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Modernist Sense of Loss in Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun*

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Chakra Bahadur Shahi has completed his thesis entitled “Modernist Sense of Loss in Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from September 2015 to December 2015 A.D. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

Hem Lal Pandey

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “**Modernist Sense of Loss in Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun***” by Chakra Bahadur Shahi has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University. It has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

The present research entitled “Modernist Sense of Loss in Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun*” analyzes the novel from the modernist perspective and reveals that the novel is a milestone in the study of modern and postmodern theories. The research argues that it is the separation, loss, alienation of the characters which does not let them live a happy life. The post war effects of the Sino-Japanese war also add the pain in their life. Thus, examining the effects and sentiments caused by the horror during the war time, the characters are seen physically abnormal too. It is the product of modernism that Hajimi and Shimamoto are dissatisfied with each other. The true love has gone away from the reality. Later on when Murakami portrays Hajimi lamenting on the loss of his youthful days, it vibrates the modern world where people are dissatisfied, disillusioned, suffering and being separated and alienated. Towards the end of the novel, we examine Hajimi admitting himself as a patient; perhaps a psychologically weak mentality of his own leads his life into a tragic track.

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I. Modernist Sentiments in Murakami's *South of the Border West of the Sun*

The present research on Haruki Murakami's novel *South of the Border, West of the Sun* attempts to uncork the sense of loss due to the high modernism flourished in the then Japanese society. The study contents itself with the contextual understanding of the first Sino-Japan war and second Sino-Japan war. Primarily, the focal point of the study lies in the exploration of pang, suffering, hallucination, disillusionment and as a whole a modernist touch through Murakami's major characters Hajimi and Shimamoto.

The novel presents Hajimi and Shimamoto as the major characters who suffer time and again because of their separation. Along with separation, they start lamenting for their separation. It comes close to the modern definition which shows people lamenting on the loss, separation, defeat and breakups. The alienated Hajimi and Shimamoto both cannot accept themselves as a part of the society. As separation of the characters from one another results into pang and suffering, they try themselves to entangle in multiple love affairs so that they temporarily forget their past. At the beginning Hajimi shows his true love for Shimamoto but later he involves in relation with other girls too. It is also necessary to understand the multiple affairs as an indication of modernism resulted from dissatisfaction. The rooted dissatisfaction in the characters makes them suffer more. Hajimi leaves Shimamoto thinking that she is not perfect. This is also an indication that characters are suffering due to their own choices. The environment they live in is the consequence of their own deeds.

The researcher observes the effects of modernism in the characters. The multiple love affairs, feeling of incompleteness and dissatisfaction of the characters become one of the major problems that characters face. But towards the end of the

novel, the broken relationship of Hajimi and Shimamoto haunts. Hajimi starts lamenting on the loss of the true beloved. Such effects as the researcher observes are concerns which are to be addressed by the theoretical perspective of Modernism. Since the problems are social by nature, no science except modernism can address such issues. The modernist perspective explores the social problem; it can also pave the way for resolution.

In the novel *South of the Border, West of the Sun*, the major character Hajimi cannot live peaceful life. He cannot live a happy life due to his own past actions. He suffers due to the separation with his girlfriend Shimamoto. Now, he is dissatisfied with his wife and starts hating himself. Sometimes, he becomes mad as he confesses his guilt for leaving her. Being dissatisfied with other girls including his own wife, he hates himself. The pessimist sentiment makes him restless. Now, the harmony and peaceful life as his family expected cannot be fulfilled. It has become hard for Hajimi to live in familial environment? What is the reason of Shimamoto's disability– which makes her suffer? These questions arouse the curiosity in reader that war has fragmented the human world, as presented by Murakami.

Haruki Murakami's novel *South of the Border, West of the Sun* has received diverse treatments in the hands of a wide range of prominent writers and critics. It has received plenty of accolade and acclamation. Several critics analyze Murakami's works for all being very much the same. His novels do share a lot of similar themes, similar characters, and similar situations. The renowned film critic John Wray makes critique of Murakami's writing. He has criticized most of the representative works of Murakami. Dwelling upon Murakami's creativity, Wray comments:

Haruki Murakami is not only arguably the most experimental Japanese novelist to have been translated into English; he is also the most

popular, with sales in the millions worldwide. His greatest novels inhabit the liminal zone between realism and fable. Whodunit and science fiction: *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World*, for example, features a protagonist who is literally of two minds, and *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, perhaps his best-known work outside of Japan, begins prosaically— as a man's search for his missing wife—then quietly mutates into the strangest hybrid narrative since Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. (12)

Murakami's world is an allegorical one, constructed of familiar symbols—an empty well, and underground city—but the meaning of those symbols remain hermetic to the last. He is also of the opinion that Murakami's novels represent the duality of mind which is suggested by 'protagonist who is literally of two minds'. Wray also makes the comment as the protagonist of Murakami's novels miss something, they are psychologically troubled. The unstable mind of the protagonist suggests his dissatisfaction which ultimately leads him to trauma. Thus, the criticism of Wray, to some extent, will be helpful for the researcher.

In the same way, Matthew C. Stretches regards Murakami's works as the blend of magic realism. He asserts:

In most of the works of Murakami the magic realism reigns sovereign. Search for identity and magic realism are the twin hallmark of Murakami's literary oeuvre. He always presents himself as the ardent follower of cultural cosmopolitanism. He stands in favor of cultural reform. He speaks against cultural isolationism. (9)

Stretcher is of the opinion that most of the works of Murakami blends the idea of magic realism along with search for identity. He is also regarded as the passionate

follower of cultural cosmopolitanism. His standing 'in favor of cultural reform' also suggests that he wants society to be changed, to be reformed and reshaped. The main ethos of Stretcher's argument is that Murakami speaks against cultural isolationism. It also suggests that 'cultural isolationism' is nothing than the separation of protagonist, his pang, suffering and traumatic experiences. Thus, Stretcher's criticism will be fruitful for the present research since it paves the way and supports with the main argument of the research.

Malcolm Jones' response to Murakami's writing is mild and palatable. He presents Murakami's writing as a creative work and creative brain. He praises Murakami:

Murakami paces a story as well as any writer alive. He knows how to tell a love story without getting cute. He understand how to blend realism and fantasy (magical realism if you want to get all literary about it) in just the right proportions. And he has a knack for writing about everyday matters—fixing dinner, going for a walk—in such a way that the events at hand, no matter how mundane, are never boring. (4)

The thematic diversity is the hallmark of Murakami's writings. His power of imagination and word-power is praised by Jones. He claims that Murakami has vast knowledge about writing with passion, creating a never-boring subjects of contemporary issues. He praises Murakami for his use of everyday language and matters.

Moreover, Jason Boog is a critic who makes criticism on Murakami's writings. Regarding Murakami's formalistic dimension, he comments:

Murakami writes in a new style of Japanese prose, while juxtaposes and merges distinctly American motifs and diction with such

traditional *junbungaku* themes as love, death and the self. Murakami's fiction frequently alludes to commercial brand names and cultural icons of the United States. Much of his work has been noted for its surreal qualities, blending bizarre plot twists and unique narration. (19)

Boog's perspective on Murakami's writing suggests that Murakami juxtaposes different ideas in his writings. His thematic concerns are related to love, death and self. The 'self' has become much important in his writings. His surreal qualities also suggest that he somehow manages to blend magic and realism in his writings. The bizarre plot twists and unique narration suggests that his vibrant quality of his works. thus, Boog's criticism will also be useful for the researcher.

In addition to this, Erik R. Lofgren makes pungent criticism on Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun*. He claims that Murakami's novels lack 'happy ending' and the element of uncertainty and bewilderment leads the major characters to traumatic pitfall. Critic Eric R. Lofgren further argues:

Among its many points of divergence, the most striking is the lack of a "happy ending" displaying selflessness, promising friendship, and offering hope for the future. *South of the Border* forsakes that "trite-and-true" formula and leaves Hajime in a state of bewilderment, unsettled and uncertain, with no easy path ahead. (9)

Lofgren is of the opinion that Murakami's novels lack 'happy ending'. The presentation of a major character with uncertainty, bewilderment and challenging path makes the point clear that they are somehow haunted by the traumatic events. Their experiences revolve around the theme of psychological disorder due to the separation of one another. The 'uncertainty' also suggests the unstable mind which is nothing more than the modernist feelings.

Some critics have paid attention to the thematic analysis of the novel whereas others have tried to dig out distinctive interpretation like feminism, existentialism, psychoanalysis, structuralism and so on. But, none of the researchers has focused upon the modernist feelings of the characters in his writings. The disorder, disjunction, alienation in the characters make them suffer more. Thus, the suffering, pang, dissatisfaction and as a whole trauma caused by war and high modernism results in mental disorders as well. This concern has largely been ignored by most of the critics. So, the present study assumes that Murakami's characters are the modernist by nature. The separation of the major characters is due to the modernism which results in trauma. To address the problem faced by Hajimi and Shimamoto, the prominent modernist critics Nicolson and Fieldman, Marshall Berman and Peter Childs's ideas are the throughout guiding principles.

The modern can be defined in terms of what it is not: the embodiment of tacit polemic. Modern writers find that they begin to work at a moment when the culture is marked by a prevalent style of perception and feeling, and their modernity consist in a revolt against this prevalent style, an unyielding rage against the official order. But modernism does not establish a prevalent style of its own; or it does, it denies itself, thereby ceasing to be modern.

Modernist writing is characterized by its emphasis on form rather than its content. Different techniques in literary writing were innovated during the time of modernism such as collage, stream of consciousness technique etc. Joyce's *Ulysses* is a typical example of stream of conscious technique. Whatever happens only happens in the mind of the hero, which is one of the typical trends of modernist writing. So does the central character in Murakami's *South of the Border West of the Sun*.

Modern literature is usually difficult to comprehend: that is a sign of its modernity. To the established guardians of culture, the modern writer seems willfully inaccessible. He works with unfamiliar forms: he chooses subjects that disturb the audience and threaten its most cherished sentiments; he provokes traditionalist critics to such epithets as unwholesome, coterie and decadent.

Modernism indeed never ends, or at least we do not really know, as yet, neither it can nor will come its end. This history of previous literary period is relevant but probably not decisive here, since modernism, despite the precursors one can find in the past, is a novelty in a development of western culture. What we do know, however, is that modernism can fall upon days of exhaustion, when it appears to be marking time and waiting for new avenues of release.

The most recent modernism simply makes an abstract opposition between tradition and the present; and we are, in a way, still the contemporaries of that kind of aesthetic modernity, which first appeared in the midst of the nineteenth century. Since then, the distinguishing mark of works, which count as modern, is the new, which will be overcome and made obsolete through the novelty of the next style.

Subjectivity becomes the typical condition of the modern outlook. In its early stages, when it does not trouble to disguise its filial dependence on the romantic poets, modernism declares itself as an inflation of the self, a transcendental and orgiastic aggrandizement of matter, and event in behalf of personal vitality. In the middle stage, the self begins to recoil from externality and devotes itself, almost as if it were the world's body, to a minute examination of its own inner dynamics: freedom, compulsion, caprice.

There exists certain dilemma regarding modernism, the Marxist critic George Lukacs has charged modernism as:

Modernism despairs of human history, abandons the idea of a linear historical development, fall back upon notions of a universal condition humane or rhythm of eternal recurrence, yet within its own realm is committed to ceaseless change, turmoil and recreation. (17)

Basically, the modernism can be understood with the problem is in largest aspect the decay of faith and the confusion of tongues: the loss of certitudes in the high matters of religion and ethics, the widespread disagreement about first principles in life as in literature, the need for trans-valuation in all spheres of thought. It is the problem of how to live and what to live for once a livelihood has been assured. Most obviously, science has introduced new knowledge that has undermined certain faiths, corroded the feeling of the transcendent of human destiny. More significantly, it has introduced new modes of thought and new condition of living, weakening the habit of faith and breaking up the settled way of life in which faith can most easily take root.

In the ways of modernistic vision, one may distrust the rational of science; one cannot play fast and loose with it. In a world, everything is questioned and nothing agreed upon the position of the artist is clearly a difficult one.

The search for new forms is not the result of mere boredom, nor the energy that activates it merely feverish. It is the very necessary adjustment to new conception of reality, the very necessary effort to provide a scheme of orientation.

The practical problems of modernity that confront the spiritual distresses of this generation suggest a colic rather than a cancer, they are more painful than

necessarily fatal, and they have been aggravated by a post war fever of disillusionment, a malady familiar enough in human history. History gives, indeed, sufficient warrant for viewing this period as a period of transition and not as a prelude to damnation, at worst as a purgatory not as a hell. These lamentations are again the sign of growing pains in a changing world, of minds left tender and exposed by the sloughing off old beliefs before new ones have hardened into a comfortably tight shell. Based on mentioned lines Herbert J. Muller says:

. . . Indeed be less plastic, and its disruptive forces may finally prove unmanageable; but there is as yet no logical necessity for assuming the worst and calling for sack cloth and ashes. One would suspect those who are conducting the last rites of arts if only they make so such clamor over the corpses. Their skepticism is too dynamic, their despair too contentions. Mean while the corpses continue to show many sings of vigorous lie. (19)

We cannot simply wave way the painful disharmonies of the modern world as were spasm in the organic evolution of human history, for they are our spasms. We cannot view them loftily as mere illusion of time order, for we are ourselves of this order and we live in time. At present we are still in the wilderness and the groping in the dim light.

Mostly, the modernist literature consists of chaotic situation which creates confusion in its necessary meaning. The nineteenth century literature is still relatively susceptible of neat summary and category owes chiefly to the hold of tradition; the ferment was only beginning, artist had but a glimmering awareness of what was happening. In the twentieth century this ferment exploded in a burst

of centrifugal activity. We face today an extraordinary purpose, way of life- diversity less between than within classes. The intellectual as well as industrial world becomes daily specialized; new points of view multiply as rapidly as mechanical gadgets. These things do not speak our language, which represents profound dilemma of modern literature.

In much modernist literature, one finds a bitter impatience with the whole apparatus of cognition and the limiting assumption of rationality. The mind comes to be seen as an enemy of vital human powers. Culture becomes disenchanted with itself, sick over its endless refinements. But if a major impulse in modernist literature is a choking Nausea before the idea of culture, there is another in which the writer takes upon himself the enormous ambition not to remake to world but to reinvent the terms of reality.

In modern literature, the modern artist seems thrown back upon his own resources. He has at once the privilege and the burden of almost complete freedom in choice of materials and methods. The result has been an immense and daring experimentation that makes this one of the most exciting of literary periods. Modern literature is no longer an art of fixed forms or contents or appropriate imitation, but an endless, ever changing scripture and revelation, the scripture and revelation of the life of man.

Modernist writing shows that twentieth century man has lost a meaningful world and a self, which lives in meanings out of spiritual center. It exposes that man has sacrificed himself to his own productions. But man still aware of what he has lost or continuously losing. He reacts with the courage of despair. Art and literature can show their ambiguous structure: the meaninglessness which drives to despair. They reject as meaningless the meaningful attempt to reveal the

meaninglessness of our situation. The anxiety of doubt and meaninglessness is, as we have seen, the anxiety of our period. The feeling of meaninglessness became despairing and self-destructive. On the basis of existentialism, the great art, literature, philosophy reveals the courage to face the things as they are and to express the anxiety of meaninglessness.

In modernist literature, the problem of belief becomes exacerbated, sometimes to the point of dismissal. At a time, when there are numbers of competing who would look each radically in conflict with the other, there arise severe difficulties in trying to relate the tacit but controlling assumptions of the writer to those of the reader. The reader bonds of premise between the two are broken, and must now become a matter of inquiry, effort, conflict. The problem appears with great force in the early phases in the modernist period and is then reflected in the criticism of T. S. Eliot and I. A. Richards, but there arises a new impulse to dissolve the whole problem and see literature as a historical, a structure beyond opinion or belief, a performance weariness sets in, and to merely with this or the other belief, but with the whole idea of belief. Through the brilliance of its straining, the modern begins to exhaust itself.

The idea of aesthetic order is abandoned or radically modified in modernist literature. To condemn modernist literature for a failure to conform to traditional criteria of unity, order and coherence is to miss the point, since; to begin with, it either rejects these criteria implicitly or proposes radical new ways of embodying them. In the assumption that the sense of the real has been lost in conventional realism, modern writings yields to an imperative of distortion. Modernist literature replaces the traditional criteria of esthetic expressiveness, or

perhaps more accurately, it downgrades the value of esthetic unity in behalf of even a Jagged and fragmented expressiveness.

In modernist literature, nature ceases to be a central subject and setting of literature. Nature ceases to be natural. The most part of natural scenes and places are as a token of deprivation and sometimes as a mere willed sign of nostalgia. They are elsewhere, not our home.

Many critics' interpretations on Murakami's *South of the Border West of the Sun* reveal that there is not limitation on Murakami's creativity. The novel's presentation of Shimamoto and Hajimi conditioning them with the hard times itself is romantic and pathetic as well. Both Hajimi and Shimamoto are the sufferers of the modern world in the light of first Sino-Japan World War and second Sino-Japan World war.

The researcher uses Modernism as methodological tool to analyze *South of the Border West of the Sun* to justify the topic of the study. The study has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter highlights on modernist concern in the novel, literature review, statement of the problem, hypothesis of the study and methodological tool. The second chapter is the textual analysis in which the researcher has made citation and illustration of the activities of the characters along with the theoretical support to prove the hypothesis. The third chapter proves the text as an example of modernist literature concluding the need of necessary arrangement in order to overcome the situation.

II. Sense of Loss in *South of the Border, West of the Sun*

Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border, West of the Sun* presents Hajimi, Shimamoto and Yukiko as the central characters who suffer due to the high modernism in the then Japanese society. The separation of the characters is shown in such a way that obstructs them to live happy married life. The marriage of the central characters does not relief from their past memories. Hajimi feels as if he is trapped in a world not of his own choosing and Shimamoto feels the same. Shimamoto does not confess that she is suffering whereas Hajimi, towards the end of the novel, admits himself as a patient needed for medication. Likewise, Yukiko tries to hang herself to death. Due to the high modernism, the psychological drives of the characters are also not in a state to drive them to the right path. The obligations of the married life make them suffer more for they cannot return to their previous life. As a result of such suffering, the characters feel alienated from the world around. The rise of capitalism also signals the value of money and the central characters feel as if they are schizos. This exemplifies that modern hero lacks something; a modern hero is a loser not the winner. To prove the hypothesis, the elements of modernism like alienation, nostalgia and loss are taken into consideration with the support from the distinct modernist writers and critics Peter Childs, Marshall Berman. and Nicolson and Fiedelman.

Peter Childs argues that modernity is a way of living and experiencing life with the changes brought about by industrialisation, urbanization and secularisation. He claims that change in people's lifestyle is an indication of modernist art. He elaborates modernism and modernity as:

"In relation to modernism, modernity is considered to describe a way of living and of experiencing life which has arisen with the changes wrought by industrialisation, urbanisation and secularisation; its

characteristics are disintegration and reformation, fragmentation and rapid change, ephemerality and insecurity. It involves certain new understandings of time and space: speed, mobility, communication, travel, dynamism, chaos and cultural revolution" (16).

Childs makes sure that modernity involves new understanding of time and space. He believes that speed, mobility, travel, dynamism, chaos and cultural revolution are the indicators of modernism. Thus, Childs concludes, "Modernism has, therefore, almost universally been considered a literature of not just change but crisis" (16). Here, Childs makes sure that understanding change is not only the modernism but understanding crisis is also a part of modernist literature and art. Thus, his idea has been significantly beneficial for the present study to claim the crisis in novel.

From the very beginning of the novel, the readers can outline Hajimi's suffering caused by separation. Hajimi further confesses that he has inferiority complex. He considers himself a different child than any other child which obstructs him. He thinks as if he lacks something. He confesses, "I happened to be one of the unusual ones, since I was an only child. I had an inferiority complex about it, as if there was something different about me, that what other people all had and took for granted I lacked" (4). The readers know that due to the Sino-Japanese war, people of Japan were highly affected and Hajimi is found to be abnormal child. He confesses that he lacked what other have. He differentiates himself from other child which suggests that he is somehow afraid of his abnormality. This makes him lament for his own life. Hajimi suffers from what most modernist suffers which is inferiority complex. Afraid Hajimi does not confine himself with normality. Van Der Kolk rights points the helplessness condition of Hajimi, "This results in a state of helplessness, a feeling that one's actions have no bearing on the outcome of one's life" (31). Here,

Hajimi slowly and gradually suffers from helplessness. He strikes with the memories of past and becomes nostalgic. Being alone, he considers that his actions have no meaning to his life. He does not consider himself a person with actions to make his life livable. This depression further hurts him.

Marshall Berman one of the prominent literary critic claims modern hero loaded with tobacco, his brain saturated, his blood burning with alcohol. He claims that modern hero is a sensitive individual. Thus, modern hero is somehow different than traditional one. He asserts:

Baudelaire's originality is to portray, powerfully and originally, modern man ... as the refinement or an excessive civilization have made him, modern man with his acute and vibrant senses, his painfully subtle spirit, his brain saturated with tobacco, his blood burning with alcohol. ... Baudelaire portrays this sensitive individual as a type, a hero. (132)

Berman reiterates Baudelaire's hero as a druggist. In the same way Murakami portrays Hajimi dissatisfied. He takes alcohol, tobacco and other drinks in order to forget Shimamoto. Now, at the verge of confession, Hajimi confirms that other people also know about how he felt. He confesses that the rumors about him are. He affirms, "But what depressed and hurt me more was something else: the fact that everything they thought about me was true" (5). This indicates the fact that he is not only physically abnormal but also psychologically weak. His mind does not operate and he feels as if something is striking inside his head. The frightened Hajimi confesses that whatever other thought about him was true and this hurts him more. The fear as one of the elements of modern people; Hajimi faces the same; he suffers from the same fate as modern people often do.

It is possible that due to the high modernism Hajimi has inferiority complex which torn him. Vito Zepinic, one of the critics examines the inferiority complex as:

The inferiority complex is apt to occur when obstacles, internal or external, prevent the development of any possible patterns of excellence supporting re-invention of the self's coherence and continuity. [. . .] Such a person is exposed to severe feelings of inferiority and incompetence, and his self-esteem is blocked with no potentialities. (56)

Zepinic rightly points what Hajimi felt. It is his dilemma that makes his life miserable. His feeling is subject to his own suffering. Internally Hajimi is torn; he time and again laments for lacking something that everyone have been enjoying in their lives. The internally weak Hsjimi also faces the external obstacles that prevent the development of any possible patterns of excellence. The incoherence and discontinuity are also one of the features that modernist people often face. Hajimi suffers from the same fate as Zepinic opines that people with inferiority complex have.

Modern people, according to Roy Starrs have psychological illness. The breakdown of family is one of the consequences of high modernism. The moral decline and decadence and psychological condition of alienation and anomie are the features of modern literature. He asserts:

On the other hand, there was a widely-held view, in Japan as in the West, that modernity had produced a variety of social and psychological ills, including a breakdown of family and community bonds, moral decline or even decadence, and a psychological condition of alienation and anomie. (7)

Starrs claims that modern people have some kind of psychological illness. He exemplifies the Japanese society having variety of social and psychological ills. Murakami in *South of the Border, West of the Sun* portrays his hero as a psychologically weak or ill person. He is suffering from inferiority complex and often makes attempts to cope and overcome the suffering. One of the finest ways to overcome the inferiority complex is comparison and contrast. Here, Hajimi compares himself with Shimamoto for he knows that she has more problems than his own. He is in search of someone who is vulnerable. He knowingly inferiorizes Shimamoto for he has to overcome the suffering. This gives solace to his mind. More than him, he claims that Shimamoto has a load of psychological baggage:

Compare with me, then, she had a terrible load of psychological baggage to struggle with. This baggage, though, had made her a tougher, more self-possessed only child than I could ever have been. She never whined or complained, never gave any indication of the irritation she must have felt at times. No matter what happened, she'd manage a smile. The worse things got, in fact, the broader her smile became. (5)

It is interesting to note that an inferior person always seeks another to prove himself strong and it happens with Hajimi too. He concludes that he is not as vulnerable as Shimamoto. He explores the only difference between him and Shimamoto that she has the ability to cope or overcome the suffering. To gather some hope, he claims Shimamoto has worsened status by making a broader smile. Thus, not only Hajimi but also Shimamoto also suffers more from the psychological baggage. M. A. S. Reid, opines that people compare with other people in order to overcome the inferiority complex. The same situation can be found in the novel when Hajimi compares

himself with Shimamoto. To this state of mind, Reid calls, "People in this situation set out to avoid all occasions in which they are likely to be compared with normal individuals" (88). In the novel, Hajimi does not compare himself with normal people but Shimamoto because he knows she is also abnormal. As Reid opines that people with inferiority complex do not compare with normal person, Hajimi finds Shimamoto more vulnerable than himself. This idea also intensifies the fact Hajimi is a modern hero suffering from the ill fate.

Michael H. Whitworth asserts claims that the modern people have complex mind and self. The consciousness is fluid and sometimes it is guided by the unconscious force. The delusion is also one of the features of the modern world. He examines:

Modernist literature displays an awareness of the complexity of the mind and the self. It is aware of the 'fluidity of consciousness' of the force of the unconscious, and of a delusion between the social and personal self, between 'conduct' and 'consciousness'. (13)

Whitworth claims that the modern mind is not constant rather it is guided by unconsciousness. The delusion between social and personal self, between conduct and consciousness, makes modern hero's mind unstatic. In the same way, Hajimi delves into the past and remembers how he holds the hands of Shimamoto. The experience of holding him back haunts him because he could not hold at the moment. He stresses, "If memory serves, not even once. Whenever we walked home from school together, she never once apologized for holding me back or let this thought graze her expression" (8). Here, Shimamoto does not apologize for holding his back while walking from school to home. The childhood memories of Hajimi makes him nostalgic to the point that they were sweet memories and at the time of crisis or lack

of love, he dreams of such days to come into his life again. This can be taken as a coping strategy of Hajimi at the time of crisis also. Francie Lin, one of the critics argues, "But Hajime, the middle-aged narrator of *South of the Border*, has no such grand political passions to react against. The novel is set in the Eighties, a decade marked in Japan by the prosperity of late capitalism, and the potential for tragedy in Hajime's life in relatively low" (15). Lin makes clear that Murakami's hero Hajimi is a modern hero who live a tragic life.

Not only Hajimi suffers from the memories of walking from school to home, but he suffers from the lost smile that Shimamoto gave him while she played songs in her home. He confesses that such a memory at present hit him, "Only when the record was safely back on the shelf did she turn to me and give a little smile. And every time, this thought hit me: it wasn't a record she was handling, it was a fragile soul inside a glass bottle" (9). In order to confess his miserable existence he says that Shimamoto wasn't handing a record but 'fragile soul' which suggests that he is spiritually impotent. His spiritual satisfaction is lost. The trapped situation of his soul is also suggested by "fragile soul inside a glass bottle" (9). He feels as if he is trapped somewhere and he does not have a power to escape. Regarding this situation Rosine and J. Perelberg one of the writers of *Time and Memory* explore how people suffer from feeling of being trapped as, ". . . his own identity and his feeling of being trapped by the repetitive compulsion to go on recreating the same scenario" (142). In the novel Hajimi suffers from the same fate as Perelberg has described. Thus, in the present world, Hajimi suffers from dissatisfaction, spiritual corruption, blackmailing and which counts in general as a modernism. The modern people in the then society of Japan lack the spiritual satisfaction.

Fear got the best of Shimamoto and in panic he turns to blame the society. As he indicates the difference between him and other people, he calls to invite the readers to judge how he was betrayed. Thus, from the very beginning of the novel, the readers can sense how frightful he was to face the separation with Shimamoto. Hajimi indicates the changes in his thinking as: "Our friends were different, so were our uniforms and textbooks. My body, my voice, my way of thinking, were undergoing sudden changes, and an unexpected awkwardness threatened the intimate world we had created" (15). The confession of Hajimi does not give an objective and only meaning as the tone of his confession shows some kind of fear in him and readers also can sense that he is now well known about the changes. The words "unexpected" suggests that he is not known about the physical changes in him which makes him frightened. Here, the fear of the Hajimi is rightly addressed by one of the critics of Peter A. Levine and Maggie Kline. They claim, "Abrupt changes in relationships like sudden disinterest in favourite people; becoming detached and withdrawn; and radical changes in grades, life attitudes, and/or appearance" (67). As Levine and Kline have quoted the symptoms, Hajimi suffers from the same fate. He fears due to the radical changes in his life attitudes and appearance which he confesses as, "My body, my voice, my way of thinking were undergoing sudden changes" (15). Hajimi fears that the union between him and Shimamoto will be torn apart due to such changes. He calls the environment he created with Shimamoto 'world'. He believes that there is no other world outside for them. It suggests that they are too much obsessed with one another that they cannot live separated from each another.

Moreover, to be sure that physical changes occur to him, Hajimi observes himself in front of the mirror, "I was no longer the kind of sickly child who ran a temperature at the drop of a hat and took to his bed. Often I stood naked in front of the

bathroom mirror, scrutinizing every nook and cranny of my body" (17). Here, Hajimi is a bit little conscious about the changes so he goes in front of the mirror naked.

Regarding this, Eric R. Lofgren claims, "South of the Border forsakes that "trite and true" formula and leaves Hajime in a state of bewilderment, unsettled and uncertain, with no easy path ahead" (600). Lofgren supports that Hajimi is a bewildered, unsettled and uncertain modern hero. There is no easy path for the modern hero. The modernist sense of loss is also accompanied by "no easy path ahead". Modern people find it difficult to make their way out. They feel as if trapped. Thus, such behaviours of Hajimi makes clear to the reader that he is a sufferer and a tragic character.

Sometimes, the character seems a bit conscious but to be sure, he likes to see with his own eyes. The physical changes make adults curious and same curiosity is seen in Hajimi. But, the way Hajimi has not accepted the changes, troubles him.

Sometimes Hajimi feels alienated and ponders in silence with mournful heart but here he feels happy being alone. This shows his loneliness and that is how he is stuck-up loner. He emphasizes, "I felt happy just being me and no one else. In that sense I could be called stuck-up loner. I disliked all team sports. I hated any kind of competition where I had to score points against someone else" (18). Hajimi feels alienated and it is not his wish to be alone. This shows that the situation is not the wish and want of Hajimi but he was stuck-up in it. He dislikes all team sports which also suggest that he does not like to be social. This idea is further intensified by his hatred towards competition. He does not like to compete because he already confessed that he lacks something what others have, "what other people all had and took for granted I lacked" (4). Thus, he prefers to be alone just because he knows he cannot compete with other people. This is the result of his inferiority complex.

Relating this kind of suffering of Hajimi, Martha Bragin, explores five stages of grief

and mourning as, Denial, Anger/ Protest, depression, bargaining and acceptance. She asserts the psychology of 13-18 years adolescents as, "Adolescents, ages 12 to 18, are entering a phase where both their bodies and their rains are developing rapidly. Their capacity for complex thought is in the process of development due to changes occurring in the brain" (202). Thus, to be sure that Hajimi suffers in the modern world, according to Martha he must be in the process of psychological development. The changes which creates fear in him count to 'denial'.

Modern people are the alienated one. They like to live alone and ponder in loneliness. They glorify the aloneness. David Ayers claims that modern people are alienated one. He asserts that capitalism has crushed the minds of the people. He exemplifies the art that is alienated from the artist as,

The speculative element purports to theorize the nature of alienation in modern society – for example, the art-work can be described as a commodity in terms that draw on Karl Marx’s theory of the commodity in *Capital*, itself an attempt to theorize the nature of alienation under the modern social formation of capitalism." (14)

As Ayers claims that modern people are alienated from the society and commodity. The same happens with Hajimi. Hajimi ponders in deep silence which he confesses as "I much preferred to swim on and on, alone, in silence" (18). It confirms that Hajimi does not like to be a sociable person because he thinks that he lacks something that all other people have. This proves that he likes to live in loneliness. Thus, due to the fear that he will lose, he does not like to compete. In order to show that he is interested in sports he at least prefers to swim so that other people will not notice that he is physically abnormal. This always makes Hajimi sad but he conceals it and seeks for the solution.

Modern people often suffer from the nostalgia of the past. Here, Hajimi becomes nostalgic while he holds his wife. He remembers Shimamoto all the time when he is with his wife. He reveals, "She placed her palm above my heart, and the feel of her hand and the beat of my heart became one. She's not Shimamoto, I told myself. She can't give me what Shimamoto gave" (25). The comparison of Yushiko with Shimamoto suggests that Hajimi is more obsessed with Shimamoto than his own wife. Being dissatisfied with his wife he dreams of Shimamoto. It is also interesting to note that Hajimi is dissatisfied with his wife yet he holds her; he cannot abandon her. The memory of his childhood friend Shimamoto remains engraved in his memory which frequently haunts and obstructs him.

Izumi further reveals the abnormality of Hajimi. She confesses that she could not understand him. Though she is with him, she does not know where his mind actually is. This shows that Hajimi is not concentrating on Izumi rather he is lost in thought of Shimamoto. Izumi charges, "There's one thing I just can't understand, Izumi said. 'You say you like me. and you want to take care of me. But sometimes I can't figure out what's going on inside your head'" (33). It reveals the fact that people simply cannot understand Hajimi due to his abnormal behavior. Though Hajimi confesses his love to Izumi, she knows that there is something in his head that is refusing to take her. Thus, Izumi becomes dissatisfied with Hajimi. It is known to the reader that since Hajimi is obsessed with Shimamoto he cannot profoundly share his feelings with any other girls. Hajimi suffers when he does not find something that he felt with Shimamoto. Hajimi feels nostalgic which makes him out of his mind.

Here, the readers come to know another cause that Hajimi always remembers Shimamoto. Izumi reveals that since Hajimi prefers to look things over all by himself he does not like people looking inside his head. She elaborates:

You prefer to think things over all by yourself and you don't like people looking inside your head. Maybe that's because you're an only child. You're used to thinking and acting alone. You figure that as long as you understand something, that's enough. She shook her head. 'And that makes me afraid. I feel abandoned'. (34)

It suggests that Hajimi does not like to interact with people around him since he considers himself inferior as he confesses that he lacks something all other people have. Izumi giving solace to his loneliness responds him with positive words. She also consoles him that he does not need to understand everything, understanding something is enough for him. She also shows her dissatisfaction with his ways.

It intensifies the fact that Shimamoto feels abandoned. The behavior of Hajimi troubles her much; it makes her afraid and abandoned. Due to the indifference of Hajimi not only he but Izumi also suffers from trauma. She feels as if abandoned from Hajimi yet she is with him. The spiritual disconnectedness haunts her more than the physical nearness.

When Hajimi was with Izumi, he feels as if he was walking down the road, he feels hooked. He feels as if stuck by the silent bolt of lightning. He confesses, "Still, the first time I laid eyes on her, it was as if I were walking down the road one afternoon and a silent bolt of lightning struck me smack on the head. No ifs, ands, or buts - I was hooked" (36). It shows the hesitation of Hajimi. His awkward feeling shows that he is haunted by the memories of Shimamoto. R. K. Thornton says:

The decadence is a man caught between two opposite and apparently incompatible pulls: on the one hand drawn by the world its necessities and the attractive impression the receives from it, while on the other

hand he. She yearns towards the eternal, the ideal and the unworldly.

(12)

Europe during the early phase of Twentieth Century produced a civilization that became a high point of world history. European civilization was imitated almost everywhere on earth and dominated the world's commerce, finance, knowledge and culture generally. But the most intelligent cultivated and sensitive Europeans were deeply dissatisfied with the achievements of their vaunted civilization. He cannot enjoy with any other girls except Shimamoto. It was of course not the bolt of lightning that struck him but it as the imagination, the remembrance of Shimamoto. There was nothing that smack on his head but he feels it which is his imagination. Being imaginative, he fears the worldly things. He does not accept the change. Thus, he becomes a loner; a misanthropist in general. This ideology suggests that Hajimi is suffering from deep down rooted aloneness, inferiority complex and nostalgia.

It is one of the characteristics of modern people that they cannot distinguish between dream and reality. Here, in the novel, Hajimi suffers from the same fate as he cannot distinguish between world of dreams and real world. He confesses this confusion as, "For me the boundary dividing the real world and the world of dreams has always been vague and whenever infatuation raised its almighty head, even during my early teens, a beautiful face wasn't enough to get me going" (36). Modern people sometimes suffer from the vagueness. Hajimi faces the same fate in his teens. He confesses that he could not create a boundary dividing the real world and the world of dreams. It suggests that at daytime the world things seem like dream and at night whatever he does in his dream he thinks that he really did it in real life.

Modern people often refuse the worldly environment and worldly things. Here, Hajimi refuses something that is quantifiable and external beauty. He confesses

that he is obsessed with something absolute which is not possible in practical life. He describes:

I was always attracted not by some quantifiable, external beauty, but by something deep down, something absolute. I liked that certain undefinable something directed at me by members of the opposite sex. For want of a better word, call it magnetism. Like it or not, it's a power that ensnares people and reels them in. (37)

Modern people search for something that is not worldly. The same happens with Hajimi as he says that he was attracted by something "deep down, something absolute". This astonishes the readers that one cannot find something 'absolute' and 'deep down'. He cannot say for sure what something 'deep down' is. Thus, he is operating with fantasy not with the reality. He is much controversial when he says that he likes certain 'undefinable' something. It creates a kind of humour in readers since one cannot ask for something undefinable. Everything in the world is definable and Hajimi asking for undefinable is beyond the metaphysical world. They ponder in silence and ask for something that does not exist. Modern people sometimes go beyond the metaphysical world. Hajimi is even guided by libidinal desires which he expresses as he likes something undefinable from the opposite sex.

Modern people like to live solitary life. They are considered as less sociable. They do not like to engage in the activities that concern with the society. They even hate the social doings. Hajimi suffers from the same fate as he does not like to be in a mass. He does not like the slogans of freedom. He expresses, "I couldn't feel the requisite solidarity with the people around me. The scent of violence that hung over the streets, the powerful slogans of the day, soon lost their point" (43). It indicates the fact that Hajimi is indifferent towards the social happenings. He does not like people

around him. He feels as if he is a misanthropist. Hajimi cannot distinguish whether violence has its scent or not. He does not know violence has its purpose, color and longing for power. The loss of the powerful slogan is also the symbol of his loss. He believes that since powerful slogans cannot do anything, his voice, his words are not of prime importance. He becomes pessimistic regarding the world around him.

Moreover, Hajimi confesses his disappointment and deep rooted loneliness. He confesses, "Years of disappointment and loneliness. And silence. Frozen years, when my feelings were shut up inside me" (45). It indicates the fact that Hajimi is suffering from being trapped. His silence also suggests that he is reluctant to be sociable. And, as a result of which he feels trapped inside. He could not share his feelings and emotions with other people. Thus, loneliness haunts him more than ever.

Modern people remember the images engraved in their memory and suffer for not having them in real world. Hajimi also suffers as he cannot forget Shimamoto. He confesses as, "I never forgot her. Her face was engraved on my memory" (69). It indicates the fact that the image of Shimamoto recurs in his mind.

Very often modern people talk with ambiguity. This is how Hajimi is portrayed in the novel speaking ambiguous sentences. At first he confesses that he does not know, later on he admits that he's not unhappy. Murakami expresses: "I don't know. At least I'm not unhappy, and I'm not lonely. A moment later I added, 'But sometimes the thought strikes me that the happiest time of my life was when we were together in your living room, listening to music'" (82). Hajimi fails to quote the exactness in his voice. He confesses that he is not unhappy and he is not alone. The remembrance of Shimamoto strikes him at the moment and he recalls those memories when they were together in living room, listening to music. This intensifies the fact that Hajimi suffers from the past memories.

The readers come to notice that only Hajimi but Shimamoto also suffers from separation. She confesses her suffering as: "Or maybe we're just unlucky, she said. Lots of slip-ups and we end up missing each other" (84). She admits that due to the social obligations and lots of slip-ups they miss each other. They cannot live conjugal life. Thus, Shimamoto suffers from the past memories as well.

It is also interesting to note that modern people sometimes find a way to hypnotize by themselves. Murakami asserts how Hajimi finds a way to hypnotize himself:

Maybe it was an illusion, I thought. I stood there a long time, gazing at the rainswept streets. Once again I was a twelve-year-old boy staring for hours at the rain. Look at the rain long enough, with no thoughts in your head, and you gradually feel your body falling loose, shaking free the world's reality. Rain has the power to hypnotize. (86)

First, Hajimi is confused whether it is an illusion or not. Standing on the roadside he gazes long into the rainswept street. Gradually, he feels his body falling loose. Hajimi becomes hypnotized by the rain. As he claims, "Rain has the power to hypnotize" (86). The readers come to know that staring long at something cannot easily hypnotize people. Only modern people who ponder long get hypnotized. So, Hajimi in order to avoid the pain in his heart, he hypnotizes himself with rain. He became too much concentrated on water that finally he believes that rain has the power to hypnotize people.

In addition, Hajimi also faces the same problem while flipping through the pages of books as he faced while staring at the rainswept street. Now, he again is lost in aimless musings. He confesses as, "I sat at the bar of my other place, flipping through the pages of books, lost in aimless musings" (87) Here, readers can sense that

Hajimi is at towards the crux of his suffering. He is lost in thought whenever he tries something for a long.

Modern people find everyday life boring. They think that there is no room for them to stay because every place is crowded for them. They refuse to involve themselves in productive and creative works. Hajimi, the central character of the novel also suffers from the same fate. Murakami explores, "The work was a complete bore. Absolutely no room for using your imagination. I was sick of it. I couldn't stand going to work any more. I felt as if I was choking, as if every day I was shrinking and one day I would disappear completely" (91). Here, once again Hajimi shows his dissatisfaction. Now, he believes that work is a complete bore. He even thinks that in work there is no room for using imagination. Being sick of work also suggests the pessimistic view of Hajimi. He refuses to go to work as he says, "I couldn't stand going to work any more" (91). His feeling confirms this as he feels choking and shrinking. He is afraid that one day he will completely disappear. Here, the psyche of the character is haunted by the worldly reality because one day everyone will disappear. But, Hajimi does not accept the universal truth. He does not accept that even if he abandons his work, he will one day disappear from the face of the earth.

Moreover, we find Hajimi confused. He expresses that he looked deep into his own eyes but he cannot identify himself. He cannot reveal his identity. The lack of identity is cause by his detachment from the society. Murakami explores the feeling of Hajimi as, "For the first time in a long while, I looked deep into my own eyes in the mirror. Those eyes told me nothing about who I was. I laid both hands on the sink and sighed deeply" (98). It is also interesting that Hajimi seeks to identify his own existence. He looks into the mirror and finds nothing about who he was. The 'sighed

deeply' also suggests his tiresome status. It also reveals that modern people are, to some extent, in search of their identity. They lament on the loss of their identity.

To be sure that Hajimi is suffering because of the separation, Murakami explains the relationship between Hajimi and Shimamoto that was too close at the beginning and when they were separated from the high school, both of them became the patients of trauma. The following conversation explores the trauma of both the characters as, "I've messed up your life. I know I have, Shimamoto said in a small voice. 'Look, let's stop talking about it', I said. 'We've come all this way, so let's talk about something more cheerful'" (101). Here, Shimamoto confesses that she ruined the life of Hajimi. But Hajimi does not like to confess the truth. The avoidance of truth is also significant to note here because modern people do not like to face the truth. They either deny the truth or escape. He likes something cheerful. It also suggests that he is in search of some kind of spiritual healing. And, Shimamoto and cheerful talking with him can be taken as a method of healing his spiritual wound.

It is also important to note that no one wants to reveal their secrets and no one wishes their secrets have been known to other people. But modern people sometimes reveal secrets, their sorrows and sufferings. Here, Hajimi wishes his wife to know that he is with Shimamoto. He reveals, "Subconsciously, I was hoping my wife would find out about my coming here with Shimamoto" (109). Hajimi does not consider the consequences of what he speaks. That is why, he like her wife to know the truth. It is the nature of the modern people that they fear with truth at the subconscious level, they sometimes speak regardless of the consequences.

When Shimamoto leaves Hajimi, he becomes insane which he confesses later on. Here, Hajimi suffers from the fear of losing Shimamoto forever. Modern people often suffer from the feeling of meaninglessness. Murakami portrays Hajimi, "As I

drove away, I thought this: *If I never see her again, I will go insane*. Once she got out of the car and was gone, my world was suddenly hollow and meaningless" (110). It indicates that lack of Shimamoto makes Hajimi go insane. He does not see any meaning of his life. The sudden change in his life suggests that he is more obsessed with Shimamoto. The feeling of meaninglessness is rightly addressed Bessel A. van der Kolk and Alexander C. McFarlane as, "Usually suffering does not bring an increased sense of love and meaning; rather, it results in loneliness and disintegration of belief. Some traumatized people deal with their encounter with unpredictability and meaninglessness. . ." (26). The readers come to know that due to the suffering Hajimi lacks sense of love and meaning which results in loneliness. The alone Hajimi feels as if his life is meaningless and unpredictable as well.

Modern people feel depressed and trapped. Hajimi suffers from the same fate. His experience can be seen as, "It depressed me. Little by little, I would get snared by the world out there" (116). The readers come to know that Hajimi feels trapped by the world around him. Since he does not involve in social activities and other ceremonies organized in the society, he feels alienated and trapped at the same time.

Modern people fail to find the meaning of their existence. Here, Hajimi is not sure of his own existence. The problem in his existence shows that he is abnormal. Murakami portrays Hajimi as, "Both hands on the wheel, I closed my eyes. I didn't feel as if I was in my own body; my body was just a lonely, temporary container I happened to be borrowing. What would become of me tomorrow I did not know" (124). This intensifies that Hajimi fails to recognize his own body. His words are so confusing that he questions his own existence. There, loneliness exists and he cannot feel anything even his body. He compares himself with a temporary container which

is not relevant for the normal people. The readers find the future of Hajimi unpredictable.

The past memories and remembrance of someone makes people suffer. Hajimi feels pain in his chest when he looks at the photograph of Shimamoto. He feels awful for the loss:

The photograph brought a pain to my chest. It made me realize what an awful amount of time I had lost. Precious years that could never be recovered, no matter how much I struggled to bring them back. Time that existed only then, only in that place. I gazed at the photo for a very long time. (128)

Here, we observe that Hajimi suffers from the pain in his chest. He realizes that he lost the precious time. He stares at the photo for a long. It is because he cannot avoid it. Modern people often have problem with recurring memories of the past. It reveals that past haunts modern people more than the present experiences. It fails to appreciate the present. It is important to note that Hajimi suffers in remembrance of the memory of Shimamoto. To this, Kolk and McFarlane call "tyranny of the past" which interferes with the ability to pay attention to both present and past. As a result of which Hajimi's life becomes colorless and present experience fails to guide him.

Modern people also have problem with sleep. They cannot sleep quietly. This happens to Hajimi as well. He cannot sleep well at night. He confesses as, "It was as if a tree were growing inside my body, laying down roots, spreading its branches, pushing down on my organs, my muscles, bones and skin, forcing its way outwards. It was so stifling at times that I couldn't sleep" (131). This suggests that Hajimi feels awkward. He feels trapped and some kind of pain inside him makes him feel uncomfortable. This uncomfortable situation as he clarifies is that he feels as if a tree

were growing inside him; spreading its branches; pushing down his organs, muscles, bones and skin.

Separation with Shimamoto has long-lasting effect on Hajimi. He is torn by the memory of Shimamoto. Now, he wants a talk that would lead back to Shimamoto. He declares, "What I wanted was harmless, meaningless talk, talk that would lead anywhere but back to Shimamoto" (133). It suggests that Hajimi is not interested in any other women than Shimamoto. He is obsessed with the past memories.

Now, towards the end of the novel Hajimi becomes more selfish when he says that he could throw all the people to be with Shimamoto. He reveals the truth as:

But they didn't know the truth. That on a certain snowy winter day, if my plane had been grounded, I would have thrown them all away to be with Shimamoto. My job, my family, my money- everything, without flinching. And here I was, my head still full of Shimamoto. The sensation of holding her, of kissing her cheek, wouldn't leave me. I couldn't drive the image of Shimamoto from my mind and replace it with my wife. (134-35)

Here, Hajimi is seen selfish. He does not care about the people around him. The memory of Shimamoto is engraved into his mind which makes him confess that he could sacrifice his job, family, money and everything to be with her. The obsessed Hajimi even confesses that there is only Shimamoto in his head. The sensations and physical relation with Shimamoto come into his mind vividly. He even confesses that he could not drive the image of Shimamoto from his mind and replace it with his wife. This suggests that he denies the present reality. He says that he cannot replace Shimamoto with his wife and practically he is replacing her in his life. There is gap between what he says and what he actually does.

Sometimes people with trauma suffering from the absence of someone they love. Here, Hajimi also suffers from the absence of Shimamoto. Murakami shows Hajimi trapped on the surface of the moon as:

But since Shimamoto had stopped coming to see me, I was struck on the airless surface of the moon. If she had gone for ever, no one remained to whom I could reveal my true feelings. On sleepless nights I'd lie in bed and replay over and over in my mind that scene at the snowy Komatsu Airport. (136)

Here, the readers clearly understand the logic behind Hajimis' suffering. He feels as if struck on the airless surface of the moon. This idea is beyond the metaphysical world. Thus, it counts as an imagination and modern people often imagine the impossible things. He also confesses that if Shimamoto is gone forever from his life, there remains no one with whom he can share his feelings. It connotes that Hajimi does not believe on the existence of other people without the presence of Shimamoto.

Hajimi believes that he holds himself back on the surface of the moon. His psyche is not imagining the things which are out of his control. He believes that he is stuck in the lifeless world. He confesses as, "Yet I held myself back, back on the surface of the moon, stuck in this lifeless world. And in the end she left me and my life was lost all over again" (136). Now, the memory of Shimamoto once again comes into his mind which truly affects his psyche. He believes that without Shimamoto his life is sure to end. He thinks as if she is the life for him and without which he can no longer breathe.

Modern people wish for the things which lack the human quality. Here, Hajimi imagines of being fish. He also thinks that thinking is a very hard job and he wants to avoid thinking. He wishes as, "I imagined I was a fish. Just a fish, with no need to

think, not even about swimming" (138). It indicates that being a human, Hajimi wishes to be a fish. Thinking about various things in the world became boredom for him. Thus, he believes that life of a fish is wonderful. That is why, he wishes to be a fish. It has nothing to think over not even about swimming. Here, 'swimming' is the everyday routine of fish. Since Hajimi is suffering from the everyday tasks, he cannot imagine that fish has to continually work; at least swim in order to live in the water. If he has ever thought about the routine of fish, he would not have wished to be a fish.

Yukiko cares Hajimi and finds him 'sighing' all the time. She finds that something is bothering Hajimi. She reveals the fact as, "'And you sigh all the time', she said. 'Anyhow, something's definitely bothering you. Your mind's a million miles away'" (142). It suggests that Hajimi's mind is not with him. It is thinking about the things which are million miles away. It indicates to the memory of Shimamoto which frequently haunts him. Thus, being haunted by the sweet memories of Shimamoto, Yukiko, his wife comes to understand his behavior.

Previously, Hajimi wished to be a fish but now he thinks that he has no will to move. The controversy lies here is that since fish has to move all the time and Hajimi has no will to move, how could he imagine himself being a fish? Hajimi reveals that he has no will to move, "But what about my life? Was there any consistency, and conviction to speak of? I felt deflated, utterly lacking the will to move" (143). Since, there is no consistency in his life, Hajimi feels deflated, he lacks the will to continue his life. Since there are turmoils in his life, he rather likes to abandon his life. As a result of which he confesses that he has no will to move ahead.

Hajimi confess all the things at this moment. He realizes that his words lost their strength. He feels as if he is parted from the reality. He also reveals that for him

the rain twisted time and reality as, "My words lost their strength and, like raindrops glued to the window, slowly parted company with reality. On rainy nights I could barely breathe. The rain twisted time and reality" (174). The pang makes him trapped. And, in such a trap he feels breathless. He charges rain for twisting time and reality. But, it is interesting and child-like talking of Hajimi that rain cannot twist time and reality but the time can twist reality and rain as well.

Modern people often doubt the present reality. They also deny the reality and like to live in the world of dream and imagination. Here, Hajimi charges memory for being bias, "Because memory and sensations are so uncertain, so biased, we always rely on a certain reality- call it an *alternate* reality -to prove the reality of events" (176). The readers come to know that Hajimi does not believe in absolute reality, he calls it alternate reality. Alternate reality helps to prove the reality of the events. This idea is quite tough that readers cannot sense the exactness from Hajimi. Since he likes to live in the world of dreams, he often rejects the world around him.

Hajimi once again tries his best to clarify the concept of reality but he cannot. He is quite vague in his definition of reality. According to him, the reality becomes reality only after it is supported from another reality which he calls alternate reality. He goes on describing reality and finally explores reality which he calls third reality as:

Therefore, in order to pin down reality as reality, we need another reality to relativize the first. Yet that other reality requires a third reality to serve as its grounding. An endless chain is related within our consciousness, and it is the maintenance of this chain which produces the sensation that we are actually here, that we ourselves exist. But something can happen to sever that chain and we are at a loss. (176)

Now, what do we have here is that Hajimi confessing his guilt. He goes on exploring the chains in his mind which are needed in order to distinguish reality. And, towards the end of the quote he accepts that people suffer because of the break in a chain of reality. This clearly points that Hajimi is suffering from such a loss as a result of breakdown of the chain.

Now, as a result of breakdown of the chain of reality, Hajimi is dumbfounded and speechless which he confesses as, "I stood there dumbfounded, speechless" (178). Now, he fully admits himself as a patient. Since memories haunt him continually, Hajimi cannot speak at all. He confesses, "For several days afterwards, I couldn't speak. I'd open my mouth to talk, but the words would disappear, as if the utter nothingness . . ." (179). It suggests that he cannot control himself and he is about to lose his mind completely. He becomes dumb. He speaks but he feels as if it has produced no voice at all.

Hajimi gets haunted by the recurring dreams. He dreams of Shimamoto. He dreams that something is chasing him and he wakes up in the middle of the night, covered with sweat. He admits, "Sometimes I have this dream. . . Still, something is chasing me. I wake up in the middle of the night, covered in sweat" (184). It intensifies the fact that Hajimi suffers from all the symptoms that modern people have. He neither distinguishes between dream and reality nor accepts the worldly truth. He often runs from the world, society and in general from himself.

To sum up, Hajimi confesses that he is at the same place where he began. At the beginning he was feeling indifferent; he believed that he lacks something that other people have and now, he feels the same. He admits the truth that he is where he has begun, "I've been in that void before and forced myself to adjust. And now, finally, I end up where I began and I'd better get used to it" (186). Hajimi was in void

in his childhood where he lacked true meaning of life. He felt as if he is different from the people around him. He was afraid of the society. And he felt trapped in a vicious circle and he knows there is no escape at all.

Towards the end of the novel, the readers can judge Hajimi as a modern hero suffering from the loss, memory and inferiority complex. He is an example of the modern hero who laments on the loss. He suffers because of the separation, loss, loneliness, nostalgia and dissatisfaction. He fears to accept the truth and in search of finding a place to safeguard himself from such fear he ponders alone into deep silence. From the very beginning of the novel, he denied people around him except Shimamoto; towards the middle of the novel, he is haunted by the memories of Shimamoto and at the end suffers from the separation. Thus, the entire novel hovers around the theme of modernist sense of loss and it stands as a milestone in the area of modernist literature.

III. Coping with the Loss in *South of the Border West of the Sun*

Haruki Murakami's *South of the Border West of the Sun* makes survey of the major characters Hajimi and Shimamoto and explores coping mechanism for overcoming the sense of loss. The separation of the characters is shown in such a way that obstructs them to live happily and some of the coping mechanisms are comparison and contrast, medication, overcoming suffering through love affairs and family as an ultimate place to overcome all the grief.

First, the novel introduces deep-rooted grief of Hajimi. He feels inferior than other people. He strikes with the memories of past and becomes nostalgic. Being alone, he considers that his actions have no meaning to his life. He does not consider himself a person with actions to make his life livable. This depression further hurts him. The fear as one of the elements of modern people; Hajimi faces the same; he suffers from the same fate as modern people often do. It is possible that due to the high modernism Hajimi has inferiority complex which torn him. To overcome this inferiority complex, he compares himself with Shimamoto and claims that her condition is worst than his.

Secondly, the lover affair and the childhood memories make Hajimi nostalgic to the point that they were sweet memories and at the time of crisis or lack of love, he dreams of such days to come into his life again. This can be taken as a coping strategy of Hajimi at the time of crisis. Thus, love affair and dream and recurring memories serve as a coping mechanism to overcome the sense of loss.

Thirdly, the researcher finds that remembering and forgetting as a coping mechanism that makes Hajimi and Shimamoto suffer and at the same time cope with such suffering. It is also important to reveal the busy lifestyle and meetings as a

coping mechanism of the modern people. Hajimi finds himself engaged in the restaurant and he feels much better than alone.

Fourthly, the routine and familial lifestyle is also one of the coping mechanism that most modern people. After the marriage, Hajimi feels much recovered; he accepts life as a truth that everyone shall ultimately live with. It is also interesting that sometimes he drinks in order to make his soul at rest. This ideology gives the modern people satisfaction and helps forget the suffering and lost moments.

The continuation is also one of the coping mechanisms that most modern people find helpful. Though Yukiko tries to hang herself to death; she loves her life. Thus, she does not commit suicide. It is more important to live than end one's life. Moreover, hypnotizing is one of the effective coping mechanism to overcome the suffering of the modern people. It is also interesting to note that modern people sometimes find a way to hypnotize by themselves. Standing on the roadside, Hajimi gazes long into the rainswept street. Gradually, he feels his body falling loose. Hajimi becomes hypnotized by the rain.

In addition to this, modern people find solace in the lap of nature. Hajimi and Shimamoto go into the den forest to celebrate. This is one of the coping mechanism that modern people usually adopt as an effective way of overcoming and becoming fresh. Thus, modern people often do not stay at one place, they love to dance, go on a trekking, visiting new places and meeting new friends. When Shimamoto and Hajimi go on a long drive, they feel better. They have strong desire to celebrate their life somewhere remote.

The researcher also reveals that not only the conjugal life serves as a coping mechanism, but it also gives hope to people. Modern people often suffer from despair, grief and pain, thus; child breeding and the love of the daughters and sons is also

important to notice here. Hajimi finds himself at peace when he is with his daughters. Thus, to be sure, that modern people need coping mechanisms, we can observe Hajimi after the final meeting with Shimamoto. When Shimamoto finally disappears, Hajimi does not end his life; he is determined to continue his life.

Towards the end of the novel, it becomes clear to the readers that it is an anthology on coping mechanism that modern people usually find helpful. Thus, as proposed by Murakami, the coping mechanisms for the modern people are important since that can be greater remedies to overcome the modern problems. The research proves to be a cornucopia on the modernist studies.

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