as the research does not involve living human participants, and does not utilize of any personal data.

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