

## Chapter II

### The Conflict

Every individual is unique and has one's own identification marks like the thumbprint, DNA and the iris. Similarly every human mind is different, yet men are all the same. The idea of 'normal' is taken on the basis of the majority that falls under a particular wavelength and generalities are formed. This is not to say that deviations, which should still be acceptable and healthy, do not occur. The idea of generalities is so rigid and comfortable that they gradually become the only accepted idea.

Deviations are progressively rejected, labeled as abnormal and soon the fear of the unknown begins to creep into the normal and ordinary minds that do not allow and accept the abnormal. It is soon forgotten that normal is only an idea of the majority and normalcy exists in shades and degrees, as does the abnormal. Those individuals, whose ideas and process of thought fall into the majority, in other words, the usual and the normal, are easily accepted. The individuals who fall far out of the normal spectrum are soon labeled as a threat, invalid, incompetent, queer, abnormal and new categories are created for these individuals who exist on these different wavelengths.

The people who fall in the borders of normal and abnormal can understand the idea of normal but they too see the world from different perspectives. In a world where a different idea is usually rejected and feared, the individuals on the border have the best chances of survival if they can blend in and adapt to the normal way of life or find a way to inspire and influence the society to view their ideas. When they fail to do either of this, they are usually shunned and rejected by the society. Despite these categories of the individual, every individual has his own idea of morality, ethics and justice. When the individual's view of life coincides with that of social norms, he can exist in harmony. The conflict arises only when the individual's idea

differs from that of his social surroundings. This disagreement has to be resolved for the individual to have any chance of contentment. Murakami's protagonists in the selected novels are stuck between the normal and the abnormal view of society and they all face a predicament, which throws their life out of balance. This dispute has to be resolved for the protagonist to be able to exist in accord with the society. The discord is triggered by some social idea that the protagonist is unable to abide by.

In HBEW, it is the technology around the Calcutec that causes the Calcutec to want to leave his world and the Dreamreader is faced with the choice of remaining in the world that is a creation of his own or to retreat in to another world, where he can keep his mind. Similarly in KS the protagonist is forced to leave home due to an Oedipal prophecy that causes the conflict in his mind. He does not know if he should fight against his fate or accept it and learn to deal with it. The prophecy is against social morality and it causes the boy to resort to loneliness and make difficult choices. Nakata is forced to put an end to the evil Johnnie Walker, which Nakata is not cut out to do.

WSC depicts the story of a nameless protagonist who is forced to find a particular sheep that rules the world and in that process he has to give up his friend who took the picture of the sheep. The story is a depiction of an individual who has to help find the means to the ideal society or to the ideal individual. It is a struggle to choose between adherence to social norms and the expression of the individual self. The need to relate to others, yet maintain one's individuality is the delicate balance that appears to be the challenge.

DDD is a journey of the individual from an emotionally numb state to a balance of emotion and reason. The protagonist is withdrawn from relationships, where he does not invest his emotions so that he has little to lose, but this kind of

relationship does not give fulfillment and results in a divorce. The protagonist learns to walk the line and to strike the balance between individuality and society. Instinct is an important guide in this process and the disagreement between instinct and reason takes place in the mind of the protagonist.

Murakami uses various techniques to bring out the conflict in the protagonists. This chapter focuses on the use of symbols, monologues, interior monologues and dialogues used by the author to bring the discord that arises in the minds of the protagonists, to the readers.

Symbols are largely manifestations of the subconscious of both the author and the reader. Many centuries of conditioning has brought in the association of images with emotions. It is a level at which many unspoken words give rise to a range of nuances of meaning that is understood beyond the conscious comprehension of the readers. In the Merriam Webster dictionary the term *Symbol* is defined as “something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; *especially*: a visible sign of something invisible . . . an object or act representing something in the unconscious mind that has been repressed” (“symbol.” def. 2). Dr. Wheeler describes the literary term *symbol* as:

A symbol is a word, place, character, or object that means something beyond what it is on a literal level. Symbolism is the act of using a word, place, character, or object . . . An object, a setting, or even a character in literature can represent another, more general idea. Note, however, that symbols function perfectly well in isolation from other symbols as long as the reader already knows their assigned meaning.  
(“symbol”)

Symbols are a common literary device that is used in literature to give depth and

potential to its interpretation. “The word symbol is derived from the Greek word symbolon” (Liungman 497). Symbols are deeply associated with the unconscious. Some symbols have universal meaning, while others have a specific meaning to certain groups of people and cultures. Jung’s “collective unconscious” reveals that certain images have the same symbolic meaning in many social and cultural structures.

Literary symbols may derive additional associations through their use in a particular literary work. Often a character, place, action, event or object is used to suggest multiple meanings in a particular story . . . considering how an image is used, how often it is used and when it appears . . . determine whether or not it functions as a symbol . . .

Symbols expand the possible meanings of a story. Thereby heightening interest and involving readers in active participation of the text.

(Kirszner 261)

Symbolism is a technique that is widely used. Murakami is seen to use symbols in his novels to show the inner conflict of his protagonist. Each character in the selected novels has a deep-set conflict that could symbolize human conflict in general. The struggle each protagonist depicts could represent the struggle that each individual has with his social and cultural surroundings. This struggle between the individual and his surroundings can be understood through Murakami’s use of symbols.

In HBEW the protagonist of HB, the Calcutec, is surrounded by technology and has a deep-set need to escape this mundane world, where he is part of the machinery that keeps the world in motion. The Calcutec does not wish to be in the midst of this technology-ridden world, yet he is unable to leave it since he is entangled with the program inserted into him. The conflict that arises due to the protagonist’s loss of

choice and interference of technology leads to a state of suppressed frustration. In HBEW it is the intrusion of technology that causes the inner conflict in the protagonist. He longs for a simpler life but he has the program embedded in him and he has no escape. His disregard for the world around him is shown with the use of symbols. Certain symbols are more prominent in HB, while certain others stand out clearer in EW. Elevators, sharpened pencils and paper clips are seen very often in HB. HBEW begins with the word 'Elevator'. Not only in HBEW but in other novels like DDD as well, the elevator is used as a symbol of connectivity to other worlds. In HB the elevator takes him to a place, which escalates his problems. The Calcutec describes the elevator as a different being; this particular elevator that surpasses all other elevators:

Another thing, most of the gadgets an elevator is supposed to have were missing. Where, for example, was the panel with all the buttons and switches? No floor numbers to press, no DOOR OPEN and DOOR CLOSE, no EMERGENCY STOP. Nothing whatsoever. All of which made me feel utterly defenseless. And it wasn't just no buttons; it was no indication of advancing floor, no posted capacity or warning, not even a manufacturer's name-plate. Forget about trying to locate an emergency exit. Here I was, sealed in. No way this elevator could have gotten fire department approval. There are norms for elevators after all.

(HBEW 2)

The Calcutec is unable to detect the direction of the elevator, leaving the reader to wonder if this hidden lab, which the elevator takes him to, is subterranean or at some other level. He eventually concludes that the elevator was intentionally kept opaque to its riders. Murakami takes his time to describe the elevator ride and the level of

discomfort that it causes in the Calcutec's mind as he speaks at length to the readers about the silence and the uniqueness of the elevator. Later he grows accustomed to the elevator, as the readers get accustomed to the transition between the two worlds, HB and EW.

In HBEW the elevator symbolizes an unconscious yearning to escape the world he is in. It is a means for him to leave the claustrophobia that he feels in his world. The elevator that he takes does not make him claustrophobic as one may expect but rather makes him apprehensive about the direction it takes him in. The Calcutec imagines a spacious and different kind of elevator that takes him somewhere he has never been. His conscious is incapable of devising a place, which is not ridden with technology. This problem is fixed by his unconscious that comes to his rescue, which will be further unpacked in the third chapter of the thesis.

Paper clips are another symbol in HB. The author refers to paperclips twenty five times in the novel. Paperclips are a symbol of the burden of being in complete control all the time. The need to organize and handle a lot of information is a compulsion to the Calcutec. The mind of the Calcutec unconsciously rejects this need to continuously organize data. Ironically, the Calcutec's job is to process data that is secretive and has to be done without the knowledge of the Calcutec. This processing of data is done in an unconscious state. This unconscious process manifests itself in the form of paperclips, an organizing tool in his conscious and waking state. It is also symbolic of his forced attachment with the technology-ridden world. On an unconscious level, he wishes to be away from all of this technology, which leads the readers to discover the End of the World, which is the password to the program that is embedded in the Calcutec.

The paperback she'd been reading was face-down on the desk. *Time*

*Traveller*, a biography of H. G. Wells, volume two. It was not a library book. Next to it were three well-sharpened pencils and some paperclips. Paperclips! Everywhere I went, paperclips! What was this? Perhaps some fluctuation in the gravitational field had suddenly inundated the world with paperclips. Perhaps it was mere coincidence. I couldn't shake the feeling that things weren't normal. Was I being staked out by paperclips? They were everywhere I went, always just a glance away.

Something went ding. Come to think of it, there'd been a couple of dings lately. First animal skulls, now paperclips. It seemed as if a pattern was establishing itself, but what relationship could there be between skulls and paperclips? (HBEW 75-76)

Apart from paper clips, Murakami uses the image of sharpened pencils quite often in his novels to show that characters are prepared for something. Often the characters are unaware that they are prepared to face something, but the sharpened pencils neatly arranged give the readers the feeling that the character is poised for the events that are to follow. In most cases it also shows how the character is very organized.

Murakami's protagonists easily fit the stereotypical mold of neat and organized. The sharpened pencils, neatly and precisely arranged, symbolize the alert nature of the character's mind and add a sense of expectancy for the readers. It foreshadows the events that are yet to occur in the life of the protagonist. The sharpened pencils are mentioned in passing and often leave the vigilant reader wondering, while it does not begin to bother the passive reader. The protagonists are hardly perturbed. It is simply part of their way of life. The pencil imagery is very subtle but when one continuously reads the works of Murakami the pencil imagery stands out demanding attention.

This symbol can also be seen in other novels. Oshima is the meticulous one in KS. He has the “long, freshly sharpened pencil” when he first meets Kafka Tamura and the mention of sharpened pencils neatly stacked continues throughout the novel (KS 38). In DDD, Murakami describes Dick North; “Dick had kept everything in immaculate order. On the desk were arranged five precision-sharpened pencils and an eraser, an unqualified still life. A calendar on the wall had been annotated with meticulous handwriting.” (DDD 315). This is often found in his novels. In HBEW the sharpened pencils are an indication of events to come, for which the Calcutec needs to be prepared.

EW is filled with many symbols that help with multiple interpretations. The most obvious interpretation is in connection with Carl Gustav Jung’s theory of human psychology. According to Jung the mind of the individual is divided into the persona, ego, shadow, anima/animus and the self. These are presented as elements of EW.

The pool in EW is symbolic of the unconscious. “In Jung’s estimation, water is the most common symbol for the unconscious” (Welch John 60). The river that runs through the EW forms a pool near the Southern Wall. This pool is often referred to as “dangerous”, “frightening” and “malign”. The librarian describes it to the Dreamreader. “I have been told the Pool only grows deeper and deeper. The whirlpool is a drill, boring away at the bottom” (HBEW 121-22).

The bridges that cross this river may be a reference to the animus/anima, which is also a bridge between the conscious, and the unconscious. The unicorns are a symbol of “peace and tranquility” in the East according to Chinese mythology and a symbol of “aggression and lust” in the West according to Greek mythology (HBEW 97). The animal thus carries the symbol of both aggression and peace. The unicorn is also seen as a symbol of the self in the novel with qualities such as aggression and



immediate satisfaction, which belongs to the id and peace and social harmony, which belongs to the Ego. The “beast” or the “unicorn” could be symbolic of the animus and anima since it acts as a bridge between the qualities of the id and the ego.

The Wall is symbolic of the *System* that curtails and limits the individual. The shadow in the novel symbolizes the Jungian shadow, which is a part of the unconscious, where all that the mind wishes to forget is locked away. In most instances it is the darker side of the individual. As the reader often sees, the shadow has a sly way of doing things and causes the Dreamreader to be an accomplice in its activities. The shadow fakes his illness so that the Gatekeeper would not gauge his strength. He forces the Dreamreader to carry him to the pool, which is a dangerous task. The shadow goads the Dreamreader into breaking rules and crossing lines. Finally, the disappearance of the shadow into the whirlpool is symbolic of losing all the memories. The Dreamreader is left with a feeling of tranquility after his shadow departs.

The idea of characters who do not have shadows or characters who have half shadows is a common feature in the novels: Nakata’s shadow is not whole, “Your problem is that your shadow is a bit--how should I put it? Faint. I thought this the first time I laid eyes on you, that the shadow you cast on the ground is only half as dark as that of ordinary people.” (KS 55). Similarly the Dreamreader’s shadow is cut off and in WSC and DDD the Sheep Man talks about his shadow, “The Sheep Man traced an indefinite shape with his finger. “That’s right. We’re half shadow, we’re in between.” (DDD 87).

According to Jackson Pollock, the snake is the archetypal image for the female unconscious, while the bird is the archetype for the male unconscious (Karmel 206). The birds that appear in the EW are symbolic of the aspirations of the

unconscious of the Dreamreader. He wishes to be free of the wall, or the system. It is only the birds in EW who are able to cross over the wall. "This is the Wall," says the Gatekeeper, slapping the broad side of the battlements. "Seven yards tall, circles the whole Town. Only birds can clear the Wall" (HBEW 108), Murakami compared the System to a Wall. By saying *System* Murakami includes the metanarratives that force the individual to conform to a uniform code, such as social, moral and spiritual codes, rather than express his individuality that may pose a threat to the norms of the System. The Wall symbolizes the limitations of human thought that may be brought about by various factors that define the identity of a person like profession, nationality, ethnicity, religion, tradition, education and values.

The forest that surrounds the EW is symbolic of the mysteries of the unconscious. The Dreamreader is warned not to venture into the forest "Keep your distance from the Wall and from the Woods. In winter, they take on an awesome power" (HBEW 145). On one occasion, the Dreamreader falls asleep in the woods and on waking, finds that he is disoriented. "Questions I cannot answer. The short sleep in the cold has consumed all warmth in me, leaving my head swimming with abstract shapes. Do I occupy the body of another? Everything is so ponderously heavy, so vague" (HBEW 150).

Although these symbols are prominent and easily recognized by the reader, Murakami denies any intentional use of symbols and archetypes in his works. He calls his work a result of auto writing, where he is quite unaware of the direction his novels take:

Murakami has rejected the idea of symbolism in his works: "To me the subconscious is *terra incognita*. I don't want to analyse it, but Jung and those people, psychiatrists, are always analysing dreams and the

significance of everything. I don't want to do that. I just take it as a whole." Murakami has said that he has no idea what awaits him when he begins to write a novel, that what transpires is as surprising to him as it is to the reader. And in that sense, his novels are anti-intellectual; they strive for an almost mystical epiphany that is experienced rather than understood. It is for this reason, more than anything else, that one keeps coming back for more, craving yet another fix, another submersion into the intriguingly obscure world of Haruki Murakami.

(Sonam)

Although symbolism may not be a conscious effort on Murakami's part, it certainly serves to reveal to some extent the obscurity of the unconscious and its magnificence and in the process it also reveals the inner conflict of the characters who shy away from the real world into a world of their own making, a world that their mind creates. In HBEW the Calcutec is ready to leave the world that he is in. He is tired of fighting against the System in HB and is willing to submit to its confines and live within the walls of EW

The use of symbols allows Murakami to show that the protagonist is uncomfortable in the role of a Calcutec since he bends under the authority, which is symbolized by the System, and he feels he does not know what direction his life seems to be taking like the elevators he rides, and the control that the organization holds over the Calcutec is symbolized by the presence of paperclips. The sharpened pencils symbolize the ennui of the protagonist. He realizes that his life is meaningless. He waits like those sharpened pencils for something to happen. He waits for the moment of the program that is embedded in him to shut down. The wait is indefinite. The Calcutec is unable to cope with the System in HB and his conflict is revealed

through the symbols.

The EW is a symbol of the unconscious mind of the protagonists along with the mysterious woods, which is also a symbol of the mind. The whirlpool is another symbol of the complexities of the mind and the shadow signifies the memories that are stored in the mind. All the elements in EW indicate that it is a world that symbolizes the mind of the protagonist. The bridge in EW symbolizes the link between the unconscious and the conscious mind. The symbols bring out the conflict that the Calcutec faces through the Dreamreader's narrative. The deep yearning that the protagonist feels for a natural world far from the complications of technology are submerged in his unconscious. The use of symbols allows Murakami to describe the mysterious and abstract quality of the unconscious without losing the confidence of the reader.

In KS, the protagonist Kafka Tamura has a great burden on him. He has the Oedipal curse, which his father reveals to him that forces him to leave home at a very tender age of 13. This Oedipal prophecy along with the neglect by his father leads to his inner conflict. He does not know if he should fight against the prophesy, which seems futile since he does not know his mother and sister, or to simply allow fate to run its course and not fight its current. Murakami presents this conflict to the reader with the help of symbols.

Some of the recurrent images in KS are the beach and the painting of the beach, the photograph with his sister when Kafka was a child, the image of the crow, the repeated mention of the backpack that Kafka carries with him, the darkness of the woods and the parallel world are certain symbols that grab the attention of the reader. The repeated mention of the photograph with the boy standing on the beach is symbolic of the burden of choice.

The title of the novel reflects this image. Kafka is forced to make choices of great magnitude, choices that determine his future and his identity. He chooses not to allow fate to rule his life when he decides to run away from home, but he later chooses to finish what had begun, when he finds that destiny overrides his choice. His inability to choose puts him between his choices, on the shore of right and wrong. The boy standing on the shore symbolizes the conflict of being stuck between fate and free will, or the confusion of right and wrong.

The backpack that Kafka carries throughout the novel is introduced to the reader as the novel begins. It symbolizes the heavy burden that Kafka is forced to shoulder, the burden of the Oedipal curse. The responsibilities of growing up too quickly and having to fend for himself, add weight to his backpack. The photograph that Kafka takes from his father is an image of himself with his sister on the beach. He finds a similar painting of a young boy on the shore in the library in Takamatsu. These pictures bring to mind the narcissus myth and symbolize the self-centered attitude that Kafka develops. The photographs symbolize the memories that he carries and the scars that those memories cause him. He is unable to forget the past and he is afraid of the future.

Kafka's adventure into the woods depicts his search for identity and the inability to understand who he really is. The boy enters the woods and soon finds himself getting lost in the labyrinth of vegetation. The darkness of the woods that surrounds him is symbolic of the "inner darkness":

The world of the grotesque is the darkness within us. Well before Freud and Jung shined a light on the workings of the subconscious, this correlation between darkness and our subconscious, these two forms of darkness, was obvious to people. It wasn't a metaphor, even. If you

trace it back further, it wasn't even a correlation. Until Edison invented the electric light, most of the world was totally covered in darkness.

The physical darkness outside and the inner darkness of the soul were mixed together, with no boundary separating the two. (KS 235-36)

He is not sure of who he is anymore. He does not know if he is capable of all that was prophesied. Kafka tries to discover himself, as he stays alone in a log cabin, cut off from human contact. He chances upon a parallel world, which is frozen in time. He is unable to decipher the reason for its existence or how it came to be. The parallel world is a symbol of the perception of each person of the world around them. The complexities of the inner world are presented with ambiguity and mystery that are disconcerting to the reader. It could be seen as a symbol of a person getting stuck in time or the inability of the protagonist to accept his predicament and move ahead with his life. Instead he still clings to a part of his life that made him feel good and lives his life in denial of the passing time.

The image of the crow is symbolic of a split in Kafka's personality. Both Kafka and Crow are symbolic of two personalities of the same person. The alternating of authority between the two identities depicts the conflict within the individual, which is the trigger for defense mechanisms. The repeated reference to Crow and the authority in his existence symbolized by the appearance of a crow is a key factor in understanding that Kafka Tamura is a combination of Kafka and Crow.

Kafka places a lot of emphasis on the painting that he believes to be of himself. At first Kafka is simply jealous of the boy in the painting, since he is told that the boy was Miss. Seiki's lover, who died many years ago. As Kafka has fallen in love with Miss Seiki, he wants to be that boy in the painting. "All of a sudden I realize--I'm jealous of the boy in the painting. "You're jealous of the boy in the painting," the boy

called Crow whispers in my ear.” (KS 253). The repeated incidents where Kafka observes the painting are when Miss Seiki is staring at it. The painting is a symbol of memories that are frozen in time. Kafka soon believes that he is the boy. He can even recall the memory of the painting, which is impossible given the timeline in the novel. Miss Saeki is in her mid forties and the picture was painted when she was twelve. Kafka could not have been the boy in the painting. Yet he believes that he is.

I close my eyes. I'm at the beach and it's summer. I'm lying back on a deck chair . . . Nearby, someone is painting a picture of me. And beside him sits a young girl in a short-sleeved light blue dress, gazing in my direction . . . Her smooth- as-porcelain arms glisten in the sunlight. A natural-looking smile plays at her lips. I'm in love with her. And she's in love with me. (KS 461)

Kafka puts himself in the center of Miss Seiki’s world. He believes that he is the boy in the picture; the boy, whose death has caused Miss Seiki to pine away. The repeated association of Kafka with the picture allows the reader to see the narcissistic qualities of the child. His assumption that he is the boy in the painting symbolizes his need to assume an identity different from his own. He clearly does not want to be the person that fate has predicted. He does not want the Oedipal myth and would rather be the boy who was dead and in the picture. The picture symbolizes the need of Kafka to assume another identity.

Rain is another symbol that depicts resolution and is seen in KS. Kafka realizes that the girl, Sakura whom he has been fantasizing about may be his sister who he has never seen. It is a moment where certain facts that they have shared with each other comes together:

Maybe--just maybe--this girl's my sister. She's about the right age. Her odd looks aren't at all like the girl in the photo, but you can't always count on that. Depending on how they're taken people sometimes look totally different. She said she has a brother my age who she hasn't seen in ages. Couldn't that brother be me--in theory, at least?

I stare at her chest. As she breathes, the rounded peaks move up and down like the swell of waves, somehow reminding me of rain falling softly on a broad stretch of sea. I'm the lonely voyager standing on deck, and she's the sea. The sky is a blanket of gray, merging with the gray sea off on the horizon. It's hard to tell the difference between sea and sky. Between voyager and sea. Between reality and the workings of the heart. (KS 25-26)

As the novel ends, Kafka speaks about the rain, "It starts to rain just after we pass Nagoya. I stare at the drops streaking the dark window. It was raining the day I left Tokyo, too. I picture rain falling in all sorts of places--in a forest, on the sea, a highway, a library. Rain falling at the edge of the world." (KS 488). It is the image of the rain falling on the sea that brings the novel to a close, symbolising the resolution of conflict.

Symbols like the photograph, the painting, the parallel world, the backpack, the crow, the dark forest and the rain help to bring out the conflict that Kafka faces in KS. Nakata on the other hand does not suffer from a burden of choice. He does what is expected of him. He is very predictable and his abnormalities do not get in anyone's way and he is not perceived as a threat. Even when he kills Johnnie Walker, he does it because it has to be done. There is no conflict of choice in the matter for him. Nakata simply does what is expected of him. He is more socially inclined than Kafka, even if



the society may perceive him differently. Symbols in Nakata's story are few. His ability to speak with cats and his inability to communicate with people shows that he is a misfit in society. The absence of memories symbolizes that he has no conflict.

In WSC the narrator is forced to find a place that is shown in a photograph along with a particular sheep in that photograph and in that process he is in search of a friend the 'Rat' with whom he has lost all contact. He is forced to go on this quest against his wishes, under a threat by the 'Strange Man' who is trying to save the life of the 'Boss', an influential businessman and thereby save the empire that was built and is sustained by the Boss who is "a major right-wing figure" (WSC 56). In WSC the characters are symbolic of the society and the pressure these characters exert on the narrator is the reason for the conflict that arises in the mind of the narrator. The sheep are symbolic of the people who have no direction or the herd mentality of the mob.

The herd mentality is a repeated theme in literature and no better example to compare this with than William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, where the mob craves for a ruler and is swayed so easily by the Orators. The herd of sheep in WSC represents the people who lack direction and follow a leader blindly. The Rat is symbolic of the rebel; someone who questions authority and the single 'sheep with the star on its back', which is being sought after, is seen as a symbol of the ideal leader. The ideal leader is still a sheep where the difference is a star. Signifying that the ideal leader cannot be very different from them. He may be allowed a "star" on his back. Individuality of a person cannot be expressed to its full potential, it may however be masked in the clothing of sheep and then be accepted. This idea is depicted by the Sheep Man.

The Rat cannot be taken as a leader, showing that individuals who are unable to conform to the social pressures have very little chance of leading the masses. Only if the Rat is dressed in sheep's clothing can he influence the other sheep. Apart from these symbols that show the resistance against society, the images may be symbolic of the inner conflict of the protagonist.

If the Rat were to exist in the world of sheep it would have to take the disguise of the sheep in order to exist. It cannot express itself as the Rat and it must behave like a sheep. The influence of the sheep almost changes the rat-nature of the Rat into the nature of the sheep, which is not its true nature. But to survive in the world of sheep, the Rat is forced to conform. The sheep with the star however finds a way to enter the Rat. The Rat struggles with this identity of the sheep, which forces him to be someone he is not. This is symbolic of the inner conflict of the individual. The Rat is a character, an individual, who finds himself in the 'world of sheep'; a world where he is different from the others and quits his job in order to be away from civilization. He chooses a place in "Hokkaido's cold country, [where] every few years there's a killer frost. If their crops die, there's no food to eat" (WSC 211). The Rat chooses isolation from the rest of the world to rid himself of the social pressure to conform, yet he is unable to escape the System. The sheep is still inside him.

The sheep may be considered the part of the protagonist that finds it easy to conform to social norms, whereas the Rat is the rebellious nature that finds its way out of the protagonist. The sheep with the star on its back may be considered the ideal one that others are forced to aspire to, which may be symbolic of the rules of the system or the moral code of the society that deems that one size fits all and that normal is based on the majority to an extent that anyone who deviates from normal is labeled 'queer', 'misfit' and shunned.

Apart from the characters that are symbolic, there are other images that have symbolic value in the novel. The ears of the narrator's girlfriend, who is later referred to as Kiki in DDD symbolize intuition, photographs symbolize perception, the woods symbolize the mind, the sea symbolizes the resolution of a conflict and the missing sound of the waves may also be symbolic to show the inner conflict of the character as he struggles to retain his individual nature against the pressure to conform to social norms.

The ears of the protagonist's girlfriend are mentioned nearly eighty times in WSC. The girlfriend has "the most bewitching, perfectly formed ears" which have clairvoyant properties (WSC 27) and "were like some great whirlpool of fate sucking [the protagonist] in" (WSC 29). The ears maybe symbolic of intuition in an individual. There are moments of obscurity and indecisiveness in every individual when one does not know what to do. It is in these moments that one tends to lean towards the gut feeling, when he has no logical reason to back up the choice.

The photograph of the sheep with a star on its back is symbolic of individual perception of the society. The protagonist's life is changed due to a photograph that his friend the Rat sends him. The photo is published in a bulletin, which catches the attention of the Strange Man, who threatens to wreck the narrator if he does not find the sheep in the photograph. When he first looks at the photograph it appears to be white specks on green hills

...it was hard to tell whether those white specks off in the distance were sheep or just white specks. And the closer I looked, the harder it was to tell whether the white specks were actually white specks or my eyes playing tricks with me, until finally I could be sure of nothing.

(WSC 62)

When the narrator counts the sheep he counts thirty two sheep initially and later, after the Strange Man points out the sheep with the star on its back, it appears to be thirty three. This change in number in a photograph represents the intrusion of external influence on the perception of the individual. It is impossible for a photograph to change and yet the narrator sees that the number has increased but does not dwell on this fact.

Another instance that photographs are mentioned in the novel are when the narrator's wife leaves him:

From the photo albums, every single print of her had been peeled away. Shots of the both of us together had been cut, the parts with her neatly trimmed away, leaving my image behind. Photos of me alone or of mountains and rivers and deer and cats were left intact. Three albums rendered into a revised past. It was as if I'd been alone at birth, alone all my days, and would continue alone. (WSC 20)

The discomfort that accompanies the end of a relationship causes the wife to want to wipe out their previous existence. She wants to rewrite the past and create a new perception of the past for herself and in the event she does the same for the narrator. The empty photo albums cause the narrator to perceive his loneliness. As the novel begins, the narrator mentions a slip that the wife has left behind which constantly reminds him of her absence. Murakami chooses to use the word 'slip' to play with its meaning. He indicates the piece of clothing, which symbolizes how the wife slipped away gradually from his life.

Once again, when the narrator is given three photographs of the ears, his adventures begin and his perception of the world changes. The photos of the ears have an attraction for him that he cannot explain, which has to do with the instinct and

intuition of the narrator. He comes up with the theory of the “worm universe” (WSC 67), which challenges the possibility of the single perception of existence that is accepted. When the narrator is introduced to his predicament with the Boss, the man is described as someone who “is never photographed” (WSC 56), which represents the ideal perception which does not exist. Since the sheep with the star on its back enters the Boss, the absence of photographs symbolizes the ideal that surpasses perception. The photograph, around which the mystery revolves, is considered to be a perception of innocence; “An innocent photograph in an innocent world” (WSC 61) until the sheep with the star appears in the photograph and the narrator is threatened to go looking for that landscape and the sheep with the star in that photograph.

The title of the novel depicts this “Wild Sheep Chase” for the sheep that is just an ideal that surpasses perception. The term ‘Wild Sheep’ in itself is oxymoronic. Sheep are domesticated, bred and they belong to someone. Wild sheep is not a usual concept.

The photograph is symbolic of the narrator’s perception of the world and the changes that his perception goes through with the appearance of the photograph of the ears, which symbolizes the influence of clairvoyance that changes his perception again and when the influence of the ideal appears symbolized by the sheep, his perception changes yet another time. Moreover the sheep with the star on its back is pointed out to the narrator by the Strange Man and it is not something that the narrator himself spots. This symbolizes the intrusion and influence of the society, which shapes perception. By the use of photographs as a symbol, Murakami brings out the conflict in the narrator as his perceptions of the world changes because of intuition, an instinctive stimulus and the social ideal, which is an external stimulus. Photographs symbolize the internal conflict of the narrator through his perception of the world; on

one side he wants to understand his world through his own individual perception (ears) and on the other hand, society thrusts its influence on his perception (sheep).

The woods symbolize the mind of the narrator. This is another common symbol that is repeatedly used in Murakami's novels with alternating worlds. In WSC the narrator is surrounded by woods in Hokkaido, where he is looking for the sheep with the star on its back. He speaks about the woods and immediately after that he speaks about his nightmare; "I felt totally exhausted, like a child who'd been wandering around in the woods for three days. I closed my eyes and the next instant I was asleep. I had a terrifying dream. A dream too terrifying to recall." (WSC 273). In KS Kafka Tamura loses himself in the woods even after he is warned not to go too deep inside the woods. In HBEW the Dream reader is seen wandering into the woods. It is also common for these characters to get lost in the woods.

The conflict in the mind of the narrator is brought out through the symbol of the woods. The Sheep Professor warns him of wandering in the woods since there are bears. The wild animals symbolize wild thoughts that reside in the deep dark crevices of the mind. The mind of the individual is the woods, when ventured too deep, the dark abysses may be accessed from which novel thought may arise that could damage the ideology that was carefully constructed by the society. That is the danger that the wild thoughts (animals) pose to the individual. The Sheep Man warns the narrator about bears in the woods and advises the narrator to keep a bell on him to ward off the bears. The Sheep Man tries to conform to the society. He believes that it is better to behave like sheep and dresses in sheep's clothing. He is afraid of bears and warns the narrator who ventures into the woods to wear a bell. This symbolizes the social intrusion to keep the mind clear of individual ideas and stick to the norms of the society. This again depicts the conflict within the individual:

“Wanderaroundtoomuchyou’llbearbait,” said the Sheep Man.

“There’sboundtobeoneaboutinthesepartsyounow. Yesterdayafternoon I foundtraces. Ifyouhavetowalkaroundyououghttoputabellonyourhiplike us.” The Sheep Man shook a little bell fastened to his hip with a safety pin. (WSC 261-62)

The words of the Sheep Man are indistinct without spaces and capitals between his words making it sound almost like the bleating of sheep rather than human speech.

The sea is another repeated symbol seen in other novels as well. Murakami brings in the sea imagery with rain falling on the sea, every time the character has a moment of epiphany. The rain and the sea symbolize some kind of realization that the character has. Just as KS ends with rain, in HBEW once again the narrative of the Calcutec ends with the image of rain and the sea, “Straight ahead was the sea... I thought about rain myself. A mist so fine, it almost wasn't rain. Falling, ever fair, ever equal, it gradually covered my consciousness in a filmy, colorless curtain” (HBEW 395-96). The same image is seen towards the end of DDD when the narrator realizes that Yumiyoshi is very important to him and he cannot afford to lose her. “The sea was one enormous idea, rain falling silently over its vastness” (DDD 391).

Just as the rain falling on the sea symbolizes the resolution of the conflict, the conflict itself is depicted by the absence of the sound and smell of the sea. The narrator in WSC visits the place where the sea used to be:

I stopped at the exact spot where I used to park to look at the sea, went over to sit down on the jetty, and drank a beer. What a view! Instead of ocean, a vast expanse of reclaimed land and housing developments met my eyes. Faceless blocks of apartments, the miserable foundations of an attempt to build a neighborhood. (91-92)

But as the novel ends, the author gives the picture of the beach and the sea again, although he does not mention rain in WSC, the narrator can hear the ocean again, even though he was unable to hear it earlier due to land reclamation.

I walked along the river to its mouth. I sat down on the last fifty yards of beach, and I cried. I never cried so much in my life. I brushed the sand from my trousers and got up, as if I had somewhere to go. The day had all but ended. I could hear the sound of waves as I started to walk. (WSC 299)

KS also feels the hint of rain and the smell of rain throughout the novel but the end reveals the complete resolution of the conflict with the imagery of the sea. The absence of the sea symbolizes the conflict or the absence of resolution, while the sea and the rain symbolize the end of the conflict.

Symbols like ears, photographs, the woods, wild animals, rain and the characters who are symbolic like the sheep, the Rat, the Sheep Man and the Sheep with the star, are brought in to discover the conflict in the narrator. The conflict of the narrator is of choice; to obey the authority of the Boss and live, or to defy authority and face the consequences, which is more often death.

DDD shares some common symbols with WSC since DDD appears to be a sequel to WSC. Symbols like the elevator, the hotel, the 'bizarre room', the Sheep Man, along with each character being symbolic of something, enables the author to bring out the inner conflict in the narrator. The elevator has the similar significance in DDD as it did in HBEW. Although the elevator looks just like any other elevator, it has a mind of its own and takes the narrator to the sixteenth floor. This is the world of the past where the Sheep Man has chosen to live. This is the narrator's link to the other world. In DDD it is not the narrator's choice but the elevator's to decide when



he can visit the sixteenth floor. If one considers the different worlds in the selected novels as the different layers of perception of the mind, the elevators are symbolic of the transit or the link that may exist between different perceptions. It is an event that only the narrator experiences except on two occasions where his girlfriend, who is a receptionist at the Dolphin hotel, chances upon the same unique phenomenon and describes the experience to him:

“Well, about ten days ago,” Yumiyoshi began, “I was riding in the elevator down to the parking garage. It was around eight at night. The elevator went down, the door opened, and suddenly I was in that place again. Exactly like before. It wasn't in the middle of the night, and it wasn't on the sixteenth floor. But it was the same thing. Totally dark, moldy, kind of dank. The smell and the air were exactly the same. This time, I didn't go looking around. I stood still and waited for the elevator to come back. I ended up waiting a long time, I don't know how long. When the elevator finally got there, I got in and left. That was it.”

“Did you tell anyone about it?” I asked.

“You think I'm crazy?” she said. “After the way they reacted the last time? Not on your life.”

“Yeah, better not tell a soul.”

“But what am I supposed to do? Whenever I get into an elevator now, I'm scared that I'm going to end up in darkness. And in a hotel like this, you have to ride the elevators a lot. What am I going to do? I can't talk to anybody but you about this.” (DDD 231)

Murakami uses these symbols to bring out the uneasiness that the protagonist feels in

his own world. The protagonists have an unconscious yearning for the past as the narrator in DDD or for another world.

The hotel is a bridge between the conscious and the unconscious of the narrator. The Sheep Man who appears in the prequel WSC is now in hiding in the Dolphin Hotel, on the sixteenth floor where the narrator had last met the Sheep Professor. Little is known about the whereabouts of the Sheep Professor, but the Sheep Man is still hiding away from the society. The Sheep Man compares himself to the switchboard at the Dolphin Hotel. The imagery of the switchboard itself is not mentioned in DDD as it is mentioned in WSC but it is the Sheep Man who is a symbol of the connection between the narrator and all other characters in the novel. The hotel is named The Dolphin Hotel, since the owner takes inspiration from the novel Moby Dick:

“I don’t know, there’s something of Moby Dick about it.”

“Moby Dick?”

“Sure. The thrill of hunting something down.”

“A mammoth, for example?” said my girlfriend.

“Sure. It’s all related,” said the clerk. “Actually, I named this place the Dolphin Hotel because of a scene with dolphins in Moby Dick.”

“Oh-ho,” said I. “But if that’s the case, wouldn’t it have been better to name it the Whale Hotel?”

“Whales don’t have quite the image,” he admitted with some regret.

“The Dolphin Hotel’s a lovely name,” said my girlfriend. (WSC 176)

Earlier on in the novel, the narrator recollects a memory where he had observed the severed penis of a whale in an aquarium and remembered thinking that “its meaning as a whale’s penis [was] irretrievably lost.” (WSC 40-41). Murakami seems to play

with the words Moby Dick and the Whale's penis that has been severed, along with the name of the Hotel to bring about the connection to the narrator. The narrator remembers this image more than once in the novel and also tells himself, "I am not a whale." (WSC 26), but in doing so, he underlined the struggle within himself of trying to push aside a part of himself and deny the existence of certain qualities of his nature. Dick North is one of the skeletons in the bizarre room in DDD. The word play could include Dick as one of his identities that the narrator would rather not identify with. Moby Dick, the whale's severed penis, Dick North and the Dolphin Hotel are brought together with their names to symbolize the identity of the protagonist. The Hotel symbolizes the identity of the narrator since it is also the residence of the Sheep Man who behaves as a connector to the conscious and unconscious self of the narrator. Although the narrator is afraid to be the whale which he associated with the loss of the penis, he accepts that he could be the dolphin, which is the hotel wrongly named. The Sheep Man tries to explain to the narrator that the hotel is the narrator's world and that the hotel would not exist without the narrator:

"For me? They called this place the Dolphin Hotel just for me? ... I don't get it. Why would you go to all the trouble? For me?"

"This is your world," said the Sheep Man matter-of-factly.

"Don't think too hard about it. If you're seeking it, it's here. The place was put here for you. Special. And we worked special hard to get you back here. To keep things from falling apart. To keep you from forgetting."

"So I really am part of something here?"

" 'Course you belong here. Everybody's all in here, together.

This is your world," repeated the Sheep Man. (DDD 83-84)

The narrator is able to accept what the Sheep Man tells him and he acknowledges that he is the Dolphin Hotel and not the Whale. The Sheep Man is someone who is hiding out dressed as a sheep to keep away from war and the social atrocities. The narrator tends to accept the words of the Sheep Man easily but tends to reject the idea that is conceived in his own mind.

The bizarre room is an abstract idea that comes to the narrator as a vision or a dream, where he finds himself in a room when he is trying to find Kiki. He finds that the room is dark and he is able to see six skeletons. It appears as if they had been interrupted somehow. These skeletons maybe attributes of his own personality and it may also symbolize the different faces that an individual, in this case, the narrator portrays towards the society. The skeletons that he is able to see may be those of the characters in the novel.

The explanation of these images is not given to the reader in the novel. The reader is not expected to be a passive observer as the story unfolds but to be an active interpreter to unpack the information that Murakami strews along the narrative. He leaves the reader to assume and construe as it reaches the reader. This could clearly bring out more than one reading and understanding of the novel. In many instances, the reader may be left with only assumption to push along within the narrative. The bizarre chamber is one such instance where the reader may assume that the six skeletons in that room belong to the characters that disappear in the novel.

Later the narrator confirms this assumption after Gotanda's death. The five people in the room are "The Rat, Kiki, Mei, Dick North and now Gotanda" (DDD 360) but the narrator does not know who the sixth person is. He is afraid that Yumiyoshi, his girlfriend may be the final skeleton but the novel ends without the death of Yumiyoshi. The sixth skeleton could be that of the Sheep Man, whose end is

not revealed just as the identity of the sixth skeleton is obscure. Entering the bizarre room is a symbol of the conflicts within the narrator. Each character may be considered to be symbol of his own nature that is projected as different people to the narrator. Gotanda is an actor by profession. He is admired by the narrator and symbolizes what the narrator wishes to be seen as. The Rat, who is a character in the prequel, symbolizes the rebellious and individualistic nature of the narrator. Dick North is the one handed poet who is very resourceful. He is the boyfriend of Ame, who is self-absorbed and forgets about her daughter at times. Despite his disability, Dick is able to take care of Ame and he is very meticulous in his work. Dick represents the resilient nature of the narrator. The character of Dick North can be a symbol of resilience and hope that the narrator is afraid to lose. He is also symbolic of the caring person that the narrator refuses to be at the beginning of the novel as well as in WSC, where he is indifferent to the whereabouts of his girlfriend and his wife. Just as he refuses to identify with the whale, he also refuses to identify with being a caring person.

KiKi is a symbol of instinct and gut feelings as seen in WSC. It is her voice that brings the narrator to the Dolphin hotel once again. It was Kiki's idea to stay at the Dolphin Hotel in WSC, when they had no lead on their search of the sheep with the star on its back, which led to the discovery of the Ovine hall, the Sheep Professor and eventually the Rat in Hokkaido. It was intuition that took the narrator to that mountain. Mei, the call girl, could be seen as a symbol of social adherence. She is often described as the goat girl Mei, who made the narrator comfortable and calm. She is murdered in the novel and seems to be one of the skeletons in the bizarre room. The combination of these characters along with their symbolic nature depicts the various identities of an individual. Symbols bring out the inner struggle that is caused

by the balancing act of the social need to conform and the individual desires. WSC and DDD may be considered as allegories due to their symbolic nature. Symbols like the hotel, the elevator, and the bizarre room, along with characters like Kiki, Mei, Gotanda, Dick North, the Rat and the Sheep Man help to discover the conflict in the narrator. The narrator is ridden with guilt and is disturbed by the voice of Kiki in his dream. The conflict between his intuition and social reason is well discovered by symbols.

Interior monologues are another technique by which Murakami is able to let the reader into the mind of the narrator to understand the inner conflict of the character. In the Merriam Webster, monologue is defined as “a usually extended representation in monologue of a fictional character's thought and feeling”(“monologue,” def.). The interior monologue is described as:

“A type of stream of consciousness in which the author depicts the interior thoughts of a single individual in the same order these thoughts occur inside that character's head. The author does not attempt to provide (or provides minimally) any commentary, description, or guiding discussion to help the reader untangle the complex web of thoughts, nor does the writer clean up the vague surge of thoughts into grammatically correct sentences or a logical order. Indeed, it is as if the authorial voice ceases to exist, and the reader directly "overhears" the thought pouring forth randomly from a character's mind. (“interior monologue”)

Edouard Dujardin, one of the writers to use the stream of consciousness technique in its infancy says of Interior monologues:

A discourse without an auditor and unspoken, by which a character

expresses his most intimate thoughts, those closest to the unconscious, prior to all logical organization, or, simply, thought in its drawing state - expresses it by means of direct phrases reduced to its syntactical minimum, in such a way as to give the impression of a hodgepodge.

(Rapaport 80)

According to James Joyce the interior monologue allows the readers to be “installed in the thought of the main character from the first lines on, and it is the uninterrupted unfolding of the thought which, apprise us of what the character does and what happens to him” (Rapaport 79). Murakami’s characters are alone although they are not necessarily lonely. They are comfortable with silences and often seek solitude. In these situations it is the conversation that the character has with oneself that moves the plot of the novels. Murakami categorizes the types of silences:

The room was utterly silent. Now there is the silence you encounter on entering a grand manor. And there is the silence that comes of too few people in too big a space. But this was a different quality of silence altogether. A ponderous, oppressive silence. A silence reminiscent, though it took me a while to put my finger on it, of the silence that hangs around a terminal patient. A silence pregnant with the presentiment of death. The air faintly musty and ominous. (WSC 106)

Murakami distributes silence very well in his novels to make his thoughts heard. The narrators encounter different kinds of silences and in these silences their own thoughts are voiced to the readers. Although his characters are alone, Murakami does not lean heavily on interior monologues, instead he creates imaginary characters in their mind and holds conversations with them.

According to the Merriam Webster dictionary, a dialogue is “ the things that are said by the characters in a story, movie, play, etc.” or “a conversation between two or more people” (“dialogue” def.) Although the dialogue between these characters are in the mind of the narrator and may be considered interior monologues in a sense, they appear in the form of a conversation between two characters that are in the mind of the narrator. Although they are in the form of a dialogue, they closely follow the definition of interior monologues, which are intimate thoughts that do not always follow logical order and lack grammatical adherence. These characters sometimes play a role in convincing the narrator of something or to make the conflict prominent to the narrator. These interior conversations are honest and allow the readers to look closely into the dilemma that the characters are faced with. Although they are honest, the thoughts of the characters may be heavily riddled and puzzling to the readers that sets them on a labyrinthine search for more meaning to understand the predicament of the characters better. The active involvement of the reader is a basic requirement to savor the depth and essence of the novels.

In HBEW the Calcutec’s story seems to be a continuous monologue as he gives a detailed description of his thoughts throughout the novel. Every idea that passes through his mind is transparent to the narrator. Some thoughts are mundane and insignificant to the narrative but they seem to have a place of their own to show that life has its mundane quality. The movement of the elevator, the smells, sounds, texture of things are accounted for as the narrator reveals his tale. The Calcutec does not like the idea of having technology intruding into his mind. The conflict in the narrator is that he is a Calcutec who is a human data processor. Although he would rather live in a quiet world away from all of the technology that runs and controls his life, he tells himself that his job is good for him and convinces himself saying that he



enjoys it. This is the conflict that takes place in his mind. The Calcutec's story takes place in the odd chapters of HBEW, which is the Hard-boiled Wonderland.

It is a process called shuffling that upsets the Calcutec. He says "whenever I shuffle, I am rendered utterly defenseless and subject to mood swings." (HBEW 115), yet he enjoys the perks that the job brings him.

"I have no intention of turning in my Calcutec qualifications. Despite the meddling and the raised eyebrows at the System, I know of no line of work that allows the individual as much freedom to exercise his abilities as being a Calcutec. Plus the pay is good. If I work fifteen years, I will have made enough money to take it easy for the rest of my life. (HBEW 115)

The Calcutec is aware that shuffling requires no effort on his part and it is not an accomplishment on his part. He cannot take credit for what is being done even though it is his mind that does it. He has only allowed his mind to be a medium for the data processing.

Laundering is a pain, but I myself can take pride in doing it. All sorts of abilities are brought into the equation. Whereas shuffling is nothing I can pride myself on. I am merely a vessel to be used. My consciousness is borrowed and something is processed while I'm unaware. I hardly feel I can be called a Calcutec when it comes to shuffling. Nor, of course, do I have any say in choice of calc-scheme.

I am licensed in both shuffling and laundering, (HBEW 115)

Although the Calcutec enjoys the pay, he acknowledges his lack of participation in his job and does not have a purpose or fulfillment. On an unconscious level the Calcutec detests the life of technology and wants to live away from it in a simpler fashion. He

believes that if he puts up with his job which is “meddling” with him now, later on his future is secure, but deep in his heart he also knows that nothing can ascertain a secure future or that the future security cannot give him the necessary peace in the present. These ideas are revealed to the readers when he alludes to *The Brothers Karamazov*:

"Well, toward the end, Alyosha is speaking to a young student named Kolya Krasotkin. And he says, Kolya, you're going to have a miserable future. But overall, you'll have a happy life."

Two beers down, I hesitated before opening my third.

"When I first read that, I didn't know what Alyosha meant," I said,

"How was it possible for a life of misery to be happy overall? But then

I understood, that misery could be limited to the future." (HBEW 389)

The Calcutec knows that he is stuck in a job that has no real meaning for him, but he tells himself that the job will secure his future. The truth is that he does not have a choice in the matter anymore. Although he says that he can quit the job when he wants to, the reality remains that he can never leave his job. The program will always be a part of him and the other Calcutecs who went through the same experiment have lost their lives. There is nothing more that the Calcutec can do but to keep “Shuffling”. As the professor confesses to the Calcutec;

“That's somethin'... even I don't know why," admitted the Professor.

"Exactly as y' say, twenty-five of the twenty-six Calcutecs who underwent shuffling actualization have died. All died the same way, as if their fates were sealed. They went to bed one night; come morning they were dead.” (HBEW 264).

His life is dictated by the social settings of his time and place. His entertainment is the typical life of a city dweller: drinking, music and books, which he relishes but he also mentions that he loves a life with nature. “As precious to me as a beautiful sunset or good clean air” (HBEW 67). The deep-set need to live away from the technology-ridden world often surfaces in his internal monologues where he fantasizes about the future.

I replayed my usual fantasy of the joys of retirement from Calcutecdom. I'd have plenty of savings, more than enough for an easy life of cello and Greek. Stow the cello in the back of the car and head up to the mountains to practice. Maybe I'd have a mountain retreat, a pretty little cabin where I could read my books, listen to music, watch old movies on video, do some cooking... (HBEW 126)

The Calcutec is not conscious of this underlying need to live close to nature. It appears as a mere fantasy in his interior monologues. As the novel progresses it begins to dawn on him and he is able to acknowledge this need. The Calcutec is stuck without a choice and is forced to create an imaginary world where he can retreat to for comfort.

The Dreamreader lives in a world that is a stark contrast to the world of the Calcutec. It is a world that sees no technology and is situated in the middle of a forest surrounded by a very high wall that does not let anyone enter or leave the premises. The Dreamreader is happy to be in this enclosure but is separated from his shadow and his memories. The conflict of the Dreamreader is whether he should remain here or try to escape this System and get out of this place along with his shadow. “Do you want to leave here?” she asks again. I shake my head. Do I mean this as a "no", or is it only that I do not know?” (HBEW 123). The shadow continually tries to convince

the Dreamreader to make a run for it, but there are other factors that make the Dreamreader want to stay. This is the predicament of the Dreamreader in EW. The interior monologues bring out the conflict, as there are times that the Dreamreader is convinced that he must leave the place quickly, and yet again there are interior monologues that tell the readers that he wishes to stay. Here the interior monologues are in the form of dialogues between two characters that exist in the mind of the narrator. This is similar to the interior conversations between Crow and Kafka in KS. The shadow can be interpreted as a part of the Dreamreader's mind:

"The more it snows, the more beasts die," says the Shadow.

"More dead beasts mean more work for the Gatekeeper. We'll slip out when he's occupied, while he's burning the carcasses in the Apple Grove. You'll lift his keys, unlock the enclosure, and we escape, the two of us."

"By the Gate?"

"No, the Gate's no good. He'd be on top of us in no time. The Wall's no good either. Only birds can make it over the Wall."

"So how do we escape?"

"Leave it to me. I've got it worked out from the information I've pieced together. I pored over your map enough to wear holes in it, plus I learned all sorts of things from the Gatekeeper himself. (HBEW 332)

The Dreamreader has grown to like the EW. It is a part of his imagination that drew up the EW to protect his mind from the program that was inserted and he has grown accustomed to it. This is a clear indication that the EW was a product of the protagonist's conflict. Yet the Dreamreader has to make the choice to stay or leave the place. Even when his shadow finds a way to leave and seems convinced of the way

out, the Dreamreader is hesitant to leave, not because he distrusts the shadow but because he has made the EW his new comfort zone. He has grown accustomed to the social structure of the place. He has begun to like the residents of the place and seems to have fallen in love with the Librarian. The longer he has stayed the more accustomed he has grown to the inhabitants. The initial doubts of staying in the EW are replaced by the comfort of the EW.

The reason for the protagonist to leave HB is because he does not have much choice as he is being hunted down, but the world he created in his mind is his own and to leave it or to stay is a choice that the Dreamreader has to make. The conflict lies not only in the obscurity of the next destination but also in the idea of security that accompanies the individual when he chooses to conform to the society. The shadow believes that he is asking the Dreamreader to leave this world, where choice does not exist, but to the Dreamreader, it is a choice that he has to make. A choice between the security and stability that comes with conformity or the idea of individuality and free will that comes with gaining his mind and the ability to act according to one's will. The conflict shows that choice will always exist. Even for the individual to give up his right to choose is a choice. In HB he is forced physically to leave the world but EW is a world of his own making, where no one can curtail his choice. It is the burden and predicament of the Dreamreader. No one can take away the freedom of the mind. All restrictions can only pertain to the physical self:

"What's this now? Don't tell me you're having doubts," jeers my shadow.

"Yes, I have doubts," I say. "To begin with, I can't even recall my former self. How can I be sure that self is worth returning to? Or that world?"

The shadow is about to say something, but I raise my hand to cut him short. "Wait, please. Just let me finish what I have to say. It is not only that I may have forgotten how things used to be. I am beginning to feel an attachment to this Town. I enjoy watching the beasts. I have grown fond of the Colonel and the girl at the Library. No one hurts each other here, no one fights. Life is uneventful, but full enough in its way. Everyone is equal. No one speaks ill of anyone else, no one steals. They work, but they enjoy their work. It's work purely for the sake of work, not forced labor. No one is jealous of anyone. There are no complaints, no worries."

"You've forgotten no money or property or rank either. And no internal conflicts," says the shadow. "More important, there's no growing old, no death, no fear of death."

"Tell me, then—what possible reason would I have for leaving this Town?" (HBEW 333)

The conflict still remains: should the Dreamreader lead a passive existence in this world of his creation, where he has no need to exercise his choice or to brave it out in a world where he actively lives for what has meaning for him:

"It all makes sense, what you say," he allows, extending a shadowy hand from under his blanket to touch his parched lips, "on the face of it. The world you describe would truly be a Utopia. I cannot fault you that. You have every right to be taken with it, and if that's the case, then I will accept your choice and I will die. Still, you are over-looking things, some very important things." ... "Just now, you spoke of the Town's perfection. Sure, the people here—the Gatekeeper aside—don't

hurt anyone. No one hurts each other, no one has wants. All are contented and at peace. Why is that? It's because they have no mind."

(HBEW 333-34)

The struggle between the choice of mind and mindlessness is the struggle between the individual and the System. Murakami makes a similar reference in his famous Jerusalem Prize acceptance speech. Murakami reiterates his stand on the role of the system, which can be viewed as a metanarrative, as designed to protect and organize humanity.

Between a high, solid wall and an egg that breaks against it, I will always stand on the side of the egg. . . Each of us is, more or less, an egg. Each of us is a unique, irreplaceable soul enclosed in a fragile shell. This is true of me, and it is true of each of you. And each of us, to a greater or lesser degree, is confronting a high, solid wall. The wall has a name: It is The System. (Murakami *ASE*)

This description goes a long way in revealing the conflict in the Dreamreader.

Murakami defends the importance of the individual against an evolved "System", which has deviated from its purpose. In HBEW the protagonist of HB is surrounded by the "System" where his individuality is threatened to the extent of extinction. The system has succeeded in entering the most intimate part of the individual - the mind. In EW the Dreamreader is faced with a choice to leave the System and face the world with a mind of his own or to stay within the walls and lose the mind, memories and choice. It is through these internal monologues in the form of conversations in the mind, the writer brings out the predicament of choice in the protagonist.

KS has Kafka Tamura the lonely runaway teenager who ruminates on his predicament very often, whereas Nakata is someone who communicates very less

with the outside world due to his lack of communication skills. Incidentally, Nakata communicates very little even with himself. The boy named Crow also communicates to the readers through internal monologues, which is a dialogue with Kafka in the mind of Kafka. The words of the boy named Crow are given in bold throughout the novel. Therefore in KS, internal monologues sometimes take the form of conversations with Crow, who is a part of the protagonist's imagination. In other words he speaks to himself. The odd chapters that delineate the story of Kafka are seen in the form of many interior monologues. The thoughts of Crow appear in bold. They are also in the form of monologues where he appears to speak for long stretches without expecting any answers from Kafka. Kafka reflects the words of Crow immediately as his own internal thoughts:

"Sometimes fate is like a small sandstorm that keeps changing directions," Crow says.

**Sometimes fate is like a small sandstorm that keeps changing directions. You change direction but the sandstorm chases you. You turn again, but the storm adjusts. Over and over you play this out, like some ominous dance with death just before dawn. Why? Because this storm isn't something that blew in from far away, something that has nothing to do with you. This storm is you. Something inside of you. So all you can do is give in to it, step right inside the storm, closing your eyes and plugging up your ears so the sand doesn't get in, and walk through it, step by step. There's no sun there, no moon, no direction, no sense of time. Just fine white sand swirling up into the sky like pulverized bones. That's the kind of sandstorm you need to imagine.**



And that's exactly what I do. I imagine a white funnel stretching up vertically like a thick rope. My eyes are closed tight, hands cupped over my ears, so those fine grains of sand can't blow inside me. The sandstorm draws steadily closer. I can feel the air pressing on my skin. It really is going to swallow me up. (KS 5)

This technique of interior monologues is used very often in the novel. It is employed in many instances to show that Kafka is extremely dependent on Crow to get him through difficult and strange situations. Crow's thoughts eventually become Kafka's thoughts and the barrier between the two identities dissolve during these monologues. They also serve to stir up questions about moral issues and abstract ideas. The young boy who is out in the world on his own is still in the process of strengthening his conscience. The books he reads, the incidents he encounters and the people he meets give him reason and opportunity to exercise his moral acumen. "But let's face it-- you're only fifteen," Crow goes on. "Your life's just begun and there's a ton of things out in the world you've never laid eyes on. Things you never could imagine." (KS 4).

In an instance where Kafka stays in a cabin in the woods, he is absorbed in a book that describes the holocaust and the strategy that the SS used to kill the Jews. The story about Adolf Eichmann catches Kafka's attention. The monologue begins with his questions about the inability of Eichmann to imagine the consequences of creating and designing the gas chamber that served to kill millions.

By the end of the war some six million Jews had been disposed of. Strangely, the guy never felt any remorse. Sitting in court in Tel Aviv, behind bulletproof glass, Eichmann looked like he couldn't for the life of him figure out why he was being tried, or why the eyes of the world were upon him. He was just a technician, he insisted, who'd found the

most efficient solution to the problem assigned him. Wasn't he doing just what any good bureaucrat would do? So why was he being singled out and accused? . . . It's all a question of imagination. Our responsibility begins with the power to imagine. It's just like Yeats said: In dreams begin responsibilities. Flip this around and you could say that where there's no power to imagine, no responsibility can arise. Just like we see with Eichmann. (KS 139)

The monologues allow the reader to follow the thought process of Kafka. It leads to the issue of his responsibility in the Oedipal prophecy. The protagonist is faced with a dilemma, which is heavier than his years can handle. He is aware of the Oedipal prophecy and does not know whether he should stay at home not knowing where fate will take him or if he should fight the prophecy and make his own destiny and take his life into his own hands. He mulls over this in his mind. This is presented as a conversation between himself and the boy named Crow, who is an imagination of Kafka's mind.

"But I have to get out of here," I tell him. "No two ways around it."  
**"Yeah, I guess you're right." He places the paperweight back on the table and links his hands behind his head. "Not that running away's going to solve everything. I don't want to rain on your parade or anything, but I wouldn't count on escaping this place if I were you. No matter how far you run. Distance might not solve anything."** (KS 4)

Internal monologues bring out the struggle that a runaway fifteen year old faces. He is short on money and needs to spend judiciously. He plans to shrink the size of his stomach to get by without the pangs of hunger, by eating small portions. The internal

monologue in the form of conversation between Crow and Kafka brings out the predicament. On another instance the monologue brings out the restlessness within Kafka. He has a moment of peace in the forest where he rests but his mind refuses to remain calm and start to think about the moment that calm will shatter.

**But that calm won't last long, you know. It's like beasts that never tire, tracking you everywhere you go. They come out at you deep in the forest. They're tough, relentless, merciless, untiring, and they never give up. You might control yourself now, and not masturbate, but they'll get you in the end, as a wet dream. You might dream about raping your sister, your mother. It's not something you can control. It's a power beyond you--and all you can do is accept it.**

**You're afraid of imagination. And even more afraid of dreams. Afraid of the responsibility that begins in dreams. But you have to sleep, and dreams are a part of sleep. When you're awake you can suppress imagination. But you can't suppress dreams. (KS 145-46)**

The conflict that arises in Kafka is due to the prophesy that troubles him. The Oedipal myth is the intrusion of social taboo that causes the internal conflict. Kafka is forced to fight against the prophecy and try to prove it wrong so he can aspire to lead a normal life. When Kafka falls in love with Ms. Seiki, he realises this through a long internal monologue. **“You’re jealous of the pitiful, twenty-year old boy mistaken for someone else ...Am I right?”** (KS 253). These internal monologues are those that bring out the conflict that Kafka faces. When Ms. Seiki comes to his bed, he has longed for her but his fight against fate and the Oedipal prophesy is so strong that a struggle between his will to fight against the prediction and to submit to his passion

against the social moral code ensues. “I don’t have the strength to resist... **Where does your responsibility begin here?**” (KS 292-93). Kafka’s internal monologues seem as an adolescent’s fantasy or dream, but they bring out the struggle that the character faces with the need to express his individuality, the need to discover his true identity and the pressure to abide by the social code of conduct.

On the other hand, Nakata’s story does not reveal itself through interior monologues. The thoughts of Nakata are seldom revealed to the readers. Nakata does not give much thought to things. He is a character who has no memories. After the accident on the hills, when he was a young boy, Nakata ceases to remember things. He is aware only of the present. The life of Nakata is shown to the readers through the conversation he has with his companion Hoshino. It is in the odd chapters that the internal monologues bring out the internal conflict of Kafka.

In WSC the narrator has to choose between aping the society and being himself. This conflict is common to all the four selected novels. In WSC the narrator is influenced by many characters in the novel that accentuates the conflict. Despite all these influences, it is up to the narrator to act. All the other characters only have the power to influence but the power of choice lies with the individual. The Strange Man threatens the narrator; the Sheep Man reasons with the narrator and the Rat’s actions influence the narrator. Finally it is the narrator who is left to ponder on his choices. In WSC the narrator does not think too deeply on the conflict. Most of his thoughts are descriptions about his surroundings as he narrates the events of his mundane life. The protagonist is divorced and feels the absence of his wife but he soon has a relationship with a high-class call girl who is also a ear model. Most of the plot moves through dialogues with other characters. When he is not sure about the journey he has to make, it is his psychic girlfriend who pushes him on. When he is stuck without a lead,

it is the Dolphin Hotel owner who indicates the picture of the Hokkaido countryside. Up until the time that the narrator goes up to the mountain with his girlfriend, the conflict of the narrator does not emerge through his thoughts or conversations in his mind. It is only when the girlfriend leaves without telling him and he is plunged in solitude again that Murakami indulges in his typical style of revealing the conflict through conversations with imaginary characters. Until then, it is conversations with the other characters that bring out the predicament unlike in HBEW and KS.

His conversation with his partner and the Strange Man, makes the narrator think of his choices and the purpose of life.

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. ... 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." (WSC 48-49)

In WSC and DDD the imaginary characters also include characters that the narrator has previously known and are now dead. In WSC, the Sheep Man and the Rat are two imaginary characters, of which the Rat is an old friend of the narrator who we later find out has been dead. The narrator has been in search of the Rat and has found his home but the Rat is not home when he reaches. He decides to wait for the Rat. The Rat appears as if in a dream and the narrator converses with him about the Sheep that he has to find and he also discovers that the Rat is dead. The Rat that he converses with could be a figment of his imagination. The conflict of the individual freedom and

the social conformity is presented in the form of dialogues between the Rat and the narrator:

“Maybe you could ask me questions? You already know pretty much what there is to know, right?”

“Okay, but if it makes no difference to you, let’s not start at the beginning.”

“Fire away.”

“You’re already dead, aren’t you?”

I don’t know how long it took the Rat to reply. Could have been a few seconds, could have been ... It was a long silence. My mouth was all dry inside.

“That’s right,” said the Rat finally. “I’m dead.” ...

“I hanged myself from a beam in the kitchen,” said the Rat. “The Sheep Man buried me next to the garage. Dying itself wasn’t all that painful, if you worry about that sort of thing. But really, that hardly matters.”

“When?”

“A week before you got here.” (WSC 279-80)

The Rat or the rebellious nature of the narrator has left him since the sheep or the social pressure forced him to conform. The Rat that he speaks with now is the memory of who the narrator used to be. In the conflict of the individual and the society, the narrator tries to get rid of the influence of society but in the process he is forced to kill his rebellious nature. Still some shades of that rebel remains in the narrator.

In a conversation with the Sheep Man, the readers find that the Sheep Man has convinced the girlfriend to leave him. The Sheep Man depicts the individuals who appear to adopt the ways of the society and live like sheep. He has convinced the girl, who is symbolic of intuition to leave the narrator:

“When you told her she’d better leave, she up and left without a word?”

“Right. Wetoldhershe’dbetterleavebecauseshewaswantingtoleave.”

“She came up here because she wanted to.”

“Wrong!” screamed the Sheep Man. “Shewantedtogetoutbutshe herselfwasconfused. That’swhywechasedherhome. Youconfusedher.”

The Sheep Man stood up and slammed his right hand down flat on the table. His whiskey glass slid two inches. The Sheep Man froze in that pose until gradually his eyes lost their zeal and he collapsed back into the sofa, out of steam.

“Youconfusedthatwoman,” the Sheep Man said, this time more calmly.

“Notaverynicethingatall. Youdon’tknowathing. Allyou thinkaboutisyourself.”

“You’re telling me she shouldn’t have come here?”

“That’sright. Shewasn’tmeanttocomehere. Youdon’tthinkabout anythingbutyourself.”

I sat there speechless, lapping my whiskey.

“Butstillwhat’sdoneisdone. Anywayit’soverforher.”

“Over?”

“You’llneverseethatwomanagain.”

“Because I only thought about myself?”

“That’s right. Because you thought only about yourself. Just deserts.” (WSC 252-53)

The narrator loses his intuitive abilities when he begins to follow the ideal social order. The Sheep Man explains that since the narrator did not treat the girl well, she has left him and that the Sheep Man had only encouraged her to leave since the narrator has not respected her like he should have and the narrator is left alone. The narrator’s girlfriend is the one who pushes him to go in search of the sheep, when the Strange Man threatens him. It is the same girl who urges the narrator to stay in the Dolphin Hotel when he does not like the place and later they discover the Ovine hall and the Sheep Professor along with the photograph of the Hokkaido hills.

“Happy to be going on a trip?” I asked.

“Uh-huh, very happy. Especially because I’m going with you.”

“You know, if we don’t find that sheep, we won’t have any place to come back to. We might end up traveling the rest of our lives.”

“Like your friend?”

“I guess. In a way, we’re all in the same boat. The only difference is that he’s escaping out of his own choice and I’m being ricocheted about.” ...

“Is anything wrong?” she asked.

“I don’t know how to put it, but I just can’t get it through my head that here and now is really here and now. Or that I am really me. It doesn’t quite hit home. It’s always this way. Only much later on does it ever come together. For the last ten years, it’s been like this.”

“Ten years?” ...



“Let’s go look for the sheep,” she said, eyes closed. “Once we get to looking for that sheep, things’ll fall into place.” (WSC 141-43)

Dialogues between the girlfriend and the narrator, Rat and the narrator, and the Sheep Man and the narrator bring out the confusion in the narrator’s mind. These characters may be considered as projections of the mind that represent various attributes of the narrator and so these dialogues take place in the mind of the narrator. They may be considered as thoughts of the narrator himself.

Similarly interior monologues serve to bring out the predicament of the narrator in DDD as well. The narrator is not good at expressing his feelings for his wife, which results in a failed marriage. The second time around, he does not give as much as he takes in his relationship with his girlfriend, who is referred to as Kiki in DDD. He reaches a point where he is lonely:

Where to begin? Where to go? I didn't know. I was rusting, badly. Alone like this, I would gradually render myself useless. Great, just great. Where to begin? My receptionist friend? She seemed nice. I did like her. I did feel a bond between us. I could sleep with her if I tried. But then what? Where would I go from there? Nowhere, probably. Just another thing to lose. I don't know what I want. And, if that's the case, as my ex-wife said, I'd only hurt people.

Once more around the block. Snow quietly coming down. Sticking to my coat, lingering a brief instant, then disappearing. I tried to put my thoughts in order. People walked past, puffing white breaths into the air. It was so cold the skin of my face hurt. Still, I kept going around the block, kept trying to think. My ex-wife's words stuck in my

head like a curse. Worse, because it was true. I hurt everybody. If I kept going like this, I'd go on losing them too.

“Go home to the moon!” were my last girlfriend's parting words. No, not departing—returning. She was braving it back to the big, bad, real world.

Then along comes Kiki. Yes! Kiki's got to be the touch-stone. But her message had vaporized midway.

So where to begin?

I closed my eyes and struggled for an answer. But in my head no one was at home. No Sheep Man, no gulls, no gray gorilla. I was abandoned, sitting in a vast empty chamber, alone. No one could give me the answer. I'd sit, grow old, and shrivel in that room. No dancing here. Very sad. (DDD 95-96)

This interior monologue shows the readers that the narrator is without direction. He is unable to connect to the world. He has not given enough to his relationships and has now come to a place where he is unable to connect. The fear of loneliness creeps upon him. He thinks about how people connect with one another. Murakami uses uninterrupted thoughts in the form of monologues here to show the narrator's struggle:

Now the phone company. All those lines coming together. Lines stretching all the way from this very room. Connecting me, in principle, to anyone and everyone. I could even call Anchorage if I wanted. Or the Dolphin Hotel, for that matter, or my ex-wife. Countless possibilities. And all tied together through the phone company switchboard. Computer-processed these days of course.

Converted into strings of digits, then transmitted via telephone wires to underground cable or undersea tunnel or communications satellite, ultimately finding its way to us. A gigantic computer controlled network.

But no matter how advanced the system, no matter how precise, unless we have the will to communicate, there's no connection. And even supposing the will is there, there are times like now when we don't know the other party's number. Or even if we know the number, we misdial. We are an imperfect and unrepentant species. But suppose we clear those hurdles, suppose I manage to get through to Yuki, she could always say, "I don't want to talk now. Bye." Click! End of conversation, before it ever began. Talk about one-way communication. (DDD 125-26)

In a world where connecting to people is so easy and at the fingertips, the narrator realizes that it takes effort on the part of the individual to make the connection. His problem is not the facility to connect to people but the will, which keeps relationships going. The individual cannot be an island and needs to be a social animal. The conflict of the individual expression and the need to adapt in a relationship still rages in the narrator.

Take my ex-wife, for example. She'd just sit there and, without a word, put me in my place. I'd loved her. We'd had some really good times. Traveled together. Made love hundreds of times. Laughed a lot. But sometimes, she'd give me the silent treatment. Usually at night, subtle, but unrelenting. As punishment for my imperfection, my arbitrariness and passiveness. I knew what was eating her. We got along well, but

what she was after, the image in her mind, was somewhere else not where I was. She wanted a kind of autonomy of communication. A scene where the hero - whose name was "Communication"- led the masses to a bright, bloodless revolution, spotless white flags waving. So that perfection could swallow imperfection and make it whole. To me, love is a pure idea forged in flesh, awkwardly maybe, but it had to connect to somewhere, despite twists and turns of under-ground cable. An all-too-imperfect thing. Sometimes the lines get crossed. Or you get a wrong number. But that's nobody's fault. It'll always be like that, so long as we exist in this physical form. As a matter of principle. I explained it to her. Over and over again. Then one day she left. Or else I'd magnified that imperfection, and helped her out the door.

(DDD 126-27)

The struggle to find the ideal is what keeps the individual in knots. The ideal in relationships and the ideal self is the illusion that keeps the conflict in the individual alive. The conflict in the protagonist is due to an illusion of the ideal individual or the ideal relationship or the ideal society, which cannot be met.

The fear of the prophecy in KS is the springboard for Kafka's conflict and the desire to be free of authority is the reason for the conflict in HBEW. Similarly fear of the threat from the Strange Man (the unknown) drives the conflict of the narrator in WSC and the guilt of losing Kiki and the concept of the ideal is the driving force of the narrator's conflict in DDD. The inability to bide by the standards of society and the individual needs aggravates these conflicts which are revealed to the readers through techniques like symbols, monologues, interior monologues and dialogues in the selected novels.

The next chapter deals with techniques such as Dual Narrative, Juxtaposition, Defamiliarization, Technoculture and Simulacra that bring out the defense mechanisms in the characters of the select novels, with the application of George Vaillant's psychological theory of defense mechanisms.