Heteroglossic Masculinity in Haruki Murakami's 'A Wild Sheep Chase'
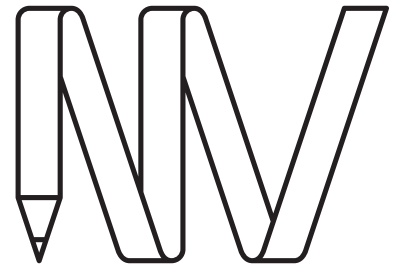
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ABSTRACT

Studies on Japanese masculinity have been consistently and strongly engaged with R. W. Connell's (1995) theory of the gender order and hegemonic masculinity, with the Japanese salaryman being identified as a masculine ideal by a number of scholars. Within this context there has been an emphasis on the plurality of masculinities present within society, and the instability of masculine ideals in gendered performances across different contexts. I argue, however, that there is still space to engage more deeply with Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia in order to reveal a multitude of different masculine voices present within a single gendered performance. Studies on the literature of Haruki Murakami have had only limited engagement with issues of masculinity, therefore this paper also demonstrates the potential for analysing the voices of male characters in fiction through masculinity theory. Here, I undertake a discourse analysis of three male characters in Haruki Murakami's *A Wild Sheep Chase* [1982], proposing that although these characters are strongly engaged and invested in the monoglossic salaryman masculinity, there is always a heteroglossia of masculine performances present. This suggests that plurality is not actually an exception, or evidence of a failure to comply, but rather an ordinary aspect of gendered performance.

KEYWORDS

hegemonic masculinity; heteroglossia; gender; masculinity studies; Murakami Haruki; popular literature; salaryman

INTRODUCTION

Masculinity studies is a significant and growing field of critical interest in Japanese studies. Influenced by Connell's (1995) theory of gender order and hegemonic masculinity, a number of studies have focused on the postwar Japanese economic miracle and its decline, and the position therein of the Japanese salaryman as a romanticised masculine ideal against which the rest of society constructs their own gendered performances (Dasgupta 2013; Hidaka 2010; Roberson and Suzuki 2003a). This approach has led to a significant commitment to the concept of many culturally constructed masculinities coexisting within a society through relations of power—interconnected, changeable and negotiated amid different socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientations and workplace relations. Within these approaches, we see masculine performances as changeable, shifting in response to different contexts. Continuing from Connell's work and how it is commonly dealt with, I will take this concept a step further by proposing that plurality is always present, even within seemingly singular masculine performances.

Through a close reading of a set of interactions between three male characters from Haruki Murakami's first full-length novel, *A Wild Sheep Chase* [1982], I argue that individuals incorporate a range of different masculine voices within their performance of the salaryman construct.[1] Francis's (2012) 'heteroglossic gender' is a reinterpretation of the monoglossia/heteroglossia dichotomy theorised by Bakhtin (1981, 270). Monoglossia (meaning 'single voice') is defined as the macro-level form of language used to reinforce dominant social groups and their views, while heteroglossia ('many voices') refers to the variability of 'voices' and language present at the micro-level. However, whereas Francis focused on the presence of femininity in masculine performances and vice versa, I will explore the presence of many masculinities within a single gendered performance. Reinterpreting Francis's concept of heteroglossic gender, this article therefore reveals the 'heteroglossic masculinities' present within gendered performances that otherwise seem to align with hegemonic salaryman masculinity, demonstrating agency and changeability without implying inconsistency or incoherence. I argue that many performances of masculinity in Murakami's novel are ingrained with a range of different voices, suggesting heteroglossia is not exceptional but actually commonplace.

Although Murakami's novel was written and set when the salaryman ostensibly had a hegemonic claim on masculine identity, none of the characters fulfil such a mono-dimensional role. Instead, the performances of the nameless protagonist-narrator ('Protagonist'), his *aibō* (相棒; or 'Business Partner'), and the *kurofuku no hisho* (黒服の秘書; or 'Black-suited Secretary') offer an alternative prism through which to question the prescriptive salaryman image of masculinity.[2]

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1 This article is based on the 2004 Japanese Kodansha edition of the novel entitled *Hitsuji o meguru bōken* [羊をめぐる冒険]. However, block quotations are taken from the 2002 Vintage Books International edition translated by Alfred Birnbaum.

2 The Protagonist identifies himself simply as *boku* (僕), using the common Japanese masculine pronoun. It is common practice in literary studies of Murakami's novels to employ the personal pronouns by which the nameless protagonists identify themselves, such as 'boku' or *watashi* (私) (Rubin 2005; Hirata 2005; Suter 2008). This article instead uses 'the Protagonist' in order to acknowledge the absence of a name. Likewise, other characters will be identified with capitalisation (i.e., the Business Partner and the Black-suited Secretary).

A Wild Sheep Chase is set in Japan in 1978 and tells the story of a 29-year-old man's search for a very special and powerful 'sheep'. The plot begins with the divorced Protagonist, who despite having a new girlfriend is maintaining a mediocre, somewhat boring life. His business partner in a small publishing firm serves as a counterexample to the Protagonist, as someone who has successfully settled into adulthood: he is married with two children and owns a large apartment. These two men then encounter the Black-suited Secretary, the representative of a shadowy right-wing conglomerate who contacts them regarding a recent newsletter their company printed, on the cover of which is a photograph of a sheep that the Black-suited Secretary wants to find. The plot then takes an increasingly magical realist turn, as the Protagonist travels to Hokkaido and begins (metaphorically) exploring Japan's imperial past.

I consider this work an example of what Bakhtin calls a 'polyphonic novel', a notion based on Bakhtin's (1981) argument that Dostoyevsky pioneered a unique form of novel in which a range of voices were present within the text, without being resolved into a single world view (341). Bakhtin argued that all Dostoyevsky characters speak in voices that are semantically separate from each other and from the author, at times absorbing each other's words or meanings but always remaining fundamentally independent. This is arguably also taking place in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, for although the Protagonist narrates the novel, other characters often take over the narration with their own stories and much of the novel takes place in conversations between characters.

As Murakami's first major work, *A Wild Sheep Chase* has been the subject of a significant amount of scholarship. However, a key trend has been to interpret this novel as a story about later generations coming to terms with Japan's colonial and imperial past (Benhammou 2010; Rubin 1999). This has especially been the case for studies making connections between this novel and Murakami's other works, such as *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* [1995], through the repetition of symbols and character-types (Ishihara 2007; F. Murakami, 2002). Another approach, particularly in English-language studies, has been to explore the concept of the self in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, notably employing psychoanalytic theory to identify the separation of self and consciousness, especially in explaining the magical realist aspects of the narrative (Strecher 2002, 2014). The Protagonist is seen as a 'typical' Murakami protagonist: bored (Rubin 2010, 56), cool, detached, and without ambition (F. Murakami 2005, 30, 25; Suzumura 2015, 65), as well as lacking the "social promise, and a ruthless efficiency" (Hong 2013, 40) necessary to succeed in modern Japan. I posit that, although the author may not necessarily have intended to critique masculinity within Japanese culture, *A Wild Sheep Chase*, though fictional, is immersed in a cultural context imbued with social tensions regarding permissible performances of gender. As such, it is possible to theoretically explore masculinity discourse within Japan through the voices and performances of this set of fictional characters. If the characters' voices are seen as "semantically autonomous" (Bakhtin 1981, 315), then their

behaviours and choices can be examined as separate and whole, and therefore individually analysed with regards to gender discourses.

Gender in Murakami's works has been addressed by researchers using psychoanalytic approaches (Dil 2009; Flutsch 2010; Hansen 2010). Gender-based studies have also largely dealt with the depiction of women in his works, which reflects a recent focus on women writers and characters in Japanese fiction studies more generally (Copeland 2006; Schalow and Walker 1996). Such studies have broadly sought to explore the social and gendered inequality within Japanese popular culture and the literary elite, particularly the marginalised position of female authors as unwanted daughters and heirs (Copeland and Ramirez-Christensen 2001). When masculinity within Murakami's novels is discussed, it tends to be biographical, with the author's personality being seen as fundamental to the ways in which masculinity is constructed and explored in his works (Nihei 2013; Lo 2004). Gender in Murakami's work has rarely been explored from the perspective of social theory, especially with regards to performances of masculinity. My approach is to see the characters within the novel as products of discourse, within a cultural context in which particular versions of gender are valued, specifically men as persevering breadwinners of the salaryman type. Therefore, the question of Murakami's intentions as an author can be briefly set aside. Through analysis of Murakami's characters—the Protagonist, the Business Partner and the Black-suited Secretary—we can explore theories of gender that are usually employed beyond the confines of literature.

THEORISING MASCULINITY IN JAPAN

Although masculinity studies on Japan covers a highly diverse range of topics, as a field there has been a strong tendency toward social constructivism[3] and a deep engagement with Connell's theory of the gender order. Working from Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Connell (1995) conceptualised hegemonic masculinity as a "configuration of gender practices" (77) that subordinates and dominates both men and women, delimiting acceptable performances of gender. The salaryman figure in Japan has been broadly accepted as a recent example of hegemonic masculinity, and as an ideal to which all men were expected to aspire (Roberson and Suzuki 2003a).

One striking trend within certain studies on masculinity in postwar Japan has been a focus on the construction of masculinity amongst certain groups of men. Key monographs by Taga (2011), Dasgupta (2013) and Hidaka (2010), for example, explore the construction of salaryman masculinity by interviewing men who could be identified as, or self-identify as, salarymen, generally based on their participation in white-collar work for a large company. Although there had previously been a significant body of work on the salaryman as a uniquely Japanese (i.e., cultural) phenomenon, these recent studies have instead focused on the salaryman as a gendered construct. There has long been a lively discourse regarding women and gendered identity,[4] it is

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3 In social constructivist theory, power is understood "in terms of social structures", and therefore with identities being formed within and against those structures (Beasley 2012, 750). For an in-depth critique of the fundamental theoretical orientations in masculinity studies, refer to Beasley (2012, 2013, 2015).
4 This discourse, in some ways, reached its apex with Butler's (1999) 'performativity'.

only since the late 1990s that a similar discussion has developed regarding men and masculinity in Japan, reflecting such developments across masculinity studies generally (Gardiner 2002, 11).

The salaryman is not so much a character-type as the combination of a set of traits: middle-class, university educated, and married with children (Dasgupta 2013, 1); the breadwinner and *daikokubashira* (大黒柱; economic pillar of the household) (Roberson 2003, 129); and a loyal *kigyō senshi* (企業戦士; corporate warrior) working tirelessly in return for guaranteed lifetime employment (Dasgupta 2003, 118). Salaryman masculinity as a performance notably touches upon all facets of life, from morning till night, and has been a highly prescriptive version of manhood. To be an adult and a successful man, an individual has been expected to fulfil as many of the above traits as possible. It has also been intimately linked to the postwar economic miracle, and to the emergence of a Japanese identity founded upon economic success and corporate culture (Dasgupta 2013, 4). Therefore, this concept places masculinity at the centre of a complicated network of institutions, as well as putting significant pressure to succeed on those who aspire to it. Social ideals are by their nature difficult if not impossible to fulfil for large sections of a community. However, the salaryman ideal has been perceived as being achievable through hard work and the consumption of middle-class products such as washing machines, televisions, and refrigerators (Dasgupta 2003, 123).

In this way, the prevailing salaryman discourse typically presents masculinity as a performance experienced and crafted by men. Dasgupta (2003) does so by highlighting how the men he interviewed adjusted their performances in order to fit the gendered expectations of their company and cohort (10). Throughout his monograph, Dasgupta also discusses the tension between different performances of masculinity across contexts, especially for those participants who do not fit comfortably into a heterosexual matrix. Although Hidaka's (2010) work is very similar with regards to the construction of the salaryman, her investigation is concerned with how the term 'salaryman' has referred to changing practices and lifestyles over the past three generations. Meanwhile, Taga (2011) focuses more specifically on the increasing tension and instability within the salaryman lifestyle as men are pulled between the demands of home and work. These key works reveal aspects of change, transition and instability within performances of masculinity, as well as the impact of social forces and changes over the course of a lifetime.

A counter-current has been research on men ostensibly subordinated or marginalised by the salaryman ideal, yet who still construct their masculinity in its shadow. The edited volumes of Roberson and Suzuki (2003a), and Louie and Low (2003), are particularly notable for bringing together critical approaches that destabilise the predominance of the salaryman figure in Japanese studies. Roberson and Suzuki's (2003b) volume highlights the institutional systems that empower the image of the salaryman and "subsume non-normative (non-salarymen) men and masculinities" (8). For example, in a context where the stereotype of Japan as a classless society of businessmen has endured, contributions such as Gill's (2003) on day labourers and Roberson's

(2003) on working-class masculinities highlight experiences of diversity and daily compromise. Louie and Low's (2003) collection less directly challenges the dominance of salaryman masculinity, yet they highlight the construction of specifically Asian masculinities. Hence, although the individual chapters may not target marginalised masculine groups in the manner of Roberson and Suzuki, the volume nevertheless reveals the highly constructed and interconnected nature of manhood and masculinity in modern Japan.

Two other important areas of interest in studies of Japanese masculinity are the role of women and the formation of gay or queer masculinities. The former relates to the role of women in the construction of masculinities, as well as how women perceive changing masculinities in Japan. A striking example is Allison's (1994) pioneering ethnographic exploration of the role that women in hostess clubs serve in aiding company employees' obligatory after-work socialising, thus supporting their construction of masculinity. Darling-Wolf (2004) has reflected on the manner in which women perceive and judge different emerging styles of masculinity or stereotypes of feminised masculinities, such as *sōshokukei danshi* (草食系男子; 'herbivore men'). There have also been significant contributions to the discussion from the field of queer studies, including the work of McLelland (2000, 2005), Lunsing (2001) and Mackintosh (2010). McLelland and Mackintosh, for example, both focus on the hybridity of gay Japanese men's masculinity, based on intersections between Western discourses and the shifting local Japanese discourse, as well as the construction of gay masculinities within Japan's mainstream media versus gay community media, such as internet forums and *Barazoku* [薔薇族] magazine. Although it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss in depth the sheer range of masculinity studies as a field, the kinds of discussions outlined above demonstrate the presence of instability and variation in gendered performance, as well as the importance of plurality to this discussion.

PLURALITY AND MASCULINITY STUDIES: AN ARGUMENT FOR USING HETEROGLOSSIA

Plurality in Japanese masculinity studies has tended to refer to variation across society, with many competing masculinities, or across contexts, with shifting performances in different social situations. The latter is the central thesis of Aboim's (2010) work, which although not focused on Japan, identified different masculinities being performed by men depending on whether they were in the public or private sphere. However, there has also been an increasing focus on the blurred boarders between masculinity and femininity in artistic representation, such as fashion magazines and newspaper cartoons. For example, Monden (2015) discusses a much more inherent plurality in his exploration of Japanese men's fashion magazines, revealing the instability of constructing masculinity as separate from femininity, through the blending of feminine attributes into masculine performances (32–33). Although the models in these magazines are presented and perceived as male, they play with a combination of masculine and feminine signifiers.

In a similar manner, Karlin's (2014) work on Meiji era Japan [1868–1912] explores the conflict and tension between performative 'Westernised' masculinities and 'traditional' masculinities as evidence for blended masculinities.[5] While Connell's theory of the gender order proposes the idea that performances that incorporate feminine traits are subordinated (especially with regards to queer masculinities), studies such as Monden and Karlin's demonstrate the space for a more flexible division between masculinity and femininity. This is very similar to Solomon-Godeau's (1997) work on the construction of male bodies in artistic nudes and the challenges of feminised masculinity within the art world, and echoes Francis's approach, which sits at the centre of this paper.

Developing Bakhtin's theory of heteroglossic and monoglossic discourse, Francis argued that although people maintain the appearance of a single gendered performance that is monoglossic (i.e., one voice), there is generally a range of traits incorporated from both genders within any gender performance, thus making it heteroglossic (i.e., many voices). Francis developed this theory from her observations of young people in school classrooms in the United Kingdom, arguing that maintaining an appearance of monoglossia is encouraged in the interest of dominant groups. Therefore, although within an individual's gendered performance there are a combination of traits associated with both femininity and masculinity, it must be disguised as monoglossic through displays of dominant and acceptable gendered traits in order to prevent social censure (Francis 2012, 11). This way of thinking about gender performance is a call to recognise plurality, while also accounting for how individuals can still be understood as performing a socially legible gender (Mackie 2003, 11). In this context, the appearance of monoglossia is valued while heteroglossia is something to be hidden. Francis's work also engages with gender as a "mutual construction", based on both the successful production of gender and the audience's acceptance of this performance as legitimate, much like Bakhtin's approach to language (Francis 2012, 9). If heteroglossia is always present, even in the most successful performance, then Francis's work demonstrates how plurality may actually be very common even if seldom recognised.

Here I am interested in applying Francis's observations of 'gender heteroglossia' in the performances of masculinity in *A Wild Sheep Chase*. However, rather than focusing on the feminine elements present within a masculine performance, I will instead be exploring the heteroglossia of different masculinities present. Of course, the aim in Francis's work was to explicitly trouble the sexed body ties to feminine and masculine behaviours. However, my approach in this article is to look at how these performances, even in their variation, continue to benefit from being aligned with cultural ideas of masculinity within the gender order and cultural context.[6] These male characters seem to display 'complicit masculinity', in terms of Connell's gender order, as they help sustain power relations that idealise salaryman hegemonic masculinity while not fully embodying it themselves. Nevertheless,

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5 One example of this is the opposition of a stoic "male primitivism" identified as *bankara* (バンカラ; lit., 'barbarian-collar') masculinity to the Westernised *haikara* (ハイカラ; lit., 'high-collar') gentleman, who was increasingly associated with a feminine interest in appearance (Karlin 2014, 56).
6 This is also with awareness of Paechter's (2012) point that orientating oneself within masculinity is a matter of positioning oneself with regards to relations of power as much as relating to actual attributes (237).

the permissible gendered performance available to the male characters within the version of Japanese society portrayed in the novel is a monoglossic one, in line with salaryman masculinity. However, within the voices of these characters I believe there exists a 'heteroglossia of masculinities'—to adapt Francis's Bakhtinian terminology. Gee (1999) has previously explored how individuals can be engaged by multiple "Discourses"[7] within a single conversation, or how "[y]ou can get several of your Discourses recognized all at once" (21). Although Gee was not necessarily advocating a categorical numbering of Discourses, I argue we can observe the emergence of a number of different 'voices' in masculine performances throughout *A Wild Sheep Chase*, reminiscent of Gee's theory of a cornucopia of Discourses.

Regarding the issue of defining distinct 'masculine' performances, here I will be focusing on how aspects of these performances draw on commonly held perceptions of masculinity within Japan. These are based on interviews conducted by Taga (2011, 36) and Itō (1996, 23, 88–89) with a range of young male interviewees, which demonstrate that key concepts consistently associated with masculinity in Japanese culture are the importance of physical and mental strength, the ability to take responsibility for oneself, and perseverance. While the characters in *A Wild Sheep Chase* display a great deal of variation in their performances, there is ultimately a recognisable commitment to these kinds of traits throughout. Likewise, the hegemonic salaryman ideal of masculinity has been consistently associated with similar traits, particularly perseverance in the face of taxing work conditions (Rohlen 1974, 85). As such, across the contexts of the corporate world during Japan's economic boom period, interviews in the post-boom period, and the characters in this boom-era novel, a remarkably consistent discursive construction of masculinity emerges, against which individuals are shaping their gendered performances.

NOVEL-BASED ANALYSIS

How is heteroglossic masculinity performed by characters within *A Wild Sheep Chase*, and what does this suggest about the relationship between individuals and social ideals? The plot of *A Wild Sheep Chase* is driven by the Protagonist's quest, taking him to the depths of Hokkaido to find an old friend, nicknamed Nezumi, and a magical sheep with which Nezumi seems to have become entangled. However, my analysis will focus on interactions between the Protagonist, the Business Partner, and the Black-suited Secretary. Although seemingly banal, and at times a little odd, the performances of these three men are inherently heteroglossic, with multiple 'voices' emerging from within the guise of the salaryman ideal. This demonstrates that although gender performances may be valued for appearing monoglossic, heteroglossia is actually quite ordinary.

7 Gee (1999) argued for a distinction between 'little d' discourse, as language, and 'big D' Discourse as the complicated network of "ways of acting, interacting, feeling, believing, valuing, together with other people and with various sorts of characteristic objects, symbols, tools, and technologies" (7). Gee also positioned people as carriers of Discourses through which they are recognised and comprehended by others.

The Protagonist and the Business Partner

The first interaction between the Protagonist and the Business Partner occurs when the Protagonist is unexpectedly called into their office from his summer holiday by the Business Partner. As the conversation unfolds it is revealed that the matter is an unsettling visit that morning from the Black-suited Secretary. But first, on entering the office, the Protagonist muses about the nature of his friend and business partner, and the significant differences between the two of them.

> He was wearing a deep-blue shirt with a black tie, hair neatly combed, cologne. While I was in a T-shirt with Snoopy carrying a surfboard, old Levi's that had been washed colorless, and dirty tennis shoes. To anyone else, he clearly was the regular one.[8]
> —Protagonist (H. Murakami 2002, 80)

However, the Business Partner is not without flaws, as he has developed a drinking habit.

> Five years ago, my business partner was a happy drunk. Three years later, he had become a moody drunk. And by last summer, he was fumbling at the knob of the door to alcoholism.[9]
> —Protagonist (H. Murakami 2002, 77)

The conversation develops into a tense discussion about the nature of their small business following its growth, with the Business Partner particularly acknowledging the benefits of their recent success:

> [BP "Sure it made money. Let us move to a larger office and take on more staff. I got a new car, bought a condo, sent two kids to an expensive private school. Not bad for thirty years old, I suppose."
> [P:] "You earned it. Nothing to be ashamed of."
> [BP:] "Who's ashamed?"[10]
> —Business Partner (BP) and the Protagonist (P) (H. Murakami 2002, 81–82)

However, the Business Partner also spends a good portion of his dialogue questioning the validity and honesty of their work as the price of their success. This is constructed both in terms of their ignorance of their financial matters, as well as a willingness to create or print content with views they do not personally hold.

> "A lot of things have changed," my partner said. "The pace of our lives, our thinking. Above all, we don't even know ourselves how much we really make. A tax accountant comes in and does all that awful paperwork, with

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8「彼は濃いブルーの新しいシャツに黒いネクタイをしめ、髪にはきちんとくしが入っていた。オーデコロンとオーションの匂いは揃いだった。僕はスヌーピーがサーフボードを抱えた図柄のTシャツに、まっ白になるまで洗った古いリーヴァイスと泥だらけのテニス・シューズをはいていた。誰が見ても彼の方がまともだった。」
(H. Murakami 2004a, 88)
9「一九七三年には僕の共同経営者は楽しい酔払いだった。一九七六年には彼はほんの少し気むずかしい酔払いになり、そして一九七八年の夏には初期アルコール中毒に通ずるドアの把手に不器用に手をかけていた。」
(H. Murakami 2004a, 85)
10「『金にはなったよ。おかげで広い事務所には引越せたし、人も増えた。車も買い換えたし、マンションも買ったし、二人の子供を金のかかる私立学校にも入れた。三十にしちゃ金のある方だと思うよ』
『君が稼いだんだ。恥じることはないさ』
『恥じてなんかいないよ』」(H. Murakami 2004a, 89–90)

exemptions and depreciations and write-offs and what not."[11]
—Business Partner (H. Murakami 2002, 82)

The Protagonist, meanwhile, seems unperturbed by this change:

> [BP:] "Last week you—I mean we—wrote the copy for that magazine ad. And it wasn't bad copy. It went over real well. But tell me, have you eaten margarine even once in the past couple years?"
> [P:] "No, I hate margarine."
> [BP:] "Same here. That's what I mean. At the very least, in the old days we did work we believed in, and we took pride in it. There's none of that now. We're just tossing out fluff."
> [...]
> [P:] "It doesn't matter," I said. "It's the same whether we eat margarine or don't. Dull translation jobs or fraudulent copy, it's basically the same. Sure we're tossing out fluff, but tell me, where does anyone deal in words with substance? C'mon now, there's no honest work anywhere. Just like there's no honest breathing or honest pissing."[12]
> —Business Partner (BP) and the Protagonist (P) (H. Murakami 2002, 84–85)

Without a close analysis of the Business Partner's brief appearance in the novel, his performance of masculinity may appear to be that of a regular Japanese businessman: jaded, but still compliant. However, this normality is undermined by the Protagonist's comment regarding the Business Partner's increasing alcoholism. Of course, the consumption of alcohol in and of itself is not unusual; the drinking culture amongst businessmen, particularly during the period of economic boom in Japan, was typically a social one that facilitated group rapport in a public space (Allison 1994). The Business Partner's habit, however, has become one of drinking alone in the morning: when the Protagonist arrives in the office, he observes that the Business Partner "had already drunk one shot of whiskey" (彼は既にウィスキーを一杯飲んでいた) (H. Murakami 2004a, 87). The choice to drink alone, and the apparent increase in the frequency with which he does so, suggests internal conflict regarding his role as successful businessman and breadwinner. The Protagonist suggests that the Business Partner's performance as a "regular guy" (まとも) (H. Murakami 2004a, 88) is becoming increasingly problematic—while he originally consumed alcohol to maintain this jovial public performance, this has since shifted to a private, somewhat shameful habit.

The other inconsistency between the Business Partner's success and his behaviour is his concern regarding the kind of company they have become, and the kind of work they now do. During the conversation outlined

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11 「『いろんなものが変っちゃったよ』と相棒が言った。『生活のペースやら考え方がさ。だいいち俺たちが本当にどれだれもうけているのか、俺たち自身にさえわからないんだぜ。税理士が来てわけのわからない書類を作って、なんとか控除だとか減価償却だとか税金対策だとか、そんなことばかりやってるんだ』」(H. Murakami 2004a, 90)

12 「『先週君は、つまり我々は、マーガリンの広告コピーを作った。実際のところ悪くないコピーだった。評判も良かった。でも君はこの何年かマーガリンを食べたことなんてあるのか?』
『ないよ。マーガリンは嫌いなんだ』
『俺もないよ。結局そういうことさ。少しとも昔の俺たちはきちんと自信の持てる仕事をして、それが誇りでもあったんだ。それが今はない。実体のないことばをただまきちらしてるだけさ』……
『同じだよ。我々がマーガリンを食べても食べなくても、結局は同じことなんだ。地味な翻訳仕事だってインチキなマーガリンの広告コピーだって根本は同じさ。たしかに実体のないことばを我々はまきちらしている。しかし実体のあることばがどこにある?いいかい、誠実な仕事なんてどこにもないんだ。誠実な呼吸や誠実な小便がどこにもないようにさ』」(H. Murakami 2004a, 92–93)

above, another voice within the Business Partner emerges. This is not the performance of the smartly-dressed businessman, the regular guy or the closet alcoholic, but rather that of a man who is uncomfortable with the fluid morality of big business. Indeed, he distrusts the vested interests or "exploitation" (搾取) (H. Murakami 2004a, 92) that are an increasingly common part of his work. Although for the majority of their conversation the Business Partner maintains a salaryman-style performance, in airing his moral concerns a different voice is present—one of frustration and suspicion. He points out in the passage quoted above, as a consequence of their business growing, what they write is dishonest and has no meaning or value to them—they write advertisements encouraging people to consume margarine, but never eat it themselves. They do not personally know what they earn as they use accountants to facilitate the kind of tax reduction associated with big business. Within the narrative timeline, this conversation takes place after the Business Partner's encounter with the Black-suited Secretary, but in the novel the conversations are presented in reverse order. This suggests the challenging and somewhat insidious conversation with the Black-suited Secretary may highlight unsavoury aspects of the corporate world, such as vested interests and underhanded deals with powerful men. The voice that emerges from the Business Partner reveals to the reader that his increasing alcoholism may be part of a range of performances he enacts in order to maintain his position despite harbouring such doubts. Thus, an alternative reading of the Business Partner could be that while appearing to be a 'regular' salaryman, he also displays other voices and performances (e.g., a desire to be normal and a distrust of hidden power structures, as well as an increasing habit of alcoholism), which reveal ongoing tension regarding his professional role, both within the company and broader society.[13]

The Protagonist's performances, on the other hand, depict a far more unstable monoglossic salaryman masculinity. As indicated above, the Protagonist does not conform with the visual presentation of a salaryman masculinity as he goes to the office wearing what is presumably his holiday wear: American brand-name jeans, a cotton T-shirt with the image of Snoopy carrying a surfboard, and tennis shoes (H. Murakami 2002, 80). This is in stark contrast to the Business Partner's neat businesswear and cologne. The Protagonist's choice of apparel, however, does betray a certain relaxed consumerism, and indeed the kind of 'Americanisation' often associated with Japan's postwar development (Duus 2011). On the other hand, when the Business Partner challenges the ethics of their work, the Protagonist appears to be completely accepting of these practices. He justifies their work arguing that it is common practice; within the business world "there isn't honest work anywhere" (誠実な仕事なんてどこにもないんだ) (H. Murakami 2004a, 93). Even through these brief examples we can see two very different performances being undertaken by the Protagonist: within one he displays a casual masculinity that appears immature or reluctant to 'grow up' (i.e., into a salaryman), whereas in the other he assumes the voice of a seasoned, cynical-realist corporate-man. This suggests that the Protagonist is not unaware of his role and position in society as a businessman and the

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13 I have argued elsewhere that we can read the Business Partner's shifts in behaviour as evidence of tension with the salaryman as a hegemonic masculinity, and a challenge to its position as a desirable masculinity to perform (Clark 2015).

associated ideals against which he is measured, but he is not limited to only performing this particular version of masculinity.

The Protagonist and the Business Partner Versus the Black-suited Secretary

Having compared the Protagonist and Business Partner it is worth considering them again within the context of their encounter with the Black-suited Secretary. After discussing his concerns regarding their business, the Business Partner recounts the Black-suited Secretary's visit earlier that day. This mysterious figure is described initially as having the appearance of a respectable businessman:

> Despite the unusually hot late-September weather outside, the man was rather formally dressed. Impeccably. His white shirt cuffs protruded precisely two-thirds of an inch from the sleeves of his well-tailored gray[14] suit. His subtly toned striped tie, accented with a hint of asymmetry, was positioned with the utmost care. His black shoes were buffed to a fine gloss.[15]
> —Protagonist recounting the Business Partner's description (H. Murakami 2002, 90)

However, this normality is interrupted when the Black-suited Secretary produces a name card with an important individual's name on it—so important that the Business Partner immediately recognises the name and the significance of meeting this individual's representative—and then requests that the Business Partner burn the card (その名刺を、今すぐ焼き捨てて下さい) (H. Murakami 2004a, 99). The Black-suited Secretary then begins to describe the nature of the conversation they are about to have:

> "[T]his is neither a conceptual issue nor a political deal; this is strictly a business proposition." [...] "You are a biznessman and I am a biznessman," he went on. "Realistically, there should be nothing between us to discuss but bizness."[16]
> —Business Partner recounting the conversation with the Black-suited Secretary (H. Murakami 2002, 93)

The Black-suited Secretary then makes two requests: that a certain pamphlet be immediately removed from publication, and that he be given the name of the individual who produced the pamphlet.

We can observe two particular masculinities emerging within the Black-suited Secretary's initial appearance. On the one hand, he wears the outfit of, and speaks as, a reasonable businessman and representative of an important

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14 The colour of the suit is translated in some editions as grey, and black in others. The original 2004 Japanese Kodansha edition often refers to him as wearing *kurofuku* (黒服), or a black suit.

15「九月の後半にしては異常なほどの外の暑さにもかかわらず、男は実にきちんとした身なりをしていた。仕立ての良いグレーのスーツの袖からは白いシャツが性格に一・五センチぶんのぞき、微妙な色調のストライプのネクタイはほんの僅かだけ左右不対称になるように注意深く整えられ、黒いコードヴァンの靴はぴかぴかに光っていた。」 (H. Murakami 2004a, 97)

16「『とはいっても、これは概念的な話でも政治的な話でもなく、あくまでビジネスの話です』……『あなたもビジネス・マンだし、私もビジネス・マンです。現実的に言っても、我々のあいだにはビジネス以外に話すべきことは何もない。』」 (H. Murakami 2004a, 100)

power broker, making a relatively reasonable request. On the other hand, he is a threatening figure claiming absolute power over the conversation when he demands without explanation that the business card be burned. Within the conversation, the Black-suited Secretary maintains the voice of a businessman overall, positioning the exchange as one between responsible men who will perform their roles appropriately. Given his unique position as the second-in-command to a hidden but socially powerful figure, the Black-suited Secretary is in no way positioned as a typical salaryman, but the businessman figure that he presents draws from this style of masculine performance. It is worth noting that the additional voice represented by the Black-suited Secretary's pronunciation of the word 'business'—*bizinesu* (ビズィネス) rather than *bijinesu* (ビジネス) leads him to being identified by the Business Partner (and potentially the reader) as a *nikkei no nisei* (日系の二世; second-generation overseas-born Japanese) (H. Murakami 2004a, 100). This single word brings the voice of another masculinity into the fray: a masculinity separate from the assumed cultural homogeneity of the Japanese salaryman ideal.

In the face of the Black-suited Secretary's two dominant voices (businessman and underworld figure) the Business Partner appears to retreat into a more monoglossic performance of salaryman masculinity. Rather than challenging the Black-Suited Secretary's dominance over the conversation, he simply receives his instructions and indicates his intention to fulfil them, using such terms as "certainly" (そのとおり) (H. Murakami 2004a, 100) and "I see" (なるほど) (H. Murakami 2004a, 102). There is a sense here that the Business Partner is only following the normal rules for business interactions, unsure of how to adjust to the changes in performance that the Black-suited Secretary is enacting. In this way, the Business Partner seems so deeply married to his businessman persona that he can only follow what is happening and process it later. It is only during his subsequent conversation with the Protagonist that he engages alternative masculinities through his criticism of the business world and their personal responsibility for their work.

By comparison, the Protagonist's encounter with the Black-suited Secretary is far more combative. The Protagonist, as the producer of the pamphlet with which the Black-suited Secretary is concerned, is delivered by limousine to the compound owned by the Black-suited Secretary's employer. However, during the course of the conversation a complicated, sinister mystery is also revealed. After some initial comments by the Black-suited Secretary, the conversation begins with a discussion of the "practical losses" (現実的な損失) (H. Murakami 2004a, 184) the Protagonist's business will experience by ceasing publication of the pamphlet. The conversation shifts dramatically when the Black-suited Secretary requests information regarding the individual who had produced the photograph of the sheep featured on the pamphlet's front cover. The Protagonist responds with a striking change of performance, prompting a similar change in the Black-suited Secretary.

> [P:] "I'm afraid I'm not at liberty to say," I tossed out the words with a cool that impressed even myself. "Journalists rightfully do not reveal their sources." [...]

[BS:] "You are a fine one," said the man. "You know, if I felt like it, I could stop all work from coming your way. That would put an end to your claims of journalism. Supposing, of course, that your miserable pamphlets and handbills qualify as journalism." [...] "What's more, there are ways to make people like you talk."

[P:] "I suppose there are," I said, "but they take time and I wouldn't talk until the last minute. Even if I did talk, I wouldn't spill everything. You'd have no way of knowing how much is everything. Or am I mistaken?"[17]

—Protagonist (P) and the Black-suited Secretary (BS) (H. Murakami 2002, 186–87)

Both the Protagonist and the Black-suited Secretary can be seen to change masculine performances in the above interaction. The Black-suited Secretary again maintains two key masculine performances: the reasonable businessman and the threatening underworld figure. He also claims authority in these two positions: firstly, as someone hierarchically superior, as the personal secretary of a power-broker; and secondly, as someone with access to resources that can easily ruin a person's life. Indeed, as he threateningly notes in a later conversation, it is his speciality to find whatever it is that someone cannot bear to lose (誰にでも失いたくないもののひとつやふたつはあるんだ。……我々はそういったものを探し出すことにかけてはプロなんだ) (H. Murakami 2004a, 237–38). What is most striking in this interaction is that when one of these characters assumes a different voice or performance, the other party shifts accordingly. Hence, at the beginning of the conversation, the Black-suited Secretary uses the voice of a reasonable businessman when he prompts the Protagonist to speak of the many consequences his request will have upon the Protagonist's business. The Protagonist responds at some length about the considerations for such a small business, borrowing both the Black-suited Secretary's terminology and tone. The Protagonist uses this particular voice very infrequently, and only when prompted in contexts similar to this one.

Subsequently, we see the Protagonist abandon the voice of the businessman and shift into that of a hard-boiled journalist, claiming the right to protect his sources. This voice is very different from the salaryman he performs earlier in that he is uncooperative, and appears to call upon higher values compared to the cynical dishonesty of the business world he seemed to accept in his conversation with the Business Partner earlier in the text. In his response, the Black-suited Secretary challenges this change in performance, questioning its validity and thus whether the Protagonist can assume this voice. When it becomes apparent that the Protagonist is not going to revert to being the businessman, the Black-suited Secretary switches to his threatening underworld voice.

This exchange recalls Francis's (2012) emphasis on gender being accepted and validated by the listener (9). Therefore, the manner in which the

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17 「『言いません』と僕は自分でも驚くくらいあっさりと言った。『ジャーナリストにはニュース・ソースを守秘する権利があります』……『君はどうも奇妙な男だな』と男は言った。『私にはやろうと思えば、君たちの仕事を全部シャット・アウトすることもできるんだよ。そうすれば君はもうジャーナリストとも言えなくなる。もっとも今君がやっている下らないパンフレットやちらしやらの仕事がジャーナリズムであると仮定すればの話だけれどね』……『それに、君のような人間をしゃべらせる方法は幾つかある』
『たぶんそうでしょう』と僕は言った。『しかしそれには時間がかかるし、それまでは僕はしゃべらない。しゃべったとしても全部はしゃべらない。あなたにはどれだけだ全部なのかはわからない。違いますか?』」
(H. Murakami 2004a, 188–89)

audience receives the performance of masculinity is vital to its success as there is a genuine risk of rejection. This view puts the power of acceptance in the hands of the listener and highlights the interactivity inherent to gender performances; however, it also puts a certain onus on the listener to understand and keep pace with the performance with which they are being addressed. In changing his performance in such a drastic manner, the Protagonist runs the risk of being rejected, and indeed the Black-suited Secretary attempts to do just that. However, when the Protagonist does not abandon this voice when prompted, the Black-suited Secretary adjusts his own performance, assuming a voice that counters this change, performing the kind of masculinity that would openly threaten a journalist. This shift in the conversation toward discussing the possibility of torture could also be seen as a reference to masculine ideals, with both characters making claims to physical and mental strength. The Protagonist acknowledges within his narration that he is actually bluffing, but that given the events of their meeting this seemed like the kind of performance he ought to produce (全てははったりだったが、コースは合っていた) (H. Murakami 2004a, 189). The Protagonist can be seen as following the script instinctively, suggesting his awareness of the performative nature of this interaction.

The conversation between the Protagonist and the Black-suited Secretary demonstrates the potential to address even brief interactions as performances of a heteroglossia of masculinities. While the Black-suited Secretary does not fit the corporate warrior model, he presents a reasonably monoglossic masculinity that features a number of salaryman traits. However, what makes him challenging, especially for the unsuspecting Business Partner, is the presence of other powerful voices—particularly that of the dangerous, underworld enforcer for a right-wing conglomerate. There is more variability in the Protagonist's performances. He can speak of business affairs in the appropriate manner, but also shift into performing a hard-boiled journalist protecting his sources. These are not inconsistencies or poor characterisations on the part of the author, but rather the presence of a heteroglossia of voices being adapted and abandoned by the characters in response to the demands of the situation within the reality of the novel.

The Black-suited Secretary in the Mountains of Hokkaido

There is one more brief appearance of the Black-suited Secretary. Near the end of the novel the Protagonist resolves the mystery in the mountains of Hokkaido. With his somewhat unsatisfying solution, the Protagonist travels alone back down the mountain, meeting the Black-suited Secretary along the way. Here, it is confirmed, as the Protagonist had come to suspect, that the Black-suited Secretary had known where Nezumi was all along but had tried to use the Protagonist to draw him out of hiding. To begin their conversation, the Black-suited Secretary notes that he was only waiting for a short time for the Protagonist to come down the mountain, intimating his use of some form of psychic power:

"How do you think I got to be the Boss's secretary? Diligence? IQ? Tact? No. I am the Boss's[18] secretary because of my special capacities. Sixth sense. I believe that's what you would call it."[19]
—Black-suited Secretary (H. Murakami 2002, 291)

Later in their conversation, following the Protagonist's prompting, he explains how he manipulated the situation and the Protagonist in order to lead him to the mountain:

"Lay out the seeds and everything is simple. Constructing the program was the hard part. Computers can't account for human error, after all. So much for handiwork. Ah, but it is a pleasure second to none, seeing one's painstakingly constructed program move along exactly according to plan."[20]
—Black-suited Secretary (H. Murakami 2002, 292)

Misplaced gloating aside, the Black-suited Secretary does not realise that Nezumi has in fact killed himself, thus destroying the sheep that was possessing him. What these two quotes actually reveal is the Black-suited Secretary's use of two new voices.

As with his previous appearances, the Black-suited Secretary positions himself as powerful and authoritative. Here, however, he assumes two quite different voices to do so—that of a psychic and a computer engineer. The first emphasises intuition, an aspect of himself that is inherent and vital, through which he has access to a realm beyond the understanding of the Protagonist. This is also striking within the context of Murakami's writing more generally, in which it is more common for women to be intuitive or psychically powerful.[21] The second voice reinforces his intelligence and perseverance, and his power to manipulate the world to suit his ends. He is claiming the ability to calculate and construct the quest, engineering a desired outcome in the face of human unpredictability. Therefore, although neither of these voices fit completely in the salaryman masculinity markers as previously discussed (being a psychic and grand manipulator), they still claim superiority within the mainstream masculine discourse of perseverance and mental strength. Due to his (rather salaryman-like) hard work and planning the Black-suited Secretary believes that he has won; but unlike their previous encounters, here he is neither the dangerous enforcer nor the reasonable businessman.

However, there is an ironic aspect too, as the Protagonist and the reader are aware that the Black-suited Secretary has already lost both Nezumi and the sheep, and in fact it is later intimated that the Black-suited Secretary subsequently dies in the explosion that the Protagonist had arranged as per Nezumi's wishes. Likewise, on the mountain in Hokkaido the Black-suited Secretary has also lost his signature outfit: he is now wrapped in a beige jacket and ski pants. This section could be read as ultimately undermining the

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18 The Boss is actually identified as *sensei* (先生; teacher, master, doctor) in the original text.
19「『私がいったいどうして先生の秘書になれたと思う？努力？ IQ? 要領？まさか。その理由は私に能力があったからさ。勘だよ。君たちの言葉に即して言えばね』」(H. Murakami 2004b, 240)
20「『種をあかせばみんな簡単なんだよ。プログラムを組むのが大変なんだ。コンピューターは人間の感情のぶれまでは計算してくれないからね、まあ手仕事だよ。しかし苦労して組んだプログラムが思いどおりにはこんでくれれば、これに勝る喜びはない…』」(H. Murakami 2004b, 242)
21 Such Murakami references to this include the Protagonist's girlfriend with magical ears in this novel and the psychic sisters Malta and Creta in *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*.

claims of control and strength upon which the Black-suited Secretary's performance was premised.

CONCLUSION

Through an examination of the conversations between this set of characters in *A Wild Sheep Chase* we can see a range of masculine voices being engaged. In the case of the Black-suited Secretary, these voices can help to control interactions and prompt useful responses. Meanwhile, the Protagonist also assumes and discards a range of performances, but he has no insidious intent, demonstrating instead an ability to readily shift performances as needed.[22] The Business Partner demonstrates a more sustained commitment to the salaryman masculine ideal; however, my closer reading of his performance also identifies the presence of other voices or masculinities. Regardless of how each of these characters copes with the contemporary fictional Japan they inhabit, what can be seen consistently is the performance of more than one masculinity. Yet none of these performances are necessarily a departure from the social ideals surrounding masculinity in Japan, or the importance of the salaryman. Even when these characters show evidence of heteroglossic masculinities, they do not necessarily challenge hegemonic masculinity and the gender order it sustains—their complicity remains in place.

This paper deals with constructed characters within a fictional world, therefore the potential parallels between their performances and masculinity in the real world need to be treated with caution. However, work such as this demonstrates how broader social discourses on masculinity, like 'common sense' constructions of masculine ideals, are recreated within fictional texts. Likewise, the masculinities presented by these characters demonstrate that there is still space within masculinity studies to engage further with ideas of plurality and heteroglossia. Moreover, as suggested in the work of Francis and the variety of masculine performances identified in *A Wild Sheep Chase*, neither is heteroglossia necessarily special or exceptional; rather, it is quite ordinary or even commonplace. Indeed, as the Protagonist says to the Black-suited Secretary, "[M]ediocrity takes many forms" (凡庸さというのはいろんな形をとって現れる、ということです) (H. Murakami 2004a, 212).

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22 Refer to Clark (2015) for a more detailed discussion of the Protagonist's relationship to the salaryman ideal.

aibō (相棒)
business partner

bankara (バンカラ；also 蛮カラ)
Meiji-era male fashion trend rejecting Western refinement for unadorned, stoic 'barbarism'

boku (僕)
informal first-person masculine pronoun; also, used to refer to the unnamed protagonist Boku in *A Wild Sheep Chase*

daikokubashira (大黒柱)
economic pillar, or breadwinner, of the household

haikara (ハイカラ)
lit., 'high-collar'; Meiji-era male followers of Western styles, referring to the high-sitting collars of Western shirts fashionable at the time

kigyō senshi (企業戦士)
corporate warrior; an exceptionally dedicated and hard-working employee

nikkei no nisei (日系の二世)
second-generation overseas-born Japanese

sōshokukei danshi (草食系男子)
lit., 'herbivore man'; men who are typically not competitive compared to the traditional male stereotype, and associated with shyness and sexual disengagement

watashi (私)
polite first-person pronoun

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