C H A P T E R - IV

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

A Clockwork Orange (1962) is Anthony Burgess' most original work. Here we find compulsive word play and the mixing of languages i.e. Russian and English in Burgess. It is the attempt to create a night talk and day talk. Burgess used another evident source i.e. Orwell's Nineteen Eighty Four, which also develops a new vocabulary to describe a totalitarian mentality. The society in which Burgess' Alex lives whether it is Alex cured or uncured, approximate Orwell's future state in which lack of emotion and violence are the two sides of a coin. At one stage, in the event we missed the Orwell's note, Burgess speaks of Staja (State Jail) No. 84 F.

If the atmosphere immediately recalls Orwell, it also partakes of hermetically enclosed criminal world of John Gay's Beggar's Opera, or Brecht and Weill's Threepenny Opera. Here we find the language has strange echoes of little remembered English novelist Gerald Kersh, a minor league Celine. In his writing we find brutal wit and a dogged persistence to avoid verbal cliches. Burgess excels in all this.

Despite Stanley Edgar Hyman's praise of the novel, however A Clockwork Orange is caught in the tangle of its own nostalgic dialectic, much as Burgess's Malayan Trilogy is wistful about British imperialism at the same time as it bows to its passing. Burgess often hides behind a basically sentimental view of the world and its processes, all based on assumptions that

the status is preferable to change or put another way, that since all change must lead to excess the past is preferable.

The title of A Clockwork Orange refers to the attempt to impose on man a mechanical arrangement antithetical to his growth as a human being. It symbolizes in brief the idea that the machine is perfect and man imperfect. The fifteen year old narrator, Alex is a 'hooligan' a product of England's creeping socialism and who must be defused through a series of brain washing sessions performed by the Reclamation Treatment. After this series, in which through drugs and films showing scenes of extreme violence the bad is turned into the good. Alex is de-emotionalized. His devotion to music which was the artistic manifestation of his violent character is now lost. Bach and Beethoven make him ill. He becomes emotionally neuter, in practice a typical member of a socialist society according to Burgess. The transformation of Alex recalls Ken Kesey's use of the lobotomy in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, his hero never indulges in Alex's kind of meaningless violence.

We find here ideologically Burgess's point is clear that a technologically oriented society, specifically one based on socialist principles of mindless amelioration, in its overriding desire to change people will kill all emotion, good and bad in the process. Burgess's invention of a new language based chiefly on Russian roots, is emblematic of this new society. But his

satire of contemporary England is rarely as sharp as Kesey's of America because Burgess makes Alex mechanical before and after he is cured. That may well reflect actuality, but it leaves the novelist no place to go. Alex is damned either way, which may be a good political point, but it is one-dimensional in fiction. If Alex is sane only while under the influence of music, murderous and amoral without it perhaps the cure is more important for social reasons than Alex's emotional life is necessary for him. The point is, at least, disputable.

That Burgess returns Alex to his previous state, that is, both to his violence and to Beethoven's "Ode to Joy", indicates a wistfulness for a lost Eden, a past no longer recoverable, even when affairs are imperfect and men are uncontrollable. It is a strange area for a novelist in the 1960's to exploit, but such ideas permeate the best of Burgess's work, the Malayan Trilogy, Enderby, Tremor of Intent, among others, and they make the parts always appear stronger than the final result. The Malayan novels (Time for a Tiger, 1956; The Enemy in the Blanket, 1958; Beds in the East, 1959) are witty, with memorable scenes and with a fine sense of England's hopeless position as technological America begins to move in, and Malayans, Indians, and Chinese grow more and more murderous forward each other. But there is no idea behind the trilogy except the fact of England's declining fortunes, along with a rather wistful look at what was once decent and expedient amateurism and a senti-

mental view of the do-good Victor Crabbe, one in a long line of Burgess's Prufrocks.

One need only compare the Malayan novels with Conrad's Heart of Darkness or Orwells Burmese Days to see how an idea can inform the work and how this idea must be worked out with irony. The resounding lie that Marlow tells Kurtz's fiancee at the end of the Conrad novella is a bitter irony that indicts what Marlow still believes in. And Orwell's Flory, like Cain, is marked, fated; his choices are themselves the measure of Orwell's wry irony. On the contrary, Burgess comes on straight; his Crabbe (neither fish nor fruit) is fumbling and decent, not even Forster's Fielding, without particular growth or insight. Forces rage around him that he never effectively internalizes, and he is not, despite Burgess's urging, Quixote.

Somewhat comparably, Enderby (1963) and Tremor of Intent (1966) are incomplete, somehow artistically starved despite Burgess's usual marvelous way with language - indeed Joycean in Enderby - and his witty manner of charting eccentricities as normal and normalities as eccentricities. The first half of Enderby- the lavatory poet, one might call him - is successful, until the idea drops off and the North African episodes pile on without regard for the inner tensions of the main character himself. Tremor of Intent is clearly imitation Graham Greene and Joseph Conrad, with its tortured secret agent, its attempt to raise spying

to an existential plane, its scenes of confession, moral dilemma, and temptation, all rolled into a James Bond thriller. Burgess is very much taken with food and drink, the whole scene of belching, farting, elimination, so that most individuals are a plumber's dream. But these digestive processes are rarely part of anything larger; except for Enderby, Burgess's characters have not regressed; they are not seeking alternate modes of being in food, and they are not, symbolically, ingesting their father in order to acquire his power.

Because there is almost no psychological process commensurate with all the physical activity,the characters are one-dimensional or interchangeable, despite Burgess's verbal play, his attention to detail, his acute sense of place and things. There is so much expert novel-making here that one wonders why his novels do not satisfy or, ultimately, do not tell us something we have not learned before. Surely, Burgess provides too much narration, conveys too much information, has too much going on all the time for the small amount finally revealed. There is no question that Burgess's fiction leaves little impression for so much expert effort, and the reason must be that the controlling ideas are not up to the richness and variety of the fill. Burgess views psychological processes simplistically, and this shortcoming vitiates the kind of density that we have come to expect with verbal play and wit of such skill.

In 1962 Burgess himself published two "dystopian" novels, A Clockwork Orange and The Wanting Seed, both conceived and executed from the same philosophical orientation but quite different in content and developmeent. Both are in many ways reminiscent of Aldous Huxley's and George Orwell's utopian novels, but both are, more importantly, advancements of the utopian genre and highly representative of the ideas and patterns that inform the majority of Burgess's works. A Clockwork Orange, written in the first half of 1961, is set in the near-future and, in many ways, borrows from Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four; The Wanting Seed, written between August and October, 1960, more elaborate and less polemical, is set in a furthur-distanced future and reminds the reader of 1984, Huxley's Brave New World, Golding's Lord of the Flies, and Rex Warner's The Wild Goose Chase and The Aerodrome.

In terms of the loosely applied criteria of "Black Comedy", Anthony Burgess's A Clockwork Orange concerns itself with a religious problem : the nature of human will and the importance of individual choice in a socialized and dehumanized world. A drunken prison chaplain says to Alex, the fifteen-year-old protagonist, before he is subjected to the Ludovico process which will force him to choose good at all times: 'It may not be nice to be good, little 6655321. It may be horrible to be good. And when I say that to you I realise how self-contradictory that sounds. I know that I shall have many sleepless nights about

this. What does God want ? Does God want goodness or the choice of goodness ? Is a man who chooses the bad perhaps in some way better than the man who has the good imposed upon him. Deep and hard questions --- '[1].

Alex, the leader of a hoodlum gang and precocious in the ways of evil, can nevertheless appreciate the nature of the choice he makes for evil over good. Together with Georgie, Dim and Pete, his "droogs", Alex's activities incorporate beatings, robberies, gang wars, rape, and finally murder. Betrayed by his gang after he has forced his way into the home of an old woman who cares for scores of cats and has killed her, Alex is placed in a progressive prison where his education in evil is advanced. His "brainwashing" and his subsequent return to society from the basic plot of the novel and afford Burgess the opportunity to comment hilariously and bitterly about the condition of man, in a mechanized world.

Peculiar to the gangs that invade the London nights in the socialized state that Burgess fashions is the use of Nadsat (perhaps an anagram of "satan'd", for Burgess, like Joyce, is fond of puns and whimsies) which is described as "the language of the tribe": "odd bits of rhyming slang --- . A bit of gypsy talk, too. But most of the roots are Slav. Propaganda. Subliminal penetration". A combination of Russian words and descriptive phrases, odd Cockney expressions, biblical locutions, and school-

boy humour talk, all of which suggest ironic overtones, Nadsat at first appears to the reader as a barrier to communication; but it actually becomes a device that enhances the narrative. The activities of Alex and his "droogs" become more terrifying, while, ironically, the language becomes more poetical. Phrases like "Being sore athirst, my brothers," "They know not what they do or say", and "mom gave me a tired little smech, to thee fruit of my womb my only son sort of", by their very incongruity with the activities being described, lend a note of poetic intensity to the narrative that contrasts with the nightmare horror of the action.

When Alex and his "droogs" speak Nadsat, the reader finds himself carried to the meaning by the very cadences of the words; and shortly he is conversant not only with the denotative meaning of the words but also with the witty, ironic connotations they convey. Conversely, when Alex speaks the conventional idiom, which he must do from time to time, his cadences are flat and unconvincing. But the end of the first chapter of the novel, the reader is intrigued by the language; and he is as conversant before long with Nadsat as Alex's "droogs" are. Burgess does not hesitate to play wittily with words as often as possible to suit his purpose. One needs to look only at such words as "lewdies" for people, "dama" for woman, "malchick" for boy, "horrorshow" for good, "slovo" for word, "Bog" for God, "bezoomy" for mad to appreciate the variety

as well as the possibilities of Nadsat. What at first seems a device that calls more attention to itself than to the development of the novel's theme appears, upon reflection, more correctly a means to render the action more meaningful as it emphasizes the characterization and maintains the illusion of a dehumanized world at the same time.

Alex's world is not one of Roman Catholic good and evil, as is Graham Greene's Brighton. Yet there are both good and evil in Alex's cosmos, and freedom to choose evil over good becomes the chief consideration of the book. In Alex's words:

> 'If lewdies are good that's because they like it, and I wouldn't ever interfere with their pleasures, and so of the other shop. More, badness is of the self, the one, the you or me on our oddy knockies, and that self is made by old Bog or God and is his great pride and radosty. But the non-self cannot have the bad, meaning they of the government and the judges and the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave malenky selves fighting these big machines ? I am serious with you, brothers, over this. But what I do I do because I like to do.' [2]

Alex's England is a socialized nightmare. People are forced by the government to live regimented lives in blocks of regimented apartments, all the same, all without individuality: 'In the hallway was the good old municipal painting on the walls-vecks and ptitsas very well developed, stern in the dignity of labour, at workbench and machine with not one stitch of platties on their well-developed plotts. But of course some of the malchicks living in 18 A had, as was to be expected, embellished and decorated the said big painting with handy pencil and ballpoint, adding hair and stiff rods and dirty ballooning slovos out of the dignified rots of these nagoy (bare, that is) cheenas and vecks'.[3]

Alex's only salvation is music, to which he responds emotionally, ecstatically. To Alex music is "gorgeousness and gorgeosity made flesh" and his reaction to it at first appears mystical in its intensity as well as in its implications, eliciting as it does imagery of a religious nature. But, ironically, the music fails to raise the spirit; for Alex can react only in a physical way to the sounds of the orchestra. For Alex, a creation of the society in which he lives, there are no such things as love, affection or duty; for only mechanical sex, compliance with the strong, and a display of power mean anything. In other words. Alex is the "clockwork orange" of the title: he is produced by a system, and he exemplifies in his actions the implications of it. He is punished by that same system when

his individuality, his love of music, can no longer be ignored by it. Alex is separated from the community not for his evil but because his individuality threatens the status quo. The references to music are introduced to lend a comic as well as ironic perspective to the theme and to afford a unifying factor to the book.

Although Alex's taste in music seems eclectic - he admires modern composers and classical composers as well - it is Beethoven whom he most cherishes, and the Ninth Symphony is his favourite composition: 'Then I pulled the lovely Ninth out of its sleeve, so that Ludwig Van was not nagoy too, and I set the needle hissing on to the last movement, which was all bliss. There it was then, the bass strings like govoreeting away from under my bed at the rest of the orchestra, and then the male human goloss coming in and telling them all to be joyful, and the lovely blissful tune all about Joy being a glorious spark like of heaven, and then I felt the old tigers leap in me...'.[4] Music arouses Alex sexually. At one point he goes into the street, into a record shop, picks up two little girls, gets them drunk on "moloko" (doped milk), and then rapes them, the old "in-out in-out". "Beast and hateful animal. Filthy horror", screams one of the children as she runs from Alex's room. His tigers no longer leaping in him, Alex falls asleep, "with the old Joy Joy Joy crashing and howling away."

In the funniest scene in the novel, Alex and his "droogs" attempt to terrorize the old woman who lives with scores of cats. As he lowers himself from a window into the room, Alex finds himself amidst the cats, their milk saucers, and the terrified old woman. To save himself, Alex, as he listens to the screeching symphony of cats and the solo of the old woman, grasps a statue of Beethoven.

Soon after this scene, deserted by his "droogs", Alex finds himself in prison for having caused the death of the "ptitsa". In order to remain near to music, the only relief that Alex has in his prison routine, Alex becomes assistant to the drunken chaplain; and his chief duty is to select and play the recordings used during religious services. When Alex finds himself confronted by evil in the form of a homosexual attack, Alex and his cellmates unite to destroy the pervert; Alex is blamed for the murder.

As a defensive measure designed to check the evil that is threatening the government and causing unrest in the state, Dr. Brodsky and the minister of the interior, or "Inferior" as Alex refers to him, have devised and sanctioned a process of conditioning human responses closely modeled on Pavlov's experiments with dogs. Alex volunteers for the brainwashing process, feeling that nothing worse can happen to him; but he is mistaken. The process of conditioning, referred to as the

"Ludovico process", reminds the reader, of course, of Alex's passion for old Ludwig Van himself. The rehabilitation involves the showing of atrocity films and films of violence, horror, and terror of all kinds. A drug, injected into Alex's system immediately before he witnesses the films, induces nausea; and Alex soon begs to be released from the torment of witnessing the films. His pain becomes so intense that Alex soon discovers that he will do anything to avoid it - indeed, the evil that once had given him such passionate pleasure makes him ill. To do good, even to think good, is the only remedy for the discomfort that has been built into him by the Ludovico process.

Along with the conditioning films that Alex is forced to watch and "appreciate" there are, unfortunately, musical accompaniments; and frequently the music is Beethoven's. Thus the one actor that had set Alex apart from his "droogs", Dim and Georgie and Pete, becomes for him a new measure of pain. If before Alex was a "clockwork orange", a subliminally conditioned by his society, now the irony is twofold. Before his brainwashing Alex had chosen, consciously as he thought, the evil action. As a result of his reintegration into a conventionalized society by means of Ludovico processing, Alex is denied choice itself. But, not fully comprehending the extent to which his psyche has been programmed, Alex seeks after his release the ecstasy of a musical binge. Pain and nausea result. To forestall the anguish that

results from any confrontation with violence or terror; Alex, who had once reveled in evil, finds himself beginning and pleading for everyone's pardon; he has become one of the meek. But the earth is not his to inherit.

At this point the devices of melodrama serve Burgess well for coincidence and chance unify the activities of the plot. Those very "lewdies" that Alex and his "droogs" had terrorized return to haunt and torment Alex in his newly discovered world of good action. A man who had been attacked while returning home with library books on crystallography sees Alex in the library where he has gone to escape the excruciating torment of piped-in music and exacts his measure of vengeance. When Alex begs for love and forgiveness, he receives instead a terrible beating. Rescued by the police, among whom is Dim, a former "droog", Alex is beaten and is left, covered with blood and half alive, in the country.

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the melodramatic plotting concerns F. Alexander, the author of a novel entitled A Clockwork Orange. During an evening's escapade, Alex and his "droogs", wearing plastic masks, had forced their way into F. Alexander's house, a place significantly called "Home", where Alex had remarked the similarity of names. The gang had raped F. Alexander's wife, who had later died as a result of the outrage. It is to the house called "Home" that Alex once again finds his way. Left by the police, he finds himself befriended by F. Alexander himself. Aware of the irony, Alex for a time

forestalls the author's awareness that he, Alex, now a famous personage because of his Ludovico processing, is the same Alex who had invaded the Alexander home earlier on.

Through F.Alexander, Alex is put in communication with the political party attempting to unseat the party that had determined that goodness could be forced upon people. Alex- who becomes a cause, then an issue, in the new political campaign- discovers that once again he is being used; for neither party is at all concerned with his moral emasculation. To serve party interests, Alex is programmed to commit suicide. Rather than endure the constant playing of music mysteriously coming into the locked apartment where he has been placed for his own "safety", Alex jumps from a window. "Friend", says one of the politicians who had coerced Alex, "friend, little friend, the people are on fire with indignation. You have killed those horrible villains' chances of reelection. They will go and will go for ever and ever. You have served Liberty well". But Alex is aware that he has been used; he also realizes that, had he died as a result of the jump, he would have served even better the cause of political expediency.

Either as a result of Alex's fall or as a result of reverse Ludovico processing - the point is never clarified - Alex returns to his old terror-loving, "bolshy" music ways. His final action in the American edition is to return to his "pee" and

"em's" house, from which he had been dispossessed by an ersatz son, and to the music of Ludwig Van's Ninth Symphony: "Oh, it was gorgeosity and yumyumyum", writes Alex at the novel's end. "When it came to the Scherzo I could viddy myself very clear running and running on like very light and mysterious nogas, carving the whole litso of the creeching world with my cutthroat britva. And there was the slow movement and the last lovely singing movement still to come. I was cured all right."

The William Heinemann 1962 edition of A Clockwork Orange includes a chapter wisely omitted from the American editions. The last section of the English edition emphasizes a time perspective on the activities that Alex narrates to his "brothers" in the body of the novel, by pointing out quite simply that Alex had reached the ripe old age of nineteen. His luscious glory has been sacrificed to the current fashion of shaved heads, and Alex now wears wide trousers, a black leather belt, and shiny black leather jerkins. Only the heavy boots, fine for kicking, remain. Employed by the National Grasmodic Archives "on the music side", Alex earns good money; and he cherishes a desire "to keep all my pretty polly to myself". He also finds himself reluctant to participate in the horror-show activities he plans for his new gang of "droogs", preferring to listen to lieder and to study the picture of a body "gurgling goo goo goo" which he has cut out of a newspaper. Alex is, indeed, bored; the only thoughts that interest him are of wife, son, and God. And these

thoughts suggest a possible salvation for the antiheroic monster of the greater part of the novel; and the idea of possible salvation contradicts the rationale that animates the novel.

The final paragraphs of the 1962 edition attempt to re-establish the rationale but fail, for the idea of Alex as a father concerned with the future of the earth does not fulfil the characterization so brilliantly developed in the greater part of the novel: "And so it would itty on to like the end of the world, round and round and round, like some bolshy gigantic like chelloveck, like old Bog himself --- turning and turning a vonny grahzny orange in his gigantic rookers --- . And to all others in this story profound shooms of lip music brrrrrr. And they can kiss my sharries. But you, O my brothers, remember sometimes thy little Alex that was. Amen. And all that cal."

In the course of A Clockwork Orange's activities Burgess comments in "black comic" fashion on the horror of life without choice, whether for evil or for good. It is better, he says, to choose evil rather than to be denied the right of choice. Although the direct expression of an orthodox religious code does not figure dominantly within the narrative, the point that moral action and ethical rightness are essential to life in an ordered community is cogently made. Indeed, the final impression that the novel makes is that it is aparable. The point that is left undeveloped concerns the nature of government and the nature of individual

responsibility. Burgess forces his reader to come to some logical conclusion, through his "creeching horror-show" scenes, about the choice for right and good action in a civilized community. Frighteningly enough, to choose evil is a privilege that cannot be denied the individual; for, when his choice for evil has been curtailed, his choice of or for good becomes meaningless.

That Alex is as much a "clockwork orange" before as after the Ludovico treatment is ironically and comically portrayed. The sociological implications of the theme are constantly emphasized; and the reader, mystified by the manner and seduced by the virtuosity of the language, at first fails to appreciate the simple homily that man is responsible to himself and to his fellow man.

Burgess, then, in A Clockwork Orange, succeeds in garbing a simple thesis in a startlingly telling and darkly humorous disguise. The violence and brutality - the slashing and rapings of the hoodlum gangs, the pack-hunting, the wanton killings - all that Alex represents, all can be found described in today's newspapers. The ultimate terror that Burgess suggests, and what best represents his concern for human beings is that what Alex and his "droogs" symbolize, governments too are involved in, and that depersonalization of family and community life produces "clockwork oranges", that regimentation of human animals into mechanized and orderly units of productive enterprise produces

a world without meaning, a world without hope. Symbolically, the world that Alex lives in is one devoid of light and sun; and the majority of scenes take place at night. The people that he lives among are clearly "clockwork organges", despite the fact that they have not been submitted directly to Ludovico processing.

Like A Clockwork Orange, The Wanting Seed is set in the future, one perhaps somewhat more remote than that of A Clockwork Orange but one as easily realizable. Conceived from the same comic-ironic perspective, employing both fantasy and melodrama to achieve its effects, this novel confronts the immediate problem of overpopulation as it considers various possible solutions for staving off a crisis occasioned by an under production of foodstuffs. But the novel goes beyond the immediate implications of a hunger crisis to develop the theme of historical necessity and, indirectly, the need of mankind to accept and appreciate the ethics or morality of tested codes of behaviour. Both religion and government come in for a full share of satire as Burgess moves his characters through bizarre, grotesque, and ridiculous situations.

The Wanting Seed, is, as has been noticed, also reminiscent of George Orwell's 1984 and Aldous Huxley's Brave New World. England in Burgess's world is a member of Enspun (The English Speaking Union), reminding the reader of Orwell's

Oceania and Newspeak vocabulary. The Ministry of Infertility and the Ministry of Fertility remind the reader of the Ministry of Truth and other such designations in Orwell's book. Other similarities are the poverty that overshadows the communal life as the land refuses to yield a harvest; population police; the fear that inhibits action'; food substitutes such as synthelac and cutlets of reconstructed vegetable dehydrate; a phony war; and edited news communiques. Tristram Foxe, the protagonist of The Wanting Seed, is also in some way like Winston Smith of 1984. Both are introverted, concerned with time and flux: Winston edits news releases and rewrites history; Tristram is a history teacher in a boys' school. The homosexuality encouraged by the government as a device to curtail birth and general promiscuity are exaggerations, to a degree, of Huxley's liberal morality of Brave New World; and the rouged, powdered, and manicured homosexual police are reminiscent of similar inventions in Rex Warner's The Wild Goose Chase, as are the elements of fantasy and horror which help to create the ambiance of the book.

But here similarities end, for The Wanting Seed, like A Clockword Orange, gives evidence of Burgess's originality, his range of interests, his concern with the nature of government, and his passion for individual freedom. Exaggeration, grotesqueness, caricature, farce, and, most of all, wit distinguish the novel. Both terror and horror lend unity and allow Burgess the opportunity to exploit his themes. A heavy tone of irony

at times intrudes upon the activities of the melodramatic plot, but comic and witty allusions to literature, music, language, and myth balance the horror and make the fable intellectually apt; without such comic balancing. The Wanting Seed would be unbearable.

Again Burgess plays dazzlingly with language as he had done in A Clockwork Orange : Joycean portmanteau words such as "howrashyoJare", puns, and anagrams all add to the dimension of comic horror. God is referred to as "Dog"; "God knows" becomes "Dognose"; a favourite comic-strip character is "Mr. Livedog", an anagram for "Evil God"; music has gone well beyond the "conventional" stage of that in A Clockwork Orange and has become "concrete" : "spoons rattling in tin basins, a speech made by the minister of Pisciculture, a lavatory cistern filling up, a revving engine; all recorded backwards, augmented or diminished, thoroughly mixed". Cannibalism, at first revolting, becomes bearable and then even funny as men "cheerfully" band together into Dining Clubs. A gruesome logic develops from the argument that if Catholics eat the body and drink the blood of their God - it is called Eucharistic ingestion- then why can't men eat their meatier brothers to stay alive ?

The Wanting Seed moves on several levels : fable, allegory, and myth. At times, the various levels of meaning uncomfortably overlap ; but, on the whole, Burgess handles his

materials capably. All three levels of meaning converge in the birth of Tristram's twins which occurs, symbolically, in a manger. On its simplest level of meaning, that of fable, The Wanting Seed moves the action from a time of infertility to a time of fertility in a future society. At the beginning of the novel, Beatrice-Joanna, married to Tristram Foxe but having an affair with his brother Derek, is shown giving the dead body of her son to the Phosphorous Reclamation Department and receiving her condolence. Constantly impatient with her kind husband, Beatrice-Joanna nevertheless wonders why she prefers Tristram's brother Derek who, to succeed in high government circles, affects homosexuality to a degree of adeptness that both amuses and terrifies her. Derek is comically pursued by Captain Loosely, a subordinate, who is attempting to discredit him with the government on the grounds that he is heterosexual. Later on, when the government condemns homosexuality and condones normal sex, Loosely, the plot manipulator, attempts to prove the opposite-Derek, who by this time has become very important in the Ministry of Fertility, is homosexual.

Burgess makes the fable appealing by the ingenuity of his episodes as well as by the virtuosity of their "black-comic" detail. On its simplest level of meaning. Burgess demonstrates ironically that society is capable of trading one evil for another; sanity indeed becomes a handicap when one lives in a mad world. The crucial scene of the novel is the prison scene in which

Tristram suddenly discovers his animal nature, while being lectured to by Brother Ambrose, a drunken and defrocked priest. Like Graham Greene's whiskey priest, Tristram at this point becomes a pursuer, although his stay in the army temporarily interrupts his search; he discovers the proper way to live in a mad world is to be mad.

In A Clockwork Orange Burgess manages to maintain a fine equilibrium between comedy and horror. The character of his antihero allows him to develop his theme of a depersonalized society endangered by the unplanned - for individuality of one of its citizens. Alex is punished as much for his uniqueness as for his legal transgression. Comedy balances horror; in the midst of horror, laughter is ready to hand; and without the laughter the fable would be intolerable. But in The Wanting Seed a much more hopeful novel than its predecessor - the horror, leavened by wit and enriched by allusion, almost overwhelms the humour because equilibrium between the two is not so steadily maintained. Funny though individual sequences may be, brilliant though the plotting and the working out of the several levels of meaning may be, precocious though the language is, the novels fails. And this failure is unfortunate, for the symbolism of the ending seems exactly right.

'The three parts of A Clockwork Orange are of equal length, each having seven chapters, but they otherwise fall into

an ABA pattern.'[5] Parts One and Three are set in the city streets and country lanes of a future England so paralyzed by violent crime that it has surrendered them to the very teenagers who commit the crimes. Part Two is set in a prison - "Staja (State Jail) Number 84F' - where the government is attempting to regain the upper hand by checking within the mind of the particular criminal the impulse toward violence. Alex, who has his own gang despite his mere fifteen years, is sent to jail for murder at the close of Part One; in Part Two he successfully undergoes the State's experimental Reclamation Treatment only to reenter, in Part Three, a world that is unchanged. Thus Burgess has Alex's adventures in Part Three - especially his return to his parents' flat, his encounters with "the crystal veck" and with Dim and Billyboy, and his visit to the cottage named HOME - duplicate or parallel those in Part One with this significant difference : whereas he earlier victimized others in committing robbery, burglary, assault, rape, and even murder, he himself is now the victim. With his natural instincts and drives artificially blocked, Alex is the "clockwork orange" of the title. One part of the moral that Burgess wishes the reader to draw here is that, in attempting to transform the violent tough into the peaceful citizen, the State has succeeded in rendering Alex incapable of self-defense.

The other part of the moral is that the State has also rendered Alex incapable of enjoying the music of his adored

"Ludwig Van." To quote once again from Burgess' own account of the novel,

> 'I imagined an experimental institution in which a generic young delinquent, guilty of every crime from rape to murder, was given aversion therapy and rendered incapable of contemplating, let alone perpetrating, an antisocial act without a sensation of prfound nausea --- A lover of music, he has responded to the music, used as a heightener of emotion, which has accompanied the violent films he has been made to see. A chemical substance injected into his blood induces nausea while he is watching the films, but the nausea is also associated with the music. It was not the intension of his State manipulators to induce this bonus or malus: it is purely an accident that, from now on, he will automatically react to Mozart or Beethoven as he will to rape or murder. The State has succeeded in its primary aim: to deny Alex free moral choice, which, to the State, means choice of evil. But it has added an unforeseen punishment: the gates of heaven are closed to the boy, since music is a figure of celestial bliss. The State has committed a double sin: it has destroyed a human

> being, since humanity is defined by freedom or moral choice; it has also destroyed an angel.'[6]

Thus the State has meddled destructively not only in the mundane area of morals but also in the higher realm of art.

But consider for a moment the notion that in figurative terms music is "celestial bliss" and Alex an angel. If this is so, then it is certainly logical to regard all of his utterances, the entire narrative related by him to the reader, as musical: if Alex is, in some sense, an angel, his story is, in that same sense, a song. And the question of what sort of song redirects our discussion to the matter of the novel's structure, for the ABA pattern in music is universally recognized as the distinguishing characteristics of the da capo aria in eighteenth-century Italian opera, a kind of aria which "consists of two sections followed by a repetition of the first, resulting in a tripartite structure ABA". And it is perhaps no accident, then, that at one point in the story Alex listens with powerful emotion to what Burgess makes quite clear is an operatic aria :

> 'One of these devotchkas --- suddenly came with a burst of singing, only a bar and a half and as though she was like giving an example of something they'd all been govoreeting about, and it was like for a moment, O my brothers, some great bird had flown into the milkbar, and I

> felt all the little malenky hairs on my plott standing endwise and the shivers crawling up like slow malenky lizards and then down again. Because I knew what she sang. It was from an opera by Friedrich Gitterfenster called Das Bettzeug, and it was the bit where she's snuffing it with her throat cut, and the slovos are "Better like this may be." Anyway, I shivered.'[7]

One wishes that Burgess had provided more information about his imaginary composer of operas: when he lived, what kinds of operas he wrote, and so on. But he does provide enough so that certain parallels can be drawn later between Alex and the wretched heroine whose aria he now hears.

To return to the actual working of the ABA pattern in the novel. Burgess reinforces the reader's sense of the pattern by opening each of the three parts with the question " 'what's it going to be then, eh ?" and by having Alex ask it in Parts One and Three and the prison chaplain ask it in Part Two. Thus, in the A Parts Alex is free to pose the question for himself, whereas in Part B someone else, significantly an employee of the State, must pose it for him. Similarly, the hero's name, which remains constant in Parts One and Three, is replaced by a prison identification number in Part Two : "6655321". In the A Parts Alex can call himself by whatever name he chooses; in Part B

he is called by a number, not even a name, chosen by the State. As Alex describes the change, "I was 6655321 and not your little droog Alex not no longer."

Alex's name is singificant in another, even more essential way because it provides the chief clue to the thematic function of the owner of the cottage called HOME. When in Part One Alex and his "droogs" break into the cottage, they not only vandalize it but also beat the owner and rape his wife, who later dies as a result. When in Part Three Alex returns, he does so alone and, having just been beaten himself, stands utterly defenseless before the man he has wronged. The latter fails, however, to recognize Alex (primarily because he was wearing a mask on the night of the break-in) and provides him with aid and shelter instead of punishment or revenge The owner of HOME even manages, in thinking aloud about his dead wife, to identify Alex with her when he says to Alex, " 'Poor poor boy, you must have had a terrible time. A victim of the modern age, just as she was. Poor poor poor girl'." Alex, of course, does recognize the owner and, wishing to learn his name, searches for a copy of the book that he was writing, and that Alex read from, on that fateful night:

> 'It struck me that I ought to get to know the name of this kind protecting and like motherly veck, so I had a pad round in my nagoy nogas looking for A Clockwork Orange, which would

> be bound to have his eemya in, he being the author... On the back of the book, like on the spine, was the author's eemya - F. Alexander. Good Bog, I thought. He is another Alex.'[8]

Having just been let out of prison, Alex has now ceased to be 6655321. He finds, however, that not only is he Alex again with the addition of the "clockwork" but that someone else in Alex, too. He has somehow managed to encounter a second version of himself.

What, then, do Alex and F. Alexander have in common besides their names ? Both, oddly enough, are authors of books entitled A Clockwork Orange. Burgess keep the reader aware of Alex's authorial role by having him frequently address his audience by means of the curious formula "O my brothers" and refer to himself as "Your Humble Narrator". One important difference between the two authors is, of course, that, while F. Alexander is writing his book on the night of Alex's first visit to HOME and has a bound copy of it on his shelves during the second visit, Alex has not yet begun to write his. In the reader's eternal present, Alex is writing it now. But, precisely because he has already done what Alex will someday do, F. Alexander is being defined here as a future version of Alex's self.

At this point in the story, the second visit to HOME, Burgess hints at the theme of the inevitability of human growth, to which he returns in the final chapter. There he sounds it loudly by having Alex answer the oft-repeated question. "What's it going to be then, eh? " With the idea of getting married and having a son. As Alex himself puts it, "there was this veshch of finding some devotchka or other who would be a mother to this son... . That's what it's going to be then, brothers, as I come to the like end of this tale". Once he has found and wed his "devotchka", Alex will, of course, have come to resemble F. Alexander in his role as a married man. But here it is not yet apparent whether growth, which will be inevitable for everyone else, will be so for him. Having "clockwork" in his heart and brain may mean that Alex will be the same forever.

There is, however, one other obstacle in the way of Alex's growing up to possess a future, and that obstacle is, ironicaly enough, F. Alexander himself. When he learns that Alex is one of those responsible for the death of his wife, he tries to force Alex to commit suicide. The attempt fails when Alex, having thrown himself out of an upper-story window, receives medical care that not only saves his life but also reverses the effects of the Reclamation Treatment. Thus Burgess under scores his irony by having F. Alexander insure that Alex will possess a future through the former's effort to deny the latter a present. Trying to murder Alex has the indirect result

of bringing him back to human life, for F. Alexander manages to kill only the "clockwork" inside his head.

F. Alexander is clearly, in some sense, a father to Alex, albeit a murderous one. Before the attempt on his life, Alex sees F. Alexander as treating him in a parental manner, although he gets the gender wrong : he calls his host and comforter "this kind protecting and like motherly veck". And perhaps, when he discovered the name on the back of the book, he ought to have considered the first initial as carefully as the surname. If, as seems almost certain, it stands for "Father", then Burgess has arranged this reunion as one between Son Alex and Father Alexander.

There is further evidence for this view of F.Alexander in the facts that he is the owner of HOME to which Alex as a latter-day Prodigal Son returns and is not punished but rather welcomed and feasted; that, unlike Alex's actual father, whom Alex would never think of striking and to whom he always refers contemptuously as "pee", F. Alexander arouses powerful feelings in Alex: and that he is married to the most important woman in the story and in Alex's life so far. Burgess follows here the Freudian model of family relations by placing the father and the son in competition for the mother and by having the son's path to manhood lead directly through the father's defeat or death. Alex the son succeeds not only in possessing the mother but also

in taking her away from the father, an event which intensifies the latter's natural desire to triumph over his rival into a rage for murder and revenge. But, of course, that act of violence brings about the more rapid displacement of the father by the son when Alex finds that his suicidal leap has resulted in the removal of the "clockwork" and in no permanent injury to himself.

The actual fate of F. Alexander, Burgess leaves obscure until Alex's conversation with the Minister of the Interior in the novel's penultimate chapter. Visiting Alex in the hospital to assure him that all is now well and to exploit the favourable political publicity, the Minister informs him that -

> 'There is a man --- called F. Alexander, a writer of subversive literature, who has been howling for your blood. He has been mad with desire to stick a knife in you. But you're safe from him now. We put him away.'[9]

The State now regards F. Alexander as it once regarded Alex. Certain phrases used by the Minister - "howling for your blood", "mad with desire" - would appear to be more appropriate if applied to a person both more animallike and more physically violent than F. Alexander. But, in any case, he has been declared "a menace" just as though he were roaming the streets at night with a band of "droogs". Therefore F. Alexander gets, at the end of Part Three, precisely what Alex got at the end

of Part One : imprisonment in a State Jail. This fate also makes sense, because he is Alex's double as well as his symbolic or mythic father : thus the career of F. Alexander not only anticipates but also repeats the career of Alex.

But this relationship also contributes to the working out of the ABA structure. In the first A section Alex is simply Alex; in the B section he becomes both 6655321 and the "clockwork" man; and in the second A section he resumes his public identity as Alex but is not truly or fully Alex because he still has the "clockwork" within him. When, however, he meets again the owner of HOME, he encounters a father figure, an older and wiser Alex, a future version of the self, who unwittingly assists him in the task of removing the "clockwork" and becoming himself once more. The ill effects of his prison stay cannot, in other words, be overcome until our hero wrestles with and defeats his own image invested with Age and Authority, until the son replaces the father. What could provide a more striking illustration of the process of human growth ?

If the vision of his future granted him in the final chapter holds true, Alex will accomplish something in life that F. Alexander did not : the begetting and raising of a son. He describes his prophetic moment in the following passage:

> 'I kept viddying like visions, like these cartoons in the gazettas. There was your Humble Narrator Alex coming home from work to a good hot plate of dinner, and there was this ptitsa all welcoming and greeting like loving .... I had this sudden very strong idea that if I walked into the room next to his room where the fire was burning away and my hot dinner laid on the table, there I should find what I really wanted... . For in that other room in a cot was laying gurgling goo goo goo my son. Yes, Yes, Yes, brothers, my son.'[10]

The place Alex describes is obviously an idealized version of home, which means that he has just paid, although in "vision", his third and final visit to HOME. The fire and the dinner are the comforts that Alex destroyed on his first visit but will soon require for himself; the "ptitsa all welcoming and greeting like loving" is the mother transformed into a wife who will in no way resist his advances; and the father, who earlier attempted to block his path, is now absent. To complete the circle, however, there is the baby boy, who, like F. Alexander, will be "another Alex" and bear Alex's other name, whatever that may be. This son will be F. Alexander's opposite in that he will represent Alex's past, whereas F. Alexander represented Alex's future. Alex perceives this even now, as he concedes in advance that

he will be unable to prevent his son from making the very same mistakes that he made :

> 'My son, my son. When I had my son I would explain all that to him when he was starry enough to like understand. But then I knew he would not understand or would not want to understand at all and would do all the veshches I had done --- and I would not be able to really stop him.'[11]

Knowing the "veshches"or things his son will do, Alex also knows that he will be unable to prevent him from doing them, both the good and the evil. As his son grows up, Alex will behold his past being repeated, just as F. Alexander beheld his. Everthing human is inevitable, Burgess seems to say, both the good and the evil.

'But Alex's tale is still a story of liberation: he has escaped from not only the literal prison of Staja 84F but also the figurative prisons of adolescent boyhood and "clockwork" humanity.'[12] And the reader who recalls that "music is a figure of celestial bliss" will want to translate "liberation" as "salvation". But it is the individual capable of growth - the "creature of growth and capable of sweetness", as F. Alexander puts it in his typescript - that has been liberated or saved, not the group, the tribe, or the species. When he is born, Alex's

son will not be free or blissful. He will be doomed, rather, to live through the error of his father's ways. Here, then, is that final flowering of the logic of the novel's structure : after A, B; after B, A again. After the freedom of the mature Alex, the imprisonment of his son. Could Alex somehow liberate his son, the structure of A Clockwork Orange would surely have to be ABC, which would signify progres without repetition.

The da capo aria itself, if the reader chooses to think of either Alex or the heroine of Das Bettzeug as performing this sort of aria, represents the same lack of freedom: having sung A and B, the performer must sing A again. And it is precisely here that the meaning of this imaginary opera comes into clear focus. The surname of the composer, "Gitterfenster", is a German word best translated as "barred window", that is, the window of a prison. The heroine has sought presumably to escape this prison, whether literal or figurative, but, realizing that she can succeed only through suicide, has now taken that step : hence Alex's description, "it was the bit where she's snuffing it with her throat cut, and the slovos are 'Better like this may be'." She is, therefore, in the very same situation as Alex when F. Alexander's friends leave him in their locked flat with the music turned on : "I viddied what I hand to do ... and that was to do myself in, to snuff it." The window in this prison is not barred, however, because F. Alexander and his friends want Alex to jump: "the window in the room where I laid down was open."

And they haven even left behind a helpful hint in the form of a "malenky booklet which had an open window on the cover", proclaiming : "Open the window to fresh air, fresh ideas, a new way of living". So Alex, saying in effect what the heroine said, goes to the window and jumps. And he succeeds, just as she may have, in achieving personal liberation - not through death, but rather through the return to life, or, to put the matter somewhat more accurately, by the return to normal life after the nonhuman existence of a "clockwork" man, which is merely another formulation of the sequence "freedom" - "imprisonment" - "freedom"; that is, ABA.

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R E F E R E N C E S

1) Burgess Anthony, A Clockwork Orange (Harmond Sworth; Penguin, 1962), p. 96.

2) Ibid., p. 43

3) Ibid., p. 35

4) Ibid., p. 48

5) A.A.DeVitis ed.; A Critical Quarterly Modern Fiction Studies. (Purdue University, 1981) p. 480 Vol. 27, Number-3.

6) Burgess Anthony, A Clockwork Orange (Harmond Sworth; Penguin, 1962), pp. 94-96.

7) Ibid., p.27

8) Ibid., p. 163.

9) Ibid., p.182

10) Ibid., pp. 194-195

11) Ibid., p. 195

12) A.A.DeVitis ed.; A Critical Quarterly Modern Fiction Studies. (Purdue University, 1981) p. 486 Vol. 27, Number 3.

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