

📖 Topic Page: [Murakami, Haruki \(1949 - \)](#)

Definition: **Murakami, Haruki** from *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Japanese novelist and translator. He is one of Japan's best-selling writers, influenced by Western writers, music, and popular culture. His dreamy, gently surrealist novels include *Norwegian Wood* (1987), *Sputnik Sweetheart* (2000), and *1Q84* (2009).

Murakami's first three novels, known collectively as the Rat trilogy, were *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979), *Pinball, 1973* (1980), and *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982). He is often described as Kafkaesque; later works that show this influence include *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (1995) and *Kafka on the Shore* (2002).

He was born in Kyoto and owned a coffeehouse and jazz bar before turning to writing full-time.

Summary Article: **Murakami, Haruki**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

(härō'kē mūr'äkä'mē), 1949–, Japanese novelist. He lived in Europe and the United States from 1986 to 1995. Widely considered one of Japan's most important contemporary novelists, he is heavily influenced by American culture, and his early work was criticized as overly Westernized by some in Japan. His cool, contemporary fiction is characterized by both realism and surreal fantasy, combining the minutiae of everyday life with strange, inexplicable events and elements of science fiction. Murakami's central theme has been characterized as the elusiveness of human identity, and his style encompasses great moral seriousness as well as whimsy and slapstick comedy. His often solitary, withdrawn, and world-weary protagonists are generally stripped of Japanese tradition; his works are sprinkled with references to American popular culture.

Murakami's first novel was *Hear the Wind Sing* (1979, tr. 1987). Since then he has published *A Wild Sheep Chase* (1982, tr. 1989), *Hard-Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World* (1985, tr. 1991), *Norwegian Wood* (1987, tr. 1989), *Dance, Dance, Dance* (1988, tr. 1993), *The Wind-up Bird Chronicle* (1995, tr. 1998), *The Sputnik Sweetheart* (1999, tr. 2001), *Kafka on the Shore* (2002, tr. 2005), *After Dark* (2004, tr. 2007), the massive *1Q84* (2009, tr. 2011), and *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage* (2013, tr. 2014). He has also written short stories, e.g., those collected in *The Elephant Vanishes* (tr. 1993), *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* (tr. 2006), and *Men without Women* (tr. 2017). His first nonfiction book, *Underground* (abr. tr. 2001), is an oral history of the 1995 Tokyo subway gas attack and its relation to the Japanese psyche. He has also translated English works into Japanese, including those of Raymond Carver and Raymond Chandler, two influences on his fiction. Murakami's second book of nonfiction, *What I Talk about When I Talk about Running* (2008), combines a runner's diary, meditations on writing, and a memoir.

See study by J. Rubin (2002).

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