

A Tale of Two Realities: Decoding Reality and Narrative in *1Q84*

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Abstract

This article looks at Haruki Murakami's book *1Q84* and how it shows a world that's not clear has many stories and makes us question what is real. The author, Murakami makes us think about reality in a way by creating a world where things like truth, who we are and how we see things are not certain. The change from the title "1984" to "1Q84" is like a sign that the world we thought was stable is actually not. It is shaped by unclear things, memories and how we feel. The story is told through two characters, Aomame and Tengo and their parallel stories. This shows that reality is like pieces that don't quite fit together and is always being rebuilt through the stories we tell and how we feel about things. The article also talks about symbols in the book like the two moons, the Little People and *Air Chrysalis*. These surreal things represent how anxious and unsure people feel in a world.

Murakami's way of telling the story challenges the idea that fiction and reality're separate. He shows that storytelling can actually change how we think about existence. The article also looks at how the characters in the book feel isolated and how their identities are not fixed but change through memories, stories and relationships with others. By mixing fantastical elements with metafiction *1Q84* becomes a key postmodern book that questions what is objectively true and the authority of a straightforward narrative. The article concludes that Murakami presents reality not as one fixed thing but as something fluid that is shaped by language how we perceive things and our imagination, through storytelling. The book reflects the uncertainties of life and offers storytelling as a way to deal with uncertainty and fragmentation.

Keywords: Postmodernism, Reality, Narrative, Fragmentation, Identity, Metafiction, Existentialism, Surrealism

Introduction

The way we tell stories today shows that we are thinking more about questions. We are wondering about how real the world's how we can be sure who we are and how we figure out what is true. These questions are especially important in writing, where stories do not have clear endings, where we question people in charge and where we do not think there is just one true reality. Haruki Murakami is a writer who has done a lot to help us think about these questions. His books are read by people from different cultures and they talk about things that worry us all like how to make sense of the world. His novel 1Q84 is an example of this. It has a story and uses many symbols showing us a world where reality is always changing and can be seen in many different ways.

The story starts in Tokyo in 1984. As it goes on the world of the story starts to change in small ways. This makes the characters and the readers feel unsure and confused. One of the things that happens is that there are two moons in the sky. This is like a picture that shows us that there can be than one reality at the same time. The story is told in two parts following the lives of Aomame and Tengo. As their stories come together, we see that the world they live in is not always what it seems. The title of this study "A Tale of Two Realities: Decoding 1Q84 " says it well. It is about how there can be realities and how we have to think carefully to understand them.

Haruki Murakami likes to mix surreal things in his stories. He takes the world and adds strange things to it which makes us question what is real. This is like what many postmodern writers do. They do not think there are true stories that explain everything. Instead, they think that reality is made by what we see what we remember and how we tell stories. So, the novel is like a place where we can think about questions. It helps us see how our own experiences and the world, around us shape what we think is real. Haruki Murakami and his novel 1Q84 make us think about how we understand the world and how we can be sure of anything.

The phrase "A Tale" in the seminar title shows that storytelling is a life-changing force in 1Q84. Usually in literature narrative is seen as a way to show reality like a mirror that reflects the world. Murakami changes this idea by making narrative a powerful force that not only shows reality but also builds and changes it. Here storytelling becomes a part of creating existence.

This change in narrative is clear in Tengo's character. When he rewrites the manuscript *Air Chrysalis* it becomes a moment in the novel. Rewriting is not a technical or artistic process; it's a creative act that changes reality. Tengo's work on the text shows that narrative can create worlds mixing fiction and reality. The manuscript is like a story within a story reflecting the narrative and influencing it. This structure shows how Murakami's storytelling is self-aware where telling the story is both the subject and the tool.

The way *1Q84* is told, switching between Aomame and Tengo's viewpoints makes storytelling central. This structure creates an effect, where each story reflects and changes the other making them seem simultaneous and connected. When these stories come together it suggests that reality is not straightforward but complex made of stories that affect each other. The "tale" becomes a story that draws attention to itself making readers question how reliable and authoritative storytelling is. Murakami challenges the idea that narrative's just a passive medium; instead, he shows it as a powerful force that shapes how we understand reality.

The ground-breaking narrative world of **1Q84** explores uncertainty and fragmentation as reality gradually collapses. Murakami dislodges the characters' perception of the ordinary through small, almost imperceptible changes that disrupt their understanding of the world around them. He does not rely on abrupt, disruptive events, supernatural or otherwise. The presence of two moons serves as the most powerful visual representation of the reality continuum. Murakami explains the event gradually and develops a comfort zone for inconsistency, emotional instability and confusion about existence, and claustrophobia. The discomfort leaves the world alien to characters and readers alike.

The untrustworthiness of the fragmented world in **1Q84** represents the author's answer to postmodernism and an objective reality that invariably eludes perception and reason. The world of **1Q84** demonstrates that postmodernism exists in the intersection of reality and subjective perception, memory, and narrative. Emotional interpretation of time and space convinces Murakami that individuals exist within a world dominated not by objective truths, but by mutable realities; the distorted reality of **1Q84** represents the fragmented state of existence in contemporary society.

The change from "1984" to "1Q84" is really meaningful and important. At first it seems like a thing just replacing the number "9" with the letter "Q".. This small change shows the bigger changes that are happening in the novel. The letter "Q" is like a question mark it means things are not clear we are not sure and we have doubts. By using this letter Murakami is saying that we can not be sure about what's real. The world we know from "1984" is now a place where we can not be sure about anything. This change is also connected to George Orwells "1984". Murakami is looking at the anxiety and fear of a bad future in a more personal and philosophical way. He is not just talking about the government being mean he is talking about how people're not sure about what is real and how they see the world.

This not being sure affects not the world in the novel but also the people in it. Aomame starts to notice that things are not like they used to be. She sees things that are different like the police uniforms what people say about history and the two moons in the sky. These small things make her feel like something is not right. Murakami wants us to see how Aomame is really trying to understand what is going on she is not just overreacting. She is confused just like people are in the world when things are changing fast and we are not sure what is happening. Murakami is showing us how hard it is for people to stay okay when everything around them is uncertain. The "1Q84" world is, like our world, where 1Q84 and its meaning are questioned by the characters and they try to make sense of 1Q84 and the reality they live in.

At the time Tengo feels a different kind of uncertainty. His work on rewriting *Air Chrysalis* starts to mix up what's real. Whats not. At first Tengo thinks of it as a writing project.. Slowly he notices that the world in the story starts to affect the real world. This shows that stories have the power to change reality. The story doesn't just describe something. It actually helps create a reality. This blending of story and reality makes it hard to tell what's imaginary and whats true.

Murakamis story also reflects ideas from philosophy. The characters in 1Q84 are not just confused about the world around them. They are also unsure about themselves. Who they are starts to fall because the world doesn't make sense. Aomame and Tengo keep looking for meaning, stability and emotional connection in a world that doesn't give them answers. What they go through shows what happens to peoples minds when reality is unstable. Murakami turns the novel into a study of how people deal with feeling and disconnected. They struggle to hold on to who they're and feel real emotions, in a world that is fragmented and unclear.

The way the other world slowly appears makes the book feel really uncomfortable. Murakami does not tell us everything at once he just lets us feel unsure and confused. He does this by creating an atmosphere and using symbols and emotions to make us feel tense. This way of telling the story makes it feel like a dream, where things seem normal but really strange. The readers start to feel what the characters are feeling, which is confusion and uncertainty. This makes the whole thing feel real and scary not some idea that does not affect us.

The two moons in the story are important symbols. Usually the moon means secrets, feelings and the part of our mind that we do not fully understand. By having two moons Murakami shows us that there are realities at the same time. The moons mean that things are not one way they are divided and complicated. They remind the characters that they live in a world that does not make sense in the way. The two moons are like a sign of a world that is broken into pieces, where many things can be true, at the same time. Murakami's two moons show us that reality is not one thing it is many things all mixed together.

Murakami uses these things to make 1Q84 a deep think about how unsure everything is and how nothing is really stable. The book makes people think about what they believe is true and real and who they are. Murakami does not give people answers. Instead he likes that things are not clear. This is how things are now. The world of 1Q84 is all broken up. This is like the world we live in now. In this world people are not really sure what is real. They have to figure things out based on what they see and remember. The stories they tell themselves. Murakami shows us that 1Q84 is a lot like our world. The book 1Q84 is really, about people. How they deal with the fact that nothing is certain.

Murakami's stories are like a puzzle with lots of missing pieces. This is like what happens to people. They feel alone even when they are around people in the city. This loneliness is a problem that people face because they do not know what to do with their lives. The world in Murakami's novel is like this too. It is not just something but also inside the characters minds.

The novel also makes us think about what's real and what is not. Each person in the story sees the world in their way. This means that what is true for one person may not be true for another. Murakami shows us that what we think is real is actually made up of what we remember what we say, how we feel and what we think. This is similar to what some philosophers say. That there is no one truth but many different

truths that people can believe in. Murakami's novel is like a question mark that makes us wonder what is real and what is not. The way people see the world is like a puzzle with many different pieces that do not always fit together. Murakami's writing makes us think about this and, about the world we live in.

The idea in *1Q84* is that storytelling can really change things. Murakami does not think that stories just reflect what is real. He thinks that storytelling is a force that can create and change the world. We can see this idea clearly when Tengo rewrites *Air Chrysalis*. At first Tengo thinks that rewriting *Air Chrysalis* is a job to make the story better. As he works on it more and more the line between what is real and what is not gets blurry. Things that happen in *Air Chrysalis* start to happen in the world too. This makes it hard to know what is really real. Murakami shows us that storytelling is an kind of magical thing that can make new worlds. The stories we tell can create realities. Storytelling is a force that can do amazing things.

Murakami uses Tengo and *Air Chrysalis* to show us this. Tengo's rewriting of *Air Chrysalis* is not about making a good story. It is, about creating a world. The story of *Air Chrysalis* becomes a part of the story of *1Q84*. This shows us that storytelling is powerful. Storytelling can change the way we think about the world. It can also change the world itself. The way the novel is set up really makes this point stronger. *Air Chrysalis* is a story, inside another story, which makes us think about how stories are made up. Murakami uses this to make us question what we think about stories and what is real. The novel says that people understand the world through the stories we tell and that these stories can change how we think, what we remember and who we are.

The way Murakami tells the story also shows that he knows he is telling a story. The book goes back and forth between Aomame and Tengo which creates two worlds that eventually come together. This makes readers see that telling stories is a process and not just a way of showing what is real. The novel always reminds us that what things mean is not set in stone and can be understood in ways. Murakami and his novel *Air Chrysalis* make us think about this. The world in *1Q84* is not always what it seems. This affects how the characters see themselves. The author, Murakami shows that identity is not fixed it is always. It is made up of memories and things that happen to us. Aomame and Tengo both have a time figuring out who they really are because the world, around them is always changing.

Aomame is a person. On the outside she seems like she has her life together. On the inside she is hiding a big secret. She has a job that no one knows about. It is not a very nice job. She hurts men who have done things. This secret life shows that people are not always what they seem and that identity is made up of different parts. When Aomame enters the world of 1Q84 she starts to question everything herself. She is not sure what is real and what is not. This makes her wonder who she really is. The identity of Aomame is changing all the time, like the world of 1Q84. Tengo experiences a crisis that's similar to others through his relationship with storytelling. He gets involved with Air Chrysalis and this gradually changes the way he looks at reality and who he is. Murakami says that people create their identities through the stories they tell and the memories they have rather than through things that are always true. Tengo's personal history and emotional experiences and his imagination when it comes to literature all come together which makes it hard to separate who he is from the stories he tells.

People can feel very alone in their minds. This is a big theme in the book. Aomame and Tengo are connected in their feelings because of something that happened when they were kids. They are apart from each other for most of the story. They are lonely. This shows how people can feel alone even when they are in a city with a lot of people around them. Murakami shows that modern life can be a place where people have a time really connecting with each other even with all the technology and ways we have to meet people.

The relationship between Aomame and Tengo also gives us hope in a world that is not always stable. The memory they share of holding hands is like something that keeps them grounded when things are not certain. Murakami says that feeling a connection with someone can give our lives meaning even when we are not sure what is real. The relationship between Aomame and Tengo is important because it shows that people can find meaning in their connections, with others and this is what Murakami is trying to say through the story of Aomame and Tengo.

Murakami's use of symbolism is really important to the themes in 1Q84. The surreal things in the novel are not fantasy they are also symbols of big questions about life and the human mind. The two moons in the story are an example of this. They show that there can be realities at the same time. When the characters see the two moons they start to question what is real and what is not. The moons also represent

two things and how things can be broken into pieces. When the characters look at the moons they realize that nothing is certain. The Little People are another symbol in the novel. They are mysterious. Cannot be explained in a simple way. They represent the idea that there are forces at work that we cannot see. Their strange nature shows that we cannot always trust people in power. Murakami does not tell us what the Little People are or what they want which makes us think about what they might mean.

The air chrysalis is also a symbol. It represents change and the creation of stories. A chrysalis is like a cocoon that something emerges from and Murakami uses this idea to explore how stories can create worlds and new identities. The air chrysalis is like a symbol of how new realities can emerge. So Murakami's surreal imagery is not just pretty or strange it is also a way of thinking about questions. The strange and dreamlike things in the novel make us question what we think is true what is real and what it means to be human. Murakami's use of symbolism in 1Q84 makes us think about 1Q84 and its themes in a deeper way. The surreal symbolism in 1Q84 is really important, to understanding 1Q84 and its message.

The book 1Q84 shows a lot of things about postmodern literature. It does not follow a line and instead likes to be unclear and have many different meanings. Murakami challenges the way of telling stories by showing that reality is not stable and is always changing. One big thing about postmodernism in this book is that it talks about itself. By putting a made-up story called Air Chrysalis inside the story Murakami makes it hard to know what is real and what is not. Readers start to wonder which things are happening in the made-up story and which things are happening in the world. Another thing about postmodernism is that it does not like to give answers. There are a lot of mysteries in the book that are not solved like what the Little People are and how the other world works. Murakami does this on purpose so that readers have to think for themselves and not just accept what they are told.

The book also mixes a lot of styles and ideas from different cultures. Murakami puts together things like life, fantasy, philosophy and detective stories all in one book. This makes it hard to put the book into one category. It shows how mixed up and complicated the world is today. Haruki Murakami's book 1Q84 is a deep look at reality identity and storytelling in a world that is not certain. The book uses symbols, stories that are not in order and techniques that talk about themselves to challenge the idea that reality is stable. Murakami shows that life is connected to memory, language,

feelings and how we understand stories. The stories of Aomame and Tengo show what happens to people when they live in a world that's not stable. They show that who we are is always changing based on how we see things and how we tell stories. The symbols in the book, like the two moons and the Little People make the book more complicated and interesting.

In the end *1Q84* says that storytelling is not a way to show what is real but it is also a powerful force that shapes our lives. Murakami shows that stories can create worlds and change what we think is true. He creates an interesting vision of life today where not being certain is a big part of being human. The book *1Q84* is an example of postmodernism and it makes us think about the world in a new way.

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