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**Homesickness and Alienation at Home in Haruki  
Murakami's *After Dark* ♦**

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**Abstract**

The individual's life cannot be exempt from obstructions, miseries, and anguish, however; humans' reactions naturally differ. In contrast, people may keep distance and be alienated as a way to escape and conceal an aspect, which is not at ease to disclose it in public, this can lead to displacement. This paper illuminates the characters' homesickness and alienation at home in Haruki Murakami's *After Dark*. The human's dark side is the result of cultural intervention that causes alienation at home. Within the framework of this problem, a psychoanalytic approach is developed to advance our understanding of the role of night and the individual's conduct as reaction. Though the characters hope to break the boundaries that constrained them, but the fear they have prevents them from having rest or practice their normal daily routine. The darkness of the night reveals everyone's darkness, this examines the psychological fluctuations the characters are encountering and going through due to their engagements into isolation and terrible experiences. Murakami insists that the characters suffer from internal conflicts, which burst out of their natural lives and ultimately develop an intensive need to reach to the soul to form a new way of responding to these problems.

**Keywords:** dark side, Haruki Murakami, *After Dark*, erosion of society, alienation and homesickness

## الشعور بالغبرة والحنين الى الوطن في رواية ما بعد الظلام لهاروكي موراكامي

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### المستخلص

لا تخلو حياة الفرد من المآمي والآلام والعوائق التي يصادفها في حياته اليومية، ومع ذلك تجده يختلف عن غيره في ردة فعله اتجاه ما يصادفه. على النقيض من ذلك، قد يبتعد الفرد ويفضل العزلة كوسيلة للهروب وإخفاء جانب ليس من السهل الاعلان عنه اما الجميع، وهذا ما يؤدي احيانا الى الاغتراب . يتناول البحث مفهوم الظلام من وجهة نظر تفكيكية وعلاقته بالهروب من الواقع واللجوء الى الغربة التي تنتهي بالشعور بالحنين الى الوطن في نهاية المطاف. يشير الكاتب الى الشر على انه الجزء اللامع من شخصية الفرد خاصة عندما يتخفى الفرد في الظلام ليخفي ملامح شخصيته التي يتظاهر بها في النور. تطرق البحث في تفسير الفكرة الى أكثر من منظور في تطوّر فكرة الظلام التي اراد هاروكي موراكامي ان يطرحها في روايته "ما بعد الظلام" التي تنظر الى الظلام كجزء مكمل للشخصية الشريرة التي تمنح لنفسها لمعة مغايرة في النور . اشار البحث الى نقطة مهمة وهي المظاهر الخارجية الخداعة التي توهم الفرد بعكس ما هو موجود بداخل شخصيته والتي تؤدي الى شعور الفرد بالغبرة وهو في موطنه. كذلك الجمال الذي لا فائدة منه عندما لا يكون للفرد فرصة في الاستمتاع به. كما وتناول البحث التأثير الايجابي للآداب الاخرى في كتابات الروائي والسبل التي ادت به الى ما هو عليه.

**كلمات مفتاحية:** الظلام الساطع ، هاروكي موراكامي، ما بعد الظلام، تآكل المجتمع، الحنين الى الوطن والغبرة

## 1.Introduction

As long as literature refers to the entire world, it is used as a platform by different writers to reflect the condition of their countries, history, culture, and society. Such literature is disseminated across the universe through which people recognize different cultures and what they have in common. It is much more frequent to encounter literary works on Asian literature by non-Asians, however; Asians have recently begun to cast a glance on their literature. This paper keeps a track on Japanese literature by one of the Japanese outstanding novelists, Haruki Murakami. Japanese literature is comparable to English literature due to its age, distinctive history and diversity. Recent theoretical research has focused on Murakami's novels as they illustrate the predominant Japanese condition. The nature of the Japanese society is reflected in *After Dark* where people are permanently struggling to establish a relationship among themselves. Most of the research has investigated erosion of society including illegal immigration, gangs, isolation. No study to date has examined the characters' sufferings of homesickness and alienation at home because of erosion of society itself. This study aims to explore the characters' behaviours and their exotic world in depth.

The aim of this research is to investigate what lies behind the scenes in the characters of Murakami's *After Dark* that pushes the character to feel alienated at home. Tracking the characters' lives in particular as living in a place that is shaped by oriental conventions leads to show the dark side of the characters. To explore the innermost of the characters at night from the author's point of view, it is necessary to answer some questions like; 1) how does the night affect the characters and turn them into evil like? 2) What is the reality of life at night and the individual's reflection of the dark side? And 3) what makes the author use the night as reference to the characters' ill-treatment to each other and make them disgusted and think of exodus?

These questions may lead to the assumptions; if the darkness in *After Dark* is a reflection of Murakami's society, then Murakami tries to make the characters embody the real darkness which exists in the Japanese society for the purpose of conveying the real occurrences in that community. But, if Murakami uses the night as a way to express his darkness that rises from his own life, then the darkness cannot be generalized on the Japanese society. Therefore, the significance of this study lies in the attempts to provide a profound analysis of the native as long as expat characters to deal with the dark aspect of their

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personalities. It not only explores a new side of After Dark, but also depicts the nature of night where people assess it as a time of relaxation and mediation. Besides, the readers will be exposed to another life journey, and the possible danger lurks at night.

## **2.Literature Review**

A series of previous studies, as will be mentioned below, have examined Murakami's novels as a special type that deals with different themes of alienation. Several authors explored the theme of loneliness through Murakami's literary works, while others adopted the psychoanalytic, social, and political approach. Despite the abundance of research, no previous research has investigated the dark side of Murakami's characters in After Dark and its effect on the psychological structure of the individual at home. This creates a status of alienation and pushes the character to think of migration. To fill this gap, this paper will concentrate on the characters by answering the already given three questions in order to explore their dark side.

In 2010, Masayasu Oda, in "A Spatial Analysis of Haruki Murakami's After Dark: The City at Night as a Place to Encounter Darkness" points at one of the gang members in the novel by describing dimness as a reflection of the character's dark thinking. In his words, he states "His hair is brown, but black is depicted as his theme colour. He wears a black leather jacket and blue jeans and rides a bitch-black motorcycle. As such he is shown to be in the world of darkness" (Oda, 2010). According to Oda the character's colours of clothes and properties are associated with one's personality. The mentality of the gang members is described according to the colour of his clothes. His study puts darkness in the frame of the colour and he paints evil and dark side of the character with the black colour.

In her essay "A Room in the hotel Alphaville" published in 2013, Johanna Nygren portrays darkness as "...the court and what is supposed to be our justice system, as dark and untrustworthy, as a creature that moves in the dark, doing dark deeds" (Nygren, 2013). This embodies the court as a strange creature that has no mercy on human beings as it is described by the character Takahashi. He discovers that people behave in a way that never looks like him. He never imagines himself committing such wicked crimes. He reveals his interests in a world filled with system of justice. This is a significant point because it projects a major shift from prior research moving the focus to the real meaning of dark which results in a system of injustice.

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Linna Amanda et al in their 2014 article “Loneliness in Haruki Murakami’s *After Dark* (2007): A Focalization Analysis” argue that many forms of loneliness existed in *After Dark*. The characters are affected by forms of loneliness, aloneness, isolation, and alienation. Their thesis focuses on Mari, the main character as the most affected one, since Mari chooses to live a solitude life to avoid being hurt. Mari starts to seek communication at the end of the novel. The study is important because it refers to loneliness and search for identity as the most problematic issue. Moreover, it addresses the need for communication and establishes a relationship to have an interaction with the society.

The representation of Mari’s alienation is presented in Andrea Carmeli O. Abulencia’s “Mari Asai’s Personal Isolation in Haruki Murakami’s *After Dark*” (2016). Japanese society experiences alienation currently that is why the author focuses on it so as to reflect Japanese condition. Abulencia furnished Mari’s sorrow towards her sister by extracting Mari’s quote: “That sense of union I felt in the darkness of the elevator, that strong bond between our hearts, never came back again. I don’t know what went wrong, but we were never able to go back where we started from” (Abulencia, 2016). She wants to have a sense of connection with her elder sister Eri, unfortunately the elevator was the last place that gather the two separate sisters. The darkness plays an important role, since it brings Mari and Eri together for the first time. What is worth noting is that when the light fades and the dark descends, people show their true self to each other. It seems that darkness is the only chance to those whom they have missed a serious word with their rivals to re-establish a hidden connection with them. They are afraid of public connection, that is why they go for hidden connection in the dark. Again in 2016, Ananda Praswanta in “Loneliness of Mari Asai at Haruki Murakami’s *After Dark* Novel (2004): A Psychoanalytic Approach” believes that the psychological approach is used to describe complicated personalities. As it has been mentioned that some people cannot cope with each other due to suffering of frustration which makes them feel lonely and stressed at the same time. Mari seeks this way to relax and get rid of all the pressure. This approach is not clearly analysed in this research. It fails to go in depth with the reasons of Mari’s psychological problem. It would have been better to focus on the character to understand her condition.

In a different vein, Michael Tsang (2018) states in his speech “Who’s the Egg? Who’s the Wall?” that Murakami has discussed political

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thoughts in his recent works. The wall stands for powerful people in high position, yet the egg stands for weak personalities. Regarding Japanese, Murakami's works portray the real incidents in Japan, since they are closely linked to their society. Murakami not only discusses political thoughts, but also social ones. In *After Dark*, Murakami refers to the night as a dark side of Tokyo. However, he warns not to ignore the dark side of the society in his acceptance speech (2009). This is to prove that behind Murakami's work there are reasons, and he succeeds in using the metaphor mentioned above in an appropriate way (Tsang, 2018).

Dark is realized as the complete absence of light, the deep shadow of the brown colour. The presence of dark indicates the inability to see properly. Dark is not only confined to the illumination since each field has its own interpretations of the term 'dark'. In literature, 'dark' implies evil, horror, depressing and disappointment. Furthermore, it is used to show that the story is gloomy and spooky. From a psychological point of view, dark triad is associated with narcissism, manipulation and psychopathy or mental illness. The so-called 'dark' is used in psychology due to its mischievous traits. The term 'dark' from a psychological viewpoint means the examination of human species since it is related to the nature of people's psycho to get what they desire. It explores these ideas and sentiments which lead the human to be predator. The goal of this literature review states how the prior studies stereotype Haruki Murakami's novels in different perspectives with especial reference to the idea of dark side.

It is worth mentioning that Murakami explores the postmodern conditions, in which a sense of alienation emerges as a constant theme throughout almost all his novels. Through his novels, he attempts to prepare the ground with a view to change the traditional face of Japanese fiction. Magical realism, surrealism, and fantasy mark Murakami's ability to break free of old patterns. The characters are trying hard to find meaning of their existence, and they lack social communication which leads to loneliness. Their actions and world can best be described as peculiar wandering between reality and fantasy.

### **3. 1. From Sunset to Sunshine: False Appearance and Hidden Truth**

*After Dark* is Murakami's one of the best novels which was published in 2004 and translated into English in 2007. At the first glance, one might suppose that this novel is filled with fearsome spectacles.

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Somehow it is a night journey based on the latest seven hours in Tokyo, when the lighthouse turns into dim, and the dark settles down throughout the downtown. It suggests that the truth is not always what we get used to see around us, there is a hidden truth which is out of reach until the situation is dissected from different points of view. Its action is set in Denny's restaurant and Alphaville hotel where the characters are isolated in search of a place to gather. Indeed, the plot is motivated by the characters' endeavours to have spiritual communication that might relief them and lead to consciousness. Many incidents take place at midnight that portray what Japanese society is suffering from.

After Dark's narrator attaches the experiences of various characters by uniting the portrayal of different perspectives that exist in this novel. It is worth noting that the camera plays the role of human eye which directs the reader's attention and monitors the whole city. Moving with no limitations in the air liberates the camera from the character's attitudes, it just captures their activities during the night life. The first journey the camera takes us is to Denny's restaurant (Yamada, 2019).

Murakami is typically striking two sides of the characters in *After Dark*; the dark side is the main focus of his novel while he strikes points here and there on the other normal side of human being. In "Japanese Dichotomies and the Individual identity in Haruki Murakami's *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki*" (2017), Sheba D. Mani points out to Murakami's interest that "There is a need to confront the dark elements from the face in the mirror we want to see" (Mani, 2017). That having the dark side means there are many hidden secrets and truths, because of the consequences of one's life, hardships, and tensions, which cannot be grasped easily until the humans' insights are investigated. By tracking the characters' lives in succession, one would voice his regret and bitter over the characters' dark side.

To start with Mari Asai, the heroine, Denny's restaurant is the place which introduces her. Mari is a nineteen-year-old college student sitting lonely in the restaurant with a book on her hand, and a cup of coffee on the table, nothing interrupts her silence except the music. Her interest in reading books makes out of her as an intellectual one. Her presence does not indicate that she is waiting for the arrival of someone. Such a young girl spends her night in the midst of the city's darkness encountering a trombonist, a hotel manager and a Chinese girl, this conduct gives an impression that the girl lives her life alone and homeless. Yet still anyone who reads the story may pose a question: What kind of peace does she find in a solitude life?

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Mari looks upset, sad and confused, these features can be clearly realized by anyone sees her as this is reflected by the nature of her daily routine. Mari looks mentally tortured as she has the sense of estrangement at home. She formulates attachment to the society where she born and she lacks feelings of family life. Home is a place where someone seeks rest and comfort, feelings of intimacy among family members, but for Mari, it is just the counterpart where she delves herself into a state of isolation. Mari's escape out of her home signifies her need to be far away. Her ego stresses a decision to spend the night outside her home in Denny's restaurant, even though she longs for her family's love and concerns.

A while later, a man with a trombone seems to recognize her face, both have a conversation through which we get to know Mari's elder sister, Eri. Takahashi expresses his strangeness over the Eri and Mari's relationship:

I wonder how it turns out that we all lead such different lives. Take you and your sister, for example. You're born to the same parents, you grow up in the same household, you're both girls. How do you end up with such widely different personalities? At what point do you, like go your separate ways? (Murakami, 2007)

Through the course of events, it becomes obvious that both have met two years ago, where Mari appears to be antisocial unlike her elder sister Eri, who is more sociable and beautiful than her sister. It turns out that Mari and Eri have different orientations. The trombonist leaves her for a band practice determining to come back. The curiosity bursts out from their conversation to know what lies behind these two sisters.

Eri, Mari's elder sister, spends the day stranded in her room, sleeping for two months. Although she oversleeps for an inexplicably long period, there is no need for a neurologist to examine her case, since the food disappears, and she changes her clothes regularly. Indeed, she wakes up, but her family takes no notice of her vigilance. Passivity is linked to Eri as a traditional feature of female gender, which is imposed on her by her physical condition. The reader can discern that Eri does not long for social communication, as if the world is drained of humans. Eri's inner feelings are chaotic unlike her bodily state which is passive.

After Dark is not devoid of unrealistic elements like most of Murakami's novels. Eri's room is filled with imaginable factors. These factors are illustrated as metaphors in order to trace the character's life through which her dark side can be observed. Eri's room has a TV with

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an image of a man with no face staring at her; all of a sudden Eri is found with her bed in the room that is shown on the TV, where Shirakawa's pencil is there. Which arouses our suspicion is the fact that Eri awakes at Shirakawa's office. In the real world, Shirakawa spends the night at his office. This is significant evidence of the existence of a relationship between Mari and Shirakawa.

Takahashi pointed out to Mari that "Say your sister is in some other Alphaville kind of place. I don't know where, and somebody is subjecting her to meaningless violence. She's raising wordless screams and bleeding invisible blood" (Murakami, 2007). Here, Alphaville hotel can be associated as a reference to movie, in which an incredible city is described. This allusion connects Eri's withdrawal from the world with her need to be alone in such an imaginary place like Alphaville hotel. How could Eri be tormented physically or even psychology, and who would be in charge of this allegation? As a result, this draws our attention to the novel's dark and threatening figures: Shirakawa and the mysterious faceless man.

In analysing the connection between Shirakawa and the man with no face, it appears that Shirakawa is watching an aquatic life biology on TV, where his entire focus is on these creatures. Similarly, Murakami describes Eri's state of mind as if she were at the depth of the ocean, meaning that Shirakawa gazes at Eri's soul, equivalently, the man with no face observes her through TV screen. In short, the incidents strongly reflect Eri's own darkness which stems from a mischievous experience with a wicked soul. Consequently, Eri escapes the reality for fear that she should face a similar experience. What is witnessed is Eri's unconscious mind that reports her insights in a dreamlike form on TV. The darkness surrounding Eri reflects a psychological process that takes shape within her subconscious mind.

### **3.2. The Chinese Girl as an Expat**

Murakami takes into consideration to discuss Japanese privilege condition in *After Dark*. One of the phenomena that exist in Japanese society is prostitution. As a Chinese fluent speaker, Mari is interrupted by a woman during her stay in Denny's restaurant asking her to catch up with her into Alphaville hotel as a translator. No sooner had they arrived than they found a girl lying on the floor. For purpose of interrogation, Mari is joins them wondering what has happened to the Chinese girl whose name later will be shown up as Cricket. The girl is in a miserable state of mind, as she has been stripped of everything she has at that

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moment. She is in 404 room, screaming, yelling and crying without uttering a sound. Several attempts have been made until she catches her breath and tells them the terrible violence she has been exposed to by an anonymous man. The security camera captures his face, which allows them to recognize him, it is apparent that the man is Shirakawa. As Shirakawa injures her, why don't they inform the police? Isn't he supposed to be detained for inflicted psychological and physical harm to the Chinese girl?

Somehow, we get to know her dark side, something she would never reveal to anyone if she had the choice. However, the circumstances compelled her to reveal that the Chinese girl is a prostitute, working for a gang member. The gang member used to contraband the girls illegally on boats to other countries to use them as goods presenting them to the costumers. So, her life is under their rule, and her job is to benefit them financially. It is a matter of mutual benefit, if she brings money, she can benefit her family back. This appears to be a complex problem, because the prostitutes cannot call for their rights, even if they are victims or hurt in a way or another. Due to breaking the law by entering the country illegally, calling police is a choice they would never choose. The Japanese society forbids such illegal immigration, so they keep their mission undercover. The preference is to return to the gang member, which would be better than being in a jail.

How could the darkness be embodied in a human, and how could a human live in the darkness? How could the human torment people owing to having sinister soul? Is it a justice system? All these queries have aroused especially after encountering the darkest character in *After Dark*: Shirakawa, the novel's malignant soul. During the daytime, Shirakawa is the honourable middle-aged man, who works as an employee in a company. Loyalty, creativity and perfection are always associated with his personality. As a way to hide his instability, he appears as an independent man especially at his work. There is a vast contrast between Shirakawa's external appearance and his inner darkness and conflicts. As the night falls, the mask slips, and his real self is disclosed.

During his existence in Alphaville hotel, Shirakawa meets the Chinese girl. Entering the hotel secretly, trying to avoid the camera eye, and having knowledge of the whole hotel's corridors and ways, indicate his regular visit to the hotel. To our surprise, Shirakawa beats the Chinese girl mercilessly practicing all kind of oppressiveness on her. The Chinese girl is oppressed at the hands of the oppressor who projects his repressed desires onto her. Shirakawa could not find satisfaction by

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beating her without cause, as Shirakawa strips her of everything. Therefore the Chinese girl was left with darkness and emptiness that no light would illuminate it as it was created by a man of evil, Shirakawa. It is undisputable that Shirakawa is stripped of humanity, ethics, and manners. Internally, Shirakawa is in detachment, while his entire focus lies on his physical needs. With regards to his emotions, Shirakawa strongly represses his emotions by presenting violence and cruelty. The feeling of having been chased by the society threatens him. That is because of his continuous effort not to be noticed by others throughout his normal daily life. Shirakawa is caught by the security camera, this is to prove that he cannot disguise himself anymore. No matter how strong, malicious, and evil Shirakawa is, there would be someone who would be more powerful than him devoting time in search of him. If there were no authority, there would be a gang member who's responsible for the Chinese girl. In the light of the fact, Shirakawa's irritation serves as a way to reveal his restrained feelings of loneliness. With all regret, Shirakawa chooses the most destructive way to rebel against aggressiveness.

### **3.3. An Embodiment of Murakami's Passion**

Murakami would not leave *After Dark* without reference to his passion for music. The character who would carry the task to reflect Murakami's love for jazz is Takahashi. To pursue Takahashi life that has an element of resemblance with Murakami, should we recognize that Takahashi abandons his love for Jazz in favour of studying law, similarly when Murakami closes his jazz club for writing novels. Takahashi is a jazz trombonist, who practices with a band in Tokyo's space at night. Takahashi appears to be extroverted and spontaneous during his conversation with Mari, and he does not hesitate to express his views on Mari and Eri's relationship. With respect to Takahashi, his role strengthens the relationship between the sisters, which leads Mari to conquer the isolation at the end of the novel.

Despite his significant and successful attempts to bring the sisters together, Takahashi himself is not able to have a sense of interaction with his family. In fact, there is no trace of his family in this novel. During his conversation with Mari, it is obvious that Takahashi sounds to be bothered in his childhood by his father who was a criminal. That is why no sense of regret appears on his face for he spends his life living alone without any sense of solidarity. Takahashi immerses himself in music to give meaning for his existence and redeem his existential situation. However, solitary life is a predilection for Takahashi rather

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than living in a dysfunctional family. As for his interest in studying law, the series of trials that Takahashi attends for preparing a seminar, strengthen his passion about law and particularly in justice system, for that he quits the band. From Takahashi's point of view, the scenes, their deeds and actions are crimes Takahashi would never commit, and the real darkness does exist in the court. Does that mean that Takahashi has no dark side?

As far as Freudian Slip (1901) is concerned, it has happened during the casual conversation, when the individual discloses the hidden truths unconsciously, as it happens with Takahashi during his conversation with Mari. Mari asks about how Takahashi's relationship with Koura is built:

How did you and Kaoru get to know each other? I have been doing odd jobs at that hotel for the past six months or so. Alphaville, Dirty works, washing floors and stuff. Some computer stuff, too installing software, fixing glitches. I even put in their security camera. Only woman work there, so they're happy to get a man's help in a while. (Murakami, 2007)

It is revealed that Takahashi is working in Alphaville so as to cover up a night spent with a girl. Neither Takahashi nor the girl are able to pay, however; Kaoru is not a kind of tolerant woman. Accordingly, working in the hotel would be the appropriate thing to escape his shameful deed.

### **3.4. Koura and Korogi's Inevitable Fate**

Solidity and immensity mark Koura's appearance, which attracts people's attention and enables her to be the hotel manager. In spite of her powerful appearance, Koura is not associated with evilness and violence. What is latter revealed to us is that Koura is a professional wrestler, which assigns her with a giantess. Koura gains popularity and a huge deal of money, but as if nothing has happened. The thing, which was not in the forecast, Koura has been through an accident, which inflicts her back. Therefore, Koura resigns, and she is bankrupt spending the money on building a house for her family, paying off her brother gambling debts, and suspicious investments. Ultimately, life brings her into Alphaville hotel (Murakami, 2007).

Nothing would be darker than running a love hotel. Being the love hotel's manager means Koura has to gloss over many things. For instance, Shirakawa beats a Chinese girl, yet Koura is responsible for protecting the girl that Koura chooses not to tell the police about fear that this should damage the hotel's reputation. Koura's priority is to inform

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the gang member for hope of cutting Shirakawa's ears as revenge, since he fled without paying the bill. Like other characters, her fate is to stay lonely either in the Alphaville hotel, or at her apartment, unable to form any meaningful relationships.

On the other hand, Korogi's fate is the worst when compared to Koura's. She is one of the servants in Alphaville hotel, who has been working for only one year. Korogi changes her job regularly, strangely Korogi is not her real name which marks her dark side. Her preference is to work secretly in the dark of love hotel, as long as the identity would not be a matter of concern. A young girl leaves everything behind her for fear of being caught by certain people. Korogi has always dreamed of someone chasing her, as Freud argues that the unconscious thoughts would emerge to the mind through dreams (1900). Those abusive people left their own marks on her body by means of a branding iron, which is the darkest ever. Korogi's inevitable fate is to roam Japan's love hotels in hope not to be at the hands of those sinister souls (Murakami, 2007).

### **3.5. Nature of Night Life**

The night in its habitual atmosphere is a time filled with tranquillity and relaxation where the individuals are keen on enjoying its seconds to relieve themselves out of fatigue and exhaustion that they have been through the day. As all the events take place at night, grotesque perspective of the night is offered in *After Dark*. It reveals typically another world filled with strangers besides their strange world. The image of the night life would completely be changed after confronting different characters with different orientations.

The reality of night life is highly populated where night people bear life's burdens upon their shoulders to every dark destination in hope of disposing it somewhere by sharing it with others involved in the same track. It is noticeable the characters are isolated and somehow connected to each other in the sense that they are struggling with their identities. The characters attempt to overcome their condition by looking for human connection. In fact, the night intensifies the characters' senses of all forms of alienations and wickedness.

Murakami's point of view is that darkness can be encountered anywhere and anytime. Therefore, the night is chosen because of its mysterious atmosphere, as the narrator refers "Everything, finally,

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unfolded in a place resembling a deep, inaccessible fissure. Such places open secrets entries into darkness in the interval between midnight and the time the sky grows light” (Murakami, 2007). The calmness of night lurks chaotic world which is seen by the characters’ behaviours of transforming it to the readers, in other words, the sense of evil occults beneath the surface of the night. With the aim of detecting the characters’ inner darkness and the city’s hidden secrets, Murakami refers to the night which is the foremost cause. Indeed, *After Dark* is a stereotype of Japanese phenomenon and what the society has been through. Murakami intends to explore Japanese inhabitants as products of the social ills they suffer from in postmodern society. In addition to that, Murakami passes a message that humans cannot be assured of anything, and ultimately the constant thing in life is change.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The upshot of *After Dark* resides in its possibility to rummage the discrepancy of Japanese society in having dark side which is at variance with their light conductance. Considerable insight is offered with regard to the characters’ night rituals in which their dark endeavours are at the culmination. The psychoanalytic approach provides a framework for purpose of scrutinizing the characters’ unconscious thoughts and desires. The work’s investigation has gone initially towards Mari, whose dark side lies on her self-imposed isolation towards her sister which intimates Eri’s own self of isolation due to engaging herself into maleficent experience with Shirakawa. Darkness is highly demonstrated by Shirakawa who instils a sense of unease in every character he interacts with especially the Chinese girl who’s the most effected by his utmost darkness. The Chinese girl is beaten mercilessly in Alphaville hotel which exposes her darkness as a prostitute having expectancy to be helped by the hotel manager, Koura. It is predestined on Korogi not to disclose her real name and to roam on Tokyo’s hotels so as not to be caught by people chasing her. Seemingly, the most sociable one is Takahashi which is the first image of investigating his conduct. This image thus needs to be interpreted with caution, for it is slightly disappointed. Takahashi is cut off from his family, his work at Alphaville hotel is a punishment because of his inability to pay the hotel’s bill. As it has been hypothesized, our research proves that

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darkness is an extension of Japanese society which is reflected by the characters' ill treatment during night.

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