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**THE PUBLIC PERSONAGE AS PROTAGONIST IN THE NOVELS OF
ANTHONY BURGESS**

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Submitted for the examination of PhD in English to
the School of English, University of Kent

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*Dedicated to Bee, Edward and Joseph
for their patience, love and understanding*

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ABSTRACT

When Anthony Burgess began writing novels that contained public personages as protagonists (Nothing Like the Sun, MF, Napoleon Symphony, ABBA ABBA, Earthly Powers, The End of the World News, Mozart and the Wolf Gang, A Dead Man in Deptford) in the latter half of the twentieth century, the challenge was to move away from (or re-manipulate) modernism but at the same time avoid a straightforward return to nineteenth-century (historical) realism. However, recognition and understanding of the way in which history is incorporated into the novel has changed dramatically over the last four decades. Burgess must now be read not only against earlier novelists, theorists and philosophers (particular examples being James Joyce, Roland Barthes and Kant), but also against a whole body of work by writers such as Salman Rushdie, Umberto Eco, John Banville and Günter Grass, as well as theorists such as Linda Hutcheon, Hayden White, Thomas M. Greene and, once again, Umberto Eco, to name but a few. For these writers have pushed the boundaries of how history is understood.

In performing such a reading, the thesis does not seek to categorize Burgess but instead identify, for example, his construction of possible worlds, his insertion of purposeful and creative anachronisms, his use of all manner of unexpected tropes and imaginings; each of which breaks from realism in unusual ways in order to achieve a better sense of reality. Through this approach it is hoped that the reader will begin to understand the range contained within these novel histories centred on public personages, and also that Burgess is a twentieth-century reminder of the challenges to literature that are to be found in the portrayal of historical figures, an art that has a history as long as literature itself. Above all, at the core of the thesis is the belief that the works discussed are not biographies, but are fictional novels that contain public personages as protagonists and actual events. This is because of the ways in which they play with the flaws of language, and among many other things, expose the often two-dimensional nature of biography and theory when applied to the world. Although biography has become increasingly sensitized to these issues, fiction can play with them more freely and innovate more readily, and Burgess's novels are an illustration of this.

BURGESS EDITIONS

ABBA ABBA (London: Faber and Faber, 1977)

ABBA ABBA (1977; London: Vintage, 2000), intro. A. S. Byatt*

A Clockwork Orange (1962; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972; repr. 1996), intro.

Blake Morrison

A Dead Man in Deptford (London: Hutchinson, 1993)

A Dead Man in Deptford (1993; London: Vintage, 1994)

A Mouthful of Air: Language and Languages, Especially English (London: Hutchinson, 1992; repr. 1992)

Any Old Iron (London: Hutchinson, 1989)

A Vision of Battlements (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1965)

Beard's Roman Women: A Novel (London: Hutchinson, 1977)

Beds in the East, in The Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy (1959; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981; repr. 1982), pp. 405-620

Byrne (London: Hutchinson, 1995)

Carmen: An Opera in Four Acts (London: Hutchinson, 1986)

Earthly Powers (London: Hutchinson, 1980)

Enderby's Dark Lady, or No End to Mr Enderby (London: Hutchinson, 1984)

Enderby Outside, in Enderby (1968; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982; repr. 1982), pp. 193-378

Homage to Qwert Yuiop (London: Hutchinson, 1986)

Inside Mr Enderby, in Enderby (1963; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982; repr. 1982), pp. 7-191

Joysprick: An Introduction to the Language of James Joyce (1973; New York: Harvest and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1975)

Little Wilson and Big God: Being the First Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess (London: Heinemann, 1987)

Man of Nazareth (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979)

MF (London: Jonathan Cape, 1971)

* Editions listed in italic are secondary editions used for their introductions and preliminary matter. Page numbers in the thesis are from the primary editions unless otherwise noted.

Moses: A Narrative (London: Dempsey & Squires, 1976)

Mozart and the Wolf Gang (London: Hutchinson, 1991)

Napoleon Symphony (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974)

New York (Amsterdam: Time-Life Books, 1976; repr. 1977), with the editors of Time-Life Books

Nothing Like the Sun (London: Heinemann, 1964)

Nothing Like the Sun (1964/1982; London: Vintage, 1992)

On Going to Bed (London: André Deutsch, 1982)

On Mozart: A Paean for Wolfgang. Being a celestial colloquy, an opera libretto, a film script, a schizophrenic dialogue, a bewildered rumination, a Stendhalian transcription, and a heart felt homage upon the bicentenary of the death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (New York: Ticknor & Fields, 1991).

One Man's Chorus: The Uncollected Writings, intro and ed. Ben Faulkner (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1998)

Shakespeare (London: Jonathan Cape, 1970)

The Clockwork Testament, or: Enderby's End (London: Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, 1974)

The Devil's Mode (London: Hutchinson, 1989)

The End of the World News (London: Heinemann, 1982)

The Enemy in the Blanket, in The Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy (1958; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981; repr. 1982), pp. 205-404

The Eve of Saint Venus (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1964)

The Eve of Saint Venus (1964; New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), foreword Anthony Burgess

The Kingdom of the Wicked (London: Hutchinson, 1985)

The Right to an Answer (London: Heinemann, 1960)

This Man and Music (London: Hutchinson, 1982)

Time for a Tiger, in The Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy (1956; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981; repr. 1982), pp. 7-203

Urgent Copy: Literary Studies (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968)

You've Had Your Time: Being the Second Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess (London: Heinemann, 1990)

INTRODUCTION

The narrator of Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children sees a great symbolic connection of his life (including the life of his parents and grandparents) to the history of India. Saleem Sinai, born at midnight on the day of India's independence (15 August 1947), reads the cracking that occurs over his body as the breaking up of India, while the loss of a fingertip he compares to the loss of Kashmir:

... things done by or to me were mirrored in the macrocosm of public affairs, and my private existence was ... symbolically at one with history. The mutilation of my middle finger was a case in point, because when I was detached from my fingertip and blood ... rushed out in fountains, a similar thing happened to history, and all sorts of everywhichting began pouring out all over us; but because history operates on a grander scale than any individual, it took a good deal longer to stitch it back together and mop up the mess.¹

Saleem makes this proclamation at the very centre of the novel, where the various relationships of the individual to history that the narrator and his family experience are explicitly theorized using the term 'modes of connection'.² The placement of this idea at the very heart of the novel highlights the very centrality of the self-reflexive tone of the whole work. However, this self-reflexivity is not the end in itself. Rushdie indicates another level at which the novel should be read, signposted through the irony generated in the narrator's overworking of his connection to history, but also through the way in which, from the very start, the narrator unashamedly writes through earlier texts, the most prominent of which is Tristram Shandy.

The use of Laurence Sterne's novel, forming as it does the pretence of there being too many stories to tell before Saleem Sinai can describe the circumstances of his birth, becomes self-parodying due to the narrator's fierce commitment to this second-hand contrivance. As such the reader becomes aware of the wider delusion that the narrator is under with regard to his connection to history. Indeed, when Rushdie was asked, 'Did you think of Midnight's Children as proposing a continuous allegory – the allegory of Saleem's body as being the mirror of a disintegrating state, for example, or the allegory of the Midnight Children's Conference?' he replied:

¹ Salman Rushdie, Midnight's Children (1981; London: Vintage, 1995), p. 238

² Rushdie, Midnight's Children, p. 238

There are those allegorical elements, but I always resisted them in the writing. Allegory comes very naturally in India, it's almost the only basis of literary criticism – as though every text is not what it seems but only a veil behind which is the real text. I quite dislike the notion that what you are reading is really something else ... although Saleem claims to be connected to history, the connections in the book between his life and history are not allegorical ones, they're circumstantial. Although the book contains those large allegorical notions, it tries to diffuse them.³

When Saleem Sinai puts into words the relationship between his body and the body of India, the allegory and the symbolism contained within such an idea becomes simplified and struggles to rise above a collection of similes. It is not, however, as with any use of irony or parody without ambiguity as to where the line is to be drawn between what is to be 'regarded' and what is to be disregarded.

Indeed, Linda Hutcheon in Irony's Edge complains of the way in which the 'unnecessary reduction of irony to the either/or model of inversion has led to radically simplified notions of how ironic meaning comes into being' and, with her allusion to the philosophy of Kierkegaard in place, she rejects the idea of irony as 'antiphrasis' or 'semantic inversion'.⁴ She argues instead for an understanding of greater complexity that draws in the temporal and spatial communication between ironist and audience. Fulfilling this, Rushdie confesses that his irony is a response to attitudes towards life in India. Hence, while the intellectual currency in such exclamations by Saleem as, 'Reality can have metaphorical content; that does not make it less real',⁵ may well have a diminished value and carry a hugely ironic tone in relation to India, such a statement cannot be universally disregarded just because the author ironizes it. Similarly, it is hard to imagine that any author can be wholly disingenuous when he writes (as Günter Grass wrote, in the self-reflexive guise of Oskar Matzerath):

You can begin a story in the middle and create confusion by striking out boldly, backward and forward. You can be modern, put aside all mention of time and distance and, when the whole thing is done, proclaim, or let someone else proclaim, that you have finally, at the last moment, solved the space-time problem. Or you can declare at the very start that it's impossible to write a novel nowadays, but then, behind your own back so to speak, give birth to a

³ John Haffenden, 'Salman Rushdie', in Michael Reder, ed., Conversations with Salman Rushdie (University Press of Mississippi, 2000), pp. 40-41

⁴ Linda Hutcheon, Irony's Edge: The Theory and Politics of Irony (1994; London and New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 61

⁵ Rushdie, Midnight's Children, p. 200

whopper, a novel to end all novels. I have also been told that it makes a good impression, an impression of modesty so to speak, if you begin by saying that a novel can't have a hero any more because there are no more individualists, because individuality is a thing of the past, because man – each man and all men together – is alone in his loneliness and no one is entitled to individual loneliness, and all men lumped together make up a 'lonely mass' without names and without heroes.⁶

Beneath Grass's irony, and indeed Rushdie's irony, at some level or other, in some form or other, in some place or other, at some time or other, what is stated has weight and value, otherwise it would not be stated at all. It is the nature of fiction, however, that ideas can reach a greater approximation of themselves through devices such as irony than in a more direct manner, even if it is necessary to first ironize before de-ironizing, and even though irony is by its very nature transient and subject to temporal and spatial conditions. This is because its alternative is simplicity of the kind that reduces metaphor and symbol to simile, removing vital textures and nuances. The paradox is, however, that reductive moves like these generate their own complexity. For example, in the musings of Saleem Sinai the reduction of allegory and symbolism to metaphor and simile are 'auto-ironizing', while in the work of the now oft-quoted B. S. Johnson, the promise of the author's own 'true' voice becomes a metafictional layer, taking the reader deeper into uncertainty and ambiguity.

Patricia Waugh in her seminal work, Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction, wrote:

The simple notion that language passively reflects a coherent, meaningful and 'objective' world is no longer tenable. Language is an independent, self-contained system that generates its own 'meanings'. Its relationship to the phenomenal world is highly complex, problematic and regulated by convention.⁷

According to Waugh, the problem of language makes necessary "“Meta” terms ... in order to explore the relationship between the world of the fiction and the world outside the fiction."⁸ Without these there would be no way of conceiving anything beyond the formulations of Oskar and Saleem. The tin drums belonging to the former,

⁶ Günter Grass, The Tin Drum (1959; London: Vintage, 2005), p. 3

⁷ Patricia Waugh, Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction (1984; London: Routledge, 1996), p. 3

⁸ Waugh, Metafiction, p. 3

not to mention his self-comparisons to historical, mythical and literary archetypes - such as when he compares his home coming to that of Ulysses,⁹ or when he imitates Christ -¹⁰ would, for example, have to mean as much to the reader as they do to the narrator, while the latter's egocentric history and psychic transmissions would be a reality not a delusional state of mind.

Although Waugh begins her treatise with quotations from Sterne, B. S. Johnson, Ronald Sukenick, Donald Barthelme and John Fowles, she insists that metafiction is a part of every novel. With this in mind, it is certainly possible to read Waugh's theorization of metafiction and to find spaces in which the work of Anthony Burgess might be inserted. When she writes, for example, about the 'self-begetting novel',¹¹ which ends with the narrator writing the novel we have just been reading, no doubt MF could be unproblematically listed alongside André Gide's The Counterfeiters, just as the same novel could be listed when Waugh writes about 'intertextual overkill'¹² (although one might add that Burgess's novel contains not only intertextual overkill but inter-linguistic overkill as well, using as it does so many languages in naming its characters, objects and places). Waugh also helps us begin to understand the significance of an author's self-insertion as a character into a work of fiction, and how this brings the reality of the author into question.¹³ Burgess's self-insertion goes a step further than presenting himself as a character, however, for he draws attention to historical personages that are not himself but who share his name(s): for example (President) Wilson in The End of the World News and John (Keats) in ABBA ABBA;¹⁴ he also makes elements of his biography the biography of others - see in particular ABBA ABBA and Earthly Powers. Burgess is thereby divided into fragments and his name becomes divorced from his body and biography, or rather each element of his person is given a life independent of every other element.

Although Waugh's formulations do admittedly fit more straightforwardly with Jorge Luis Borges and B. S. Johnson, her ideas with regard to attitudes towards

⁹ Grass, Tin Drum, p. 327

¹⁰ Grass, Tin Drum, p. 331

¹¹ Waugh, Metafiction, p. 14

¹² Waugh, Metafiction, p. 145

¹³ Waugh, Metafiction, p. 133

¹⁴ Note that Anthony Burgess was the author's pen name and that he was christened John Burgess Wilson, later receiving the confirmation name Anthony (see Little Wilson and Big God, p. 6; see also Roger Lewis, Anthony Burgess, London: Faber and Faber, 2002, p. 67).

history and the writing of fiction are still ideas that clearly have their correlates in the novels of Burgess. This is particularly the case with those novels that contain public personages as protagonists but also holds with novels outside this grouping as well, such as Any Old Iron and the novels of The Malayan Trilogy: Time for a Tiger, The Enemy in the Blanket and Beds in the East. There are as has been indicated, however, notable elements missing from Waugh's theory that are needed before it is possible to state with complete conviction that Burgess writes 'metafiction'. Ambiguity, for example, is not a term that Waugh uses when formulating her theory,¹⁵ and yet it is something that Burgess employs and manipulates everywhere, and often in the very smallest unit of communication: the word (as is argued in chapter of this thesis on The End of the World News). Further, the omission of any focused discussion on how metafiction can employ the techniques of poetry, and indeed a broader acknowledgement of how metafiction can break free of the novel, also presents a huge difficulty in making the case that Burgess writes in the way that Waugh describes.

Waugh viewed the turn towards poetry in the work of B. S. Johnson as an attempt to control meaning, not to enter further into multitudinous meaning-making,¹⁶ and her discussion of T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land focused more on the gaps than the words.¹⁷ Since Burgess's novels are filled with poetry and other forms of poetic, non-novelistic styles, for example libretto, film scripts, colloquy, and dramatic dialogue (see ABBA ABBA, The End of the World News and Mozart and the Wolf Gang), it seems that they are either pushed towards Waugh's 'aleatory' categorization due to their refusal to explain themselves,¹⁸ or else they are shunted back towards her categorization of 'modernism'. But, when we consider the apparent ease with which Burgess is able to conjure (in The End of the World News and A Dead Man in Deptford) William Empson's seventh type of ambiguity,¹⁹ it must be argued that Waugh's view of poetry needs revision. This is because Burgess opens our eyes to how ambiguity can be employed (often through poetic language) to extend meanings;

¹⁵ The word is used in a general way on page 103 of Waugh's book, but only to describe the ambiguity of place in Nabakov's Pale Fire.

¹⁶ see Waugh, Metafiction, pp. 22, 23, 98, 163, 167, 168, 180

¹⁷ see Waugh, Metafiction, pp. 23, 24, 147, 157

¹⁸ see Waugh, Metafiction, pp. 12-13

¹⁹ 'the most ambiguous that can be conceived', in which 'two meanings of a word, the two values of ambiguity, are the two opposite meanings defined by the context, so that the total effect is to show a fundamental division in the writer's hand' (William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, 3rd edn. [1930; Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1961], p. 192)

and how it is possible to accept that a biographical account can at once be about an individual public personage and the author, proving that the history that comes between the contemporary 'us' and the historic 'them' cannot be ignored despite apparently unnecessary and unappealing resonances that cross-cut one another.

It is not ambiguity alone that is vital to understanding the work of Burgess, there is also a comic sensibility in his work that permeates every single novel and this is most clearly to be found at the opening of his Enderby novel with an unmistakable 'Pffrrrump'. Indeed, Patrick Swinden, in The English Novel of History and Society, 1940-80, noted how, in common with D. M. Thomas, Burgess makes use of social comedy 'as a kind of launching-pad from which to take off into much wilder and bizarre forms of comic fantasy'. By juxtaposing the transgression of societal norms and expectations with 'wild[] flights of linguistic and quasi-autobiographical fancy', Burgess highlights 'the real comic possibilities, as well as the real historical circumstances' of his fictional representations of public personages.²⁰ The comic, however, is in turn often closely linked to ambiguity in Burgess's work. For example, there are comic possibilities about the fact that there was a George Orwell (or Orrell) involved in Christopher Marlowe's history,²¹ and also a twentieth-century writer who chose the pen name George Orwell. Rather than detracting from the history of Christopher Marlowe, it forges a comic and at the same time memorable connection when highlighted in A Dead Man in Deptford. And, through having no obvious meaning it artfully generates Empson's sixth type of ambiguity:

An ambiguity of the sixth type occurs when a statement says nothing, by tautology, by contradiction, or by irrelevant statements; so that the reader is forced to invent statements of his own and they are liable to conflict with one another.²²

²⁰ Patrick Swinden, The English Novel of History and Society, 1940-80 (London: Macmillan, 1984), pp. 12-13

²¹ It must be noted, however, that Burgess takes advantage of the fluidity of Elizabethan language here, for biographers of Marlowe typically write of George Orrell (not Orwell), whose friendship with William Bradley drew him into the feud between Bradley and Thomas Watson that ended in the death of the former in Hog Lane (18 September 1589) (see Charles Norman, The Muses' Darling: The Life of Christopher Marlowe [London: The Falcon Press, 1947], pp. 86-89; William Urry, Christopher Marlowe and Canterbury [London: Faber and Faber, 1988], p. 30; A. D. Wraight and Virginia F. Stern, In Search of Christopher Marlowe: A Pictorial Biography [London: Macdonald, 1965], pp. 117, 122).

²² Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, p. 176

The statements that the reader is forced to generate in the example of George Orwell, and the potential for comedy therein, further highlight the absence of a detailed discussion of comedy and the comic form by Waugh, since theories of metafiction are often focused more heavily on irony than comedy. Arguably, through comedy however often comes a subtler irony than can be achieved by the overworking of a self-reflexive standpoint.

In addition to the question of poetics, ambiguity and comedy - elements of Waugh's theory that appear to require expansion in order to include Burgess - there are also the elements of Waugh's work that simply need to be examined more closely when reading Burgess. Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogic and his notions of carnival and parody, are one such example, for it is difficult to conceive of understanding Napoleon Symphony, in particular, without the wisdom contained in works such as Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics. Bakhtin's book, now firmly a part of literary criticism, gives an unparalleled insight into the conception of character in the line, 'Dostoevsky's hero is not only a discourse about himself and his immediate environment, but also a discourse about the world; he is not only cognizant, but an ideologist as well'.²³ It is one of many statements that cast light on Burgess's work and the ways in which it goes about meaning-making that cannot be rejected simply as 'aleatory'.

In order to further expand Waugh's theories, it is also necessary to combine them with the work of others. For example, Hayden White's theories of narrativism have been of pivotal importance in the writing of this thesis. His assertion that 'One can produce an imaginary discourse about real events that may not be less "true" for being imaginary'²⁴ holds across the entirety of the novels discussed in this thesis. For:

How else can any past, which by definition comprises events, processes, structures, and so forth, considered to be no longer perceivable, be represented in either consciousness or discourse except in an 'imaginary' way? Is it not possible that the question of narrative in any discussion of historical theory is always finally about the function of imagination in the production of a specifically human truth?²⁵

²³ Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, intro. Wayne C. Booth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 78

²⁴ Hayden White, The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation (1987; Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1992), p. 57

²⁵ White, The Content of the Form, p. 57

White argues that although the recording of events in an unformulated manner (as in chronicles and annals) appears to be more ‘factual’ and ‘truthful’ because it circumvents the contrivances of narrative, in actuality there is no history without narrative, for as soon as one attempts to interpret history, and in essence imagine it, as one must in order to make it meaningful, a narrative will be imposed. As discussed in the later chapters of this thesis, this narrative is to a certain extent arbitrary, in White’s opinion, and most probably sourced from literature or myth. However, this is not a negative, on the contrary it is the basis of human understanding, and what he labels ‘a specifically human truth’. The alternative is to experience a termination of meaning.²⁶

In the biography of Shakespeare there is much that is imaginary and uncertain. As Ivor Brown wrote, ‘For nothing between [Shakespeare’s] baptism and banns have we any certain authority’.²⁷ But this keeps the Bard’s history alive. Biographical accounts have been published unrelentingly since the nineteenth century, presenting arguments for the identity of ‘W. H.’ that swing back and forth between Southampton and Pembroke, and back and forth between whether or not to entertain the idea of an Anne Whateley. Not only this but the very uncertainty of Shakespeare’s life has also been a creative source for works of fiction, such as Wilde’s ‘Portrait of Mr W.H.’ and Burgess’s Nothing Like the Sun. Further, the love of the unknown, which the biography of Shakespeare supplies in abundance, becomes the model and trope for subsequent biographies. It forces lies to be told and issues to be overlooked in order for coherence to be arrived at. And not only is Shakespeare’s life a model for all (literary) biographies, it also presents a postmodern opportunity to the novelist, whereby a novelist can be truthful about the life of Shakespeare by exposing the need for lies and by exposing the ambiguity that surrounds the writer’s life. For, as Waugh wrote:

In realist or modernist writing, textual contradictions are always finally resolved, either at a level of plot (realism) or at the level of point of view or consciousness (modernism). In metafictional texts that employ contradiction, there can be no final certainty (no FINAL CURTAIN either), only a reworking of the Liar Paradox, which might run something like this: “‘All novelists are liars,” said the metafictionist, truthfully.’²⁸

²⁶ see White, The Content of the Form, p. 16

²⁷ Ivor Brown, Shakespeare (1949; Collins, London, 1963), p. 49

²⁸ Waugh, Metafiction, p. 137

Nothing Like the Sun takes up the postmodern challenge by granting Shakespeare a multiplicity of 'Dark Ladies', and by ending in madness and confusion as syphilis takes over the body of Shakespeare. Pairing this with the drunkenness of the narrator, Burgess elects delirium in preference to the finality of death, and thereby circumvents any 'final certainty' or 'final curtain'.

The ideas of Waugh are unquestionably important to a reading of Burgess,²⁹ as are the novels she cites, but the novels that are central to this thesis suggest that there needs to be further refinement and extension of Waugh's assessment of, in particular, historical writing,³⁰ if her work is to be used to better understand how fiction centred on the biographies of historic individuals transforms the 'traditional conventions of fiction'.³¹ Hutcheon's modification of Waugh's theory in her classification, 'historiographic metafiction', took such a step by grouping together novels that concern history (such as Midnight's Children) and those that concern historical individuals (or public personages), such as John Banville's Dr Copernicus. And, drawing on White's argument of the unnatural nineteenth-century separation of history and literature, Hutcheon began her concentrated formulation in order to understand the postmodern resolution to this separation. 'Historiographic metafiction,' wrote Hutcheon, 'keeps distinct its formal auto-representation and its historical context, and in so doing problematizes the very possibility of historical knowledge, because there is no reconciliation, no dialectic here – just unresolved contradiction'.³²

J. M. Coetzee's Foe provides one example of the way in which historiographic metafiction highlights the problematizing of history.³³ The novel is based on the fictional supposition that there existed a Susan Barton who in the first instance narrated the tale to Daniel Defoe (or Foe) of Robinson Crusoe (or Cruso), after her experiences on a desert island, and who was erased from the history by her omission

²⁹ Although Burgess receives scant mention in Waugh's work; she only names him twice (see Waugh, Metafiction, pp. 84, 142).

³⁰ Waugh, Metafiction, pp. 106-108

³¹ see Waugh, Metafiction, p. 148

³² Linda Hutcheon, A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction (1988; London: Routledge, 1996), p. 106

³³ J. M. Coetzee, Foe (1986; London: Penguin, 1987)

from Defoe's story.³⁴ Hutcheon wrote that, 'Foe reveals that storytellers can certainly silence, exclude, and absent certain past events – and people', and also that historians have excluded women from the traditional histories of the eighteenth century.³⁵ While Barton is frustrated and needs her story to be told, however, her position is never omnipotent and omniscient. In foregrounding Barton the others in the story are pushed into minor roles. The narrator notably fails to open up the male voices (those of Cruso, Friday and Foe) both in philosophical and physical terms in the novel. This is because while '[p]ostmodern fiction suggests that to re-write or to re-present the past in fiction and in history is, in both cases, to open it up to the present,' the act of rewriting history at the same time 'prevent[s] it from being conclusive and teleological'.³⁶ Every rewriting creates new errors and new omissions, out of which contradiction arises. However, in the words of White: 'Unless at least two versions of the same set of events can be imagined, there is no reason for the historian to take upon himself the authority of giving the true account of what really happened.'³⁷ Hence, histories are kept alive through doubt, uncertainty and contradiction.

Historiographic metafiction is at odds with the earlier formulations of Georg Lukács, the critic who identified Sir Walter Scott's Waverley as the birth of the 'classical' historical novel. Lukács searched in the historical novel for a concreteness of time and place, which he found primarily in Scott, but also in Moll Flanders and Tom Jones. These novels he felt turned away from the 'unusual plasticity' of time and place witnessed elsewhere in fiction. He wrote that, 'Scott endeavours to portray the struggles and antagonisms of history by means of characters who, in their psychology and destiny, always represent social trends and historical forces'.³⁸ 'Scott's greatness lies', Lukács continued, 'in his capacity to give living human embodiment to historical-social types'.³⁹ He argued that the Enlightenment and Napoleon led to an awareness of the epochs of history and the distance of one historical period from another, and he placed Sir Walter Scott at the awakening point of this historical consciousness in the novel. Lukács saw the hero standing at the neutral centre of

³⁴ Hutcheon, Poetics of Postmodernism, p. 107

³⁵ Hutcheon, Poetics of Postmodernism, p. 107

³⁶ Hutcheon, Poetics of Postmodernism, p. 110

³⁷ White, Content of the Form, p. 20

³⁸ Georg Lukács, The Historical Novel, trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell (1962; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 33

³⁹ Lukács, The Historical Novel, p. 34

Scott's novels, where 'opposing social forces can be brought into a human relationship with one another',⁴⁰ but he argued that Scott does not show the 'evolution' of historical figures such as 'Richard Coeur de Lion, Louis XI, Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, Cromwell, etc.'. Instead he portrays characters in which the personality is already 'complete'.⁴¹

Lukács' argument for the historical individual to be confined by their 'complete' version; the version that has been written and approved through consensual agreement, the version that has been 'committed to history' so to speak is in sharp contrast not only to historiographic metafiction but also to the novels discussed in this thesis. Burgess's historical personages are never complete but are instead ongoing dialogues with their contemporaries, as is the case with Napoleon and Josephine in Napoleon Symphony, and with history itself, as is the case with Freud and Trotsky in The End of the World News. There are no neutral spaces where public personages can be simply themselves and never can they find a satisfactory resolution in these novels. Public personages do not die; they pass into uncertainty. For history is less certain for Burgess than it is for Scott. He cannot ignore how names echo, how poetics can change history and our interpretation of it, and how a name can make us think for a moment of a completely different individual who takes us outside of the time we might be engrossed in (as in the earlier example of George Orwell). At the same time, however, it cannot be ignored how Burgess's position closely mirrors the papal obsessions with name of the kind that are so vehemently rejected in Earthly Powers, something that itself appears to present to the reader a contradiction.

Arnold Toynbee wrote of Pope John XXIII, the central subject of Earthly Powers that:

Angelo Giuseppe's assumption of the name 'John' was as intentionally significant as Achille Ratti's assumption of the name 'Pius'. Each of these two Popes was setting out to redeem the reputation of a name that at least one previous Pope Pius and a number of previous Pope Johns had brought into disrepute.⁴²

Further, Lawrence Elliott in I will be called John noted that not only was the Pope's

⁴⁰ Lukács, The Historical Novel, p. 36

⁴¹ Lukács, The Historical Novel, pp. 38-39

⁴² Arnold Toynbee, A Study of History, rev. ed. Arnold Toynbee and Jane Caplan (1934-1954; London: Oxford University Press with Thames and Hudson, 1972), 210.

name chosen to redeem the name John, but also to promote the name John, associating it with all the goodness from John the Baptist onwards.⁴³ Here, as in Burgess, the echo of names across time holds importance. However, in Burgess's way of thinking, although names make connections across time, one individual does not eclipse (or absorb) another. On the contrary every historic individual is left open to the influence of every other individual for subsequent manipulation and revision, and there are no chronological boundaries or restrictions placed upon this. In essence the slate cannot be wiped clean. In the fictional worlds that Burgess creates, time is pressed flat forcing every point in time into relation with every other point. This becomes particularly the case in Napoleon Symphony where Napoleon, for example, not only appears in a series of pastiches of the nineteenth-century novel, but where Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four is quoted in French, layering anachronism upon anachronism.

Avrom Fleishman has argued that the 'omission [by Lukács] of the great modern novelists – Hardy, Conrad, Virginia Woolf (even of such Continental figures as Malraux and Sholokhov) – makes his absorption in Romain Rolland and Heinrich Mann seem arbitrary and irrelevant to a critical history of the genre, let alone its English development. For there are many more values in historical fiction than Lukács's account allows for.'⁴⁴ Margaret Scanlan likewise argued that the place of history in the modernist novel should not be underestimated.⁴⁵ Citing Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, Joseph Conrad and E. M. Forster as examples, she declared that the work of Scott and Tolstoy (and Barbara Cartland) represents 'a loosely defined' categorization of the 'historical novel', and as a genre is 'outmoded'. Instead she argued persuasively for the "other historical novel"; skeptical, ironic and "discontinuous," seeking to exploit rather than cover up the boundaries between history and fiction'.⁴⁶ And, whereas Lukács began his investigation of the historical novel with Sir Walter Scott, Scanlan began hers with William Makepeace Thackeray's Vanity Fair and ended it with the The End of the World News. Scanlan interestingly found some fault with Fleishman when he wrote 'that [Vanity Fair] is

⁴³ Lawrence Elliott, I Will be Called John: A Biography of Pope John XXIII (London: Collins, 1974), pp. 247-248, 255.

⁴⁴ Avrom Fleishman, The English Historical Novel: Walter Scott to Virginia Woolf (Baltimore, MD and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), p. xvii

⁴⁵ Margaret Scanlan, Traces of Another Time: History and Politics in Postwar British Fiction (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 4-5

⁴⁶ Scanlan, Traces of Another Time, p. 3

“outside the canons of historical fiction”⁴⁷ and claimed ‘rather, perhaps, he should have said that it is the prototype of the contemporary skeptical historical novel.’⁴⁸ She did declare, however, that Fleishman ‘accurately evokes the tendency of contemporary British historical novels’ when he writes that ‘Vanity Fair is more interested in the “enactment of the processes by which historical events are assimilated into consciousness and behaviour” than in the events themselves’.⁴⁹ And this is a statement that could be as readily applied to the novels of Burgess that contain public personages as protagonists as it is to Thackeray.

Waugh, Hutcheon, Scanlan and Fleishman, among others, all help to refocus attention on the literary novel as a historical novel, by making literature re-explore what is meant by the term ‘historical’ and move away from the nineteenth-century characteristic of historical fiction most prominently evident in Scott. A characteristic that White described in the following way:

... the nineteenth-century historical novel ... was born out of the inscription within and interference between an imaginary tale of romance and a set of real historical events. The interference had the effect of endowing the imaginary events with the concreteness of reality while at the same time endowing the historical events with the magical aura peculiar to the romance.⁵⁰

In the type of writing that White describes, not only do the historical events appear immutable once transmuted, but also, paradoxically, fictional elements come under threat of appearing less real if, once concretized, they are then aligned with real persons. Indeed, Scott wrote that he sought when drawing on real-life persons outside of the public frame to ‘generalise the[ir] portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals’.⁵¹ While a later writer, H. G. Wells, went so far as to plead with his reader not to read The World of William Clissold as a roman à clef: ‘It is a work of

⁴⁷ Avrom Fleishman, Fictions and the Ways of Knowing: Essays on British Novels (University of Texas Press, Austin, 1978), p. 53, cited in Scanlan, Traces of Another Time, p. 3

⁴⁸ Scanlan, Traces of Another Time, p. 3

⁴⁹ Scanlan, Traces of Another Time, pp. 3-4

⁵⁰ Hayden White, Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect (1999; Baltimore, MD and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), p. 67

⁵¹ Sir Walter Scott, ‘Introduction’, Chronicles of the Cannongate, quoted in Sir Walter Scott, ‘Introduction’, The Antiquary (London: Macmillan, 1919), pp. viii

fiction, purely and completely'.⁵² Not only this, but Wells also argued immutability for his public personages of the kind described by White when he noted that:

[In The World of William Clissold] Dr. Jung is made to talk in a London flat. It is very much as he talked in a London flat. He appears because certain original ideas of his have been taken and woven into the Clissold point of view, and it was at once ungracious not to acknowledge the far-reaching suggestions that came from him and clumsy and self-important to make a footnote or a prefatory note ... [further] the Shaw of the 'eighties, blows into a Kensington evening, and Keynes lunches with Clissold. These are affectionate hospitalities; they do not wound nor injure and can awaken no resentment.⁵³

While Scott and Wells both viewed 'historical personages free subjects of delineation', they refused to explore the 'plasticity and elasticity' of such characters, or at least did not acknowledge that this is what they did, for whatever reasons. It must be noted, however, that while this appears to create a divide between them and us, a postmodern reading would of course see an unavoidability about the doubling that occurs when historic individuals are placed in a novel.

As is discussed in the chapter of this thesis on Mozart and the Wolf Gang, White saw the nineteenth century as responsible for the division between history and fiction, something that has been difficult to repair. Aldous Huxley wrote, however, that the sense of detachment between man and history is something ongoing.⁵⁴ He also wrote that it is an uneasy relationship that it is difficult to understand, and I am therefore more cautious of dismissing the worth of writers such as Scott and Wells than White is.⁵⁵ Nineteenth-century historical realism should not necessarily be understood as wholly erroneous, but as part of a wider portrayal of man and history in which it is one way (or a collection of ways) of portraying the relationship. It is only erroneous when it is allowed to be tyrannical, when its truth is taken as the only truth, when its representation of reality is the only way of representing reality.⁵⁶

⁵² H. G. Wells, The World of William Clissold: A Novel at a New Angle (London, 1933), p. 2

⁵³ Wells, Clissold, p. 3

⁵⁴ see for example Aldous Huxley, The Human Situation: Lectures at Santa Barbara, 1959 (1977; London: Flamingo, 1994), p. 114

⁵⁵ Huxley, Human Situation, p. 114

⁵⁶ The inspiration for this point comes from the argument made by Erich Auerbach that, 'The Bible's claim to truth is ... tyrannical – it excludes all other claims. The world of Scripture stories is not satisfied with claiming to be a historically true reality – it insists that it is the only real world, is destined for autocracy.' (Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of

Burgess draws heavily on nineteenth-century understandings of history in *The Malayan Trilogy* and *Any Old Iron* in order to demonstrate the incongruence between historical and lived time, while *Napoleon Symphony* incorporates parodies and pastiches of the nineteenth-century novel from Austen to Dickens in order to demonstrate how all history has passed through the ‘crooked mirrors’⁵⁷ of nineteenth-century realism. While the novels are not a replication of the nineteenth-century historical realism of Scott, at the same time they are not a straightforward progression from or superannuation of it either. However, like White’s narrativism and Hutcheon’s ‘historiographic metafiction’ among other ideas, such as those of Scanlan, Burgess’s novels do offer some kind of antidote to the potential tyranny of nineteenth-century realism. At the same time, however, they pay homage, which is the privilege afforded to the novelist; whereas, the postmodern theorist is forced to generate cohesiveness out of contradiction.

‘Hutcheon brings good news and bad news for the old-fashioned realist reader’, wrote Steven Connor provocatively in *The English Novel in History 1950-1995*. He continued:

The good news is that she refuses modernism’s chilly exile from politics and history, restoring literary writing to the world and its interests, moral and political; the bad news is that the world and its interests are now revealed to be as thoroughly and inescapably “textual” as the texts that mirror it. The literary text is returned to a relationship with an historical real that has in the meantime been refashioned in its image.⁵⁸

Connor criticized the simplicity of Hutcheon’s acquiescence to the very thing she sought to escape: the division between fiction and history. He claimed this limited the scope of her ‘characterization of historiographic metafiction’, and he demonstrated this to be the case through the example of a quotation from Alison Lee.⁵⁹ Connor saw before him in Lee’s theoretical application of Hutcheon a ‘flattening’ and ‘blocking off’ of ‘awareness of the different ways in which novels may address historical

Reality in Western Literature, trans. Willard R. Trask [1946; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968; repr. 1974], pp. 14-15)

⁵⁷ The term ‘crooked mirrors’ is used by Bakhtin to describe the effects of parody (see Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, p. 127). I use it here as an intertextual link to the chapter on *NS*, in which parodies of nineteenth-century literary styles are employed and discussed in relation to Bakhtin.

⁵⁸ Steven Connor, *The English Novel in History 1950-1995* (London: Routledge, 1996)

⁵⁹ Connor, *English Novel in History*, pp. 130-132

material'.⁶⁰ And further, Connor found it necessary to reject the singularity that he saw in the writing of Hutcheon and her theory of historiographic metafiction in order to read among other novels The End of the World News. Of which he wrote insightfully:

The pretence of the novel to be a thing of scraps and fragments has a serious purpose, in pointing to the principles of survival and renewal in the lowly and disorganised energies of dissociation associated with contemporary culture. If the multiple, simultaneous culture of the contemporary world works to flatten and homogenise history, then it also suggested that its scrappiness and heterogeneity allows newness to emerge and survive. The contemporary culture of adaptation, which threatens to dissolve the singleness and autonomy of every form – including and especially that of the literary novel – also offers the possibility of imaginative resistance to every attempt to bring change and renewal to an end in the name of the whole truth of finality.⁶¹

The insightfulness comes from Connor's ability to understand the ambiguity employed by Burgess in the novel, an ambiguity that begins in the title and that is carried unflinchingly through to the very end. For, as he writes:

The End of the World News is poised in subject and manner between ... two possibilities, the end of the world in indifference, vacuity and forgetfulness and the survival and revival of history in aggregation, invention and narrative. The title of the novel seems to enact these two possibilities. Wilson explains that the title is borrowed from the formula used by the BBC World Service newsreaders: 'That is the end of the world news'. If the novel concerns the end of the world, it also gives us news about it, thereby offering the possibility of some surviving newness in the world.⁶²

Despite Connor's clear-sightedness, however, it is Hutcheon that is more indicative of the approach of postmodern theorists towards Burgess. For while Burgess is not wholly excluded from postmodern theorizing, his writing has provided bemusement and surprise to many, indicating a lack of transparency and a misalignment of his logic with that of postmodernism. Although Hutcheon, for example, quite freely asserted that the unreliable narrator of Earthly Powers is 'postmodern and paradoxical',⁶³ she found little more to write about the novel. While Brian McHale's

⁶⁰ Connor, English Novel in History, p. 132

⁶¹ Connor, English Novel in History, p. 217

⁶² Connor, English Novel in History, p. 217

⁶³ Hutcheon, Poetics of Postmodernism, p. 118

postmodern expectations were unfulfilled when the celebration of Senta Euphorbia in MF presented an example of a 'full-fledged popular carnival' where normally 'reduced and displaced forms of carnival are the most typical'.⁶⁴ And further, it was with surprise that Edmund J. Smythe, in Postmodernism and Contemporary Fiction, found 'self-reflexiveness' in Earthly Powers.⁶⁵

One of the difficulties for postmodern theorists approaching Burgess lies undoubtedly in part with the author's own attitude towards postmodernism, something that was exposed in an interview published the year before The End of the World News, where Burgess was quoted as having said:

Some people think Finnegans Wake is at the end of modernism ... I think we're still in a modernist phase ... We're only at the beginning of learning what music and literature can do together. We're still in the modernist period.⁶⁶

Although this would seem to situate Burgess by his own theorization as a modernist, he did not reject out of hand the concept of 'postmodernism'. Rather than seeing it as a successor to modernity, however, he viewed it as one element of it. And, as with modernity he traced postmodernity to the influence of music upon fiction. In fact, in the same interview he correlated the rise of postmodernity with the influence, in particular, of Schoenberg's 'Pierrot Lunaire' (1912) and Stravinsky's 'Le Sacre du Printemps' (1913) on Gertrude Stein.⁶⁷ This somewhat esoteric statement leads to a confusing position however. And in order to navigate the awkward division of modern and postmodern in Burgess's work, Paul Phillips - a critic of Burgess's music - recently proposed in a keynote address delivered at the first conference of the International Anthony Burgess Foundation,⁶⁸ the term 'pre-postmodern'. It is tempting to follow suit and write that this term may be just as appropriate for his fiction. At the same time, however, it might be said that such a term further

⁶⁴ Brian McHale, Postmodernist Fiction (1987; London: Routledge, 1996), p. 174

⁶⁵ Edmund J. Smythe, ed., Postmodernism and Contemporary Fiction (London: Batsford, 1991), p. 23

⁶⁶ Samuel Coale, 'An Interview with Anthony Burgess', Modern Fiction Studies, Vol. 27, No. 5 (Autumn, 1981), p. 444

⁶⁷ Coale, 'An Interview with Anthony Burgess', p. 443

⁶⁸ Paul Phillips, 'Keynote Address', paper presented at the first international conference of the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, 'Anthony Burgess and Modernity: A Symposium', 7-9 July 2005.

'periodizes' the 'unperiodizable'. For, responding to Lyotard's argument that 'postmodernism' is modernism in its 'nascent state', McHale wrote that although it could be argued that Lyotard erroneously used 'post-' where he should have used 'pre-', this is insufficient for the nascent state that Lyotard described, since it was also a 'constant' state.⁶⁹ Problems are inherent, therefore, in applying chronological reasoning to a set of ideas that are not in the first instance based on such a model, making the concept of 'pre-postmodernism' somewhat unsatisfactory.

Lyotard's claims indicated, for McHale, not only something false about the opposition of modernism and postmodernism but also that there was something wrong with periodization itself. Qualifying this, McHale wrote that this is only true 'in a certain sense, in terms of a certain conception of periodization'.⁷⁰ An intriguing statement, especially when considered in light of the discussion of Lukács' sense of periodization in contrast to that of Burgess. (For it can be imagined that McHale is alluding to the type of periodization that ring-fences one epoch from another, as opposed to the cross-cutting and pressing flat of time that the reader is presented with in Burgess's novels.) The problem with periodization surfaces most prominently in relation to Ulysess and The Name of the Rose, two novels that are for McHale at once modern and postmodern, and consequently opens up a fault-line between the two schools of thought. In the former, two 'tectonic' plates – the modernist half and the post modernist half – rub against one another. The first chapters of Ulysess provide a 'normal' modernist poetics, and the later chapters a parody of modernist poetics, the keys to which are labelled by McHale as 'mobile consciousness' and 'parallax'.⁷¹ While the former presupposes a notion of stability about the world through which the 'inward' and 'open' mobile consciousnesses of the characters wander with their 'direct interior monologue' and their 'free indirect discourse' in the novel of Ulysess, the latter is described by McHale in the following way:

Interior discourse, whether direct or free indirect, already involves a form of perspectivism or parallax. A character's interior construction of the world diverges from the authorial projection of it, and the 'angle' of this divergence serves to inform us about the structure of this character's consciousness. The obvious extension of this principle of parallax is to juxtapose two or more characters' different constructions of the same world, or same part of the

⁶⁹ Brian McHale, Constructing Postmodernism (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 43

⁷⁰ McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, p. 43

⁷¹ McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, pp. 43-47

world ... This multiplication of versions has two simultaneous functions: it both serves to confirm the stability of the world outside consciousness ... and at the same time exposes the similarities and differences between different minds.⁷²

In the postmodern half of Ulysses mobile consciousness and parallax are transformed into the 'mobile world' and the 'parallax of discourses'. '[T]here are no stable landmarks "out there" to measure consciousness against',⁷³ and 'characters are submerged in discourses, and a discursive parallax, a counterpoint of discourses'.⁷⁴ Nothing is really known for certain in the later chapters of Ulysses, according to McHale, and the distinction between hallucination and reality is continually elusive.⁷⁵ And it is here at the fault-line between the modern and postmodern Ulysses that there is the opportunity to understand the novels of Burgess containing the public personage as protagonist. For Burgess writes of a world wholly certain of its uncertainty. He is not unsettled by this, but instead time and again welds together conflicting and contradictory historical accounts and theories in order to demonstrate over and over again that 'true' histories are a fallacy. In this way he generates a parallax of biographical, historical and philosophical discourses - as is demonstrated in this thesis - through invoking the work of Immanuel Kant, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roland Barthes, Mikhail Bakhtin, Hayden White, Thomas M. Greene, Reinhart Koselleck and Umberto Eco, among others.

Of course, the relationships between the work of Burgess and Joyce have certainly not gone unnoticed before and have in fact been numerous noted. Burgess himself,⁷⁶ John J. Stinson,⁷⁷ Harold Bloom, Roger Lewis,⁷⁸ Alan Roughley,⁷⁹ and Andrew Biswell⁸⁰ have all discussed the borrowings from the 'Scylla and Charybdis' chapter of Ulysses in Nothing Like the Sun. Bloom went so far as to write, in The

⁷² McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, p. 46

⁷³ McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, p. 48

⁷⁴ McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, p. 52

⁷⁵ McHale, Constructing Postmodernism, pp. 48-51

⁷⁶ Anthony Burgess, 'Genesis and Headache', in Thomas McCormack, ed., Afterwords: Artists and Their Novels (New York: Harper Row, 1969), p. 42

⁷⁷ John J. Stinson, 'Nothing Like the Sun: The Faces in Bella Cohen's Mirror', pp. 89-103, in Geoffrey Aggeler, Critical Essays on Anthony Burgess (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall, 1986) pp. 89-103; John J. Stinson, Anthony Burgess Revisited (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1991)

⁷⁸ Roger Lewis, Anthony Burgess (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), p. 82

⁷⁹ Alan Roughley, 'Nothing Like the Sun: Anthony Burgess's Factification of Shakespeare's Life', Anthony Burgess Newsletter, 3 (December 2000), pp. 42-55, URL (consulted May 2005): <http://bu.univ-angers.fr/EXTRANET/AnthonyBURGESS/ABNews.html>

⁸⁰ Andrew Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess (London: Picador, 2005), pp. 287-288

Western Canon:⁸¹ 'I have a passion for Burgess's Nothing Like the Sun, but it lovingly repeats Ulysses without revising it'.⁸² And Burgess's borrowings are so intentional and so much a part of an individual that believed in the 'parallax of discourses' at a personal as well as historical and philosophical level that Á. I. Farkas in Will's Son and Jake's Peer has argued that the Joycean borrowings in Burgess's work are part of the wider self-associations of the author with James Joyce,⁸³ which in turn are part of the author's self-historicizing and self-mythologizing. No wonder Bloom confessed: 'Burgess, a loving disciple of Joyce, provides so loving an extension of Stephen's theory that I long ago jumbled the library scene and Burgess's imaginings together in my mind and am startled always, rereading Joyce, not to find much that I wrongly expect to find, which is gorgeously present in Burgess.'⁸⁴ Philippe Lejeune extending the sense in which Burgess saw his own biographical self as a parallax of discourses observed at the Second International Anthony Burgess Symposium at the University of Angers, France,⁸⁵ that Burgess in his (auto)biographical writing knowingly fits himself within pre-existing narratives of what an author is, and not only is it Joyce that is of central importance here. According to Lejeune, Burgess wrote in his autobiographical works in a detached and highly confident way, sure of the very smallest details of his life despite almost never referring to a diary - once again, certain of his uncertainty. Lejeune believed that the choice of 'confession' as a mode of writing was an unoriginal and uninspired choice, and followed St Augustine and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He also believed that Burgess's 'confessions' are more like reading biography or even fiction, because of the compressions in the text. The only thing that rescues the autobiographies from the mundane in Lejeune's opinion is the author's self-awareness of what it is he is doing. Burgess was determined to historicize himself, and also insert himself into history, by making his biography the biography of others, something that for his less ably skilled characters in The Malayan Trilogy and Any Old Iron was impossible. He, however,

⁸¹ Harold Bloom, The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages (1994; London: Papermac, 1996)

⁸² Bloom, Western Canon, p. 193

⁸³ see Á. I. Farkas, Will's Son and Jake's Peer: Anthony Burgess's Joycean Negotiations (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 2002)

⁸⁴ Bloom, Western Canon, p. 416

⁸⁵ Philippe Lejeune, 'The Autobiographical Pact in Burgess's "Confessions"', paper presented at the 2nd International Symposium on Anthony Burgess (University of Angers, France), 'The Lives of Anthony Burgess: Auto(biography) and Burgess', Musée des Beaux-arts, Angers, December 9–11, 2004.

was acutely aware that the real penetrates the fictional, and that the fictional also penetrates the real and that the relationship is ongoing and ever changing.

In the middle of researching for this thesis, I read Martin Amis's 1995 novel entitled The Information,⁸⁶ which in the beginning appears to be an extension of the idea behind William Golding's The Paper Men.⁸⁷ However, instead of a critic pursuing a novelist, in The Information there is a jealous author/book reviewer/vanity press employee (Richard Tull) pursuing a successful novelist (Gwyn Barry), and not so much pursuing as trailing after and plotting against him. For the majority of the novel sympathies are with the artist, Richard Tull, and his struggles to gain recognition, but as the novel closes it becomes apparent that the author has been playing a trick, and that the novel is about self-delusion. The novel is not about having sympathy for the suffering of the artist. It is about writing not being any easier for the successful novelist than the unsuccessful one.

While reading The Information I could not help projecting onto Tull and Barry the personages of Anthony Burgess and Kingsley Amis. In part I admit that this was due to my own Burgess-centred approach to reading and the idiosyncratic logic that arose out of this. Despite the path to the assertion, however, the alignment of Tull and Barry with Burgess and K. Amis is not without its justifications. The first of these justifications is an entry in K. Amis's memoirs that reads:

Over the years, starting with Tremor of Intent in 1966, I went on not being able to read John's [John Anthony Burgess Wilson's] novels – too much wordage, word-play, wordiness and not enough character, story, etc., to suit me. In fact the severance in what we had had in the way of a friendship could be traced to my failure to write to him when he sent me an inscribed copy of Tremor; I could neither have said I had liked it, nor, surely, could I have opted for any of the bullshitty alternatives about looking forward to reading it when. [sic.] I naturally avoided reviewing it or its successors. Over these same years John reviewed either all or nearly all my novels, every time in the most glowing terms. Naturally I was delighted, but proportionally embarrassed. I did make an exception by reviewing his 1985 when it came out in 1978, but with all the will in the world could not be much more than luke warm about it.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Martin Amis, The Information (London: Flamingo, 1995)

⁸⁷ William Golding, The Paper Men (1984; London: Faber and Faber, 1985; repr. 1990)

⁸⁸ Kingsley Amis, Memoirs (London: Hutchinson, 1991), p. 276

In his letters to Philip Larkin, K. Amis noted the lack of spark to Anthony Burgess,⁸⁹ and referred to him as 'ole A Burgess', and when Man of Nazareth was entered for the Arts Council National Book Award in 1979, for which Amis was the sole judge, he told Larkin that the thought of reading Burgess along with William Golding, Philip Roth and Doris Lessing made him want to be shot dead.⁹⁰ To Robert Conquest, Amis wrote about Burgess's 'shitty' piece in the Observer on Robert Graves, and when the novelization of Under Milk Wood was being discussed, Amis rejected the idea of Burgess being the one to perform the task.⁹¹ Further, he was dismissive of The Wanting Seed when a copy was sent to him from Heinemann,⁹² and although later complimentary about the novel and also A Clockwork Orange, this amounts to little when we consider how publicly he derided Burgess in his memoirs: a lasting testament to his dislike.

Amis viewed Burgess as obscure and overly experimental, uninterested in the concerns of a traditional author such as himself: story and character. This was paired with a genuine sense of animosity from Amis, something which Burgess refused to reciprocate publicly, but which could well be seen to underlie his comments made in You've Had Your Time about Amis's move away from literary progressivism towards conservatism (YHYT, pp. 82-83, 140). Amis and Burgess were not only divided in their personal opinions of one another, however. When Brideshead Revisited was adapted for television, Burgess was well and truly behind the skill with which it had been produced. He is quoted as having said of it:

Perhaps I am going too far but I think that it is the best piece of fictional television ever made. It is a remarkable achievement. It is the book. In some ways it is better than the book. [Jeremy] Irons is remarkable, he is on screen effectively for the whole series and I think [John] Gielgud and [Laurence] Olivier give the best performances of their lives. They are not rushed into dramatic tricks, they are totally absorbed by Waugh himself.⁹³

⁸⁹ This is along with Saul Bellow, V. S. Naipaul and Malcolm Bradbury (Zachary Leader, ed., The Letters of Kingsley Amis [London: HarperCollins, 2000], p. 986).

⁹⁰ Leader, Letters of Kingsley Amis, p. 1008

⁹¹ Leader, Letters of Kingsley Amis, p. 1056

⁹² Leader, Letters of Kingsley Amis, p. 596

⁹³ Bryan Appleyard, 'Hopes for "Brideshead" as High as the Price', The Times (23 September 1981), p. 15

In contrast, Amis thought that Brideshead Revisited was a 'dead book' and a 'dead film'.⁹⁴

Burgess and Amis also had political divisions. In February 1967, during the Vietnam War, Burgess, along with Alan Sillitoe, Ivy Compton-Burnett and others, opposed Kingsley Amis when he stated that American policies in Vietnam were given 'unequivocal support' from a large body of opinion in the UK.⁹⁵ The divergent ideologies of Burgess and Amis, along with the divide between experimental and traditional, however, were something that not only the authors themselves perpetuated, but critics as well. Jonathan Raban wrote, 'Reading Napoleon Symphony is not unlike reading an account of a great novel by an agile and sophisticated critic', and he was of the opinion that the ideas on which the novel is 'hung' have a greater force than the novel itself. 'What Burgess fails at, Kingsley Amis does with near-contemptuous ease.'⁹⁶ Even those that did not think Amis such a natural writer as Raban still viewed Burgess's work as obscure. Roger Sale wrote: 'Amis is frightened of life, no question, and much possessed by death, too, but he won't face up to that ... won't make that the stuff of his books.' While at the same time, he called Napoleon Symphony, '363 pages of nonsense', and qualified this by writing that, 'to imitate musical form is to do just that, no more.'⁹⁷

In The Information, Richard Tull's novels are always reviewed by people neither able to affirm nor disaffirm the writer's brilliance because they can never finish them, and when Tull's novel Untitled is distributed among agents and publishers everyone is afflicted with a neurological condition ranging from migraine upwards in severity, and few manage to ascend more than the first ten pages. Although such extreme reactions to Burgess's work may not yet have been recorded, the sense in which his novels are opaque has often come to the surface in reviews. At the end of 1974, for example, the New York Times Book Review published a list of 'noteworthy' titles. Napoleon Symphony was entered with the line: 'Even when we

⁹⁴ The Times, 'The Pope's Battalions ... Battling to the Last', (16 December 1981), p. 13

⁹⁵ Brigid Brophy, Peter Buckman, Anthony Burgess, Ivy Compton-Burnett, Len Deighton, Gillian Freeman, B. S. Johnson, Julian Mitchell, John Mortimer, Alan Sillitoe and William Trevor, 'American Policies in Vietnam' (Letter to the Editor), The Times (2 February 1967), p. 13

⁹⁶ Raban, Jonathan, 'What Shall We Do about Anthony Burgess?', Encounter, 43 (November 1974), p. 87

⁹⁷ Roger Sale, 'Fooling Around, and Serious Business', Hudson Review 27 (Winter 1974-1975), p. 627

don't know what all the pyrotechnics are celebrating, we can still enjoy a good display'.⁹⁸ The commendation was an extract from an earlier review of the novel by Sara Sanborn,⁹⁹ which had been a mixed appreciation. She wrote: 'There is little sense of historic time, place and condition; except for the musical tie-in, the novel could as well have been about Henry V or Bismarck. This is part of the point, though it is unlikely that the blandness of effect was intended.'¹⁰⁰ She went on to criticize the war scenes for the outcome of their effect being 'that of six men on a small stage representing a battle', and further that 'the lines aren't good enough to enlarge the narrow action.' 'Throughout the novel,' she wrote, 'so much is thrown together in a little room that the value of everything is diminished'. It was only due to '[m]otifs and metaphors [that] bounce from one [Burgess novel] to another like sonic waves', that Sanborn was able to commend the novel at all.

More optimistically, Ion Trewin remarked from this side of the Atlantic that Napoleon Symphony was 'a work of astonishing intellectual capacity,' although he did not 'pretend to have caught all the nuances.'¹⁰¹ While, seeing through Burgess's opaqueness, John Mills argued in Queen's Quarterly how Napoleon Symphony works from the first 'insignificant' chord to the Promethean theme of the last movement.¹⁰² And another reviewer went so far as to say that 'it is hard to believe that the details of French history were not organised by God specifically with an eye to Mr Burgess's taste for comedy, rhymes, misunderstanding and stylised coincidence.'¹⁰³ Emma Tennant, meanwhile, noted the dedication to Stanley Kubrick at the beginning of the novel and the corresponding filmic quality of the work.¹⁰⁴ These complimentary analyses are only the very beginnings, however, of coming to understand Burgess and realize his importance.

In 1977, M. Amis wrote a review of ABBA ABBA for the New Statesman,¹⁰⁵ in which he discussed the categories of 'A' novelist and 'B' novelist in Burgess's Joysprick. Burgess had written in Joysprick:

⁹⁸ New York Times Book Review, 'Christmas Books', (1 December 1974), p. 70

⁹⁹ Sara Sanborn, 'Napoleon Symphony', New York Times Book Review (9 June 1974), p. 5

¹⁰⁰ Sanborn, 'Napoleon Symphony', p. 5

¹⁰¹ Ion Trewin, 'High Jinks', The Times (1 May 1976), p. 11

¹⁰² John Mills, 'Novels', Queen's Quarterly 82 (Summer 1975), pp. 292-294

¹⁰³ Paul Chipchase, 'Imperial rag', Tablet (7 December 1974), pp. 1185-1186

¹⁰⁴ See Emma Tennant, 'Josephine Wheels', The Listener (24 October 1974), p. 552

¹⁰⁵ Martin Amis, 'Abba Abba by Anthony Burgess', New Statesman (June, 1977), reprinted in The War Against Cliché (London: Jonathan Cape, 2001), pp. 113-116

There is a kind of novelist (conveniently designated as Class 1), usually popular, sometimes wealthy, in whose work language is a zero quantity, transparent, unsexuctive, the overtones of connotation and ambiguity totally damped ... To the other kind of novelist (Class 2) it is important that the opacity of language be exploited, so that ambiguities, puns and centrifugal connotations are to be enjoyed rather than regretted, and whose books, [are] made out of words as much as characters and incidents ...¹⁰⁶

Amis substitutes Class 1 and Class 2 with A and B, but this aside, more notable is the fact that the descriptions coincide rather neatly with Barry and Tull respectively, and a certain logic would suggest that if this is an intentional move then the original classifier (Burgess) might well be alluded to alongside his classifications. Even if it is a subconscious one, there is an argument to be made, and one might go so far as to say that replacing Class 1 with A and Class 2 with B was intentional, making AB (Anthony Burgess) both Class 1 and Class 2 (which is in actual fact the position that Burgess argues for W. Somerset Maugham in Joysprick, and one that he also hints at for himself).

Aficionados of Martin Amis will tell you that Richard Tull and Gwyn Barry, if they have any corresponding real-life entities then these are the author himself and Julian Barnes. Amis meanwhile denies altogether that it is a roman à clef, and claims that both characters are based upon him.¹⁰⁷ Of course, one way in which to overcome this would be to turn to Umberto Eco's conception of possible worlds, whereby meaning can be constructed without the voluntary consent of the author through what is labelled 'hermetic drift' and 'connotative neoplasm'.¹⁰⁸ For according to Eco, 'There is a phenomenon of connotation when a sign function (Expression plus Content) becomes in turn the expression of a further content.'¹⁰⁹ The 'expressions', in this instance the characters (Tull and Barry) and their 'content' (the people upon whom they are based), through connotation can express further 'content' (that is,

¹⁰⁶ Joysprick, p. 15

¹⁰⁷ On 19 August 2004 I posted a question on the Martin Amis Discussion Forum: 'The Information – is it a roman a clef?'

(<http://discuss.albion.edu/viewtopic.php?t=170&highlight=roman+clef&sid=7ac572044e6685b41971d6d8cb09499f>). The details cited here are from the responses received. I am grateful to James Diedrick, Professor of English, Albion College, for highlighting the interview in which Amis claims Tull and Barry to be himself (Graham Fuller, 'The Prose and Cons of Martin Amis', Interview Magazine, 25, 5 [May 1995]).

¹⁰⁸ see Umberto Eco, The Limits of Interpretation (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 29

¹⁰⁹ Eco, Limits of Interpretation, p. 29

Burgess and K. Amis). It is enough to assert here, however, that Amis's novel opens our eyes to the way in which Burgess can be viewed as the literary outsider in his time, even though his output was prolific. And it must be noted that 'prolific' in relation to Burgess does not simply refer to the thirty-four novels or the seventeen or more books of non-fiction, the five translations, the dramatic works or the introductions to the work of others. There are also regular articles in The Listener to be considered, articles in The New York Times, The Times and the Times Literary Supplement, and in magazines such as Horizon. There are then television documentaries and appearances, recorded lectures, translations, unpublished materials held at universities and elsewhere, not to mention Burgess's musical output. Indeed, there have been entire theses written in relation to Burgess on the subjects of journalism, James Joyce, and music alone, such is the weight of his work in these areas.¹¹⁰

All of this did not stop Roger Lewis re-invoking the view of Burgess as outsider in his recent biography, however, and continuing to perpetuate the view of the author as an obscure Tull-like Class 2 novelist, as K. Amis and others had done previously. Lewis wrote:

... the paradox with Burgess is that his work is a decoy. In his books you do not find private turmoil, or ambiguity or equivocation. He gives no sense of an introspective mind. He simply presents things, externals. His subjects may be passion, betrayal, deeds of violence, death, yet the tone is supercilious and detached. It is almost as if, in a crazy way, he didn't exist. There is a sort of psychic emptiness or numbness; he was a man who at his centre was a ghost or shadow, such is the dissociation of his sensibility ...¹¹¹

Lewis mistakes here the self-reflexivity of metafiction that he finds in the work of other novelists for a philosophical mind and sees it as lacking in Burgess's work. This we know from earlier examining Rushdie and Grass is an error. And although it is true that Burgess's work is often filled with action and dialogue, over and above overt self-reflexivity, this does not make it any less philosophical, and any less metafictional. In addition, that which Lewis describes as a decoy can in fact be read as a part of the parallax of biographical, historical and philosophical discourses ever present in the author's work. For Burgess was less an outsider in terms of the

¹¹⁰ For a list of theses see Appendix. See also Farkas, Will's Son and Jake's Peer.

¹¹¹ Lewis, Anthony Burgess, p. 211

philosophical underpinnings of his work and his appreciation of the contemporary climate in which he wrote than for the way in which he wrote, his preference for one narrative form over another. Lewis undervalued, for example, the many philosophical hurdles that Burgess had to overcome when writing, especially when writing literary novels about historical individuals. Paradoxically, at the same time, Lewis captured in his complaint an essence of what Burgess's writing on the historical individual was all about: the instance whereby individuals who enter into history of necessity take on an air of universality, something that Sanborn, equally critically, identified of the Napoleon in Napoleon Symphony, when she wrote that he could be any number of historic figures (including Henry V and Bismarck). Sanborn and Lewis both saw the interplay between universal and particular that Burgess undertook and yet wholeheartedly dismissed its value, seeing it as nothing more than innocent and misguided fumbling. Let us not pretend, however, that Burgess did not purposefully invite a good deal of this criticism, knowing full well that he would be misinterpreted, and even declaring himself that Napoleon Symphony was a failure within the very pages of the novel.

Times have now changed, enabling Burgess to be better understood. The claim by writers such as Erich Auerbach,¹¹² and later Reinhart Koselleck and White, of the indivisibility of narrative from history, and how histories and individuals trope other histories and individuals, gathered momentum in the middle of the twentieth century and has now peaked in the literary consciousness. But it must be said, this is something that is good and bad. Alastair Fowler wrote in the TLS recently, '... the boundary between novel and history has blurred. All biographies must in part be imaginary constructs ...'.¹¹³ Of course, the acceptance of the fact that biography resorts to conjecture, or 'imaginary constructs', is most welcome, but the idea that the division between novel and history has blurred is potentially a dangerous one. When considering fiction about history it is often presumed that the line between fiction and non-fiction must continually be questioned. Why choose a fictional mode rather than a non-fictional mode in order to write about history or biography? What is real and what is fictional in these novels? The questions follow from the premise that fiction is

¹¹² See Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 39-40

¹¹³ Alastair Fowler, 'Enter Speed: A Feverish Life of Shakespeare, Like History on Amphetamines', Review of Stephen Greenblatt's Will in the World, TLS (February 4, 2005), p. 3

less well researched and less scientific than history, and that history when it is central to a novel is often nothing more than a pull for fact hungry readers. It suggests that there is a lack of distinction between history, biography and fiction, when in fact there is a distinction. History and biography resort to conjecture and supposition out of necessity, whereas the devices of conjecture and supposition in fiction can be employed for their own end, forever expanding the questions that literature is able to ask. Further, whereas fiction might fail to cohere, defamiliarize and make absurd, biography typically seeks to cohere and convince. As Thomas M. Greene wrote:

The literary text offers itself to whatever random reader investigates it with both an invitation and a resistance to the intuitive intelligence. It exists only to be read – that is its reason for being – but it presents to the reader a kind of density that can be more or less deeply penetrated, but never fully. It is this element of resistance in the literary work which makes the task of the reader unique and problematic, and which makes the moral character of public construal so delicate an issue. Who finally can judge the virtue of a reading?¹¹⁴

As I have progressed through the writing of this thesis, the question of the distinction between history and fiction has become less and less important and has been replaced by an interest in the plasticity (and elasticity) of history and the suppositional elements of it, the very things that Lukács wanted the historical novel to get away from. It has also been the case that less and less I have searched to determine what Burgess meant by this or that, and to explore the novels instead through hypothesis and imaginative supposition, and embrace the ambiguities, in order to better reach the depths of the works and draw out their textures, even at the risk of error.

For example, Burgess wrote a short story called ‘The Muse’, discussed in the chapter on Nothing Like the Sun. The short story is about Shakespeare and makes many mentions of Kant. Since Nothing Like the Sun is also about Shakespeare, I conjectured in the chapter that it was worth attempting to make sense of Nothing Like the Sun through the elements of Kant’s philosophy earlier raised in ‘The Muse’. A further instance of imaginative supposition comes in the address of The End of the World News. In the ‘Foreword’ to the novel, Burgess mentions a ‘young German’ by the name of ‘K’ interested in ‘time and space’. By the time I was writing the chapter on The End of the World News I had been reading a number of philosophical theories

¹¹⁴ Thomas M. Greene, Calling from Diffusion: Hermeneutics of the Promenade (Northampton, MA: Smith College, 2002), p. 67

of history, one of which happened to be Reinhart Koselleck's Futures Past.¹¹⁵ Koselleck is German and was born after Burgess. He is a young German interested in 'time and space' and therefore although not a concrete certainty for 'K',¹¹⁶ relating Koselleck's work to The End of the World News is a worthwhile exercise, for reasons that I discuss in the chapter.

In addition to pieces of supposition with specific identifiable bases, I have undertaken more general supposition as well. For instance in thinking about history, I have allowed myself to be guided into reading Hayden White and Erich Auerbach, and then on to related theories from Umberto Eco and Mikhail Bakhtin. The work of Eco, in particular, has encouraged me to think in terms of hypotheses, and rather than searching for truths, or verifiable facts, what I have searched for are hypotheses that can to greater or lesser extents be upheld and help to explain. This does not mean a disregard for the published and unpublished material that Burgess produced, and a preference for theoretical standpoints. It means letting theory help tease out ideas that might not otherwise be apparent.

The novels contained in this thesis are not biographies, but are fictional novels that contain public personages as protagonists and actual events. They play with the flaws of language, and among many other things, expose the often two-dimensional nature of biography and theory when applied to the world (see Nothing Like the Sun), explore the way in which a man's theories (and even name) can shape consciousness (see MF), play with theories of human universality (notably in Napoleon Symphony), investigate the malleability of persons and events and the distraction of autobiographical interference (see ABBA ABBA), manipulate chronology and produce anachronisms for personal and political purposes (see Earthly Powers), demonstrate how the play with ambiguity offers opportunities to extend historical understanding (see The End of the World News), show how troping can infiltrate the very corners of a biography, and highlight the importance of taking into account 'perspective' (see Mozart and the Wolf Gang), and finally, they illustrate that however close to a history it is possible to get, it can never be ignored that reader and writer are both alienated from the time that is past (see A Dead Man in Deptford).

¹¹⁵ Reinhart Koselleck, Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time, trans. and intro. Keith Tribe (1979; Columbia University Press, 2004)

¹¹⁶ Kafka and Kant are other contenders, but each (including Koselleck) is somehow let down in the description Burgess gives of the individual. This is intentional, the reduction of a name to an initial expands the possible number of individuals it could be.

The first chapter of this thesis approaches the novel Nothing Like the Sun, a work focused on Shakespeare's love-life and in particular Anne Whateley, the Dark Lady, Mr W. H. and the Rival Poet. By exploring Burgess's other writings on Shakespeare, the chapter finds, as mentioned, an appropriate means of interpretation through Kant. Out of this interpretation the narrator's drunkenness and his fanciful claims can be better understood. However, while the Kantian philosophy is allowed to structure the reality within which Burgess's public personages are held and constructed in Nothing Like the Sun, it notably does not enter the ontology of the novel.

In the second chapter, MF, a novel whose reality is constructed out of structuralism, incest and riddles (where the myths of Oedipus and the Algonquin/Iroquois Indians converge), is explored in a more straightforward and less speculative way than Nothing Like the Sun. Rather than look elsewhere for a means of interpretation, it looks to the structuralism that the novel very directly points the reader towards. In doing so it not only uncovers the importance of Claude Lévi-Strauss, whose work The Scope of Anthropology¹¹⁷ inspired the novel, but also the intricate relation of the novel to Roland Barthes's seminal work, the 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives'.¹¹⁸ The chapter also exposes a twist at the end of the novel in which the largely a-historical and a-political nature of structuralism gains political and historical strength in relation to race.

In Napoleon Symphony, which is considered in the third chapter, the 'cognizant and ideological' Napoleon and his equally intelligent Josephine work their way through Shakespearean and classical mythological masks, before Napoleon ends up on St Helena represented in numerous nineteenth-century narrative styles from Austen to Bulwer-Lytton. In the process lines from George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four appear in French in Josephine's dreams, and Napoleon becomes Jesus Christ. All this is done coldly and calmly as Burgess traces the musical movements of Beethoven's 'Eroica' symphony. The distance that is established in the Nothing Like the Sun and MF between author and subject matter is taken even further here.

¹¹⁷ C. Lévi-Strauss, The Scope of Anthropology, trans. Sherry Ortner Paul and Robert A. Paul, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967)

¹¹⁸ Roland Barthes, 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives', Barthes: Selected Writings, ed. and trans. Susan Sontag (1982; Fontana, 1983), pp. 251-295

In contrast to the honed detachment in Napoleon Symphony, ABBA ABBA is a novel in which authorial detachment and ambivalence is replaced by Burgess's determination to insert his autobiographical self into the narrative. He does this to a certain extent in MF where the narrator at the end of the novel walks along Lake Bracciano, a place where Burgess himself lived. He also does this with the drunken narrator, Mr Burgess in Nothing Like the Sun. And, at the end of Napoleon Symphony Burgess presents a poem entitled 'An Epistle to the Reader'. In ABBA ABBA, however, the subject of the fourth chapter, Burgess inserts himself most obviously, and awkwardly, into the narrative as Gulielmi and J. J. Wilson. The effect is an overshadowing distraction from the time Keats spent in Rome at the end of his life, where a possible meeting with the Italian poet G. G. Belli is explored.

The focus of the fifth chapter is on one of Burgess's best-known novels, Earthly Powers. It is a large novel and difficult to summarize, and the route that is traced through it is guided by its main characters, Carlo Campanati, Kenneth M. Toomey and Godfrey Manning. They are each representations of real-life persons: Pope John XXIII, W. Somerset Maugham and Jim Jones (perpetrator of the November 1978 Jonestown massacre in Guyana). The chapter explains how these characters are at once approximations of their 'originals' and also how Burgess's attempts to superannuate the influence of Maugham and Pope John XXIII on his work and life must of necessity fail.

In approaching The End of the World News there is far less to go on than other novels in terms of criticism by Burgess and others: the novel is presented by its author as an overly avant-garde work, without much purpose, focusing on Freud, Trotsky and science fiction with ambivalence. In order to combat this, I look in the sixth chapter to the cumulative lessons learnt from the earlier novels and take a speculative step, as mentioned, in comparing the novel to a work by Reinhart Koselleck: Futures Past. The comparison proves highly fruitful and broadens the importance of the novel to the wider thesis and its considerations.

By the time the discussion of Mozart and the Wolf Gang is reached in Chapter 7, the thesis has moved across three decades of Burgess's work, from the 1960s to the 1990s. Burgess's interest in presenting the public personage as protagonist it appears has not waned. Mozart and the Wolf Gang concisely demonstrates, through its employment of opera libretto, film script and colloquy how perspectives are of as much importance as the historical events that they portray. It is also a novel that tests

the elasticity and plasticity of historical representation through its use of among others, Stendhalian tropes.

The discussion of Mozart and the Wolf Gang prepares the way for the final chapter on A Dead Man in Deptford. In its exploration of Christopher Marlowe's life and death, the novel, it is argued in Chapter 8, presents to the reader a set of possible conjectures. These sometimes appear quite implausible, and at other times more than likely. With the help of Eco's theory of 'possible worlds', the novel is shown to be the crescendo where Burgess demonstrates the nuance that is possible when creating a public personage in fiction, and how biography can so obviously fall short of this. Burgess carries the reader along in A Dead Man in Deptford, adding colour and texture to the language and the Elizabethan world he creates, before making clear that it is a history, no matter how hard the attempt to recreate is, and it is a place from which ultimately we are unavoidably alienated, not because the people of Marlowe's world were so different from 'us' but because of all the writing that comes between 'us' and 'them'. The novel and its analysis in the chapter provide, as the chapter itself concludes, a satisfactory summary for the entire thesis from Nothing Like the Sun through to A Dead Man in Deptford.

CHAPTER 1

The Kantian Reality of Nothing Like the Sun

I begin this thesis and its investigation with a study of Nothing Like the Sun, a novel dedicated to C. P. Snow and his wife,¹ which is about the, or rather, a love life of William Shakespeare. As the subtitle of Nothing Like the Sun ('A Story of Shakespeare's Love-life') indicates, and as those familiar with Shakespeare's biography will know, the playwright's love life is not an area where it is appropriate to apply the definite article. Neither is it a place where the term 'story' is out of context, given the amount of supposition that surrounds Shakespeare's life. Ivor Brown wrote: 'For nothing between [Shakespeare's] baptism and banns have we any certain authority.'² And even the banns do not resolve the mysterious questions surrounding the circumstances of Shakespeare's marriage to Anne Hathaway. Nothing Like the Sun speculates upon these circumstances, and also looks at the possibility of infidelity in the marriage of Shakespeare and Anne based upon the sonnets concerning the Dark Lady and the young man.

Nothing Like the Sun begins its story in the late 1570s as Shakespeare, known in the novel as WS,³ is entering his teenage years. Present are his sisters, Anne and Joan, and his brothers, Gilbert and Richard. Joan is the second Joan born to William Shakespeare's parents, the first having died before Shakespeare's birth. Contentious is the fact that Burgess labels Gilbert 'the family idiot' (Nothing Like the Sun, p. 3) and also that Richard's 'left leg was shorter than his right by an inch and a half' (NLTS, p. 4). By Burgess's own confession, there is nothing to support him here, but equally there will be a long wait until someone proves that the characteristics he assigns to

¹ Charles Snow and his wife Pamela (née Hansford Johnson) were friends of Anthony Burgess and he accredits Charles Snow as being the only person to commend him on his act of self-review in the Yorkshire Post, following the publication of Inside Mr. Enderby under the pseudonym of Joseph Kell in 1963 (see You've Had Your Time, pp. 61-62, 71-73). A copy of the review is reprinted in Roger Lewis's biography of Burgess (Roger Lewis, Anthony Burgess [London: Faber and Faber, 2002], pp. 313-314).

² Ivor Brown, Shakespeare (London: Collins, 1949; repr. 1963), p. 49

³ Burgess wrote of the pseudonym: 'After a draft page [of Nothing Like the Sun], I decided that Shakespeare must be called WS. Too many conditions cluster around the full name; it needs to be purged of all the harmonics in a novel which has no concern with greatness. WS – it seemed to me [was] sufficiently neutral.' (Anthony Burgess, 'Genesis and Headache', in Thomas McCormack, ed., Afterwords: Artists and Their Novels [New York: Harper Row, 1969], p. 35)

Gilbert and Richard were not true.⁴ Encountered in the first part of the novel are the low fortunes of William's father John, and the marriage of Shakespeare to Anne Hathaway, alongside the death of Shakespeare's sister Anne and the subsequent arrival of William's brother Edmund.

In Chapter IV, WS goes to Shottery with his friends S. Brailes, Ned Thorpe and Dick Quiney to feast and revel in the Mayday celebrations and to find the figure of Shakespeare's desire, a 'black one, her hair's and body's scents a torment to be whipped away in steady lashes of a rod to spare not.' (NLTS, p. 23). She is not a woman that is black, but a woman with black hair, Alice Studley. He however, after seeing Alice on the arm of another man goes to get drunk and awakens the next morning in the woods at Shottery, lying next to Anne Hathaway, who then forces herself upon him (NLTS, pp. 28-29). It echoes A Midsummer Night's Dream and the partner exchange system in the forest outside Athens: Anne is Helena to WS's Demetrius, while Alice and her man are Hermia and Lysander, and the 'love-in-idleness' is alcohol.

Burgess draws the act of bringing back the maypole and the Mayday revels from The Anatomie of Abuses (1583) by the Puritan Philip Stubbes.⁵ As he explained in his biography Shakespeare:

What has been passed down to us as an anaemically pretty children's frippery was then, as Stubbes realised only too well, a pagan glorification of the ithyphallus, with al fresco fornication galore. There was a good deal of lust about in Stratford, as in other Tudor towns and villages, and some of this lust was not secretive but periodically exalted as an aspect of that whole life-process – the breeding of animals, the burgeoning of the earth – in which an agricultural society was so desperately involved. Young men and girls lost

⁴ Burgess, 'Genesis and Headache', p. 35

⁵ Stubbes wrote of Mayday: '... [the] chiefest jewel [that the Mayday celebrants] bring from thence is their May-pole, which they bring home with great veneration, as thus. They have twenty or forty yoke of oxen, every ox having a sweet nose-gay of flowers placed on the tip of his horns; and these oxen draw home this May-pole (this stinking idol, rather) which is covered all over with flowers and herbs, bound round about with strings from the top to the bottom, and sometime painted with variable colours, with two or three hundred men, women and children following it with great devotion. And thus being reared up with handkerchiefs and flags streaming on the top, they straw the ground about, bind green boughs about it, set up summer-halls, bowers, and arbours hard by it; and then they fall to banquet and feast, to leap and dance about it, as the heathen people did at the dedication of their idols, whereof this is a perfect pattern, or rather the thing itself.' (Philip Stubbes, The Anatomie of Abuses [1583], cited in Shakespeare, p. 55)

their virginities early in those days, and we cannot think that Will was an exception.⁶

WS's meeting with Anne Hathaway under the influence of alcohol at a time of revelry such as this suggests not love but lust. It is part of Burgess's programme to humanize Shakespeare and make him just like everybody else. At the same time sex with Anne is part of an entrapment, for WS is tricked into marriage upon the pretence that the pregnant Anne Hathaway is carrying his child inside of her (see NLTS, p. 36), hence it is not only an illustration of Shakespeare's flaws, but also Anne's flaws and the flaws in their marriage.

Anne's entrapment of WS is not the only aspersion that the novel casts upon the couple's relationship. After the first four chapters and a total of thirty pages, WS meets the character of Anne Whateley. This is not an invented character, but the imagined embodiment of a name that rests besides that of 'William Shaxpere' on a marriage licence issued by the Diocese of Worcester, the day before William Shakespeare's marriage to Anne Hathaway at Temple Grafton on 28 November 1582.⁷ Over a century ago, Sidney Lee wrote:

A difficulty has been imported into the narration of the poet's matrimonial affairs by the assumption of his identity with one 'William Shakespeare [sic.],' to whom, according to an entry in the Bishop of Worcester's register, a license was issued on November 27, 1582 (the day before the signing of the Hathaway bond), authorising his marriage with Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton. The theory that the maiden name of Shakespeare's wife was Whateley is quite untenable, and it is unsafe to assume that the bishop's clerk, when making a note of the grant of the license in his register, erred so extensively as to write 'Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton' for 'Anne Hathaway of Shottery.' The husband of Anne Whateley cannot reasonably be identified with the poet. He was doubtless another of the numerous William Shakespeares who abounded in the diocese of Worcester. Had a license for the poet's marriage been secured on November 27, it is unlikely that the Shottery husbandmen would have entered next day into a bond 'against impediments,' the execution of which might well have been demanded as a preliminary to the grant of a license but was wholly supererogatory after the grant was made.⁸

⁶ Shakespeare, p. 55

⁷ Where the names were recorded as 'William Shagspere' and 'Anne Hathwey' (Shakespeare, p. 56).

⁸ Sidney Lee, A Life of William Shakespeare (1898; Royston: Oracle, 1996), p. 23-24

However, Burgess was not the first to think differently from Lee about Anne Whateley. Ivor Brown wrote of the marriage licence:

On November 27, 1582, an entry was made in the episcopal register at Worcester. This set down the issue of a marriage licence to William Shaxpere and Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton. On the next day two yeomen of Stratford, Fulk Sandells and John Richardson, agreed to pay forty pounds should any legal consideration arise to prevent the marriage of William Shagspere and 'Anne Hathaway of Stratford in the Dioces of Worcester maiden.' What was sought was a marriage between these two after a single reading of the banns instead of after the usual three. It was the object of Sandells and Richardson to indemnify the Bishop and his officials for any action or suit arising from the grant of this special licence. They were, in fact, guaranteeing the absence of let or hindrance such as consanguinity or previous marriage would provide.⁹

This led Brown to deduce that since Shottery and Temple Grafton could not, as Sidney Lee had argued, have been confused:

I am inclined to believe there was an Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton and that she was beaten on the post by Anne Hathaway of Stratford (which included Shottery). The latter lady had the stronger claim and powerful friends. The suspicion that the young man, after an 'affair' at Shottery, had lost his heart elsewhere, would give further cause for the haste with which the Hathaway champions descended, money in hand, upon Worcester ...¹⁰

In his biography, Shakespeare, Burgess followed a similar argument to Brown for the existence of Anne Whateley and her involvement with the William Shakespeare in question:

... a marriage licence was issued between a certain William Shaxpeare and a certain Anne Whateley of Temple Grafton. This is recorded clearly in the Worcester episcopal register. Few doubt that this Shaxpere was Anne Hathaway's Shagspere, but some have doubted whether there was such a person as Anne Whateley and, knowing the orthographical fantasies of Tudor scribes, have affirmed that 'Whateley' was a somewhat extreme version of 'Hathaway'. But Anne Hathaway came from Shottery, not Temple Grafton, and no amount of ingenuity can turn the one place into the other, geographically or orthographically. Both places lie west of Stratford, but if Shottery is going to be absorbed by some bigger unit, then this would be Stratford rather than Temple Grafton. Indeed, this has long happened, Shottery

⁹ Brown, Shakespeare, p. 49

¹⁰ Brown, Shakespeare, p. 52

now being a mere suburb of Stratford. Temple Grafton stands aloof from the absorption, with Binton and Dodwell and Drayton set as a triple barrier ... I along with others, such as Frank Harris, may be forgiven for believing that Will entered on a forced marriage with a woman he did not really love, and the lovelessness of the marriage was one of his reasons for leaving Stratford and seeking a new life in London.¹¹

Brown and Burgess, however, should not be taken as the final word on the existence of Anne Whateley. A. L. Rowse put forward yet another argument:

After her father's death Anne had moved out of the old home [Hewlands Farm at Shottery, i.e. Anne Hathaway's Cottage], to her relatives at Temple Grafton or to Stratford – at any rate more accessible to the attentions, the 'sportive blood', of the youth so much her junior. By November, at least, it was clear that she was pregnant, and at the end of the month young William and two friends of hers rode off to Worcester, where the diocesan registry was, to obtain a licence to marry. For Shakespeare was a minor – so that consent of his parents was necessary; and there had to be two sureties on behalf of the bride to look after her interests – two neighbours, friends of her father. All was above board, but there was need for some hurry for Advent was about to begin, when there was a close season for marriages, without a special and expensive licence, and after Septuagesima fell a similar inhibited season until April, when Anne would be eight months gone with child. So after only once calling the banns, William and Anne were married on 30 November or 1 December, either at Worcester or more probably at Temple Grafton.¹²

Michael Wood in his recent 'search' for Shakespeare, meanwhile, chose to think of the marriage licence as a false lead, the product of a long and tiring day, confident that the Anne could be none other than Hathaway,¹³ the very position that Lee long ago rejected.

The inclusion of Anne Whateley in Nothing Like the Sun is part of a broader play with ideas and biographical theories surrounding Shakespeare that neither began nor ended with the novel. It is there in the novels The Right to an Answer, Enderby's Dark Lady, A Dead Man in Deptford; the short stories 'The Muse: A Sort of SF Story'¹⁴ and 'A Meeting in Valladolid'¹⁵; the biography, Shakespeare; in the essays

¹¹ Shakespeare, pp. 57-60

¹² A. L. Rowse, William Shakespeare (London: Macmillan, 1963), p. 57

¹³ Michael Wood, In Search of Shakespeare (Part 1), BBC2, 28 June 2003, 9.15pm-10.15pm.

¹⁴ Anthony Burgess, 'The Muse: A Sort of SF Story', The Hudson Review, 20th Anniversary Issue, Vol. 21, No. 1 (Spring 1968), pp. 109-126; Anthony Burgess, 'The Muse', in Judith Burnley, ed., Penguin Modern Stories 7 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971), pp. 7-27; Burgess, 'The Muse', in The Year's Best Science Fiction No. 3 (London, 1970), cited in P. J. Handley, 'A Fictional Theory of Language: A Study of the Structural Significance of Some Novels by

and reviews, 'Genesis and Headache', 'Will in the Women's Room',¹⁶ 'Mr W. H.',¹⁷ 'What Shakespeare Smelt',¹⁸ 'Dr Rowstus'¹⁹ and 'In Search of Shakespeare the Man';²⁰ in the ballet suite 'Mr W. S.' (see You've Had Your Time, p. 309),²¹ in the unpublished musical film script 'Will!';²² and, in the television script for an unaired serialization on Shakespeare's life, which I have been fortunate enough to peruse at the International Anthony Burgess Foundation in Manchester.²³

In The Right to an Answer, published almost half a decade before Nothing Like the Sun, the reader is introduced to Ted Arden, landlord of The Black Swan (a pub in the suburbs of 'a rather large smug Midland city'). He is described thus:

You only had to look at Ted Arden to see that William Shakespeare had got his face and forehead (if not what lay behind the forehead) from the Ardens. A strong breed, the Ardens, while the Shakespeares must have been as weak as water. Ted had the fiddle-shaped brows, the big-lidded eyes of the best-known Shakespeare portrait [i.e. Droeshout]; he had also a kind of charm which, despite the strong Midland accent and the broken teeth, could obviously get him anywhere – the Arden charm which Shakespeare himself must have inherited. (RA, pp. 5-6)

At the end of The Right to an Answer it is revealed that Ted has a novel theory about Shakespeare's downfall:

Anthony Burgess', MA thesis, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Birmingham (October 1974), p. 19

¹⁵ 'A Meeting in Valladolid', The Devil's Mode, pp. 5-21

¹⁶ 'Will in the Women's Room', Homage to Qwert Yuiop, pp. 258-260

¹⁷ 'Mr W. H.', Homage to Qwert Yuiop, pp. 261-263

¹⁸ 'What Shakespeare Smelt', Homage to Qwert Yuiop, pp. 264-266

¹⁹ 'Dr Rowstus', Urgent Copy: Literary Studies, pp. 161-166

²⁰ 'In Search of Shakespeare the Man', Urgent Copy, pp. 157-161

²¹ see also Andrew Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess (London: Picador, 2005), p. 296

²² A manuscript for which is held at the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas (Anthony Burgess, Box 49, 4-5; <http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/research/fa/burgess.folder.html>), and discussed at length by Kay Smith, 'Burgess and Will!: Anthony Burgess's Cinematic Presentation of Shakespearean Biography', Anthony Burgess Newsletter, 4 (August 2001), pp. 33-49, URL (consulted May 2005): <http://bu.univ-angers.fr/EXTRANET/AnthonyBURGESS/ABNews.html>

²³ It contains episodes 2-5 and 8-9; the second episode begins with Shakespeare as a legal clerk and takes the story through to its completion with Shakespeare on his deathbed. The episodes are titled in order as follows (number of pages in parentheses): 'The Upstart Crow ...' (38pp.), 'Fair Friend ...' (34pp.), 'Dark Lady' (29pp.), 'Not Without Right ...' (30pp.), 'The King's Men ...' (28pp.) and 'A World Too Wide ...' (24pp.).

'One woman,' said Ted. 'And she was a black woman. E wrote a poem about er avin black airs growing in er ead and e said they was like black wires ... This black woman of is,' said Ted, 'ad come on a boat from Africa. Well up in the world she was, daughter of a chief or something, and she wasn't made into a slave but was taken into somebody's ouse and made a lady of. And this poor bugger fell for er, ook, line and sinker ... This black woman, yer see, was taken off to the West Indies or somewhere as a sort of companion like for some lady of this family she'd been living with oo'd taken a real fancy to er ... Well, Will's broken-arted. Is art's so broken e can't write proper any more, not the stuff e used to write, full of fun and whatnot, making everybody piss themselves of laughing ... Anyway, e gets so ill they ave to send im back to Stratford, is nose fair dropping off. Nobody likes the plays e writes, so e makes no money ...' (RA, pp. 250-252)

As this passage demonstrates, Burgess had not only been thinking about Shakespeare well before Nothing Like the Sun, but also about his Dark Lady. Further, John J. Stinson,²⁴ Kay Smith, and Roger Lewis, identify that the idea of the Dark Lady actually being black came from G. B. Harrison's Shakespeare Under Elizabeth.²⁵ Burgess, it is claimed, read this as an undergraduate, making the idea for the novel nearly thirty years in gestation. Andrew Biswell in his recent biography further supported the idea that Nothing Like the Sun was in part the product of Burgess's undergraduate reading, when he wrote:

... the novel's text includes no word that would have been unfamiliar to Shakespeare ... The one deliberate anachronism is the word 'spurgeoning', which is an affectionate reference to the literary critic Caroline Spurgeon, author of Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us (1935), whose book was known to Burgess from his undergraduate days in Manchester.²⁶

Despite the long gestation, Nothing Like the Sun was published relatively early in Burgess's long novelistic career. The first novel, Time for a Tiger, which began the Malayan Trilogy,²⁷ was published in 1956,²⁸ and Nothing Like the Sun was published only eight years afterwards. Shakespeare was a subject, however, that Burgess

²⁴ John J. Stinson, Anthony Burgess Revisited (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1991), p. 91

²⁵ G. B. Harrison, Shakespeare Under Elizabeth (New York, 1933), cited in Lewis, Anthony Burgess, p. 300

²⁶ Biswell, Anthony Burgess, p. 286 (see also 'Genesis and Headache', p. 35)

²⁷ The following novels in the trilogy were: The Enemy in the Blanket (1958) and Beds in the East (1959).

²⁸ Although Time for a Tiger was the first novel to be published, it was not the first to be written. A Vision of Battlements and The Worm and the Ring pre-date it in this respect (see Little Wilson and Big God, pp. 362-369).

returned to again and again, and he is there right up until the very last book Burgess published while still alive, A Dead Man in Deptford. As such Shakespeare became a figure of continual intertextual revision for Burgess.

Following the publication of Nothing Like the Sun, there was a short story that was multiply reproduced in the late 1960s and early 1970s called variously 'The Muse: A Sort of SF Story' or simply 'The Muse', which eventually ended up being reprinted as part of the novel Enderby's Dark Lady, a novel in which, notably Burgess's comic poet, Enderby, acts the part of Shakespeare in a play. The final reproduction of the 'The Muse' in Enderby's Dark Lady extended its reach across three decades and moved it out of magazines and collections of short stories and into a novel, a place of greater permanence, fixing its place in readings of Burgess. As John Cullinan wrote, "'The Muse,'" deals with the philosophical problem of knowledge in terms of a clever mixture of science fiction, and historical fantasy; it also casts some light on two of Burgess's more ambitious novels, Enderby and Nothing Like the Sun.'²⁹

Paley, a twenty-five year old literary historian, and the protagonist of 'The Muse' visits System B303, a planet that is currently enjoying its proto-Elizabethan period, in order to find Shakespeare. The planet mirrors the Earth's history, but lags behind by five hundred years.³⁰ There are other planets as well, FH78, G210 and G9 each performing different periods in The Earth's history. Paley is warned that 'polycephalic monsters' and 'tripodic ectoplasm' were present in the proto-fourteenth century,³¹ and that things may therefore not be exactly as one expects or necessarily identical to Earth's past when he visits the proto-Elizabethan period. When Paley meets an Elizabethan prostitute, Bess, on B303 she removes her garment and where her nipples should be there are eyes.³² Similarly the 'misshapen ugly man' that shows Paley into Shakespeare's house has a 'row of bright blinking eyes across his chest'.³³ On the blink is exactly what this alternate (or virtual) reality appears to be. When

²⁹ John Cullinan, 'Anthony Burgess' "The Muse: A Sort of SF Story', Studies in Short Fiction, 1972, 9, p. 213.

³⁰ The character of Swenson has seen in the future that he will die in 2084, and he declares that he has twenty years left to live, hence the year must be 2064, and this conveniently makes it the quincentenary of Shakespeare's birth, as Swenson points out ('The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 112).

³¹ 'The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 109

³² 'The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 120

³³ 'The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 122

Paley finally meets with Shakespeare he sees, ‘a reproduction of the Droeshout portrait of Shakespeare [from the First Folio], square in a frame, the lips moving but the eyes unanimated ... ’:

The talking woodcut advanced on him ... and then the straight sides of the frame bulged and bulged, the woodcut features dissolved, and a circle of black lines and spaces tried to grow into a solid body ... The solid body became an animal shape, indescribably gross and ugly – some spiked sea urchin, very large, nodding and smiling with horrible intelligence. Paley forced it into becoming a more nearly human shape. His heart sank in depression totally untinged by fear to see standing before him a fictional character called ‘William Shakespeare,’ an actor acting the part. Why could he not get in touch with the Ding an sich, the Kantian noumenon? But that was the trouble – the thing-in-itself was changed by the observer into whatever phenomenon the categories of time-space-sense imposed.³⁴

Here we witness Paley’s frustration at being unable to grasp the Kantian noumenon or thing in itself, which in German is ding an sich. It is a signpost towards the overarching Kantian structure of the short story.

Immanuel Kant divided the world into phenomena and noumena. The former is the appearance of things, what Kant calls ‘sensible entities’,³⁵ and the latter is made up of ‘intelligible entities’.³⁶ The latter, that which he calls ‘the thing in itself’ or the ‘object in itself’ or the ‘concept’,³⁷ is ultimately unknowable and knowledge of it can only be approached through phenomena. While Paley believes himself to hold in his mind the pure distilled noumenon that is Shakespeare, when faced with objectifying this in the world, he realizes that he must unite his concept of Shakespeare with more rigid and physical resources. Kant wrote of this that:

Understanding and sensibility, with us, can determine objects only when they [noumenon and phenomenon] are employed in conjunction. When we separate them, we have intuitions without concepts, or concepts without intuitions – in both cases, representations which we are not in a position to apply to any determinate object.³⁸

³⁴ ‘The Muse’, Hudson Review, pp. 122-123

³⁵ Immanuel Kant, Immanuel Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (1781/1787; London: Macmillan, 1929; repr. 1973), B306; p. 266

³⁶ Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B306; p. 267

³⁷ Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B306-B307; p. 267

³⁸ Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B314; p. 274

The push and pull that Paley experiences between his imagination and the physical world around him is part of the struggle for understanding, which occurs because of the inseparability of noumenon and phenomenon. If the noumenon is allowed to exist alone, then it will never be objectified, and equally if the phenomena are surrendered to (e.g. pictures and biographical portraits) then no extension of understanding will ever be achieved.

The story of 'The Muse' having introduced Kant's noumenon and phenomenon moves on to the German philosopher's theories on time and space. Swenson reprimands Paley on his presumption that one can travel through time in the same way that one travels through space. He complains of the 'yawning causalness [sic.] with which the Nacheinander turned into the Nebeneinander'.³⁹ For Kant, 'Time has only one dimension; different times are not simultaneous but successive (just as different spaces are not successive but simultaneous).'⁴⁰ To think of time as simultaneous (nebeneinander) not successive (nacheinander) is therefore wrong for Kant and wrong for the reality in 'The Muse'. Paley must apologize to Swenson:

'Sorry, sorry, sorry. I just wasn't thinking.' With so much else on his mind, was it surprising that he [Paley] should be temporarily ungeared to the dull realities of clockwork time, solar time?⁴¹

Cullinan wrote that, 'Burgess [in 'The Muse'] is presenting in Kantian terms the problem of how to reconcile the various Shakespeares that different men see'.⁴² The critic also made a very good point about the story, when he wrote: 'it is more imaginative than discursive, and its epistemological bent is anything but didactic.'⁴³ He notices that 'The Muse' does not attempt to extend or make real Kant's philosophy. Instead the philosophy provides the laws that govern the world of the story, and a means of structuring it, nothing more.

In contrast to 'The Muse', which accesses its Kantian reality through space travel, Nothing Like the Sun accesses what appears to be its Kantian reality through alcohol and drunkenness. The novel uses drunkenness in order to get beyond the bounds of 'sensible entities', to explore the facets of Shakespeare's life and

³⁹ 'The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 110

⁴⁰ Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, B47; p.75

⁴¹ 'The Muse', Hudson Review, p. 110

⁴² Cullinan, 'Anthony Burgess' The Muse', p. 219

⁴³ Cullinan, 'Anthony Burgess' The Muse', p. 220

tentatively to approach the elusive 'noumena' that are Shakespeare, Anne (Hathaway/Whateley), the Dark Lady, W.H. and the Rival Poet. Burgess wrote in his journalism that drinking connects writing to life and that 'pub-drinking remains the last of our creative social acts'.⁴⁴ In the novel, drinking is an act that enables an interpretation of events that is anything from unlikely to implausible. These unlikely events contribute to the stretching of the 'sensible' through the use of the 'intelligible', to use Kantian terms. It is not a case of in vino veritas, but the fact that in drink events can be more freely shaped in order to explore understanding. Not only is there drunkenness in the novel, but also the narrator himself (Mr Burgess) becomes progressively drunk across the novel, which is written under the pretence of being a final lecture delivered by a teacher to a group of Malay students. Mr Burgess is of central importance, because of him drunkenness infiltrates every part of the novel, never allowing phenomena to go unaltered by it. Umberto Eco wrote of the public spectacle of a drunk:

As soon as he has been put on the platform and shown to the audience, the drunken man has lost his original nature of 'real' body among real bodies. He is no more a world object among world objects – he has become a semiotic device; he is now a sign, something that stands to somebody for something else in some respect or capacity – a physical presence referring to something absent. What is our drunken man referring to? To a drunken man. But not to the drunk who he is, but to a drunk. The present drunk – insofar as he is the member of a class – is referring us back to the class of which he is a member. He stands for the category he belongs to. There is no difference, in principle, between our intoxicated character and the word drunk.⁴⁵

It could be said then that Mr Burgess is not Anthony Burgess, he is the word drunk and the concept of drinking, and that he is the creative social act that gives flight into otherwise inaccessible (and Kantian) realms.

It appears that the novel's early critics embraced neither the object nor the concept of Mr Burgess. According to Burgess, the suggestion of drunkenness was too slight for them:

Nothing Like the Sun was not well understood by its first reviewers, most of whom failed to see that the story of Shakespeare's love life was presented in the form of a drunken lecture given to students in a Malaysian college: the

⁴⁴ 'The Writer as Drunk', Urgent Copy, p. 89

⁴⁵ Umberto Eco, Limits of Interpretation (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), p.

lecturer, who is a character called Mr Burgess, gets progressively drunker and drunker on Chinese rice wine spirit, and he ends by identifying his own stupor with the delirium of the dying Bard. It is also his final lecture before flying back West, and he is entitled to irresponsibility. He seems especially irresponsible in stating that Shakespeare's tragic genius was fired by syphilis, which he is presented as having acquired through his association with a dark lady of East Indian origin. Shakespeare has been traditionally immune from the imputations of sexual sin, and even the birth of his first child Susannah six months after his marriage has been explained in terms of a special dispensation of nature. But Shakespeare, as my title indicates, was no flaming luminary exempt from human weakness. It is not at all improbable that he suffered from venereal disease: there seem to be few great men in history who have not been touched by the great morbid aristocrat.⁴⁶

The narrator it would seem proved as forgettable as Christopher Sly in The Taming of the Shrew, and this at first appears reasonable. There are a number of Chinese, Malay and Indian names in the narrator's farewell, and they provide little reason to doubt Mr Burgess is Anthony Burgess. However, among those that the narrator says farewell to are also Misses Alabaster, Bacchus, Shackles and Anguish, and this is where the pretence becomes unlikely. Mary Magdalen according to the gospels anointed Jesus' feet with perfume from an alabaster jar (Luke 7:36-50), and alabaster is a substance used to make sculptures. Bacchus is the Greek god of wine, and 'Shackles' and 'Anguish' sound like characters from a Georgian drama. The names make no pretence of being real, and they disrupt the sensible entities through their resonances. Biswell writes that the inclusion of Mr Burgess protects the novelist against criticism for the outlandish theories contained within the novel.⁴⁷ This is partially true, but the character of Mr Burgess, and the contrivance of the implausibly long lecture, is also more importantly a way of accessing a realm of less rigid reality. In this it echoes the storytelling of Marlow on the River Thames in Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness, and the same character's story told around a table of drinkers in Youth.⁴⁸ Burgess, however, takes the length of Nothing Like the Sun beyond that of Conrad's Marlow stories, further emphasizing a lack of verisimilitude and highlighting the novel's fictionality.

⁴⁶ Anthony Burgess, 'A Foreword', Nothing Like the Sun, pp. 1-2

⁴⁷ see Biswell, Anthony Burgess, p. 288

⁴⁸ This is in contrast to the verisimilitude of Lord Jim and Chance, where the novel's narrator in both of them confesses to having patched together Marlow's storytelling from numerous sittings (see Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim [1900; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986; repr. 2000], p. 67; Joseph Conrad, Chance [1914; Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1999], p. 41)

The central concern of the less rigid (and Kantian) reality in Burgess's novel is Shakespeare's Dark Lady. The Dark Lady sonnets are Shakespeare's sonnets 127-154, and the quotation 'nothing like the sun' is from Sonnet 130, a sonnet that is reproduced as an epigraph to the novel, but fades into ellipses after 'black wires grow on her head'. The first of the Dark Lady sonnets, 127, begins the theme of a reversal from the 'old age', where 'black was not counted fair', for black is now 'beauty's successive heir', and the eyes of the sonneteer's mistress 'are raven black', a theme that is sustained throughout the series. In Sonnet 131, the juxtaposition of black and fair continued, when Shakespeare wrote, 'Thy black is fairest in my judgements place', and in Sonnet 132, the sonneteer swears 'beauty herself is black'. Alice Studley, WS's first proper love interest in Nothing Like the Sun, is similarly 'black-eyed, the flue on her body black, her hair black and shining as blackbirds that fed on thrown-out bacon fat' (NLTS, p. 11). And it is Alice that forces WS's poetic mind into playing with the words fair and dark in the novel, which starts the sequence of the Dark Lady sonnets (NLTS, pp. 16-22). In the scene where WS sees Alice on the arm of another man she fulfils not only the role of goddess, but also of tormenter, as likewise demanded by the sonnets: 'In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds', wrote Shakespeare in Sonnet 132, and there the sonneteer claims that his lady's eyes 'Have put on black' in order to torment him. These dark deeds apply likewise to the 'fair' lady, Anne Hathaway (whose meeting with WS is predicted by the fortune-teller Old Madge [see NLTS, p. 14]). Hathaway is the second fair lady of the novel, and is described as fair (and English) after taking advantage of WS in the woods (NLTS, pp. 28-29). The first fair lady is the great 'golden' lady who WS delivers gloves to, and similar to the second fair lady, Anne, instigates a sexual union with WS (NLTS, pp. 8-9). The second dark lady, meanwhile, is the younger Anne, daughter of Whateley the skinner, '[h]er eyes were black' and 'her hair rich black' (NLTS, p. 32), who steals his heart in Nothing Like the Sun.

After marrying and after taking employment in Gloucestershire with John Quedgeley to teach his sons Latin, WS takes a trip to Bristol to purchase copies of Plautus' Menaechmi, and encounters there a prostitute whom he describes somewhat ambiguously as black and gold, implying dark and fair:

If Englishmen were white, [WS] thought, then must she be called black; but black she could not in truth be called, rather gold, but then not gold, nor purple

neither, for when we say colours we see a flatness, as of cloth, but here was flesh that moved and swam on the light's tide, ever changing in hue but always of a richness that could only be termed royal; her colour was royalty. For her hair, it coiled in true blackness; her lips were thick; her nose was not tightened against the cold air ... but flat and wide; her brow was wide too, though shallow. (NLTS, pp. 57-58)

WS does not have the money to have sex with the prostitute and so she raises her fists at him and he must run away. In his hurry to run away he leaves behind the copies of Menaechmi he has bought. She is the third dark lady and the third fair (or golden) lady. She is good and bad together: she is in part responsible for The Comedy of Errors, but also for The Comedy of Errors not being a more exact translation of Plautus.

The Bristol prostitute, or someone who looks like her, someone similar, reappears later in the novel in London and WS becomes enchanted by her (NLTS, pp. 137-139). However, she betrays him and leaves him for Southampton, and when she returns it is with news of a son that she says has two fathers (that is, WS and Southampton [NLTS, p. 209]). Burgess conjures the name of this Dark Lady of London from Sonnet 147:

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve,
Desire his death, which physic did expect.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd;

For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

The downward acrostic, FTMAH (lines 3-7), gives the name Fatjmah (or Fatimah), as is explained in the foreword to the Vintage edition of Nothing Like the Sun.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ 'A Foreword', Nothing Like the Sun, p. 2 (see also 'Genesis and Headache', pp. 32-33)

Fatimah sends her son via Bristol to the Indies, and the son is part of a contrivance to link WS to the East in order to fulfil a promise that Mr Burgess makes to his students at the start of the lecture/novel, to demonstrate that Shakespeare had something to give to the East. Fatimah and her son are the culmination of Burgess's speculation on Shakespeare's Dark Lady in Nothing Like the Sun, a subject that has for a long time been a subject and plaything of Shakespeare's biographies, much like Anne Whateley. The Arden editor of Shakespeare's Sonnets, Katherine Duncan-Jones, describes the Dark Lady sonnets thus:

... a sequence of twenty-eight darkly satirical heterosexual poems whose moral and artistic instability seems to reflect a male disgust with the lunar, menstrual, cycle alluded to in their number.⁵⁰

She views the Dark Lady sonnets as essentially misogynistic, and foregrounding them she suggests perpetuates a notion that the sonnets are heterosexual, which she says is nonsense.⁵¹ She prefers to premier the sonnets that declare love to a young male, as they are in the majority, suspicious that to premier the Dark Lady is to promote the 'courtly love tradition' that Shakespeare was 'explicitly rejecting and debunking'.⁵² She does not accept theories of a femme fatale, and pities those that have:

Some Victorian and Edwardian scholars, such as Gerald Massey and Thomas Tyler, devoted large parts of their lonely lives to the quest for 'the lady', and Frank Harris and Bernard Shaw competed to dramatize the story of Shakespeare's 'tragic love'.⁵³

Her preferred conclusion on the Dark Lady sonnets is that they 'encompass not so much passionate devotion to a distantly cruel mistress as an elaborate mockery of a woman who is no more than a sexual convenience.'⁵⁴ Burgess it could be argued manages to cross the divide between 'passionate devotion' and 'sexual convenience' in his Kantian conceptualization of the Dark Lady. Her various phenomenological guises (Anne Whateley, Alice Studley, the prostitute and Fatimah), as with the versions of Shakespeare presented in 'The Muse', are offered as a way to get closer to

⁵⁰ Katherine Duncan-Jones, ed., 'Introduction', Shakespeare's Sonnets (London: Arden Shakespeare, Thomson Learning, 1997; repr. 2001), p. 6

⁵¹ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 51

⁵² Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 50

⁵³ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 51

⁵⁴ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 51

the noumenon that is the Dark Lady rather than to uncover her 'true' identity. It is highly improbable (to the point of impossibility) that the Dark Lady was any of these individuals in life, but the cacophony of characters help loosen the reader's demands on, and expectations of, realism. The character of WS himself realizes from his first Dark Lady, Alice Studley, that 'you could not write verses of the one and particular but only of the All or Universal' (NLTS, p. 17), and the truth of this is upheld in the novel by the multiplicity of dark ladies.

The idea of universality is extended in Nothing Like the Sun through concentration on the character of WS. He is, as per Robert Greene's label (Johannes Factotum), a Jack-do-it-all or a Jack-of-all-Trades, an everyman, a universal. This is conveyed first of all by his love of revelry: his companions, S. Brailes, Ned Thorpe and Dick Quiney, enjoy 'skull-cracking, jibing, making skip the rheumy ancientry, thieving, wenching and the like' (NLTS, p. 23), and their 'droog' like behaviour connects WS to Burgess's Alex in A Clockwork Orange. There are also echoes of Thomas Hardy's Jude when WS stands on a table at Master Woodford's declaiming Seneca (NLTS, p. 49), and the parallels between WS and fictional characters become even more explicit when the opening of chapter eight in part one is punctuated by quotations from Ovid's 'Ariadne Theseo' (Heroides) (NLTS, p. 54). In addition, WS relates himself to François Rabelais's fictional schoolmaster Tubal Holofernes, following Henry Rogers's introduction of WS to the author (NLTS, p. 69), and the numerous references to The Seven Deadly Sins bring to mind Christopher Marlowe's Dr Faustus, as well as more generally morality plays (see for example NLTS, pp. 15, 72). Further, the reader is invited to see WS as an equivocal contraction of Wilson, the surname with which Burgess was christened. This comes when WS is witnessed about to blot the name he has written: 'WILSON' (see NLTS, p. 70). As Stinson pointed out WILSON is also an equivocation of Will's Son, making Burgess also Shakespeare's son.⁵⁵ Not only is WS a contraction of Wilson, and Will's Son, but in addition, Handley argued that Burgess sees himself as Shakespeare as well. In support of this Handley quoted the following lines from Burgess's Shakespeare:

[we] need not repine at the lack of a satisfactory Shakespeare portrait. To see his face, we need only look in a mirror. He is ourselves, ordinary suffering humanity, fired by moderate ambitions, concerned with money, the victim of

⁵⁵ John J. Stinson, 'Nothing Like the Sun: The Faces in Bella Cohen's Mirror', pp. 89-103, in Geoffrey Aggeler, Critical Essays on Anthony Burgess (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall, 1986), p. 95

desire, all too mortal. To his back, like a hump, was strapped a miraculous but somehow irrelevant talent. It is a talent which, more than any other the world has seen, reconciles us to being human beings, unsatisfactory hybrids, not good enough for gods and not good enough for animals. We are all Will. Shakespeare is the name of one of our redeemers.⁵⁶

Burgess's name is given further emphasis in the novel when it is a John Wilson that christens The Globe theatre in the name of Kyd, Marlowe and Shakespeare (NLTS, pp. 215). Further, it is as Endymion, the mythological handsome young man, who became the subject of a Keats poem, that WS is last witnessed in Stratford before he becomes a playwright (NLTS, p. 75). At the end of the novel, WS views himself as Caesar, and Ben Jonson as Brutus (NLTS, p. 229), when Jonson's play The Isle of Dogs closes the theatres, effectively killing WS.

As Handley wrote: 'WS is the only concern of Nothing Like the Sun: as his love and disease engage in social discourse, other people are presented.'⁵⁷ It is through WS, therefore, that all other characters in Nothing Like the Sun are read. As in life, Shakespeare and his work infiltrate every part of English literature, which clearly includes Burgess, while the identity of Shakespeare himself is uncertain. The problem is that the particulars of Shakespeare's life do not agree to make a universal that is Shakespeare. Biographers and fiction writers must therefore, in Kantian terms, apply 'the hypothetical employment of reason', in order to establish not the 'true' Shakespeare, but to render a hypothetical unity that can be taken as Shakespeare for the purposes of understanding the particulars of his life and work:

The hypothetical employment of reason, based upon ideas viewed as problematic concepts, is not, properly speaking, constitutive, that is, it is not of such a character that, judging in all strictness, we can regard it as proving the truth of the universal rule which we have adopted as hypothesis. For how are we to know all the possible consequences which, as actually following from the adopted principle, prove its universality? The hypothetical employment of reason is regulative only; its sole aim is, so far as may be possible, to bring unity into the body of our detailed knowledge, and thereby to approximate the rule to universality.⁵⁸

Although Shakespeare is the basis of so much life and literature, there is no certain particular that is Shakespeare, from which universal rules of life and literature can be

⁵⁶ Shakespeare, p. 261, cited in Handley, 'A Fictional Theory of Language', p. 58

⁵⁷ Handley, 'A Fictional Theory of Language', p. 37

⁵⁸ Kant, Critique, p. 535

generated with any certainty. Hence there is a continual use of hypothesis, and as Handley wrote some thirty years ago:

Burgess is no doubt aware that even his ‘historically sound’ Shakespeare is a fiction, for all that it is convincingly composed of facts. [Burgess] has suggested [‘In Search of Shakespeare the Man’ in Urgent Copy, pp. 160-161] that the curse on whoever would move the bones of Shakespeare to ‘find what spirit animated them’ is to discover that ‘there is nothing but bones’. Any image of Shakespeare ‘both works and does not work’. The factual bones are so few that any tissue of lies serves to flesh out the hypothetical skeleton – and explains nothing. All we have is the plays. If we obeyed our reason, we should be content with reading those. We do not and are not: hence, in Burgess’s case, Nothing Like the Sun (1964), ‘The Muse’ (1968), and Shakespeare (1970). All of these works, a short story, a ‘biography’ – show the impossibility of getting close to the man.⁵⁹

‘The unread Shakespeare’, wrote Handley, ‘is the most accurate biography – a proper fiction made of facts’.⁶⁰ He was referring to the actual work by Burgess called Shakespeare, and proposing that because of conflicting conjectures in the biography of Shakespeare that the only true version of Shakespeare’s life is an unread one.

In Kantian terms, however, even though hypothetical reasoning may be flawed, the unity and coherence it provides is of value.⁶¹ The problem for Kant comes not with hypothetical reasoning, but when hypothetical understanding based on a ‘projected unity’ is understood in apodeictic terms.⁶² This is where the projected unity becomes transcendental and the hypothetical quality is lost, meaning that it gives the false impression of being based on empirical fact rather than hypothesis. In order to combat this false impression, it is desirable to maintain an acknowledgement of the hypothetical nature of the reasoning. In line with this, Burgess in Nothing Like the Sun adds extra emphasis to the hypothetical nature of the conclusions in the novel by making them openly idiosyncratic: for example, by making the Dark Lady Malayan,

⁵⁹ Handley, ‘A Fictional Theory of Language’, pp. 15-16

⁶⁰ This is in response to the following, written by Burgess: ‘Much of my time in Malta, since returning from the United States, has been spent in writing a new life of Shakespeare. New? – hardly, since there are no new facts, and one’s style sets into an unedifying melange of the stock robust (ale, lice, wenching) and the timidly speculative, which is everybody’s style when writing a Shakespeare biography ... The book will look very lovely when it comes out, full of coloured pictures of Mary Fitton and the Earl of Pembroke, and it will stand, unread although regularly dusted, on several thousand coffee tables.’ (Anthony Burgess, The American Scholar XXXVIII, p. 686, cited in Handley, ‘A Fictional Theory of Language’, p. 22)

⁶¹ Kant, Critique, p. 535

⁶² Kant, Critique, pp. 536-537

or East Indian, which Burgess admits to having selected simply because he himself was attracted to Malayan and East Indian women.⁶³ This acts as a confession of their hypothetical nature.

Surprisingly, in the presentation of 'Mr W. H.' and the 'Rival Poet', the idiosyncrasy dissolves. Burgess wrote: 'I wanted Mr W. H. to be Wriothesley, Harry, Earl of Southampton, and the Rival Poet of the Sonnets to be George Chapman – dull and orthodox identifications which should be a foil to daring speculations about the Dark Lady.'⁶⁴ As is widely known among scholars, and as Burgess explains in his biography of Shakespeare, the 1609 version of the Sonnets carried a dedication to 'Mr W. H.'⁶⁵ The two central schools of thought on Shakespeare are that W. H. is either Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, to whom 'Venus and Adonis' and 'The Rape of Lucrece' are openly dedicated,⁶⁶ or it is the William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, to whom the First Folio of Shakespeare's plays is dedicated. Knowing who W. H. is matters, because it may give an indication as to the identity of the young man in the sonnets.

Famously, Wilde's 'The Portrait of W.H.' is about the tension between two opposing theories of W. H.:⁶⁷ not Southampton and Pembroke, but William Herbert, Lord Pembroke and a young boy actor by the name of Willie Hughes who is a 'spiritual presence' (Mr W.H., p. 40) and 'phantom puppet' (Mr W.H., p. 53) that appears in the sonnets through ingenious textual manipulations. In Wilde's narrative a painting is produced of Willie Hughes, which is supposedly a forgery by Edward Merton, painted falsely to provide evidence to the central character Erskine by another character, Cyril Graham, of Hughes's existence. The reader is not entirely certain by the end of the story, however, whether the picture is a fake or if the narrator has been gulled into believing the story of Willie Hughes is false when it is true.⁶⁸

Wilde achieves a level of ambiguity around the identity of 'W. H.' that resists fixity. But, instead of following a Wildean course and creating ambiguity around the

⁶³ 'Genesis and Headache', p. 30

⁶⁴ 'Dr Rowstus', p. 161

⁶⁵ Shakespeare, p. 124

⁶⁶ The dedication of Venus and Adonis to Henry Wriothesley is witnessed in Nothing Like the Sun on p. 98.

⁶⁷ Oscar Wilde, 'The Portrait of Mr W.H.', in The Portrait of Mr W.H., ed. Ian Small (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995), pp. 1-58

⁶⁸ Richard Ellman tells us that Wilde himself increasingly grew to believe in Willie Hughes himself (Richard Ellman, Oscar Wilde [1987; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1997], pp. 280-281), but it is not necessary to believe this for the piece to be effective in its ambiguity.

identity of W.H. also, Burgess decides in Nothing Like the Sun to make a direct declaration of identity. Burgess makes 'W. H.' Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton. He overcomes the very obvious obstacle of how to turn H. W. into W. H. by creating a slogan: Southampton's family want him to marry, something that he does not want to do, and so Robert Devereux introduces him as 'Master HW or, putting his family first as he is told he must Master WH.' (NLTS, p. 91), and in this way he is translated. Southampton himself repeats the slogan, 'the family first, as ever ... Wriothesly before Harry. Mr WH.' (NLTS, p. 109), and so too does Burgess in his biography, Shakespeare.⁶⁹ This is in opposition to Duncan-Jones, who argued that:

The case for Southampton, one of the two strongest candidates, effectively collapses if th[e] dating [that the sonnet sequence was written in part after 1600 and put into its final form ready for publication in 1609] is accepted. Not only are Henry Wriothesley's initials the wrong way round; he was over 35 in 1609, and recollections of the time when he was a 'lovely boy' were rather distant.⁷⁰

Burgess, however, sensitive to this issue of age, proposes a Southampton, who in appearance and demeanour is young (see NLTS, p. 91), and who continually refers to WS as 'old dad'. And it has to be said that even if Duncan-Jones's points are taken into account, Shakespeare was 45 in 1609 and Southampton closer to youth than he was. Therefore, even if Southampton is less likely than Pembroke, as Duncan-Jones suggests,⁷¹ the former is not a wholly unfounded conjecture.

Making Southampton W.H. is problematic not in terms of the validity of the conjecture, but in Kantian terms for its failure to identify its hypothetical nature clearly in the novel. However, the conjecture was not one that Burgess viewed as the truth, at least not one that by the publication of Shakespeare he viewed as the truth anyway. The concept of a 'foil' has already been referred to, and Burgess further wrote:

... if we play the scholars' game and puzzle over the identity of a Mr W. H. in Shakespeare's life, or come out confidently with an assertion as to who he was, then we enter a dangerous world of time-wasting dissension, where monomania thumps and lunacy beckons. Those who say that Mr W. H. was

⁶⁹ Shakespeare, p. 125

⁷⁰ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 52

⁷¹ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare's Sonnets, p. 52

William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, clash with those who are sure that he was Wriothesley, Henry, Earl of Southampton (a man told to put his family first), and there are side-skirmishes involving scholars like Dr Hotson, who has written a book to prove that Mr W. H. was William Hatliffe, glamour-boy of Gray's Inn, and – though his theory has long been exploded – Oscar Wilde, who said that he was Will Hughes, a young actor.⁷²

Even if this was not the view of Burgess at the time of publication, the publication of Shakespeare creates an intertextual emendation that makes it so; and a similar point can be made surrounding the granting of the Coat of Arms to Shakespeare's family.

In Nothing Like the Sun, John Shakespeare surprises his son when, after reapplying for the Coat of Arms, he is granted the honour (NLTS, p. 173). This is not the certain truth of the situation. Michael Wood has it that William Shakespeare made the alterations and second application,⁷³ while Sydney accepted that it could have been John or William that made the alterations to the second 1596 draft.⁷⁴ In the biography, Shakespeare, Burgess simply wrote about a reapplication for the arms that was granted without naming the person that reapplied, allowing the ambiguity to expose the uncertainty of who it was,⁷⁵ another intertextual emendation that demonstrates the hypothetical nature of the suppositions in the novel.

In contrast to W.H. and the Coat of Arms, the Rival Poet is approached in Nothing Like the Sun in yet another way. In the novel and in the biography, Shakespeare, Burgess is fixed on the identity of the rival poet as George Chapman.⁷⁶ Burgess sees Chapman as a rival on a personal and ideological level, who threatens WS's/Shakespeare's friendship with Southampton and his work. The biographical and historical are so tightly fused that no other logical explanation makes itself apparent to him. Burgess's Chapman therefore taunts WS in Nothing Like the Sun and steals Southampton away from him, and having watched Chapman's A Humorous Day's Mirth, WS criticizes it for not presenting 'true people'. WS says of Chapman's characters that, 'They are not built out of warring elements, they are a sort of potion', and to Burbage that: 'Human souls are not smooth mixtures like that, fixed forever in choler or melancholy or amorousness. These creatures of Chapman's are flat, like

⁷² Shakespeare, p. 125

⁷³ Michael Wood, In Search of Shakespeare (Part 3), 'The Duty of Power', BBC2, 12 July 2003, 9.15pm-10.15pm.

⁷⁴ Lee, Shakespeare, pp. 189-190

⁷⁵ Shakespeare, p. 19

⁷⁶ Chapman he claims, 'is, without doubt, the Rival Poet, the man who praised Southampton as Narcissus, while Shakespeare dramatised him as Adonis.' (Shakespeare, p. 130)

very crude drawings. They cannot surprise themselves or others by becoming other than what they are.’ (NLTS, p. 184). The reason for this singularity when it comes to the Rival Poet is difficult to explain within the Kantian reality that is being argued for here.

The singularity of Burgess’s choice of Chapman for the Rival Poet is in contrast to Duncan-Jones, who is more open than she is with the identity of W. H., and cites the possibilities of Francis Davison, John Davies of Hereford, Samuel Daniel, George Chapman and Ben Jonson. She even goes so far as to say: ‘Perhaps, indeed, the “rival poet” is a composite figure, and the mini-sequence 76-86 should be seen as exploring the theme of the speaker-poet’s sense of being threatened by other poets through a fictionally amalgamated writer, drawing on several individuals, rather than as embodying any single thread of allusion.’⁷⁷ This appears to make sense, it is very similar to what Burgess wrote about the Dark Lady: ‘It is best to keep the Dark Lady anonymous, even composite.’⁷⁸ Burgess’s reasoning over the Rival Poet, in contrast, does not make sense. It is in Kantian terms transcendental and apodeictic, that is, it is an assertion of truth based upon hypothetical reasoning.

The Rival Poet in Nothing Like the Sun indicates that the reality of the novel is not governed by what Kant thought was right. Instead, Burgess explores in Nothing Like the Sun the different positions that Kant describes, whether right or wrong. First, the idea of the Dark Lady is an example of Kant’s interplay between phenomena and noumenon. Second, WS is an exploration of the awkward relationship between the particular and the universal. Third, the identity of ‘W.H.’ is a demonstration of ‘hypothetical reasoning’, that need not be thought true outside of the novel. Fourth, the Rival Poet is an illustration of transcendental reason, where the hypothetical becomes stated as if based on empirical evidence. It can from this be concluded that by fulfilling aspects of Kant’s philosophy, even Kant’s theory of the transcendental, the novel can be demonstrated to fulfil, and also fail, in being Kantian. As in ‘The Muse’ the philosophy is an imaginative plaything, not the author’s ontology, and it is once again the reality that Burgess’s Shakespeare inhabits.

⁷⁷ Duncan-Jones, Shakespeare’s Sonnets, pp. 65-66

⁷⁸ Shakespeare, p. 148

CHAPTER 2

MF and Structuralism

When Liana Burgess, second wife and widow to Anthony Burgess, was asked at the First International Symposium for Anthony Burgess in Angers,¹ to name the work that he had been most pleased with in his long and prolific career, she named MF. Although this was not the first time that the novel had been identified as the writer's favourite,² it appears to be a rather strange choice. Burgess labelled MF his 'structuralist novel' and the structuralism within the novel immediately dates the work. However, as will be discussed in the reading of the novel here, the structuralism of the novel, like the Kantian elements of Nothing Like the Sun, helps form the reality of the novel and does not locate itself as the ontology belonging to the novel or the author.

MF is the story of Miles Faber, or M.F., and his search for the works of Sib Legeru,³ a Castitan artist and writer. The Caribbean island of Castita is a fictional place whose name in Italian means chastity. The island exists at a point in the ocean where there is no visible landmass; its dialect is constructed mainly from the blending and distortion of Italian, Maltese and English. Geoffrey Aggeler has asserted the fictional basis for Castita to be Malta.⁴ The story is told retrospectively at the age of 50 by the protagonist who in the story is on the brink of coming of age (he is twenty, he has as many years as there are chapters in the book, and he is ready to turn twenty-one). M.F. cannot travel to Castita without permission until he comes of age, and since his parents are deceased this permission must come from his lawyer Mr Loewe. His deceased father, whose instructions are being carried out by the lawyer, did not want the risk of M.F. committing incest with his sister Catherine (nicknamed Kitty

¹ 'The Avatars of A Clockwork Orange', Anthony Burgess Centre, University of Angers, France, December 7-8, 2001

² 'When he [Burgess] was asked in 1983 to name his favourite books, he replied that he was proud to have written parts of The Right to an Answer, all of MF and the fourth chapter of Napoleon Symphony.' (Andrew Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess [London: Picador, 2005], p. 261)

³ The artist Sib Legeru, it is learnt at the end of the novel (MF, p. 212), is an amalgamation of the work of M.F.'s grandfather and his patients, which included M.F.'s father. The term siblegeru, from which the name of the fictional artist is created, means lying with one's sister, as Burgess informs his readers (MF, p. 212; see also 'Oedipus Wrecks', This Man and Music, p. 162), and the search for Sib Legeru leads M.F. to his sister: Sib Legeru's work resides in the shed in Kitty Kee's garden.

⁴ See Geoffrey Aggeler, 1979, pp. 16, 53, 144, 206, cited in Arnold Cassola, 'MF: A Glossary of Anthony Burgess's Castitan Language', English Language Notes, 26, 4 (June 1989), 78

Kee), it being a long-term characteristic of M.F.'s family. This means M.F. cannot come into contact with Kitty Kee, and he therefore cannot travel to Castita immediately, because his sister is on the island with her guardian Miss Emmett. This is what M.F. is led to believe anyway, but in truth he is detained in New York as part of a contrivance that is being controlled by his grandfather, Dr Z. Fontana, who wants to draw M.F. into incest. The way Fontana guides M.F. into incest is premised upon Lévi-Strauss's assertion that: 'The thing you do ... to avoid committing incest is the very thing that will lead you to it.'⁵ M.F.'s grandfather does not want actual incest to occur, however, he instead wants to bring the drive that has existed in his family, and passed through generations, to a head in order to break from it. M.F. is, from Fontana's perspective, at the point in the river that he and his son (M.F.'s father) passed through and this is the point at which to change its course.

Unlike the other novels that are discussed at length in this thesis, MF has no public personage of any kind as its central protagonist. It uses instead numerous allusions (and half allusions) to the name and ideas of the structural anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss, so that in the end the anthropologist becomes something of a ghost, his name echoing and his presence always felt across the text. Although it is true that all the historical and literary figures that Burgess portrays can be said to be ghosts, or rather people who have left undying traces of themselves across society, history, music and/or literature, in MF this is demonstrated more explicitly in the novel's play with linguistics and structuralism. Synonyms, etymons, antonyms, homonyms, anagrammatized words, acrostics, translations, 'palinlogues', etc., are all significant in MF. There is certainty of these cryptic, hidden and accidental elements of language, they are as real as the ghost of Jacob Marley, and they contribute to the construction of the novel's reality.

The employment of structuralism and linguistics leads MF towards a central theme of literature: incest. Incest as a theme of literature has recurred across centuries and across millennia. The most famous story to involve incest is unquestionably that of Oedipus, and the most famous version of the story is the play by Sophocles called Oedipus Rex (or Oedipus the King).⁶ In Oedipus Rex incest is very certain, it is an act

⁵ see 'Oedipus Wrecks', pp. 178-179

⁶ Sophocles is mentioned in the novel just after M.F.'s wedding to his sister in the circus tent: 'a lady like a schoolmistress who was in charge of seals ... spoke bitterly at me [i.e. M.F.] what sounded like debased Sophocles.' (MF, p. 186). Note: Burgess also published a translation of Oedipus Rex (Sophocles, Oedipus the King, translated and adapted by Anthony

between mother and son that produces progeny. When the theme of incest was taken up in the English Renaissance and subsequently carried forward into the literary eras that followed it, its exact definition came into question. The definition of incest up until the 1908 Incest Act was in the hands of the Church and the English people. It was imprecise and strayed to include cousins, second cousins, wives marrying their brother-in-laws, and a whole number of familial permutations.⁷ Freud wrote on Hamlet's Oedipal desires in Shakespeare's play,⁸ a play where the tragic hero kills his 'uncle father' not his real father, and The Winter's Tale, it can be argued, reflects the imprecise interpretations of incest too. In the latter play there are two kings that call each other brother and their children are united in marriage. It is a suggestion of cousin marriage that may exist only in language, but it is there. Later in the nineteenth century, there is The Cenci by Percy Shelley, with its father/daughter outrage, Oscar Wilde's famous play The Importance of Being Earnest, with its cousin marriage between Jack/Ernest and Gwendolen,⁹ and Ibsen's Ghosts with its threat of step-brother/step-sister incest.

The latter play, Ghosts, concentrates on the struggles between law, religion and individual in understanding incest in society, and alludes to the ongoing confusion when Mrs Alving says:

I'm inclined to think that we're all ghosts ... it's not only the things we've inherited from our fathers and mothers that live on in us, but all sorts of old dead ideas and old dead beliefs, and things of that sort.¹⁰

By inheritance from our mothers and fathers Mrs Alving means atavistic characteristics, and by 'old dead ideas' and 'old dead beliefs' she means all those associations that through time, from Oedipus forwards, have attached themselves to the concept of incest. Mrs Alving's son, Oswald, is stepbrother to Mrs Alving's maid, Regina Engstrand. Unaware of their familial relationship the two are drawn together.

Burgess [Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press]) and Freud goes to see a production of the play in The End of the World News.

⁷ see Adam Kuper, 'Incest, Cousin Marriage, and the Origin of the Human Sciences in Nineteenth-Century England', Past and Present 174 (2002): 158-83

⁸ Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams (1900; London: Penguin, 1976), pp. 362-368

⁹ The cousin marriage in Wilde's play is briefly discussed in Alexander Leggatt, English Stage Comedy 1490-1990: Five Centuries of a Genre (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 16-17

¹⁰ Henrik Ibsen, Ghosts and Other Plays, trans. Peter Watts (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964; repr. 1969), p. 61

Although incest is averted between Oswald and Regina, it is a ghost that haunts the family. The truth of this becomes apparent when Oswald is told by his doctor that, 'The sins of the father are visited on the children ...'.¹¹ This makes Mrs Alving start and jump up from her chair. Oswald's father has committed incest and this is the reason for Oswald's dire illness and his suffering that ends the play. The softening of Oswald's brain,¹² strongly suggests syphilis, and the remark that his father once made him sick,¹³ points to filial pederasty, which is at the same time atavistic, because it is an inherited illness, in the metaphorical sense of being passed from father to son.

Miles Faber (M.F.), the protagonist and narrator of MF, like Oswald, is a victim of atavism, and the connection between M.F. and Oswald is made explicit with mention of Mrs Alving and her son in MF (see MF, p. 151). In this way and many others the novel continues to perpetuate myths and preconceptions surrounding incest. Rather than break from the old representations of incest, structuralism provides the novel with a means through which to resurrect the theme and its 'old dead beliefs' and 'old dead ideas'. Incest in MF, as in the Oedipus myth and in Ghosts, is defined by incestuous insemination or at least the risk of it, which one of the characters, Mr Pardaleos, expresses thus: 'ejaculatio seminis inter vas naturale mulieris' (MF, p. 48), meaning an ejaculation into a woman's (or a wife's) vagina. As with Oswald, however, M.F. is the product and not the perpetrator of the implanted and incestuous ejaculation: despite by the end of the novel marrying his sister, M.F. does not perform fully consummative sex with her, and instead they have sex and he withdraws from her and ejaculates on a rug (MF, p. 197).

M.F.'s route to incest begins with his university professor, Keteki, who prompts his interest in the Castitan writer Sib Legeru. Professor Keteki (see MF, 218) is a lecturer in English, whose name in Sanskrit means riddle, as Burgess reveals in 'Oedipus Wrecks' (p. 166). He sets M.F. a riddle in class, to which M.F. answers The Jew of Malta (MF, pp. 11-13), and Keteki accepts this response as true, although it is not certain that it is the right answer. The professor's name is phonemically similar to Catherine's nickname - Kitty Kee - they are both therefore riddles. Further, Catherine lives on Indovinello Street in Grencijta, the capital of Castita. Indovinello in

¹¹ Ibsen, Ghosts, p. 74

¹² Ibsen, Ghosts, p. 89

¹³ Ibsen, Ghosts, p. 95

Italian means riddle, and likewise the name of the boat on which M.F. travels from Ojeda (or Ojida)¹⁴ to Castita on is also named riddle, but in Polish: Zagadka.¹⁵

In MF there are riddles that can be answered such as the one by Keteki, even though the answer may not be correct, and there are riddles to which M.F. knows the correct answers, but chooses not to respond. For example, his lawyer, Loewe, sets him the following puzzle:

- Up, I am a rolling river;
Down, a scent-and-colour giver. (MF, p. 15)

M.F. knows that the answer is flower, but for some reason unknown to him, he will not answer it. When M.F. is on Castita,¹⁶ Dr Gonzi asks him a riddle that he will likewise not answer. In the latter instance his refusal to answer is because in answering it he risks uttering an obscenity on an island whose name is chastity:¹⁷

- Throatdoor, tongueback, nose and teeth
Spell a heavenblack hell beneath.
Engage warily, young men,
Lest it prove a lion's den. (MF, p. 75)

Later Dr Gonzi asks M.F. another riddle, which he is similarly unwilling to answer:¹⁸

- Move and my own self enclose
A land above the deeper snows. (MF, p. 84)

Dr Gonzi has lion like features connecting him to the Sphinx of Thebes in the story of Oedipus.¹⁹ The punishment for refusing to answer, or being unable to answer, the riddle in the Oedipus myth is death. Reflecting this, M.F. is pursued by Gonzi, who

¹⁴ In Serbian Ojeda means 'corrosive'. The alternative spelling appears to be a typo (see MF, p. 58).

¹⁵ The boat is called Zagadka II (see MF, p. 55).

¹⁶ M.F. arrives on the island of Castita at the festival of Senta Euphorbia, sees a Donji Memorija or Mr Memory (see MF, p. 70), and when the man is arrested, M.F. sets himself up as a Mr Memory Junior (MF, p. 72). After being asked some historical questions, he is asked riddles by the crowd. The first identifiable character with a riddle is a man in a wheelchair, who although M.F. does not know it, is his grandfather and the second is Dr Gonzi (MF, pp. 74-75). He answers neither of their riddles, viewing them both to be too obscene.

¹⁷ As Burgess tells the reader in 'Oedipus Wrecks', the answer to the riddle is 'cunt' (p. 171).

¹⁸ The answer to the riddle is 'Gonzi', again revealed by Burgess in 'Oedipus Wrecks' (pp. 172-173).

¹⁹ 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 172

fires a gun at him, but unlike the story of Oedipus, M.F. is not killed (see MF, pp. 85-86).

In addition to riddles that are answered (correctly or otherwise) and riddles that are not answered despite knowing the answers, there is Aderyn the Bird Queen's riddle towards the end of the novel that has two answers:²⁰

Who has the final final, say,
That was put back but had his day? (MF, p. 204)

Whether M.F. chooses God or dog he will be wrong, as indeed he is, and as a consequence Aderyn sets her birds on him. M.F. however blows a whistle and they turn to attack Aderyn instead. Burgess describes it as the transference of Oedipus' punishment, because one of Aderyn's hawks scratches her eye, echoing Oedipus' blinding of himself.²¹ The riddle itself is not an Oedipal one, however, because there is no correct answer and it comes after the aborted incestuous act of M.F. and his sister Kitty Kee. In order to understand this more fully it is necessary to turn to Burgess's interest in, and appreciation of, Claude Lévi-Strauss.

The 'riddle-incest nexus', which Lévi-Strauss identified in his work, The Scope of Anthropology,²² aroused Burgess's interest in structuralism.²³ Burgess acknowledged The Scope of Anthropology as one of his favourite books from 1967,²⁴ and it was the convergence between Oedipus and the American Indian myth that Burgess chose to concentrate on in MF.²⁵ Burgess claimed to have been intoxicated by the structuralism of Lévi-Strauss and wrote: 'I feel ... somehow that I've been manipulated by [Lévi-Strauss]'.²⁶ MF is not a novel that Burgess wrote and then rebuked or alternatively let quietly disappear when he 'sobered up', however. Further,

²⁰ Aderyn is mother to M.F.'s double Llew, who by this stage is dead, and who she fully believes M.F. to have killed. The riddle is a surreptitious way to attack M.F. with her birds (see MF, pp. 205-206).

²¹ 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 175

²² see 'If Oedipus had read his Lévi-Strauss', Urgent Copy: Literary Studies, p. 259; 'Oedipus Wrecks', pp. 163, 164, 179

²³ This interest was in part due to the fact that Burgess felt himself to have already been unknowingly playing with the 'riddle/incest motif' in Tremor of Intent (see 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 164).

²⁴ Anthony Burgess, 'Books They Liked Best and Books They Liked Least', Book World (December 3, 1967), pp. 16-17, cited in Jeutonne Brewer, Anthony Burgess: A Bibliography (Metuchen, NJ and London: Scarecrow Press, 1980), p. 59

²⁵ see Claude Lévi-Strauss, The Scope of Anthropology, trans. Sherry Ortner Paul and Robert A. Paul (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), pp. 36-37

²⁶ 'If Oedipus had read his Lévi-Strauss', p. 261

he did not draw the conclusion that it was a novel outside his main oeuvre, as is evidenced by his selection of it as his favourite work. This is despite the critical attacks that he received upon its publication in 1971, attacks that were remembered by Burgess right up until the end of his life: he satirically quotes one of his critics, Jonathan Raban, as the final word on MF in You've Had Your Time (p. 232). Raban wrote of MF: 'It's too pygobranchitic: meaning, roughly, that it breathes heavily through its hinder parts'.²⁷

Interestingly, Lévi-Strauss noted in The Scope of Anthropology that riddles and puzzles are rather rare among North American Indians, and that the combination of riddles and incest are not found anywhere in American Indian myth, and further that '[i]n the whole of North America only two puzzle situations are found whose origins are unquestionably indigenous'.²⁸ In 'If Oedipus had read his Lévi-Strauss', however, Burgess writes that '[a]pparently ... conflation of word-puzzle and incest is common among the American Indians'.²⁹ Burgess offers therefore, not an honest account of Lévi-Strauss's observations, but a novelistic distortion of the homology that Lévi-Strauss undertakes in his desire to assert order within disorder.³⁰ MF likewise distorts, it does this through its application of mythopoeic elements, which are at once drawn from the Oedipal and Algonquin myths, but never truly allowed to be fulfilled. For example, the sexual act between M.F. and his sister, described in the opening of this chapter is not incest, but averted incest, and the riddles that are asked are not answered, and further these are not paired with death, but near death. Similarly, although at one level, M.F. stands for 'motherfucker',³¹ the mother/son incest of the Oedipus story is never fulfilled in MF.

Before the novel begins there is a woman called Carlotta Tukang, with whom M.F. performs public copulation outside the F. Jannatu Memorial Library in Massachusetts (MF, p. 9), following Keteki's 'riddle' seminar. In Latin 'faber' refers to maker, or specifically blacksmith or locksmith, and the word tukang in Malay

²⁷ Jonathan Raban, 'Package Tour', New Statesman, 81 (17 June 1971), pp. 856-857, cited in Paul Boyntick, Anthony Burgess: An Annotated Bibliography and Reference Guide (New York: Garland, 1985), p. 89

²⁸ Lévi-Strauss, Scope of Anthropology, p. 36

²⁹ 'If Oedipus had read his Lévi-Strauss', p. 259, emphasis added.

³⁰ Claude Lévi-Strauss wrote: '... since I was a child, I have been bothered by, let's call it the irrational, and have been trying to find an order behind what is given to us as a disorder.' (Claude Lévi-Strauss, Myth and Meaning [London and Henley: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978], p. 11)

³¹ see 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 165

means approximately the same as faber in Latin. This act is therefore at once an act of incest and not: when M.F. discovers the congruence in the names he at first thinks that it might have been his mother, but his grandfather dispels the illusion (MF, p. 210). In its employment of myth, as with its employment of structuralism, MF is a novel that is always punning.

MF opens with its protagonist, Miles Faber, or M.F., lying ‘Functionally naked ... [a]ll the operative zones exposed.’ (MF, 9, emphasis added), a scene that is later paired with M.F.’s encounter in the novel with Irma: she is a collage artist (and partner to the voyeuristic Chester) who gives M.F. a functional embrace in the elevator on the way up to her apartment (MF, 34, emphasis added). The reason for this ‘functional’ label becomes clear when MF is read alongside Barthes’s ‘Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives’:

The essence of a function is ... that it sows in the narrative, planting an element that will come to fruition later – either on the same level or elsewhere, on another level.³²

By labelling the functions with the adjective ‘functional’, it appears that Burgess is being facetious, and even perverting the course of structuralism, but in fact he is adhering to its rules in a way that is more complex than might be expected, making the pun all the more powerful. M.F. in his room at the Algonquin Hotel begins flicking through television channels (MF, pp. 18-20). On the first channel, M.F. witnesses a pop group that are noted to be wearing levis (MF, p. 18). The next channel that he hops to shows a funeral with ‘wreaths’ being placed on a coffin (MF, 18), the music that plays at the same time sounds something like Richard Strauss’s tone poem Death and Transfiguration (more commonly known in the German, Tod und Verklärung). Strauss in German, as Burgess makes explicitly clear in ‘Oedipus Wrecks’, means wreath.³³ The third channel again punctuates the name Strauss when it shows ‘athletes levitating to the music of Johann Strauss’.³⁴ Without realizing it, M.F. has produced a televisual collage of the name Lévi-Strauss, with strauss triply repeated. The collage is also arguably an extended pun on Barthes’s seminal work,

³² Roland Barthes, ‘Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives’ (1966), pp. 251-295, in Barthes: Selected Writings, ed. and trans. Susan Sontag (1982; London: Fontana, 1983) p. 261

³³ ‘Oedipus Wrecks’, p. 168

³⁴ see ‘Oedipus Wrecks’, p. 167

'The Death of the Author', due to its funeral and funereal wreaths, and the multiply invoked German word 'strauss'. Further, in the film in which wreaths are laid at a funeral, the widow's son, '[a]n untrustworthy young man in black' (MF, p. 18), reassures his grieving mother by telling her that the deceased may live on through his work. The suggestion that the deceased will live on through his work makes him conceivably an author. Indeed it can also be read as the death of Burgess as author, for M.F. falls asleep after his channel hopping and when he reawakens he looks at his watch to see that it has stopped at 19:17. The time indicates the year of birth for John Anthony Burgess Wilson, 1917, and puns on the birth of the 'modern scriptor', for as Barthes wrote: '... the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text ... ' following the death of the author.'³⁵ More immediately, though, M.F.'s act of collage links him to the collage artist Irma. The scene in M.F.'s bedroom at the Algonquin is further linked to Irma and her apartment by the fact that one of her collages contains a picture Carlotta Tukang and a review of one of Tukang's novels (MF, p. 35), another instance when M.F. was functionally naked, and one that he thinks on while in the Algonquin: '...the functional nakedness that was our badge of criminal identity.' (MF, p. 18). This satisfyingly dense set of associations is more convincingly structural than the simple label 'functional', and is important because the 'function' is a central tenet of Barthes's structuralism.

Barthes divided the function into four levels: nuclei, catalyzers, informants and indices.³⁶ The nuclei (otherwise known as cardinal functions) demarcate the central points of the narrative, while the catalyzers harmonize with them in order to carry the narrative forward: they provide necessary, but not essential parts to the narrative, maintaining a story's sense of chronology for example. The informants serve meanwhile 'to identify, to locate in time and space ... they are a pure data with immediate signification',³⁷ while indices refer 'to a more or less diffuse concept which is nevertheless necessary to the meaning of the story ... the character of a narrative agent, a feeling, an atmosphere (for example suspicion) or a philosophy'.³⁸

When M.F. leaves the Algonquin Hotel, in New York, there is a 'nucleus', a decisive moment in the story, where M.F. walks out on Loewe in defiance despite the

³⁵ Roland Barthes, 'Death of the Author' (1968), in Image-Music-Text (1977), ed. and trans. Stephen Heath (Glasgow: Collins, 1977), p. 145

³⁶ Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', pp. 260-275

³⁷ Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', p. 267

³⁸ Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', p. 264, 267

lawyer's insistence that M.F. waits until he comes of age to go to Castita (see MF, p. 28). As he leaves, the hotel lobby it is referred to as a 'vestibule': a communicating chamber or channel. The vestibule enables M.F. to pass from his hotel room into the outside world, and since it is non-essential in terms of plot, can in Barthes's terms be defined as a catalyzer. In the lobby/vestibule M.F. sees 'A young man in levis ... carrying a floral tribute.' (MF, p. 28), signalling death. It is a warning of the later death on Castita of M.F.'s double Llew. The young man in the hotel vestibule through the words 'young man' and the funereal associations of the floral tribute, which is conceivably a wreath, can be linked once again to the earlier funereal tone and the death of the author. As Barthes writes:

The catalyzer ceaselessly revives the semantic tension of the discourse, says ceaselessly that there has been, that there is going to be meaning.³⁹

A similar semantic tension and promise of meaning is likewise present when the young man from the hotel vestibule wearing levis returns to M.F. in a dream while locked in a cell at the police station in Grencijta (MF, p. 93). As with the vestibule, the police cell is also arguably a catalyzer. It comes at the very beginning of M.F.'s time in Castita after his arrest,⁴⁰ where he is presented in the cell with a list of punishable crimes in the middle of which is incest (MF, p. 92): it is an indication of what is to come (with his sister Catherine), but also an indication of what has gone before (with Carlotta).

Meanwhile, the 'levis' that feature in the vestibule and the police cell are neither nuclei nor catalyzers and in structuralist terms it would seem they are best labelled 'informants':

informants bring ready-made knowledge, their functionality, like that of catalyzers, is thus weak without being nil. Whatever its 'flatness' in relation to the rest of the story, the informant (for example, the exact age of a character) always serves to authenticate the reality of the referent, to embed fiction in the real world.⁴¹

³⁹ Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', p. 267

⁴⁰ This comes after M.F.'s involvement with Gonzi and being chased by him with a gun (see MF, pp. 86-87).

⁴¹ Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', p. 268

Various persons and apparitions wear levis in MF, from the pop group on the television in the Algonquin (MF, p. 18) to the young man in the hotel vestibule (in reality and dream), and also later a clown at M.F.'s wedding reception towards the end of the novel. They thus serve 'to authenticate the reality of the referent, to embed fiction in the real world.' The web of language is even more entwined than this in MF, however: Barthes refers to the functionality of informants being, 'weak without being nil', and so it is more than coincidence that in Latin 'levis' means light (i.e. not heavy), because as an informant the levis have a light, or weak, impact. The levis act as informants describing a make of jeans and at the same time knowingly as a description of such a function's impact.

The punning continues with the indices in the novel, the fourth of Barthes's level of functions. They are in MF very often and very obviously a philosophy rather than something more subtly formed: there is first and foremost the structuralism of Dr Fontana; Dr Gonzi, meanwhile, is a scholar of the solipsism of Bishop Berkeley (and also has a brief flirtation with the social contract of Thomas Hobbes); and, there is in addition a clown on Castita who gives a critique of the Kantian Ding an sich (MF, p. 186). Meanwhile, the majority (if not all) of the italicized quotations that appear in Chapter 5 on Chandeleur's 'god-shirt' (as M.F. labels it) are from Aldous Huxley's The Perennial Philosophy.⁴² And, it is Huxley that links the novel back, whether intentionally or serendipitously, to Barthes. For, on the island of Castita a mynah bird calls attention to the 'here and now' (MF, 105), the same call that Huxley's birds make on the island of Pala in Island alongside the call to 'attention' itself,⁴³ while Barthes notably wrote in the 'Death of the Author':

... there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written here and now.⁴⁴

Here the boundaries of intentionality are approached, but nonetheless it does add to the novel's intertextual and structural intertwining.

One of the most prominent and wholly intentional indices in MF is M.F.'s lack of self-volition and autonomy. M.F.'s lack of autonomy is first presented via his

⁴² Aldous Huxley, The Perennial Philosophy (1944/1945; New York: Perennial/HarperCollins, 2004)

⁴³ Aldous Huxley, Island (1962; New York: Perennial/HarperCollins, 2002)

⁴⁴ Barthes, 'Death of the Author', p. 145, emphasis in original

smoking habit when he states: 'Looking down at my hand, I discovered that I'd been smoking another Sinjantin in total automatism.' (MF, pp. 12-13). The lack of self-control is also at the heart of M.F.'s involuntary talent for riddle making.⁴⁵ Apart from a minimal volition, positively encouraged by Loewe's restriction of him, M.F. is little more than a toy to be manipulated. And not only is M.F. manipulated due to his already weak volition, but he is also continually disarmed. Firstly, in his attempt to get to the airport and travel to Castita, M.F. gets into a limousine that arrives for 'Air Carib, Udara Indonesia and Loftsax' airlines. His fellow passengers rob him of almost the entire five hundred dollars he has and he is left, virtually penniless, on the street (MF, p. 31).⁴⁶ Secondly, M.F. walks into a bar in despair and meets Irma. She buys him endless drinks, and realizing that she has plenty of money, he decides to try and steal some from her. In order to do this he goes back to her apartment. In Irma's apartment, M.F. is part of an erotic game played by Irma and her voyeuristic partner Chester; he is also part of the structural game played by Fontana and Loewe: Irma like the thugs who rob M.F. reports back to Loewe (see MF, p. 45). M.F. leaves Irma and Chester with a small amount of money they give him for his services, and under Chester's advice makes his way to Miami in order to find a way to Castita. On the aeroplane to Miami, however, there is a man in black who 'coffins' himself in the toilet. He is on the way to a funeral, the funeral of a 'buddy', who took three bullets in the back of the throat (MF, p. 45), but before going to the funeral he takes M.F. to a Mr Pardaleos. Pardaleos does not call M.F. by his correct name, 'Miles Faber', but instead 'Homo Faber' (MF, p. 47),⁴⁷ and although he does not realize it, this is, like the theft and the sexual humiliation, an act of disarmament. When Loewe told M.F. earlier in the novel that his name meant soldier, M.F. took it to be his surname that he was referring to (see MF, p. 16), but it was in fact his forename, 'miles', which is replaced here by 'homo' meaning man or human being. The name Pardaleos meanwhile is phonemically close to the Greek for assessor, *παραδρος*, and assessment of M.F. is one of the character's roles, for he is testing M.F.'s responses to suggestions he puts to him. Once Pardaleos has disarmed M.F., he places in M.F.'s

⁴⁵ see 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 166

⁴⁶ When M.F. asked Loewe for money, he gave him five hundred dollars, the exact cost of the room booked for him at the Algonquin, a room that was unnecessary (MF, pp. 16-17), not having paid for the room, however, this money was still in his possession.

⁴⁷ The name is repeated in Fontana's poem after the wedding ceremony (MF, p. 193).

head thoughts incest by asking him to conjure images of it in his mind (mother/son and brother/sister [MF, 48-49]); he is measuring M.F.'s receptiveness to incest.

Shirley Chew thought that she had identified a character flaw in M.F. when she wrote:

Burgess' latest novel, MF (Miles Faber, mezzo forte, male and female), is as ingenious as ever but an air of contrivance now sits upon the invention. It may be that the young hero who narrates the tale is really a remote and faceless character despite retaining some of the traits of his predecessor's. At the same time the action, which is in the shape of a quest, is often less interesting in itself than for the cunning examples of word-play with which it is knotted.⁴⁸

Instead, what Chew identifies is the way language creates an alternate reality to the world of action in the novel, and also the way in which the characters are actors in, and puppets to, the novel's machinations. Language is given autonomy in the novel in order to fulfil the structuralist demands on the narrative.

M.F. first encounters Burgess's 'structuralist engineer', Dr Z. Fontana, in Chapter Two. The chapter is set in an eatery in New York and begins with the acrostic 'INCEST', constructed from the orders being placed, and is followed by the acrostic 'WITH', constructed from M.F.'s order. It ends with the orders that form the word 'MOTHER'. Prompted by the food being served, M.F. has thoughts of how a roast dinner should not be turned into a sandwich (MF, p. 22). He then hears Fontana speaking into a tape-recorder in a French accent about instant soup: the 'Synchronic metaphor of the diachronic.' (MF, p. 22). A pair of crutches rest by Fontana's side, a metaphor for the synchronic movement he describes, and one that links the novel not only to incest through the notion of atavism, but also to Much Ado About Nothing through the notion of time and crutches:⁴⁹ when Claudio is asked by Don Pedro when he intends to marry Hero, he says, 'Tomorrow, my lord: time goes on crutches till/love have all his rites.' (II.i.334-335). A roast dinner like a well-made soup moves on crutches towards its completion, whereas a sandwich like an instant soup is almost instantaneous and very much of the moment. The difference between the synchronic and the diachronic to which the scene alludes is part of a contention in structuralism

⁴⁸ Shirley Chew, 'Mr. Livedog's Day: The Novels of Anthony Burgess', Encounter, 38, 6 (June 1972), 63

⁴⁹ This is significant given the stage direction from Much Ado used as an epigraph at the beginning of the novel.

from Ferdinand de Saussure's seminal work, Course in General Linguistics,⁵⁰ forwards. Saussure wrote:

To say that two words as different as calidum [the Latin for hot] and chaud [the French for hot] constitute a diachronic identity means simply that speakers passed from one form to the other through a series of synchronic identities in speaking without there being a break in their common bond despite successive phonetic changes.⁵¹

It is not necessary to discuss the distinction between diachronic and synchronic at length here or to decipher a philosophical standpoint in MF with regard to the synchronic and diachronic, in order to acknowledge that the discussion of it makes the eatery scene structuralist in tone, a tone that is further enhanced when the voice of Fontana prompts M.F. to think:

The voice had a French accent and was rapid. I couldn't see its owner, for this was a place in which, if you didn't want to eat in enstaged dramatic public at the huge half-wheel of the counter, you had to be nooked between wooden partitions. I was so nooked, and so was the speaker. (MF, p. 22)

The final sentence of the quotation has in its grammar three interpretations. It is on the surface a reference to M.F. and Fontana both being seated in partitioned eating areas. However, one can also read it in the following way: 'I was so nooked, and so [I] was the speaker.' This is similarly true, since M.F. is the narrator, or speaker, in the novel. Not only is M.F. the speaker as in narrator, but also, like an audio speaker, he is in a wooden box. The wooden box, when read in conjunction with the structuralist tension between 'author' and 'narrator', and 'arranger' and 'speaker', drawn by Roland Barthes in his 'Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives',⁵² can be read as a coffin, thus linking it once again to the death of the author, as with the other instances in the novel. There appears to be no end to the puns on structuralism in MF.

In Chapter 7, when M.F. arrives in Castita, he stays in a cheap hotel ('the Batvia'). There he finds, left behind by a former occupant, a referee's handbook and a whistle (previously mentioned with regard to Aderyn the Bird Queen). It appears to be a rather arbitrary inclusion, until it is read, again, in conjunction with Barthes's

⁵⁰ Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (London: Peter Owen, 1913/1959)

⁵¹ Saussure, Course in General Linguistics, p. 182

⁵² Barthes, 'Structural Analysis', pp. 282-284

‘Structural Analysis of Narratives’. Barthes writes that, ‘Many narratives ... set two adversaries in conflict over some stake’, which gives the narrative a ‘double’ subject, which he labels as a ‘dual of persons’. ‘This dual is ... interesting in that it relates narrative to the structures of certain (very modern) games in which two equal opponents try to gain possession of an object put into circulation by a referee ...’.⁵³ In line with this, M.F. finds a football referee’s whistle and rule book, although it is not football that is played between M.F. and his double Llew, it is a two-player game in which Catherine is the prize. It is a game that is ancient, medieval and modern, where M.F.’s grandfather is the referee that signals when the game begins and ends. Llew, M.F.’s adversary, is a man who looks the same as M.F., and who is with Fontana’s circus in Castita. The confusion comes when M.F. arrives in Castita looking identical. This leads first of all to his arrest, and then to M.F. being driven to the circus by the policeman who thinks he is Llew. Llew himself takes the opportunity to don a disguise, and pretend to be M.F.’s friend, while M.F. pretends to be Llew. All of this ends in tragedy, however, when M.F.’s sister Catherine mistakes Llew for M.F.

While M.F. is in the shed at Catherine’s house looking at the work of Sib Legeru, which he has travelled to the island to investigate, she sees Llew in the street. She thinks he is M.F., and tries to call his attention, but he thinks that she is offering him sex (see MF, p. 147). He enters the house and tries to have sex with her, but while he is in the middle of doing so, M.F. re-enters the house and sees it happening. Miss Emmett then comes in armed with the pair of scissors that she always has tied to her belt and lunges for Llew who falls out of a window and dies (see MF, p. 151). In order to understand this more fully it is necessary to look towards the Algonquin/Iroquois legends that influenced MF and Claude Lévi-Strauss.

In the legends of the Seneca Indians (members of the Iroquois tribe) there is a tale (‘129. The Legend of Hahadodagwat’ha’),⁵⁴ which is very similar to the story on the island of Castita in MF. I outline these similarities in Table 1. As is to be expected in mythopoeic writing there are differences in the two tales. One important example is that in the Seneca tale the owls belonging to the double’s mother know the truth about the boy and his sister, but do not riddle as Aderyn’s Cockatoo does in the novel (MF,

⁵³ Barthes, ‘Structural Analysis’, pp. 279-280

⁵⁴ Jeremiah Curtin and J. N. B. Hewitt, ‘Seneca Fiction and Myths’, ed. J. N. B. Hewitt, in Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1910-1911 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918), pp. 666-680

p. 214). MF here combines American Indian and Oedipus myth, but fulfils neither: in the 'Legend of Hahadogwat'ha' the owls are wise and see the truth, while in the Greek myth the riddling creature (and the judge of truth) is a sphinx.

In MF the sphinx is first of all aligned with owls and the Algonquin word for owls, Koko-Koho.⁵⁵ The owl then becomes more generally aligned with birds in the novel, the word aderyn (the name of the Bird Queen in MF) is itself Welsh for bird. The Oedipus and Algonquin myths/legends are further conjoined in MF when, in the role of his dead double Llew, M.F. eclipses his sister Catherine while at the same time embracing Aderyn, Llew's mother (MF, p. 172). This comes when Aderyn tells M.F. (who is disguised as his dead double Llew) and Catherine that they are to be married, M.F. looks up, 'at the tricky Arranger of Things, disguised in a ceiling corner as a spider.' (MF, p. 173). The eclipse alludes to an element of Algonquin legend where the incestuous brother and sister become the sun and the moon in eclipse,⁵⁶ the embrace also alludes to Oedipus and his mother, and the spider alludes to the arranger of events in structuralist theory. By the time MF was published the structuralist 'arranger' had crept its way into Joyce criticism, and was defined by David Hayman, as:

a figure or a presence that can be identified neither with the author nor with his narrators, but that exercises an increasing degree of overt control over, increasingly challenging materials ...⁵⁷

In the second edition of Hayman's text, he states, 'The arranger should be seen as something between a persona and a function, somewhere between the narrator and the implied author. One is tempted to speak of "him" as an "it." ... Perhaps it would be best to see the arranger as ... an unstated but inescapable source of control.'⁵⁸ Burgess does not leave the 'arranger' as an 'unstated but inescapable source of control', but instead, as he did with 'functional nakedness' and the 'functional embrace', uses punning and brings the idea directly to the surface, making the

⁵⁵ In the novel Coco-Coho is a drink with an owls face on the bottle (MF, p. 21; see also Burgess, 'Oedipus Wrecks', p. 168)

⁵⁶ This is an element of the American Indian incest myth that Pauline Melville draws attention to in her novel, The Ventriloquist's Tale (London: Bloomsbury, 1998).

⁵⁷ David Hayman, 'Ulysses: The Mechanics of Meaning (1970; Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), p. 84, cited in John Somer, 'The Self-Reflexive Arranger in the Initial Style of Joyce's Ulysses', James Joyce Quarterly, 31, 2 (1994), 65

⁵⁸ Hayman, Mechanics of Meaning, pp. 122-123

'Legend of Hahadodagwat'ha'	<u>MF</u>
1. The tale is of a sister who is abused by a boy identical to the brother that she lives with when the brother is out <u>hunting</u> .	1. M.F. goes <u>hunting</u> for meat at the shops and brings back a joint dripping with blood to Catherine and Miss Emmett's house.
2. The double lives nearby with his mother, according to the brother, and is a friend of his. The sister does not believe him.	2. Llew lives with his mother at the nearby circus, and befriends M.F.
3. In order for the boy, Hahadodagwat'ha, to prove that what he tells his sister about the double is true he hides <u>just outside their home</u> and waits for his double to arrive.	3. Llew arrives while M.F. is <u>just outside the house</u> in the shed looking at the work of Sib Legeru.
4. When the double arrives Hahadodagwat'ha kills him.	4. Returning to the house M.F. finds Llew attacking his sister. In the commotion Miss Emmett (Catherine's governess) causes Llew to fall out the window to his death.
5. The brother and sister bury the double under the fireplace.	5. Llew is placed in the shed surrounded by candles.
6. The double's mother visits the home and they tell her they are married, but the fire betrays them by speaking.	6. Aderyn (Llew's mother) follows M.F. to his sister's house and is suspicious of M.F. and Catherine, having already heard of a person looking like her son called Miles Faber.
7. Later the brother and sister go to the mother's home where they are confronted by a screech owl and a horn owl that like the fire also speak the truth of the situation, so the brother and sister lie in bed together to allay suspicion.	7. To allay suspicion M.F. and Catherine go to Aderyn's trailer and share a bed.
8. The mother of the brother and sister pouring hot oil over the mother of the double finally defeats her.	8. Aderyn is finally defeated when she is pecked at by her own birds.

Table 1. Correspondences between 'Legend of Hahadodagwat'ha' and MF

arranger a spider who sits in the corner. The scene with Catherine and Aderyn should be read in connection with an earlier scene of multiple meanings when M.F. is in the shed at Indovinello Street examining the work of Sib Legeru. A spider startles M.F. there and reminds him that there is not time to read everything at that moment, and pushes the action along (MF, p. 141). M.F. goes back into Catherine's house, and he confronts Llew. As Table 1 (point 3) illustrates this aligns the action with the Iroquois legend, where the brother waits in hiding just outside his home for his double.

The punning and the way it is given meaning in the novel is facilitated by the level at which the characters in the novel are actors rather than more wholly volitional individuals. For example: Z. Fontana is also 'the soup man' and 'the jelly man' (see MF, pp. 74-75), a psychiatrist and a poet, while at the same time being a Faber and M.F.'s grandfather. Meanwhile, M.F. pretends to be Llew, and Llew pretends to be a moustached friend of Llew (that is, M.F.). There is also the act of brother and sister (M.F. and Catherine) pretending to be man and wife. The theatricality of this final point, M.F. explains to Catherine in the following lines:

There were Beth and Bob Greenhough who did Romeo and Juliet at the Princes Connie in Manchester, England, in, oh, about 1933. Connie Chatterley and the gamekeeper Mellors, in the stage version of Lawrence's dying sermon, were acted by Gilbert Zimmerman and his sister Florence. And they actually went through the motions, naked too, flowers wreathing genitals and all. That of course, was much later than 1933. (MF, p. 174)

Not only are characters actors, but language itself is an actor in the novel as well. The novel is word play, a play of words, and often only fulfils on an etymological level, making it a novel for polyglots and riddle masters. For example, at a level of action, incest is not fulfilled between Catherine and M.F, for they separate before he ejaculates, and not fulfilled by Carlotta and M.F. Keteki meanwhile opts for filial pederasty instead of mother/son or brother/sister incest (MF, p. 218), avoiding the risk of insemination altogether. However, it is not until the end of the novel that these things are revealed, and so polyglots and readers of structural anthropology are pre-empting all the time things that do not happen, or that only happen across languages and through language.

Language is detached from action in MF. Those without the ability to understand, among other languages, Welsh, English, Italian, Maltese, Greek, Latin, Malay, German and French, read the progress of the novel very differently from those that do. For example, it may interest the reader to know that Dr Gonzi's name means

in Rohingya ‘underwear’, or that Professor Burong’s name (see MF, p. 171) means in Cebuano ‘stupid’, or that Fontana in many languages means fountain, or that the name of Mr Dunkel is Swedish and German meaning abstruse. Further, Swart Smythe, Dr Fontana’s pen name under which he publishes his collection of poems called Structure, means (as with ‘faber’) blacksmith, since swart in Afrikaans and Frisian means black and Smythe is a synonym of Smith.⁵⁹

MF is full of invitations to interpret the novel and ‘foreign’ language is only one of the ways in which it makes these invitations, there are other more direct invitations as well. For example, Aderyn the Bird Queen, alluding to the structuralism that underpins the narrative, says to M.F. while he is disguised as her son Llew: ‘behind every art there’s a science.’ (MF, p. 163), and later, Dr Fontana tells M.F. that:

[the] works of Sib Legeru exhibit the nastiest aspects of incest [and] ... signify the breakdown of order, the collapse of communication, the irresponsible cultivation of chaos. In them are combined an absence of meaning and a sniggering boyscout codishness. It is man’s job to impose manifest order on the universe, not to yearn for Chapter Zero of the Book of Genesis ... Art takes the raw material of the world about us and attempts to shape it into signification. Antiart takes the same material and seeks insignification. (MF, p. 214)

As well as invitations MF carries warnings too, however. M.F. warns the reader of the novel, ‘Don’t try distilling a message from it, not even an espresso cupful of meaningful epitome or a Sambuca glass of abridgement, con la mosca. Communication has been the whatness of the communication. For separable meaning go to the professors, whose job it is to make a meaning out of anything.’ (MF, p. 218).

Ignoring M.F.’s warning, Aggeler boldly asserted that the significance of the novel was in its address of race and that: ‘[Burgess] has fused incest myths [in MF] – Algonquin Indian and Greek – and given them new meaning as a devastating satiric indictment of contemporary western cultural values which goes well beyond the criticisms levelled in the Enderby novels.’⁶⁰ This is premised on the final chapter of the novel where we find the novel’s narrator at Lake Bracciano, a place in Italy where

⁵⁹ Definitions from Webster’s Online Dictionary: The Rosetta Edition (<http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org>)

⁶⁰ Geoffrey Aggeler, ‘Incest and the Artist: Anthony Burgess’s MF as Summation’, Modern Fiction Studies (Winter 1972-3), p. 529

Burgess lived with his wife Liana. The wind is blowing across the lake and he reminisces about his life and marriage. It is revealed that the narrator is black and his wife is Chinese, and that they have adopted children of a variety of races. The many races are brought together under one roof in a single family by Mr and Mrs Faber, but those races are not for mixing – that would be incest, which is not permissible. M.F. wanted children with Ethel, demonstrating a desire for ‘miscegenation’ as the narrator labels it, but at the same time there is an acceptance that the cultural norm (as he sees it) is of an ongoing division of the races, and hence the adoptions. Aggeler argues that incest from Burgess’s point of view, however, is the continued segregation of races that Ethel and M.F. practice, not ‘miscegenation’.⁶¹ This leads Aggeler to his assertion that the novel provides a ‘devastating satiric indictment of contemporary western cultural values’.

Aggeler claimed that Burgess ‘attempts to jolt his readers out of their race consciousness by allowing them to finish the entire novel before he reveals a racial factor that most writers would feel compelled to clarify on their first page.’⁶² In truth, however, the revelation that M.F. is black, and the adjoining pun on the name of Anna Sewell and her novel, Black Beauty, appeared to me at first to be the novel’s weakest part. There is no great surprise and no great revelation. Perhaps this is lost to time, or perhaps the colour of the narrator’s skin is as arbitrary as everything else in the novel. Aggeler does quote Burgess as having said in a personal interview that the reader is intended to re-read the book with the information that M.F. is black and to find no difference.⁶³ It is difficult, however, to understand how this can hope to reflect or address the race issues of 1970s America, which is what Aggeler means by ‘satiric indictment’. This is until it is acknowledged that the conflation is a response to an earlier metaphor dreamt up by Louis Agassiz in the nineteenth century,⁶⁴ who wrote:

The production of halfbreeds is as much a sin against nature, as incest in a civilized community is a sin against purity of character ... Far from presenting

⁶¹ Aggeler, ‘Incest and the Artist’, p. 540

⁶² Aggeler, ‘Incest and the Artist’, pp. 540-541

⁶³ Aggeler, ‘Incest and the Artist’, p. 541

⁶⁴ It may not have been Louis Agassiz in particular that Burgess was responding to, however, Agassiz was a Zoologist and animal classifications in the novel would give additional reason to suggest that it was him in particular that Burgess was thinking of. In particular Z. Fontana, as Burgess tells the reader is Zoon Fontana, meaning in Greek talking animal (‘Oedipus Wrecks’, p. 168). There are also numerous birds and names for birds (see ‘Oedipus Wrecks’, p. 172).

to me a natural solution of our difficulties, the idea of amalgamation is most repugnant to my feelings, I hold it to be a perversion of every natural sentiment ... No efforts should be spared to check that which is abhorrent to our better nature, and to the progress of a higher civilization and a purer morality.⁶⁵

Read in relation to Agassiz, it is possible to understand the criticism that is made by the novel: incest is racial purity, because the incest that has produced M.F. is racial purity at its *n*-th degree. It hence reverses the argument. To re-read the novel and see no difference from when it was read simply for its address of incest means not that black and white are indistinguishable but that incest is wholly distinguishable from racial mixing in the novel. For example, Faber's and Tukang's public copulation looked like incest but was in fact a protest against racial segregation, which could as well be viewed as an act of 1970s sexual liberation. Faber's existence takes Agassiz's prescription to its limit. Agassiz's want of racial purity is fulfilled to its utmost by incest, the very thing that he metaphorically uses as an argument against 'miscegenation'. Rather than suffering disease and weakness due to being a 'mulatto', Faber suffers it from being the absolute opposite. He thereby challenges Agassiz and the confused metaphor that aligns 'miscegenation' with incest. It is not the structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss or Roland Barthes that challenges Agassiz's incest-miscegenation nexus, however, but rather the bringing together of structuralism, myth and theories of 'miscegenation' in a novelistic dialogue.

Lévi-Strauss is an individual constructed in the ether, a universal without congruent particulars, a hypothesis, as with Shakespeare in Nothing Like the Sun, through whom perspectives on reality can be altered. At first MF appears untouched by historical and political issues, even worse it appears clumsy to allow structuralism to ride rough shod over them. Reflection upon its themes, however, exposes a fiercely intellectual level that can all too easily go unnoticed. It is a novel that takes risks, just as Nothing Like the Sun takes risks, and the return for this is unquestionably worthwhile.

⁶⁵ Louis Agassiz cited in Robert J. C. Young, Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 149

CHAPTER 3

The Author, and the Position of the Hero with Regard to the Author, in Burgess's Art: Burgess, Bakhtin and Napoleon Symphony

Inspired by Mikhail Bakhtin's work on Dostoevsky, Andrew Biswell in a reading of Earthly Powers suggested that a 'polyphonic' approach might be taken towards reading Burgess.¹ More recent still, Nuria Belastegui suggested a dialogic approach to Nothing Like the Sun,² which also borrowed from Bakhtin. Here I examine the correspondence between Bakhtin and Burgess's portrayal of Napoleon. In mind of this, the title to this chapter echoes one of Bakhtin's chapter titles in Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (translated into English by Caryl Emerson).³ Bakhtin elaborates in the chapter, 'The Hero, and the Position of the Author with Regard to the Hero, in Dostoevsky's Art', upon how the hero, within Dostoevsky's 'polyphonic' novelistic style, 'illuminates himself from all possible points of view'.⁴ Bakhtin offers in his work an explanation on why the texts that he calls 'dialogic' (that is, ones which have diverse and incongruent textual elements within them that appear to be in dialogue with one another) appear to be erroneous when read in a 'monologic' way (that is, are read for a single overarching thesis). With the assistance of Bakhtin, this chapter investigates how Napoleon Symphony appears to some to be '363 pages of nonsense', but can also be 363 pages of sense.

The first 'incongruence' in Napoleon Symphony comes in its very concept. The concept is that of putting Beethoven's third symphony, the 'Eroica', together with the life of Napoleon from his marriage to Josephine forwards. Originally Beethoven did indeed dedicate his symphony to Napoleon and saw it as a tribute to the man. Beethoven, however, became disillusioned by Napoleon and chose to remove the name from the symphony by marking it out.⁵ Alluding to this, in Mozart and the Wolf Gang, the fictional Burgess asks the rhetorical question of his alter ego the fictional Anthony: 'Can we listen to the Eroica without imposing if not the image

¹ Andrew Biswell, 'Conflict and Confluence: Anthony Burgess as Novelist and Journalist', PhD Thesis (University of Warwick, 2002), pp. 178-179.

² Nuria Belastegui, 'Negativity and the Dialogic Structures of Nothing Like the Sun', paper presented at the Anthony Burgess and Modernity: Symposium, International Anthony Burgess Foundation, Manchester, 7-9 July 2005.

³ Mikhail Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, intro. Wayne C. Booth (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984)

⁴ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 49

⁵ See Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphonies 1-9, Wiener Philharmoniker (Conducted by Sir Simon Rattle) [Booklet] (London: EMI Records, 2003), p. 57

of Bonaparte at least the wraith of some colossal conqueror?’⁶ Napoleon Symphony pre-empts the question by almost two decades, however it does not answer it. The author does not deny or ignore Beethoven’s position with regard to the symphony, and in fact he over dramatizes it. In Napoleon Symphony the dedication is torn from the manuscript paper,⁷ instead of being crossed out. Burgess was not greatly concerned with the appropriateness of pairing Napoleon with the Eroica. Instead he viewed it in the most part as a technical challenge more than anything else: how to fit a history into the musical structure of a symphony within a novel. He wrote of it thus:

On the most general level ... the book [Napoleon Symphony] is in four movements, just as a symphony is in four movements. But it means a little more than that. It means that the proportions of each movement are exactly matched in the novel itself. What I did was to play the symphony over on the phonograph and time each movement, and I worked out a kind of proportion of pages to each second or five seconds of playing time. So there is a correspondence between the number of pages and the actual time taken for the thing to be performed. But more than that, I’ve worked with the score of Eroica in front of me, the orchestral score, and I’ve made each section within a given literary movement correspond to a section within Eroica, so that a passage of eight bars would correspond to so many pages in the novel. And not only the length, the number pages, but the actual dynamics, the mood and tempo.⁸

The question asked in this chapter is whether this ‘symphonisation of fiction’, which is later described in Mozart and the Wolf Gang as an ‘implausible undertaking’ and proof that ‘things have to occasionally to be done to show that they cannot be done’ (Mozart and the Wolf Gang, p. 146), can be aligned with Bakhtin’s identification of Dostoevsky’s polyphonic project.

M. L. Holloway wrote that the most obvious elements of Napoleon Symphony any reader is immediately confronted with are the relinquishing of ‘conventional

⁶ Mozart and the Wolf Gang, p. 99

⁷ ‘... while the dissident duc d’Engheim is being sentenced to death for conspiracy against the State, a kind of bugle call is heard outside, along with a fart like the tearing of paper. That is Beethoven ripping the dedication of the “Eroica” to Bonaparte and announcing his opening theme, no longer allowed to be permitted to glorify tyranny.’ (Geoffrey Aggeler, Anthony Burgess: The Artist as Novelist [Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1979], pp. 184-185)

⁸ Interview with Geoffrey Aggeler in New York City, September 16, 1972, cited in Aggeler, Artist as Novelist, p. 209

naturalism' and the willingness to set aside 'authenticity'.⁹ Addressing these elements of the text from a Bakhtian perspective means identifying them with a disjuncture between monologic and dialogic. 'The polyphonic project is incompatible with a mono-ideational framework of the ordinary sort',¹⁰ writes Bakhtin, and the monologic, which he aligns with philosophical idealism, 'recognizes only one principle of cognitive individualization: error ... Only error individualizes.'¹¹ Wherever a dialogic approach to narrative is taken, the only element that someone trained to think in the 'ordinary', 'mono-ideational' framework will recognize, according to Bakhtin, is error.

In the epistle to the reader at the end of Napoleon Symphony, Burgess directs his reader towards Tolstoy's War and Peace (Voyna i Mir) for a 'successful' portrayal of Napoleon. Bakhtin directs his reader towards the same novel for a mono-ideational portrayal of the same man. Burgess also directs his reader towards Thomas Hardy's The Dynasts for a 'failure' to portray Napoleon, a play/drama that G. Glen Wickens investigates from a Bakhtian perspective in Hardy, Monism and the Carnival Tradition.¹² Hardy's text, subtitled, 'An Epic-Drama of the War with Napoleon, in Three Parts, Nineteen Acts, and One Hundred and Thirty Scenes', is knowingly implausible, and Burgess identifies Napoleon Symphony as closer to Hardy than Tolstoy in its attempt to rewrite history through symphonic formulations. The implausibility of Napoleon Symphony does not render it nonsensical, however. The implausibility is instead part of the deft economy of the writing with which Burgess quickly summarizes and compresses information into small spaces. As Aggeler wrote:

Napoleon Symphony is introduced by an overture in which we hear the reflections of three wedding guests awaiting, in company with the bride and a dozing registrar with a wooden leg, the arrival of the bridegroom. It is the evening of 9 March 1796. The tardy bridegroom is Napoleon. The bride-to-be is Josephine, and the three guests who will be witnesses are gentlemen who have shown themselves to be her good friends. By deft allusion, Burgess

⁹ '... far from setting his sights on the authenticity often associated with the concept of the 'historical' novel, Burgess is prepared to rewrite history, relinquishing conventional naturalism in the interest of the new light to be thrown on the past by a 'musicalised' interpretation of it ...' (M. L. Holloway, 'Music in Words: The Music of Anthony Burgess and the Role of Music in his Literature', PhD thesis [University of Huddersfield, 1997], p. 184)

¹⁰ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 78

¹¹ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 81

¹² G. Glen Wickens, Thomas Hardy, Monism, and the Carnival Tradition: The One and the Many in 'The Dynasts' (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002)

indicates the ways in which these men have proven their friendship, but a reader unfamiliar with Josephine's history might easily overlook some of these allusions and the concomitant playful ironies of the overture. To one of these men, Jean Lambert Tallien, Josephine owes her life. Tallien was the man who courageously attacked Robespierre on the floor of the Convention and precipitated his downfall, thus serving France as well as rescuing Thérésia, the woman he loved and later married, from the guillotine. He also rescued his friend Josephine, then awaiting execution with other aristocrats in the Carmelite prison. Another guest/witness is Josephine's former lover Paul Barras, who has promised Napoleon command of the Army of the Alps as a wedding present if he marries Josephine. Barras hopes to solidify his own position as one of the five directors through the marriage ... Also present is Jérôme Camelet, Josephine's lawyer, who has given her marriage encouraging approval after her notary, Raguideau, had tried strenuously to dissuade her and deeply offended Napoleon ... When he [Napoleon] finally strides in with a fourth witness, his aide-de-camp Lemarois, and commands the registrar to "Begin!" we are ready for the Allegro con brio.¹³

When the allegro con brio begins, with the illicit reading of a letter from Napoleon to Josephine, the economy of presentation continues. Present are Massena, Augereau, La Harpe, Berthier and Kilmaine (while outside riding on a horse is Saliceti). They call Napoleon 'Wet Dream' (Napoleon Symphony, pp. 15-17), and the scene, and that which follows, echo reports by André Masséna, Prince of Essling, on the disdain with which Napoleon was first received by his army.¹⁴

The first thing that Napoleon does when he is introduced to the reader in the allegro con brio, or first movement, is to change his name from Buonaparte to Bonaparte, as he did in life. Napoleon reflects on changing his name from its Italian to the French spelling that: 'When they took Milan he could perhaps juggle with the u, conquering France or fraternal Italian as the occasion dictated.' (NS, p. 18). The changing name becomes a means of easy movement between France and Italy, and highlights the importance of Napoleon to the unification of Italy. This importance is also highlighted by the novel's dedication to Burgess's Italian wife, Liana: 'To my dear wife, a Buonapartista, who, in her extreme youth, could not understand why the British had named a great railway terminus after a military defeat.' The talk of juggling the 'u' in the novel gives way to an ideological rant, which places waltz above minuet and translates Europe into a female body. There is a multiplicity of meaning here. One might note, first of all, the correlations often made in biographical accounts between Napoleon's romance with Josephine and his campaigns to conquer

¹³ Aggeler, Artist as Novelist, pp. 210-211

¹⁴ See Felix Markham, Napoleon (New York: Signet, 1963), pp. 32-33

Europe. Secondly, one might note that Napoleon was said to have ‘put his stamp on everything from the theater to furniture, from law to the Catholic Church. “The Age of Napoleon” was as much a conquest of style and imagination as it was a military epoch.’¹⁵

As Napoleon’s army marches, Josephine is introduced in flagrante delicto with Lieutenant Hippolyte Charles (NS, pp. 20-21). The novel alternates between Napoleon and Josephine: he is in Northern Italy fighting the Austrians and she is in Paris. In a dream that Josephine has, she and Napoleon are in Verona. ‘In her dream her husband was trying to take her naked on the terrace, in the presence of the servants who were clearing the table: she distinctly saw a spot of coffee fall from the lifted pot on to the marble pavimento. Oh no, oh no. But he kept laughing that this was the town of Romeo and Juliet.’ (NS, p. 29). It is the first of many images that attempt to take hold of Napoleon and Josephine. The novel is full of pre-existing narratives that provide transient descriptions of the central protagonists, but that also communicate with one another.

When Napoleon learns of Josephine’s infidelity (NS, p. 48), he makes a conscious choice not to be the jealous Othello (NS, p. 49). Instead he chooses to learn a lesson from the country that he is currently in, Egypt, and that lesson is from Antony and Cleopatra that betrayal is ‘the pattern of history’ (NS, p. 49). Napoleon, like Bakhtin’s formulation of the hero in Dostoevsky’s work, ‘is not only cognizant, but an ideologist as well’.¹⁶ This does not mean that he is always right, however. After Napoleon has slept with Fourés’ wife (see NS, pp. 51-52), she is called Cleopatra (NS, p. 62). By deduction this then makes Josephine Fulvia or Octavia, but neither of these really appears to make sense. In the second movement Josephine, who by this point in the novel is called simply J, corresponding to Napoleon being called N (NS, pp. 121-122), herself dreams that she is Cleopatra (NS, pp. 142ff.). When she awakes from the dream, however, she has become Aphrodite (NS, p. 145). There is no authoritative viewpoint, no decision on who represents Cleopatra, but there is a dialogue.

Napoleon puts forward a position and this is then seen to be in conflict with a transitory state of identity for Josephine. Bakhtin summarizes the situation when he

¹⁵ Gregory Fremont-Barnes and Todd Fisher, The Napoleonic Wars: The Rise and Fall of an Empire (Oxford: Osprey, 2004), p. 314

¹⁶ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky’s Poetics, p. 78

writes: '[t]he idea begins to live, that is, to take shape, to develop, to find and renew its verbal expression, to give birth to new ideas, only when it enters into genuine dialogic relationship with other ideas, with the ideas of others.'¹⁷ In Bakhtin's terms, Josephine can be viewed as an idea ever growing, just as Napoleon is, and together they enter a dialogue of ideas (or a dialogic), which is also a putting on and taking off of masks, very consciously in a cognizant and ideological fashion, but not one that provides any answers.

Awakening from the complex dream filled with satyrs and sphinxes, oboes and flutes, in which she is Cleopatra, Josephine looks at her clock and sees that the time is 4:30 am (NS, p. 146). In ME, the time 19:17 is an allusion to Burgess's date of birth, 1917. A similar time/date correlation is used in the short story 'Sure is a Busy Night'.¹⁸ The short story begins at 7 pm in the year 1900 and every minute of the clock shifts the narrative on another year. The difference with the time 4:30 am is that it can be read either as 430 AD, in which case it is the date of the death of St Augustine, or 430 BC, in which case it is the date of the Athenian Plague. The premonition of death is doubly punctuated here through the duality of the time/date correspondence. Death is further punctuated by the appearance of the Triton in Josephine's dream that threatens death with a lyric from 'Oranges and Lemons', spoken in French: ' ... VOICI UNE CHANDELLE POUR ALLER VOUS COUCHER VOICI UN COUPERET POUR COUPER VOTRE TÊTE.' (' ... here is a candle to light you to bed and here is a chopper to chop off your head' [NS, p. 145]). Death here not only alludes to the threat to Josephine of execution during the French Revolution, and the general threat of death to Napoleon in war, but it is also the threat of divorce and with it a metaphorical death; the death of the relationship between Napoleon and Josephine.

In a mirror in Josephine's dream before the Triton, there appears the concluding (but unfinished) line from George Orwell's Nineteen Eighty-Four: 'LA LUTTE ÉTAIT TERMINÉE. IL AVAIT REMPORTE LA VICTORIE SUR LUI-MEME. IL AIMAIT ... ' ('The struggle was finished. He had won the victory over himself. He loved ... ' [NS, pp. 144-145]).¹⁹ It links to the Triton's line from 'Oranges and Lemons', a song that is an integral part of Orwell's novel.²⁰ The line in the mirror marks Winston Smith's

¹⁷ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 88

¹⁸ New York, pp. 181-189

¹⁹ see George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1989), p. 311

²⁰ see Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four, pp. 102-104, 153, 231

surrender of his self to Big Brother. It appears arbitrary, but what it does, like the equivocations of Napoleon and Josephine to various historical and literary figures, is to interfere with chronology. Indeed the chronology of Orwell's novel itself is rearranged in NS by placing the line from 'Oranges and Lemons' after the concluding line of the novel, but more than this the presence of lines from Nineteen Eighty-Four are a purposeful anachronism that refuses to allow any straightforward approach to history.

Josephine's awakening from her dream to a time/date correlation mirrors the earlier awakening of N in the Kremlin when he looked at his watch and it was 4:51 am (NS, p. 142), which likewise undergoes a double conversion: to 451 AD, the date of The Council of Chalcedon, and 451 BC the date of The Twelve Tables, both indicators of a laying down of doctrine and law. In line with this laying down of the law, the time/date 4:51 am becomes the key (or law) to movement across historical events in the lives of Napoleon and Josephine. At 4:51 am, December 1809, the month of Josephine's divorce from Napoleon,²¹ Josephine awakes in 'her Malmaison bedchamber' (NS, p. 154), and in the next sentence N is looking at his watch: it is 4:51 am, October 1812, the date when the French began to retreat from Moscow.²²

The time/date correlations found in Napoleon Symphony can be read as an allusion to the awkward relationship between historical time and literature. Bakhtin wrote at length on the difficulty in 'assimilating real historical time and space in literature' in a paper entitled 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes Towards a Historical Poetics'.²³ He wrote of Dostoevsky in particular:

In his work Dostoevsky makes almost no use of relatively uninterrupted historical or biographical time, that is, of strictly epic time; he "leaps over" it, he concentrates on action at points of crisis, at turning points and catastrophes, when the inner significance of a moment loses its temporal restrictiveness.²⁴

Points of crisis in Napoleon Symphony are likewise points at which the novel leaps forward. It does this often by plunging the novel into ever greater comic puns. When

²¹ David Nicholls, Napoleon: A Biographical Companion (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 1999), p. 288

²² Nicholls, Napoleon, p. 288

²³ see M. M. Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes Towards a Historical Poetics', pp. 84-258, The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays (1981; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996)

²⁴ Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 149

the Berezina is crossed by the remnants of the Grande Armée (26-28 November 1812)²⁵ by bridges N and J in Napoleon Symphony, the reader is asked to think about why the bridge is labelled J. The obvious answer would be Josephine, but when it collapses Cornevin yells ‘O fucking Jesus’ (NS, p. 178), and then everyone is screaming ‘O Jesus Christ almighty’. There is not only an equivocation between Josephine and Jesus, both of their initials being J, but Jesus also stands alongside Napoleon or N and gives out first. Further, it is soon disclosed that Napoleon is Jesus himself, and even above and beyond Jesus. This begins when Lieutenant Ratiano loses his left leg, and it is described thus:

Lieutenant Ratiano saw his left leg, from the knee down, actually break off, no pain, like a rotten tree-limb, and then wept for it, seeing it in the snow: my baby, part of me, I have let you die. He prepared to die puzzled that God had not interfered in the huge agony of a dying army, but then saw the incredibly beautiful subtlety of the whole Universal System, God using the Emperor to bring about undeniable evidence of the immortality of the soul. It was so simple really: the one part of the Human System that could not break off and lie there in the snow was the Human Spirit. Lieutenant Ratiano prepared in ecstasy to break everything off, including his brain, and then what would be left was the essential Lieutenant Ratiano, counting his broken-off parts invisibly, seeing that everything was there. Hallelujah hallelujah. And then he died puzzled that anybody had to be born in the first place. (NS, p. 185)

In the third movement of Napoleon Symphony, which contains Napoleon’s escape from his incarceration on the Isle of Elba and the Battle of Waterloo (NS, p. 268), with increasing frequency the words Jesus and Christ are used separately and in combination, and when N comes to talk of the English not being able to see the ‘Eternal Spirit of Reason’ he declares that: ‘We have had a glimpse of the eternal forces of evil that militate against our pure and, yes, Christian doctrine. Antichrist is abroad, gentlemen. But, with God’s help, Antichrist shall not prevail.’ (NS, p. 197). Here the fusing of Napoleon’s Enlightenment spirit and the spirit of Christianity appears an all too simplistic pun, but the Enlightenment changed the face of Christianity, and became in itself a new religion, therefore to see Napoleon as the figurehead of this new religion equivocal not only to Christ but to God is an acknowledgement that out of the ridiculous comes a terrifying sense of what is partially true. Even though it appears to leap ahead of itself in its reasoning, the novel in its comic portrayal of Napoleon scuffs its heel upon a truth.

²⁵ see Nicholls, Napoleon, p. 288

David Barrett wrote, 'one method of defence against a man whose ideas are a little disturbing is to make a comic figure of him.'²⁶ He was writing about Aristophanes' portrayal of the Greek tragedian Euripides in The Poet and the Women. However, he could have just as easily been writing about Burgess's portrayal of Freud, Trotsky, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Keats, Maugham or indeed Napoleon. For each could be seen as comic, and each had ideas that could be seen as disturbing, in particular in their ability to reshape our consciousness, our literature, our politics and geography. Burgess alerts the reader throughout Napoleon Symphony that it is indeed a comic novel. N's wisdom on the comic and his theory of laughter are one of the ways that Burgess does this. Napoleon remarks in Napoleon Symphony:

... a very narrow compartment indeed divides the sublime from the ridiculous. I remember distinctly being taught that as a cadet. One man is a man, six hundred and fifty-five thousand men are either a stellar sublimity or a joke. They march, they charge – they are the very movement of the heavens. They retreat, they all have dysentery – ah, how comic ... widows and orphans wholesale, en masse, are themselves ha ha comic. Stage direction: Enter a chorus of widows and orphans. Laughter. You see what I mean? (NS, pp. 198-199)

Napoleon's wisdom on laughter is in many ways similar to Bakhtin's theory that: 'Laughter is a specific aesthetic relationship to reality, but not one that can be translated into logical language'.²⁷ Bakhtin wrote of 'carnival laughter', one of the central tenets of his work:

... in death birth is foreseen and in birth death, in victory defeat and in defeat victory, in a crowning a decrowning. Carnival laughter does not permit a single one of these aspects of change to be absolutized or to congeal in one-sided seriousness.²⁸

This is not a straightforward comedy to understand, and although something akin to it is present in Napoleon Symphony, Burgess is very wary of its employment. He writes in the epistle to the reader at the end of Napoleon Symphony:

This is a comic novel and it must
Be read as such, as deemed good or bad –

²⁶ David Barrett, 'Introduction', Aristophanes: The Wasps/The Poet and the Women/The Frogs, trans. ed. David Barrett (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 97

²⁷ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 164

²⁸ Bakhtin, Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 164

A thousand versts away from Tolstoygrad.
Indeed, my working title used to be
This: The Napoleon Comic Symphony,
A name that reason forced me to reject,
Since comic leads the reader to expect
Contrivances of laughter: comic taste,
Like the term comedy, has been debased.
Arousing mirth – this is not what I'm at:
What's comedy? Not tragedy. That's that. (NS, p. 348)

Further, Aggeler wrote of the comedy in Napoleon Symphony:

Viewing the novel as a whole suggests that Burgess's sense of 'comedy' is vaguely Dantesque. It begins in the 'hell,' in an Elizabethan sense, of his passion for Josephine, moves on through purgatorial campaigns in Italy, Egypt, and Russia, and finally concludes, not with his death on St. Helena, but with a resurgence of an earlier triumphant mood as his partial fulfilment of the dream of a united Europe is prophesied, with even the British, 'those bastards incorporated into the Great European Family...' (NS, 359). Within comedy of this kind, there is room for a great deal more than there is in the types of comedy recognized by modern taste and evaluated in terms of hilarity achieved. There is certainly room for hilarity and the farcical, the arousal of mirth and contrivances of laughter, but there is also room for representing a wide variety of human experiences, some arousing pity or sadness or even horror rather than mirth. This is the comedy of the Elizabethans, as well as Dante, the comedy of Marlowe, simultaneously exalting and mocking Promethean aspiration in Tamburlaine and Faustus, or Shakespeare in Troilus and Cressida. It is the comedy of Burgess in Nothing Like the Sun, A Clockwork Orange, and the Malayan Trilogy.²⁹

The comedy in Napoleon Symphony may well be the things that Aggeler describes. However, Burgess's supposed reluctance to confess his comic purpose is in and of itself a connection to comedy across time. This is because the requirement of laughter has always been thought a threat to the seriousness that comedy can convey. In Plato's Symposium, for example, Eryximachus says to Aristophanes: 'take care what you're about. If you preface what you have to say by making us laugh, you will force me to be on the watch for jokes in your speech, which might otherwise run its course in peace.'³⁰ Burgess therefore highlights a facet of comedy present in its conception, not a contemporary flaw. There have always been entertainments written for mirth above art and there always will be.

²⁹ Aggeler, Artist as Novelist, p. 210

³⁰ Plato, The Symposium, trans. W. Hamilton (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1951), p. 58

In the fourth movement of Napoleon Symphony, or the allegro molto, time and again INRI, the initials emblazoned upon Christ's cross, are re-invoked and manipulated (see for example NS, pp. 274, 275-276, 286, 343). This is Napoleon's martyrdom, and even wooden effigies have been made of him in the guise of toy monkeys that climb poles, sold as souvenirs from St Helena. It is also Napoleon's Promethean immortality,³¹ where Napoleon lives on in a kind of glorious after life in which his dreams almost all come true. Here Burgess introduces a further facet of comedy: parody and pastiche. Burgess wrote of the section:

The variations [of Beethoven's 'Eroica'] find a literary counterpart in parodies or pastiches of the styles of British writers from Jane Austen to Henry James. N makes a friend of Betsy Bascombe [sic: Balcombe] in prim regency prose ... Sir Hudson Lowe, N's detestable jailor, appears as Sir Hud, and N as Lion of the Valley in a logomachia in Sir Walter Scott's style. William Wordsworth, in blank verse out of The Prelude, sees N making a garden ... Sergeant Trouncer and Private Slodge discuss N's failing health in the manner of Dickens. In Bulwer Lytton's prose the affair with Anna Walenska is recalled ... A ponderous passage in Ruskinian style tells of a great storm blasting N's garden ... Tennyson, in In Memoriam style and stanza, with INRI acrostics, records N's death and mourns it. We join N after death, in a garden, talking to a young woman about the nature and value of heroism. The manner is that of Henry James, counterpointed with tropes from Gerald Manley Hopkins ... [When] the dead and corporal N is cut open for the postmortem, sewn up, [and] buried. Betsy is Dickensianly tearful about him ...³²

Writing about Napoleon in the shape of nineteenth-century fiction appears as anachronistic as the insertion of lines from George Orwell. The parody is not nonsensical, however, for Bakhtin describes the importance of parody thus:

In antiquity, parody was inseparably linked to a carnival sense of the world. Parodying is the creation of a decrowning double; it is that same "world turned inside out." For this reason parody is ambivalent. Antiquity parodied essentially everything: the satyr drama, for example, was originally the parodic and laughing aspect of the tragic trilogy that preceded it ... it was like an entire system of crooked mirrors, elongating, diminishing, distorting in various directions and to various degrees.³³

³¹ Affirmation of this immortality comes in the last line of the novel where there is a peal that praises Jesus and Napoleon: 'And I say aga INRI ng bells bells bells bells and rejoice. Rejoice.' (NS, p. 343).

³² 'Bonaparte in E Flat', This Man and Music, pp. 189-190

³³ Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 127

The crooked mirrors of parody, when applied to history, acknowledge its plasticity. Writing continuously amends history, just as it does fiction. This occurs even when that writing is not directly concerned with the particular history in question. There is nothing random in Burgess's choice of nineteenth-century writers. Hayden White is among those that place responsibility firmly at the feet of the nineteenth-century novel and its realism for the traditional view of history inside it and outside of it.³⁴ Burgess appears in the parodies to be making a similar observation: why else confine oneself to this era? As such, the eighteenth-century history of Napoleon is filtered through the nineteenth-century way of writing history. It distorts it and changes it through its crooked mirrors. All of this, as with the rest of Napoleon Symphony, is written with a cool detachment whereby there is an almost ludic focus on structure and style over and above character. It allows a suggestion of the nineteenth century's influence on history, without accusations of wrongdoing.

Unlike Burgess, James Joyce did not confine himself to parodying the prose styles of one era when writing the 'Oxen of the Sun' episode of Ulysses, which begins with a 'Sallustian-Tacitean prelude' and proceeds in historical order through to modern-day slang.³⁵ Jeri Johnson wrote of the Joycean work that, 'the characters and events [of the 'Oxen of the Sun'] are produced through the styles (not despite them).'³⁶ In the case of Burgess's Napoleon, however, the parodies are another battle to be fought: between history and the individual. Although Burgess's work unquestionably invites comparison to Joyce, it manipulates the Joycean perspective and its 'parallax of discourses' (discussed in the introduction to this thesis) in order to produce something that recognizably belongs to Burgess.

Structure from the very start of Burgess's career was of great importance. The first novel that he wrote, A Vision of Battlements, used as part of its structure an examination of the Aeneid,³⁷ and from there forwards ways of structuring and using those structures for the transmission of meaning have been the focus of many of his

³⁴ see Hayden White, Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect (1999; Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), pp. 22-26

³⁵ James Joyce, Ulysses, ed. and notes by Jeri Johnson (1922; Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 1993), pp. 905-6

³⁶ Ulysses, p. 906

³⁷ John Cullinan, 'Anthony Burgess: The Art of Fiction XLVIII', The Paris Review, 56 (Spring 1973), p. 157

works. In his essay, 'Bonaparte in E Flat',³⁸ Burgess explained how the novel's structure comes from a combination of the pace of Beethoven's third Symphony as it is performed and recorded, and the notes as a musical score, while he wrote of the subject matter of Napoleon Symphony simply:

With Napoleon's story I was ... in the comfortable position of having his biography to draw on. Indeed, I had little to invent except scenes and dialogue corresponding to historical fact. The problem was nearly completely formal: how to make true history fit into musical patterns.³⁹

As elsewhere, Burgess did not appear to enter into complex philosophical discussions about his novel and the meaning contained within it. The meaning he leaves up to professors of literature: as Miles Faber makes clear in MF and John B. Wilson, BA in The End of the World News. He instead prefers to explain how his novels are constructed.

In focusing so intensely on the structure, Burgess fails to tell his reader that Napoleon Symphony is a perpetual and unrelenting Rabelaisian joke. Not Rabelaisian in the sense of being bawdy and crude (although these are elements of the novel), but in its initial appearance of being inappropriate and even ridiculous, before opening forth with a multiplicity of meaning, which is multiply affirmed and varied. If I were to write in an overly poetical way about this, in order to counteract the somewhat colder version that Burgess provides of writing within a regimented structure, I might assert:

One can imagine the coincidences dawning on Burgess as he wrote. It must have been as if waves of serendipity washed over Burgess time and again. He knew no more than his hero, Napoleon, about the directions in which the novel was taking him as he was commanded by history and music into newfound Rabelaisian truths.

In this sketch of Burgess at work, I purposefully borrow from Bakhtin, who wrote, that Dostoevsky knew very little more than his hero when writing his dialogic fiction. Bakhtin after all has led to this point of understanding and so the final submission is to allow Burgess to become Bakhtin's Dostoevsky. It is however an error to allow Burgess to be fixed in this way. For, was it Bakhtin's 'Dostoevsky Burgess' that I was

³⁸ This Man and Music, pp. 180-192

³⁹ 'Bonaparte in E Flat', p. 181

thinking of when I saw Burgess as Martin Amis's Richard Tull in the introduction to this thesis? No, it was a less fixed Burgess, one with properties that could be universalized in fiction, one that I am familiar with, and yet one that I could not wholly describe without falling into clichés of what makes an author, borrowed from descriptions of other authors. My argument is that Napoleon Symphony is full of such borrowings. Burgess takes from Beethoven as readily as he takes from George Orwell, and is as willing to describe Napoleon in the image of Christ as Mark Antony. These borrowings at once threaten to dissolve the identities of his characters, and at the same time make them more fluid and realistic, moving as they do from one to the next, never fully submitting, and instead forcing difficult questions and difficult solutions.

The most important thing that Bakhtin can provide for helping to understand the Burgess novels discussed in the preceding chapters and those that are discussed in following ones comes in the following lines:

Dostoevsky was capable of representing someone else's idea, preserving its full capacity to signify as an idea, while at the same time also preserving a distance, neither confirming the idea nor merging it with his own expressed ideology. The idea, in his work, becomes the subject of artistic representation, and Dostoevsky himself became a great artist of the idea.⁴⁰

David Lodge made a similar assertion about A Clockwork Orange. He called it a 'novel of ideas', 'a novel in which ideas seem to be the source of the work's energy, originating and shaping and maintaining its narrative.'⁴¹ Bakhtin's lines help to clarify what Lodge meant by this, and also demonstrate that the terms 'novel of ideas' and 'artist of ideas' are indeed meaningful terms that can be applied across Burgess's fiction.

The chapter of this thesis on Nothing Like the Sun argues how a range of theories of Shakespeare, often implausible or unlikely, are presented to the reader of the novel. It also argues how the novel can be seen to contain a Kantian reality. In the chapter on MF it is similarly argued that structuralism while constructing the reality of the novel does not provide its ontology. Once again, in Napoleon Symphony there is detachment, perhaps the greatest of all thus far, and again there is at the same time

⁴⁰ Bakhtin, Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics, p. 85

⁴¹ David Lodge, The Art of Fiction: Illustrated from Classic and Modern Texts (1991-1992; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), p. 198.

an obsession with the finest details of the subjects and the portrayal of the subjects. This is made possible by the fact that the ideas that the author represents, as Bakhtin writes of Dostoevsky, are held at a distance. There is ambivalence employed, but it is not employed out of not caring, it is employed out of not knowing anything for certain, and not believing that anything can be known for certain. Although it might be possible to recognize in Napoleon something of Othello or Mark Antony, just as it is possible to recognize M. Amis's Richard Tull or Bakhtin's Dostoevsky in Burgess, particular people remain unknowable 'noumena' to use Kant's term. They can be approached through sensible elements, 'phenomena', but these can never wholly describe them. The distance that is placed between the author and the phenomenological descriptions of his subject is an acknowledgement of the impossibility of presenting the pure noumena of individual public personages. And this is because of all the writing that stands between them and us.

CHAPTER 4

The Magical Code(x): ABBA ABBA

This chapter takes its title from a textual analysis of ABBA ABBA in Roger Lewis's biography, Anthony Burgess.¹ It is an analysis that is featured in the appendices to the biography. In it Lewis asserts that ABBA ABBA is a typical example of Anthony Burgess's work and an illustration of what he deems to be the misalignment of the author's talents with his subject matter.² Lewis argues in the analysis that Burgess does not match up to Keats and that:

Though both writers fill up their work with bright lights and dark shadows, though both are fascinated with death and decay – autumnal ripeness that's about to become rot; the flow of life immobilised on an ancient urn – Keats is warm, erotic, embracing, yielding; Burgess cold, rusting, metallic, aloof. Keats is youthful, sexually aware, puzzled about morality ... I can absolutely picture th[e] castle, snowy, dusty, cobwebby in "The Eve of St. Agnes" – I can smell the perfumes; imagine I can touch the underclothes and beads of perspiration. Burgess's world, by contrast, isn't about to die: it is already dead.³

One of Lewis's central complaints is that, 'The Keats of Abba Abba is an irresistible punster, his talk a torrent of quips and quiddities. He can't introduce himself without saying, "Junkets? Oh yes. Jun Kets."⁴ The name Junkets however is not a cunning invention by Burgess, but a cunning observation, since it was the nickname bestowed upon Keats by his friend and publisher Leigh Hunt.⁵ The name of the poet through Hunt's cognomen becomes the word for a particular type of journey: a junket. In the novel it draws attention to the fact that the junket to Rome for some people is Keats, and it is, paradoxically, even more so after reading ABBA ABBA.

Aside from criticizing the use of language and dialogue in ABBA ABBA, Lewis also takes objection to Burgess's characterization. He argues that the author places upon Keats Catholic guilt that is his own, James Joyce's and Graham Greene's, and not the poet's own. Lewis describes this as one of the 'intractable' elements in

¹ Roger Lewis, Anthony Burgess (London: Faber, 2002)

² Lewis, Burgess, pp. 407-412

³ Lewis, Burgess, p. 411

⁴ Lewis, Burgess, p. 409

⁵ see Walter Jackson Bate, John Keats (London: Chatto & Windus, 1979), pp. 92, 195

Burgess's work. He writes that Burgess 'can't cope with real people that don't stay still'.⁶ In addition, he criticizes Burgess's heavy borrowings from Robert Gittings's Standard Life of John Keats,⁷ published in 1968. Here Lewis fails to realise that Burgess's borrowings do the same thing as they did in Nothing Like the Sun and the same thing that they do elsewhere in his work. They demonstrate that there is no flesh and blood, only the amalgamation of two-dimensional writings about a subject, of which, in this instance, Gittings's work is one. When such biographical portrayals such as that of Gittings are placed within a novelistic framework, the reader is forced to note the inadequacy of taken for granted representations, and it is through this experience that a greater sense of reality is achieved.

When public personages are placed into a book they cease to be themselves. A double is created whereby the original is not forgotten, but the fictional character with the same name measures itself and is measured by others against the original. In the process the question is raised, 'Who is the original?' the answer to which is that the original is lost. The individual has become a construction made out of writings about the public personage.

In Paul Theroux's My Other Life there is a character by the name of Anthony Burgess whose reply to being told he is 'the most articulate of modern novelists' is 'Ballocks'.⁸ The character will sit over boxes full of his novels signing them for a single individual without blinking an eye, and is an extremely affable person when faced with his public. The reader learns that:

Burgess was prolific, impatient, funny, modest, self-mocking, with a gift for mimicry. He wrote everything, he wrote with both hands ... He was a traveller, a teacher, a natural expatriate; he was a witty and perceptive and witty critic, he had no literary circle.⁹

Although Theroux's Burgess is playfully realistic, Theroux still knows that however much the character is like the Burgess he knew, the character cannot be a true representation of him unsullied by all that was written by him and about him. Further, by being contained within a work of fiction the character is even further distorted and unreal. The local demands and workings of narrative in the novel mean that a pure

⁶ Lewis, Burgess, p. 411

⁷ Lewis, Burgess, p. 409

⁸ Paul Theroux, My Other Life: A Novel (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1996), p. 202

⁹ Theroux, My Other Life, p. 204

untainted version identical to the one that lived in the world is impossible. This is because the character must perform a role, his presence being inescapably in dialogue with the rest of the novel. As Theroux writes in his 'Author's Note' at the beginning of My Other Life: 'There are some names you know – Anthony Burgess, Nathan Leopold, Queen Elizabeth II, and more, but they ... are alter egos, other hes and other shes. As for the other I, the Paul Theroux who looks like me – he is just a fellow wearing a mask.' Theroux punctuates the notion of alter egos on the following page with a quotation from Jorge Luis Borges's 'Borges and I': 'I do not know which of us has written this page.' He thereby confirms not only the difficulties of writing public personages into a novel, including oneself, but that even the act of narration is an act of doubling oneself that produces a difficulty in distinguishing the difference between the author and his writing even for the author himself. Understanding who has written the page in front of you, or who speaks when you address an audience, is a part of understanding that it is impossible to create in writing an individual as he or she was in the world in any straightforward way, since it is impossible to capture even oneself in writing or speech satisfactorily. 'The man is fiction, but the mask is real' writes Theroux in describing his self-portrayal in My Other Life. The division between the lived and corporeal existence of the private self and the masks of the multiple public selves is difficult to come to terms with, and the text is the site of this struggle for Theroux, as it is for Burgess.

Burgess writes of Napoleon, at the end of Napoleon Symphony, 'My Ogre, though heroic, is grotesque,/A sort of essay in the picaresque,/Who robs and rapes and lies and kills in fun/And does not lasting harm to anyone.' (NS, p. 348). It reminds the reader of Nick Bottom and the mechanicals in A Midsummer Night's Dream, reassuring the audience not to be afraid of their lion and compelling them to understand how a person can also be a wall. It further reminds the reader of Puck at the end entreating the audience to see the play as a dream if it offends. It is unavoidably comic and unavoidably troublesome. Writing public personages into novels as protagonists is an act of masquerade. At the heart of every portrayal is a fictional character and placed over this is a series of masks, which are more often than not comic. In ABBA ABBA, John Keats like many other Burgess characters (including Valentine Brodie in The End of the World News) stumbles around a city - in his case Rome - drinking while he should be dying, and not taking anything as

seriously as he should. He is a linguist, who remarks on the edibility of Isaac Marmaduke's nickname: Ikey Marmalade. He anagrammatizes his surname: 'Keats takes steak', 'Stake takes Keats' (AA, p. 76). He recites from one of Burgess's favourite works, The Anatomy of Melancholy by Robert Burton.¹⁰ And, when 'The Princess Borghese, Pauline Bonaparte, came looking for the handsome Elton, Elton himself obligingly appeared, on his way to Switzerland, and coupled with her on John's bed, John obligingly tucking his feet up to make room' (AA, p. 81). Keats would not be out of place in any number of the author's novels. There is nothing unfamiliar about the character from this perspective, except that he has a poetic and linguistic bent. The remarkable facts of his life cluster around the unremarkable (fictional) centre. It suggests normality, and Keats's normality is a reflection of Rome's own normality, for as Burgess once wrote:

The trouble with Rome ... is that it does not help you to think of higher things; it is too much a city of stone and mortar and wine and life. And the Basilica itself stands as a symbol of the papacy's desire to be remembered in this world rather than to reap its reward in the next.¹¹

In many ways it is not Keats that Burgess is interested in ABBA ABBA, however, but the second public protagonist of the novel, Giuseppe Gioacchino Belli. Belli was a dialectical poet who lived in Rome 'writing in the language of the street'. He lived from 1791 until 1863, and '[b]etween 1824 and 1846 he wrote over 2,200 sonnets, each of which is a faithful picture of what Rome was like in the early nineteenth century', according to one account.¹² Burgess gives the exact number of sonnets as 2279 in You've Had Your Time (p. 242) - a number reproduced by John J. Stinson -¹³ while elsewhere Burgess numbers them at 2275.¹⁴ Aside from the Burgess translations in ABBA ABBA, the translation of Belli's work into English has been

¹⁰ Burgess has referred to The Anatomy of Melancholy as a book that he numerously returned to (see Anthony Burgess, 'The Anatomy of Melancholy', Review, Horizon, 12, 4 [1970], p. 49). It also provides the structure for The Eve of Saint Venus, and his epigraph for The Enemy in the Blanket is from Burton's 'A Digression on the Air'.

¹¹ Anthony Burgess, 'Rome', in John McGreevy, ed., Cities: From the Television Series Conceived by John McGreevy (London: Angus & Robertson, 1981), p. 235

¹² http://www.geocities.com/mp_pollett/roma-b1.htm (accessed Wednesday, 2 June 2004, copy on file)

¹³ John J. Stinson, Anthony Burgess Revisited (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, G. K. Hall & Co., 1991), p. 135

¹⁴ 'Rome', p. 230

rare, considering his reported importance in Italy and Rome. However, there have been translations made by Eleonore Clark,¹⁵ Harold Norse,¹⁶ Miller Williams,¹⁷ and William Neill.¹⁸

Burgess was drawn towards Belli because there was a great contradiction in him being at once a 'blasphemous poet' and also a 'church censor', seemingly without difficulty. This Burgess labelled 'schizophrenic',¹⁹ due to Belli's two very different public selves. He claimed that Belli 'created a voice for the common people – common people who had always been downtrodden, by popes as well as by bureaucrats'.²⁰ While working as a Vatican censor of plays Belli was also writing sonnets.²¹ These sonnets were not published, however, until after his death. He became who he now is through death. His death gave birth to the duality of his life. As such he is a very straightforward demonstration of how the writing about an individual changes over time when new things are discovered about that person.

Burgess writes in his second work of autobiography that he was so taken by Rome and its language, so different from the Tuscan dialect, that he thought at one point about making the translation of Belli's poems his life's work because of the way that they reflected the language. He discusses in the autobiography the opportunities that he took between his work on translating *Cyrano de Bergerac* and the writing of *The End of the World News* to translate Belli (*You've Had Your Time*, pp. 242, 327). He thought that there would be little interest in the poet in England, however. Still he felt it worth deliberating over whether Keats would have surpassed Browning as a poet had he lived as long as Belli, and the effect a meeting with Belli may have had upon his work (*YHYT*, pp. 327-328); the product of this being *ABBA ABBA*.

In Burgess's journalistic writing on Rome attention is drawn to the location of the statue of Belli that resides in the district known as Trastevere.²² This is the same

¹⁵ http://www.geocities.com/mp_pollett/roma-b1.htm (accessed Wednesday, 2 June 2004, copy on file)

¹⁶ Giuseppe Gioachino Belli, *Roman Sonnets*, trans. Harold Norse, Pref. William Carlos Williams, Intro. Alberto Moravia (Highlands, NC: J. Williams, 1960)

¹⁷ Miller Williams, *Sonnets of Giuseppe Belli* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981)

¹⁸ G. G. Belli, *Seventeen Sonnets Translated from the Romanesco of G.G. Belli*, trans. William Neill (Fife: Akros Publications, 1998)

¹⁹ 'Rome', p. 230

²⁰ 'Rome', p. 230

²¹ 'The Art of Liking Rome' (1984), *One Man's Chorus*, p. 66

²² See for example 'Rome', p. 230; 'The Art of Liking Rome', p. 66

'frock-coated' and 'top-hatted' statue that Ronald Beard sees in Beard's Roman Women (p. 36) while out walking in Rome.²³ In Beard's Roman Women, Ronald Beard, widower, and the novel's protagonist is concerned with writing a film script about Byron, the Shelleys and the writing of Frankenstein. The novel ethereally brings English Romanticism into contact with Belli through the mind of Beard. Like Burgess, the protagonist is widowed when his wife dies from cirrhosis having drunk heavily in the tropics (BRW, p. 10). Also like Burgess, 'Beard had determined to read and understand a Belli sonnet every day,' and 'to translate and publish, in some arty bold journal of America, twenty or more obscene sonnets, so that he could be more than a mere script-maker.' (BRW, p. 36). Beard also falls in love with an Italian woman, as did Burgess. Her name in the novel is Paola Lucrezia Belli. She is trying to capture Rome and criticize the Vatican through her art, and her aims are to "“ ... photograph Rome ... in reflections. In rain water ... Or windows ... ”" (BRW, p. 30). Paola's name and her critiquing of the Vatican echo Burgess's Belli in ABBA ABBA, and it is in ABBA ABBA that the two Belli's of Beard's Roman Women (the woman and the statue) are reduced to one.

Giovanni Gulielmi, the third central character of ABBA ABBA, lives in a flat on Piazza Saint Cecilia where he works on translations of Byron, Keats and other English writers into Tuscan (AA, p. 19). It is in his flat, before noon on a November day that he reads some of Keats's poems to Belli. There ensues a discussion of one of Keats's unpublished poems, 'To Mrs Reynolds's Cat'.²⁴ Gulielmi is convinced of its quality and Belli is convinced of the opposite. Belli says that 'since ... there is a dying body on St Helena ... [p]oetry should hymn the spirit and not talk of asthmatic cats' (AA, p. 23). It is the second time that Belli has alluded to Napoleon. He says at the beginning of the second chapter: 'I think most poets have their elegies on Napoleon waiting' (AA, p. 20). The point of the discussion between Gulielmi and Belli, for the purposes of the novel, however, is not whether the poem is thought good or bad, or whether its subject matter is trifling or serious, but the fact that it is written with an

²³ The description given of the poet in Beard's Roman Women is as follows: '[Belli] had been thoroughly nonconformist and had written a large number of blasphemous sonnets. There was one, for instance, on the foreskin of Jesus Christ which, in Belli's day, had been on simultaneous exhibition in over eighty Catholic churches.' (BRW, p. 36)

²⁴ It is a poem that was unpublished by Keats, is said to 'show a talent for light verse', and has been labelled 'slight but charming' (John Keats, Selected Poems, ed. and intro. John Barnard [Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988], p. xiv)

ABBA ABBA CDC DCD rhyme scheme, the rhyme scheme that Belli himself favoured, and which is also the rhyme scheme of many of Keats's poems, for example 'On First Looking into Chapman's Homer', 'To My Brothers', 'Addressed to [Haydon]'.

The rhyme scheme, ABBA ABBA CDC DCD, led Lewis to write that poetry in ABBA ABBA, 'is a magical codex' and 'is about more than we know'.²⁵ The reality however is less mystical than Lewis suggests. The rhyme scheme in the novel provides a way of navigating language and meaning in order to explore and extend what we know: a way of adding dynamism and stimulating meaning-making. The rhyme scheme not only connects one Keats poem to another, it also connects Keats to Belli and to Petrarch and the Italian Sonnet. It is not magical in the mystical sense of the word that Lewis invokes, but magical in the surprising and unusual way it alters our thoughts about the world by offering validation to typically invalid ideas. If Burgess had wanted a more certain and absolute connection between Keats and Belli he could have selected and translated faithfully only those poems of Belli that have an ABBA ABBA CDC DCD rhyme scheme, but he did not. Further, the poems that Burgess includes are not strictly translations, and do not attempt to keep the overall details intact, they are instead 'rethinks' of Belli's work.²⁶ This suggests not a sacred regard for the works, but a manipulation of them for the author's own ends. They mean what the author wants them to mean, and this can clearly be demonstrated by comparing the Italian poems, with their translations into English by others and with their translations into English by Burgess.

The Belli poem that Burgess labels 'Abraham I' is featured in Table 1. It takes very little Italian to realize that 'La Bibbia, ch'è una spece d'un'istoria' is more adequately translated 'The Bible, which is a sort of history' than 'The Bible, sometimes called the Jewish Chronicle' (which is Burgess's version). The reason for this substitution becomes clear, however, come the fourth line of the poem, where he rhymes chronicle with parsonical, which enables the A rhyme of the first stanza, omitted by other translators, to be achieved. The same rethinking is not necessary, however, to provide the B rhyme in lines 2 and 3, since straight translation provides it. The words 'arca' and 'patriarca' become 'ark' and 'patriarch'. Of course the rhythm and sound of the rhyme is different, but to achieve the type of rhyme that Belli

²⁵ Lewis, Anthony Burgess, p. 410

²⁶ It is a term that Burgess himself uses when describing his translation of Carmen (see Carmen: An Opera in Four Acts, pp. x-xi)

does alternating between ‘-ia’ (A) and ‘-ca’ (B) and ‘-etto’ (C) and ‘-ello’ (D) in the poem, would take more than genius to translate into English if sense were to be maintained. Notice though how Burgess varies from Belli’s CDC DCD rhyme scheme in the second half of the poem, replacing it with the CDE CDE rhyme scheme of what is more traditionally thought of as The Petrarchan or Italian Sonnet.²⁷ In ‘Abraham 2’, however, Burgess faithfully echoes the original CDC DCD rhyme scheme of Belli in the second half of the poem.

There are many poems that diverge from the ABBA ABBA CDC DCD rhyme scheme in Burgess’s translations, and then there are poems where Belli himself uses a different rhyme scheme, for example, ‘La Creazzione der Monno’ (The Creation of the World; which follows an ABAB ABAB CDC ABA CBC rhyme scheme), which Burgess translates into the more popular ABBA ABBA CDC DCD rhyme scheme. Unlike Belli, however, Burgess keeps the opening ABBA ABBA rhyme scheme as a constant throughout his rethinks, while many of them vary in the second half of their rhyme scheme from the most common CDC DCD, as can be seen in Table 2.

As a consequence of the variations in rhyme scheme, individual poems become linked to others through the relative individuality of their rhyme schemes. However, while an examination of the grouped poems highlights certain shared elements – for example, the themes of food and words in the rhyme scheme ABBA ABBA CDC EDE - it is more of an invitation to find meaning than it is an assertion of meaning. Burgess plays with the form of the Italian sonnet like he plays with words, offering opportunities for an extended range of meaning to be found – as with the John Keats/Junkets pun – but gives no indication of an absolute or finalized meaning. Belli becomes thereby malleable, and Burgess can stretch him into shapes that fit his purposes in the novel. For example, Belli complains of how Romans believe that all the events of the Bible happened somewhere in Rome (AA, p. 67). He says of them, ““ ... They have no notion of morality, none of theology, none at all of history ... ”” (AA, p. 67), which is similar to Burgess’s own views on Rome expressed in his journalism. The way that the character’s words reflect Burgess’s own echoes

²⁷ see Jon Stallworthy, ‘Versification’, in Alexander W. Allison, Herbert Barrows, Caesar R. Blake, Arthur J. Carr, Arthur M. Eastman and Hubert M. English, Jr., eds, Norton Anthology of Poetry: Third Edition (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983), pp. 1416-1417

'Er Zagrifizzio d'Abbramo (I)' (Source: Giuseppe Gioachino Belli, <u>Sonetti Scelti</u> , [Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, Torino, Italy, 1964], p. 169)		'XXIX. Abraham's Sacrifice I' (Source: Harold Norse, <u>Giuseppe Gioachino Belli, Roman Sonnets</u>)		'Abraham I' (Source: Anthony Burgess, <u>ABBA ABBA</u>)	
1	La Bibbia, ch'è una spece d'un'istoria,	1	The Bible, which is a sort of history,	1	The Bible, sometimes called the Jewish Chronicle,
2	Dice che ttra la prima e ssiconn'arca	2	Says that between the first and the second ark,	2	Says, midway between Noah's and Aaron's ark,
3	Abbramo vorze fà da bon patriarca	3	Abraham wanted to make, like a good Patriarch,	3	That Abraham played the grand old patriarch
4	N'ojocaustico a Dio sur Montemoria.	4	Burnt-offerings to God on Mount Moria.	4	And sacrificed to God, with fine parsonical
5	Pijò dunque un zomaro de la Marca,	5	So he went an' fetched a donkey from the province	5	Language that all that blood made sound ironical.
6	Che ssenza complimenti e ssenza boria,	6	That was mindin' his own business indifferently,	6	He took a donkey from the donkey-park
7	Stava a pasce er trifojo e la cicoria	7	Havin' a ball with clover an' chickory	7	(Chewing up chicory and grass in stark
8	Davanti a casa sua come un monarca.	8	In front of the house, just like a Roman prince.	8	Lordly disdain, as if it wore a monocle)
9	Poi chiamò Isacco e disse: «Fa' un fascetto,	9	Then he called Isaac, said: "Make a bundle,	9	And called to Isaac: "Pack the bags and load
10	Pija er marraccio, carca er zomarello,	10	Get the meat-cleaver, load the donkey,	10	This ass here, get the boy to bring a nice
11	Chiama er garzone, infilete er corpetto,	11	Call the house-boy, slip on your jersey,	11	Sharp axe, then kiss your mother on the cheek.
12	Saluta mamma, cercheme er cappello;	12	Say goodbye to your mother, look for my hat;	12	Bring coats and hats, we're going to take the road.
13	E annamo via, perché Dio benedetto	13	C'mon, let's go, because the blessed God	13	The blessed Lord requires a sacrifice.
14	Vò un zagrifizzio che nun pòi sapello».	14	Wants a sacrifice with no questions asked."	14	The time has come to teach you the technique.

Table 1. 'Er Zagrifizzio d'Abbramo (I)' and translations

<u>ABBA CDC EDE</u> 'Image & Likeness' 'Holy Starvation' 'Cain 1' 'The Ark 2' 'Age' 'The Tower' 'Lot 1' 'Limbo' 'Spread the Word' 'The Last Judgment'	<u>ABBA ABBA CDE DCE</u> 'Original Sin' 'Wisdom'
<u>ABBA ABBA CCD EED</u> 'Enter Joseph' 'The Ark 1' 'The Slaughter of the Innocents 2' 'A Wedding at Cana 2' 'Anger' 'Martha & Mary' 'Two Kinds of Men'	<u>ABBA ABBA CDC DEE</u> 'Cain 2' 'At the Pillar 1'
<u>ABBA ABBA CDE CDE</u> 'Adam' 'Greed' 'Knowledge' 'Abraham 1' 'Abraham 3' 'Baptism' 'A Wedding at Cana 3' 'Guilt'	<u>ABBA ABBA CDE ECD</u> 'Balshazzar's Feast' 'Whitsun'
<u>ABBA ABBA CCC CCC</u> 'The Beastly Paradise' 'Susannah'	<u>ABBA ABBA CDD CDC</u> 'Lot 2'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CDC DDC</u> 'Balaam's Ass'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CCC DDD</u> 'The Battle of Gideon'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CCC DDC</u> 'Circumcision'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CDC EED</u> 'The Slaughter of the Innocents 1'
	<u>ABBA CDD EED</u> 'Communion'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CDE EDC</u> 'A Wedding at Cana 1'
	<u>ABBA ABBA CDD CDD</u> 'Christ & Pilate'

Table 2. Variations from ABBA ABBA CDC DCD rhyme schemes in Burgess's translations of Belli's poems

the way that Burgess manipulates Belli's poems so that they say what Burgess wants them to say. These are not the only ways in which Burgess manipulates Belli however.

In the novel John Keats regards Belli highly, but fears that if the Italian poet were published in England then the censors might come down on him as they had on Leigh Hunt for libel against the Prince Regent.²⁸ It may be desirable to link Belli to

²⁸ see Bate, *John Keats*, pp. 41-42

Hunt in terms of influence: Hunt is said to have influenced Keats's use of the Petrarchan sonnet (and oppressively so).²⁹ Keats's poem, 'To Leigh Hunt, Esq.', is also notably linked to the novel because it is written with the same rhyme scheme that is central to ABBA ABBA. It is arguable however that it is Gulielmi, the go-between and translator in the Keats and Belli relationship, that is in the greater part like Hunt than Belli. It was Leigh Hunt and his literary magazine The Examiner that brought together Keats and Shelley in life and in literature,³⁰ just as Gulielmi brings together Keats and Belli.

Gulielmi lives, as mentioned, on the Piazza Santa Cecilia on the top floor of a three-story house that he owns. The other two floors he rents out in order to provide an income, along with some rents on land in Lazio and some British gold that he has invested in Torlonia (AA, p. 19). Not only is Gulielmi to a certain extent a shaping force in the relationship of Keats and Belli, like Hunt was between Keats and Shelley, but Gulielmi also shares a great deal with Burgess. Burgess like his character Gulielmi lived in a top floor flat on Piazza Santa Cecilia (with his second wife Liana and his son Andrea at number 16A). It had formerly been the home of Liana's 'Cambridge friend Bruno Micconi [Miconi], the lecturer in economics at Rome University, [who] had ... transferred himself to the University of Siena ... ', wrote Burgess (YHYT, p. 241). More than this, Gulielmi and Burgess are related, or so it would seem. The connection between Gulielmi and Burgess starts with Gulielmi's Manchester origins,³¹ and becomes even stronger when the connection between Gulielmi and a certain J. J. Wilson is made explicit at the beginning of Part Two of the novel. A. S. Byatt in her introduction to the novel wrote: 'Burgess reincarnates Keats's death, and Belli's Roman life and work, in his own vigorous English. He adds a further puzzle, in the shape of another alter ego, an Englishman called J. J. Wilson, descended from a Joseph Joachim Guglielmi, who lives in Manchester, dies in New York, shadows Burgess-Wilson's own career, translates Belli and is murdered in New York, having written several of Burgess's own rude sonnets'. As J. J. Stinson noted, 'The actual translator of the Belli sonnets is, of course, Burgess himself, who is

²⁹ see Bate, John Keats, p. 298

³⁰ see Bate, John Keats, p. 111

³¹ Gulielmi says, 'My maternal grandfather came from Manchester and was a staunch Stuart man. Disgusted and, indeed, disgraced by the rebellion of 1745, he exiled himself to Italy. He died recently, very old, in an apartment of the Castello on the lake of Bracciano. He was still brooding on the lost Stuart cause, execrating the pudding Hanoverians, as he called them.' (ABBA ABBA, p. 11).

(despite the difference of middle initial and absence of Italian lineage) largely the very same Wilson.³²

In illustrating his influence on the portrayal of Belli so explicitly, Burgess at the same time exposes one of his own major influences. On at least one level J. J. must stand for James Joyce, as it does in 'The First J. J.', an article published in The Spectator.³³ because before the explanation of how J. J. Wilson is related and translated from Gulielmi, mention of James Joyce is explicitly made. The boy Burgess, or more precisely Wilson, dreamt of himself as the next James Joyce. 'As a schoolboy [he] sneaked the two-volume Odyssey Press edition out of Germany into England, cut into sections and distributed over [his] body.'³⁴ To truly become a novelist, however, that dreamer had to die. He had to recreate himself as Anthony Burgess; and, hence the premature death of J. J. (or James Joyce) Wilson in the novel. At least that is my reading of J. J. Wilson.

The compulsion to include autobiographical and confessional elements did not begin in writing about Rome and Belli for Burgess. It was there in The Malayan Trilogy, not only with the resemblance of Victor and Fenella Crabbe to Anthony and his first wife, Lynne, but also with the Chinese boy-composer, Robert Loo, who like Burgess could understand a symphony by simply reading the score.³⁵ Elsewhere, in The Worm and the Ring, the second novel that he wrote,³⁶ there are reflections on his teaching experience believed to be so true to life by Miss Gwendoline Bustin, ex-Mayor of Banbury and long-term School Secretary at Banbury Grammar School (where Burgess had been a schoolmaster at the beginning of the 1950s) that a libel case was brought against him.³⁷ This settled out of court and forced the remaining copies of the book to be pulped (YHYT, pp. 54-55). Burgess wrote that as an act of

³² Stinson, Anthony Burgess Revisited, p. 135

³³ Anthony Burgess, 'The First J. J.', Spectator (18 March 1966), p. 332, cited in Jeutonne Brewer, Anthony Burgess: A Bibliography (Metuchen, NJ and London: Scarecrow Press, 1980), p. 70. See also John Fletcher, 'Anthony Burgess, (Auto-)Biographer', Anthony Burgess Newsletter, 5 (October 2002), pp. 37-50, URL (accessed 11 December 2005): <http://bu.univ-angers.fr/EXTRANET/AnthonyBURGESS/ABNews.html>

³⁴ Anthony Burgess, 'Introduction', in James Joyce, Ulysses (1936; London: Minerva, 1992), p. v. Note: Andrew Biswell challenges this account in his biography of Burgess (see Andrew Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess [London: Picador, 2005], pp. 31-32)

³⁵ Anthony Burgess, 'Performers: A Necessary Evil', New York Times Magazine (17 October 1982), p. 98

³⁶ see 'First Novel' (1993), One Man's Chorus, pp. 270-273

³⁷ The Times, 'High Court Of Justice, Queen's Bench Division, "The Worm And The Ring", Bustin v. Wilson And Another' (25 October 1962), p. 16

revenge, he had been writing Miss Bustin into Nothing Like the Sun as a 'cheese-chewing Banbury Puritan', but Heinemann's lawyers warned him against it (YHYT, p. 55). In addition, Burgess's Gibraltar wartime experiences feature in A Vision of Battlements and the symptoms and treatment of Edwin Spindrift in The Doctor is Sick, which reflects his own infamous brain tumour,³⁸ clearly display that Burgess had an insatiable appetite for writing himself (and those around him) into his novels.

In historical fiction the inclusion of autobiographical elements becomes, to borrow a term from J. M. Coetzee, 'anti-illusionary',³⁹ or non-magical. This is especially so when they are openly contrived and anachronistic, for they disrupt the sensible elements of the novel. In addition, the extensions of meaning that Burgess premised on names alone cannot support the weight they are expected to carry. Burgess's name, as with the Petrarchan rhyme scheme, acts as a tool to enable movement through time that is able to forge connections that would otherwise not be possible, but these are comic connections, not ones that are intended to sustain seriousness and plausibility. For instance he overuses and overemphasizes Keats's forename in ABBA ABBA, because it is the same as the one that he was christened with. He also employs the same comic playfulness to connect himself to the Princess Borghese, Napoleon's sister, when he writes outside of fiction that 'Burgess is Borghese in Italian'.⁴⁰ The connections made through names are not only comic, but also transitory, because they cannot support the weight of meaning placed upon them.

In ABBA ABBA, Pauline Bonaparte is not defined by Burgess's name, but wholly by Antonio Canova's famous statue of her, Venus Reclining. It is a mould from which she cannot break free, and when she speaks it is Latin from Lucretius' De Rerum Natura (or On the Nature of Things [AA, p. 27]), the same poem that is recited unintentionally in place of the exorcism in Burgess's The Eve of Saint Venus. There is no depth of mind to the character and it is as if she has died only to be replaced by this very strong image of herself though she is still alive. Pauline Bonaparte is a ghost-like figure, who casts a spell of death on Elton, and although he sleeps with her, suggesting she is more flesh and blood than first thought, this only occurs within Keats's delirium (AA, p. 81). The ghostly appearance of Pauline, as with the

³⁸ see for example Biswell, Real Life of Anthony Burgess, pp. 205-213

³⁹ J. M. Coetzee, Doubling the Point (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 27

⁴⁰ 'Rome', p. 243

nickname Junkets, is less invention and more observation. It closely mirrors the account of Pauline Buonaparte by Keats's friend Joseph Severn:

Canova had just done a nude statue from her [i.e. Pauline Bonaparte], which we went to see, and thought it 'beautiful bad taste.' It was Keats gave this statue its lasting name, 'The Æolian Harp.' But among other virtues which distinguished this eminent lady was a quick eye for a handsome figure and fine features, and hence it came about that she cast languishing glances upon Lieutenant Elton each time we encountered her. At last this so jarred upon Keats's nerves, though he thankfully acknowledged that he was not the attraction, that we were obliged to go and take our walk in another place.⁴¹

In Severn's account, as in the novel, Pauline is a threat of death, and also a link with sex and statues. In the novel Pauline appears in a coach before Keats dreams of sex with 'F.B.' (AA, p. 52). As in NS, the reduction of names to initials are always an expansion of possible meaning. F.B. in Keats's dream logically stands for Fanny Brawne, about whom Keats is said to have written the poems, 'The day is gone, and all its sweets are gone', 'I cry your mercy, pity, love – ay love', 'What can I do to drive away', and 'To Fanny'.⁴² It could also stand however for the writer Fanny Burney or even the artist and inventor Samuel F. B. Morse, since both were alive at the time. Further, outside of Keats's own time, but within Burgess's, F.B. has come to stand for Kafka's F.B., his fiancée Felicie Bauer, who is also Fräulien Bürnster of The Trial,⁴³ a twentieth-century symbol of desire. All of these are possible interpretations, because it is after all a dream, and the possibility of an unexpected subject only adds to its dream and delirium type quality. This creates a contrast with Pauline Bonaparte, who is, by being defined through sculpture, far less fluid and malleable than Keats and Belli. She is purposefully rigid, constructed of marble, ghostly and cold, fixed in demeanour.

It is tempting to think of statues in literature as celebrations or even as resurrections. Shakespeare certainly tempts us into such a conclusion. When thinking about the reappearance of Hermione as a statue in The Winter's Tale it feels natural to connect her with the second Hero in Much Ado About Nothing, and to see both as

⁴¹ William Sharp, The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn (1892), p. 82, cited in Bate, John Keats, p. 676

⁴² John Barnard, 'Introduction', in John Keats, Selected Poems (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1988), pp. xiv-xv

⁴³ see George Steiner, 'Introduction' (1992), in Franz Kafka, The Trial (1925; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984; repr. 1992), pp. x, xiv

symbolic resurrections; after all both are presumed dead before their reappearance. Neville Coghill argues, however, that Hermione's reappearance is an act of 'restoration', not resurrection, something that happens for Leontes and not to Hermione.⁴⁴ For Coghill, Leontes regains what he had and it matters not one way or another how Hermione's identity is affected. In fact, if we extend Coghill's argument and read Hermione, and in turn Hero, as 'restored', then their resurrection can in fact be said to signal their deaths. For the infallibility of becoming the models (or ideals) of their former selves can only realistically happen in death. Likewise, for Ibsen's Irena in When We Dead Wake being sculpted into clay and marble is a similar emotional death, because even when she is restored to her sculptor it can only signal a brief transfiguration before death: the existence of the artefact kills the human being, and although as with Shakespeare there is optimism at the restoration of the human being, it is quickly followed by transfiguration, and like Christ's Transfiguration it pre-emptly death.

Statues do not only signal death, they also establish a distance between those immortalized in history and those lesser mortals of the here and now. When Henrietta Stackpole sees the statue of Lord Nelson at Trafalgar Square in The Portrait of a Lady, she asks, 'Wasn't he high enough, that they had to stick him a hundred feet in the air?'.⁴⁵ Idealized and placed in the heavens safely apart from the 'lower-middle class' that populates, in the quoted instance, Henry James's London,⁴⁶ Nelson succinctly demonstrates this setting apart from human kind, idealization and death that is intrinsically tied up with statues in literature. There is a fixity about statues that denies the human element and any change in them is often their decline, decay and destruction (as with Shelley's 'Ozymandias'). They might decay slower than human flesh, but that is because human flesh like human identity is more fluid than stone or marble. Statues are cold, unemotional and detached things. They signal death for the person portrayed, because of the stasis they signify. It is a way into history, but a way out of life.

⁴⁴ '[The Winter's Tale] is a play about a crisis in the life of Leontes, not of Hermione, and her restoration to him (it is not a "resurrection") is something that happens not to her, but to *him*.' (Nevill Coghill, 'Six Points of Stage Craft', in Kenneth Muir, ed., Shakespeare: The Winter's Tale [1958; Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1968; repr. 1988], p. 212)

⁴⁵ Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady, ed. and intro. Geoffrey Moore and notes by Patricia Crick (1881; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984; repr. 1986), p. 217

⁴⁶ James, Portrait of a Lady, p. 194

Pauline Bonaparte is a walking piece of history in ABBA ABBA reminding the reader of Napoleon. She is the background history of the novel that keeps intersecting with the central characters. She also has the Jamesian quality of being a minor character that is kept forcibly two-dimensional in order to highlight the depth of the central character(s). This Jamesian quality is likewise true of Burgess's autobiographical presence in the novel. By locating a series of unreal elements in the text of increasingly implausible design the reader's mind is taken off the unreality of the characters of Keats and Belli and their meeting. And, to use a contemporary cultural idiom, they fly beneath the radar. The malleable characters, i.e. Keats and Belli, who are shaped through comedy and word play, contrast with the caricatures, Pauline Bonaparte and Gulielmi. The latter two characters are so distracting that the reader stops worrying about the authenticity of Keats and Belli, and they become normal and everyday, the unremarkable private selves of altogether more remarkable public ones.

When ABBA ABBA was first published, David Hughes described it in The Times as, 'a vigorous fictive joke about Keats hobnobbing with a racy Italian counterpoet in regency Rome – a lively excuse for Burgess to print a long set of disgracefully sharp sonnets about Christianity; the Old Testament in black stockings'.⁴⁷ The novel when reflected upon at greater length, as demonstrated in this chapter, is something more than an excuse to publish some translations of Belli works. And, as has been noted they are not translations faithful to the originals but instead manipulations and rethinks of them. Burgess does not look to the stars to give him inspiration or invest his faith in connections with an imaginary magical codex, he instead manipulates text and generates meanings through word play, names and forms for his own ends. Keats himself, according to the biography by W. Jackson Bate, viewed the Petrarchan and the Shakespearean sonnet as rather dull, a mere means of experimentation, which eventually led to the establishment of the stanza form he used in his odes. And, the type of experimentalism that Burgess engages in, although it often appears overly avant-garde, ambivalent and unthinking, has behind it a high level of research and philosophical manipulation. Those elements that at first appear misplaced - e.g. the nickname Junkets, the appearance of Pauline Bonaparte and the translated poems - become through reflection integral parts of the text. This need not

⁴⁷ David Hughes, 'A Personal Best of 1977', The Times, Fiction (2 June 1977), p. 9

rely on a magical code(x), a mystical source that is forever allusive, but on an active manipulation of form, content and meaning.

CHAPTER 5

The Earthly Powers of the Superannuated Character

Earthly Powers is a novel that, similar to Any Old Iron and The End of the World News, spans the events, or at least some of the events, of the twentieth century. It does this at least as convincingly as Any Old Iron (in its sinking of the Titanic and the two world wars) and in many ways more convincingly than The End of the World News (in its portrayal of socialism, psychoanalysis and science). However, at the core of the novel are its characters, their relationship to their historical moments, their relationship to one another, and in turn their relationship to the author himself, and these are to be the main considerations of this chapter. In contrast to Martin Amis's The Information, a novel already discussed in the introduction to this thesis, Earthly Powers is a novel that it seems is wholly unproblematic to label a roman à clef. This is because the author himself openly declared the 'real-life' correlates of his characters in the press soon after the novel's publication.¹ There is first of all Kenneth Marchal Toomey, a Somerset Maugham-like character who is also the narrator; second, there is Don Carlo Campanati, who becomes Pope Gregory XVII, a representation of Pope John XXIII; third, there is Godfrey Manning, a religious sect leader, Head of the Children of God, a representation of Jim Jones, the perpetrator of the November 1978 Jonestown massacre in Guyana;² and fourth, although not identified by Burgess at the same time as the others, there is the character of Dawson Wignall, a representation of John Betjeman.

To write that Kenneth M. Toomey is W. Somerset Maugham, and that Carlo Campanati (Pope Gregory XVII) is Angelo Giuseppe (Pope John XXIII), and equally that Godfrey Manning is Jim Jones and that Dawson Wignall is John Betjeman would be misleading, however. Brian Martin wrote of the Dawson Wignall character that 'Anthony Burgess's nasty satire [of John Betjeman] in Earthly Powers is wide of the mark: Dawson Wignall "not yet O.M. but tinkling with other awards" eludes his

¹ See in particular Helen Dudar, 'Burgess: A Nomad Pens a Big Book', Los Angeles Times, (28 December 1980), p. 55

² For detailed accounts, see for example, Shiva Naipaul, Journey to Nowhere: A New World Tragedy (formerly titled Black and White, 1980; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982); Catherine Wessinger, How The Millennium Comes Violently, foreword by Jayne Seminare Docherty (New York and London: Seven Bridges Press, 2000)

original.’³ He is not wrong, all of the characters in the novel elude their originals, and (Percival) Dawson Wignall, who annoys Toomey for his appearance in ‘all the anthologies’, and whose poetic themes are said to derive from ‘Anglican church services, the Christmas parties of his childhood, his public school pubescence, [and] suburban shopping streets’ (*Earthly Powers*, p. 23), is probably the most harmless of the elusions. He does have the lines, ‘No writer is above language. Writers are language. Each is his own language.’ (*EP*, p. 34), but he is all in all the most innocuous of the characters. This might be because all in all the tastes of Burgess and Betjeman, in particular when it came to modernism, could be seen to be fairly congruent leaving him little to complain of. Indeed, Andrew Biswell suggests as much in his article, ‘Anthony Burgess as Television Critic’.⁴

In contrast to the relationship between Dawson Wignall and John Betjeman, Carlo Campanati is not only wholly ‘wide of the mark’, but also wholly subversive in terms of his relationship to Pope John XXIII. In his formative years Carlo is a greedy, gambling priest who exorcizes others over the dinner table for the mildest of thought crimes against the Church. He smuggles Chablis disguised as altar wine into a restaurant during prohibition America (*EP*, pp. 294-295), and notably becomes pope through the opportune sudden death of a rival (*EP*, pp. 294-249). He also has a strong belief in the equal and opposite forces of good and evil, which is a doctrine that is often repeated over the course of the novel (see for example *EP*, pp. 167, 343-344). ‘He never had any doubt about the externality of evil,’ writes Toomey, ‘and this is what made him so formidable. Man was God’s creation, and therefore perfect. The devil got in in the Garden of Eden and taught man how to be evil, and he was still doing it.’ (*EP*, p. 163). Carlo’s doctrine combines Manichaeism with St Augustine, he believes at once in an equal and opposite good and evil and combines this with Augustinian theories of free will, which argue that although omniscient and omnipotent, God does not ‘annihilate the devil’, as Toomey puts it, because of free will. Carlo’s religious thinking is muddled, and the boundary between self-overcoming and overcoming forces of external evil that are equal to the forces of

³ Brian Martin, ‘*Recessional Church Poems* By John Betjeman Illustrated by John Piper’, Review, *The Times* (2 April 1981), p. 17

⁴ Andrew Biswell, ‘Anthony Burgess as Television Critic’, *Anthony Burgess Newsletter*, 1 (July, 1999), pp. 16-22, URL (accessed 11 December 2005): <http://bu.univ-angers.fr/EXTRANET/AnthonyBURGESS/ABNews.html>

good is blurred and with it the divide between orthodoxy and heresy.⁵ It is so muddled and blurred in fact that where I have labelled Carlo's doctrine Augustinian, Biswell labelled it Pelagian.⁶ What is certain however is that as a representative of the Church, Carlo works under the assumption that all that he does is good, even if it is gluttonous and/or violent.

Toomey struggles to understand Carlo, his actions and his motivations and largely finds him misguided and even dangerous. The Maltese Archbishop asks Toomey to verify a miracle that he witnessed when with Carlo. It occurred in a Chicago hospital where Carlo's brother Raffaele lay dying from a mobster shooting. Carlo, while attending his wounded brother's bedside, heard the screams of a six-year-old child suffering from tuberculosis meningitis (see EP, pp. 292-4). Although Carlo's attempts to save his own brother did not work, and his exorcism of Dr Philip Shawcross in Kuala Kangsar led to the doctor's death because of his weakened condition (see EP, pp. 271-273), a miracle happens when he visits the child in the Chicago hospital and the child is saved. It is central to the novel, because the cured child goes on to be the religious sect leader and mass murderer Godfrey Manning. It takes Toomey 642 pages (the entire length of the novel) to go back over his relationship with Carlo, however, in order to conclude whether or not the curing of Godfrey Manning, or God Manning as he is otherwise known, was a miracle, or whether what he witnessed was not God's intervention but that of the devil. Ultimately Toomey has no answer that he can give with conviction: he grants the Church their miracle, but does so with the knowledge that he will never return to the Church.

Carlo Campanati/Pope Gregory XVII is not a true representation of Angelo Giuseppe/John XXIII, in all that he was and did. Burgess transformed a man termed a 'garden-of-the-soul kind of Catholic',⁷ into a devoted Manichee. Although Carlo is hypocritical and misguided in his beliefs, this does not mean by the same measure that Pope John XXIII was likewise hypocritical and misguided. Carlo it must be understood is the personification of Pope John XXIII's doctrine and its consequences,

⁵ 'it is a heresy to believe in twin and equal powers of good and evil; for the Christian, God is creator of all, and is ultimately in control of all.' (Leslie Stevenson, Seven Theories of Human Nature [1974; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn., 1987], p. 48)

⁶ see Andrew Biswell, The Real Life of Anthony Burgess (London: Picador, 2005), p. 375

⁷ E. E. Y. Hales, Pope John and His Revolution (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1965; repr. 1966), p. 4

as Burgess viewed them. Burgess is reported as having told one interviewer that ‘Pope John made it all the harder to recognize evil ... [and that b]y making evil something outside of man, a Charles Manson can say “It wasn’t me who did these things, something got into me, it was due to some diabolic force.”’⁸ Further:

Pope John XXIII was intended for Reader’s Digest. He killed the intellectual vitality of the church. Things were not redefined. The central authority of the church was destroyed.⁹

And even more vehemently:

I think [Pope John XXIII] was a bad man. I think he was dangerous ... John killed the intellectual authority of the church.¹⁰

In A Journal of a Soul, Pope John XXIII recorded his struggles to be educated and also his struggles against himself, for example the writing of rules to avoid playing cards and dice,¹¹ and to avoid masturbation.¹² He also confessed in the book to breaking those rules.¹³ The way in which he reprimands himself sets a tone of piety, and before reading Earthly Powers it is quite natural that one understands and sympathizes with Pope John XXIII for his struggle against the human condition. It may be that the reader even congratulates him for his candidness. However, Burgess forces a reading (through Carlo Campanati) of A Journal of a Soul in which Pope John XXIII increasingly errs towards a simplistic view of good and bad, where the struggle is not within him but with some overpowering external force. Burgess in his attack on Pope John XXIII, it must be noted, is asking the reader to collude with him, and it is a collusion that is not in itself without difficulty. For it asks the reader to make a complex judgement on the work of Pope John XXIII without giving them the means to do so. It is also a portrait not drawn directly by the character of Carlo, as Pope John XXIII drew his Journal of a Soul, but written through the narrator, Toomey. In places Toomey does report the writing of Carlo directly (see for example

⁸ Lynn Darling, ‘The Haunted Exile of Novelist Anthony Burgess: ‘Earthly Powers’ and The Burden of the Past’, The Washington Post, Style Section (26 December 1980), p. D9, col. 4

⁹ Darling, ‘Haunted Exile’, p. D9, col. 3

¹⁰ Dudar, ‘A Nomad Pens a Big Book’, p. 55

¹¹ Pope John XXIII, Journal of a Soul, trans. Dorothy White (1964; London: Geoffrey Chapman Ltd., 1965), p. 7

¹² John XXIII, Journal, p. 17

¹³ John XXIII, Journal, p. 18

EP, pp. 164-168), but more often the reader is left to depend upon Toomey's memory, and it is made very clear that 'Memory lies, yet how far we can never be sure.' (EP, p. 276).

In The Vulnerable Text,¹⁴ Thomas M. Greene argues that implicit in every text is vulnerability, because of the unavoidable 'dependence on secondhand signifiers',¹⁵ and further: 'The text does not exist which cannot be parodied, just as the culture does not exist which an alien cannot perceive as barbaric.'¹⁶ A text should not be deemed wrong, therefore, for its use of tropes,¹⁷ but instead the reader should be aware that: 'The triumph of the text lies in its power to discover or uncover the density of the signifier and the sedimented substance of a tradition that does not merely erode or debase.'¹⁸ That is to say, in order for a text to 'triumph' it must move beyond the ambivalent use of tropes and renew their significance at the same time as employing them, otherwise they risk being debased and their power to mean risks being effaced. However, Earthly Powers does not allow readers to judge whether or not A Journal of a Soul is a 'triumph'. This is because the fictional Carlo is too distant from Pope John XXIII for this to be possible. In contrast to the novels discussed in the preceding chapters of this thesis, where a distance is put between Burgess and his subject matter in order to reflect on the ideas of others, in Earthly Powers Burgess is so close to his subject matter that he is in effect blinded and there can be no sense of a realistic portrayal.

In 1966, Burgess wrote an article on the portrayal of saints and religious figures in contemporary literature. He wrote how the truly saintly lack the necessary, 'colour, conflict, variety, libido',¹⁹ to be interesting fictional subjects: only saints who are willing to be sinners first can be written into novels. He added:

there is something that predisposes [the novelist] to a kind of Manicheism [sic.]. What the religious novelist often seems to be saying is that evil is a kind

¹⁴ see Thomas M. Greene, The Vulnerable Text: Essays on Renaissance Literature (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986)

¹⁵ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. xii

¹⁶ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. xiv

¹⁷ Tropes and troping are discussed in more detail in the chapter on Mozart and the Wolf Gang in this thesis.

¹⁸ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. xii

¹⁹ Anthony Burgess, 'Religion and the Arts: I – The Manicheans', Times Literary Supplement (3 March 1966), p. 153

of good, since it is an aspect of Ultimate Reality; though what he is really saying is that evil is more interesting to write about than good.²⁰

In order to highlight Pope John's errors, Burgess becomes the type of novelist that he foretold the reader about fourteen years earlier in his article on Manichaeism. The Manichaeic elements of Carlo can, in the light of the earlier piece of journalism, be deemed a fictional necessity that is turned into a criticism. In contrast to Napoleon Symphony, where simplification was used as a means to demonstrate the protagonist's complexity and individuality, in Earthly Powers it does the opposite. Carlo is a simplification that highlights the problems of simplifying.

Don Carlo Campanati tells Toomey, as he wags a bit of bread at him, that 'language is one of our trials and sorrows. We are forced, by the very nature of language, to generalize. If we did not generalize we would have nothing to say except ... this bread is a piece of bread.' (EP, p. 121). It reiterates the fact that Carlo himself is a generalization. It also points to a central concern of the novel with regard to how symbolism is interpreted in the Church. In the novel, Carlo's misuse of symbolic language is given life in the character of God Manning and his religious sect, the Children of God. The play with symbolism works at a very bold level: God Manning is responsible for the death of Hortense Campanati's granddaughter Eve. There is a very obvious congruence of Eve's name with that of the first woman in the Garden of Eden, and a congruence of the sect leader's name with the Garden's creator. Further, Hortense is Toomey's sister, who married Carlo's musical brother Domenico, and hence Eve has a familial connection to Toomey and Carlo, making her death even more symbolic. Eve's death is not the only symbolic death, however. In eyewitness reports at the time of the Jonestown massacre, it was recorded that nurses administered poison through a syringe squirted into the mouth followed by a grape drink,²¹ or alternatively that cyanide was contained in a purple soft drink.²² The Children of God, meanwhile, take their suicide pill in place of communion bread, once again making a bold symbolic statement: not only is the bread representative of the death of Christ's body, but also of the bodies of those in the sect.

²⁰ 'The Manicheans', p. 154

²¹ The New York Times, 'Witness Tells How Cult Members Went to Deaths' (25 November 1978), p. 8L, col. 1

²² Terry Williams, 'Cocktail that Ended in Tableau of Death', The Times (22 November 1978), p. 8, col. 1

It was not necessary for Burgess to drastically alter all of the events from the Jonestown massacre in order to make them symbolic. It was reported at the time that chicken innards were presented as a cured cancer to onlookers in Jonestown,²³ and this, in contrast to the transmogrified poison (the suicide pill), becomes a part of the novel lifted verbatim without change (see EP, p. 612). In order to understand this, it is necessary to turn to a comment that Burgess made in the press at the time of the novel's publication. He complained of the language of the Catholic Eucharist that:

The words are so dangerous. In Africa, there are places where they say mass with bits of animal flesh hanging from the cross and use animal blood at communion – they took the translation of what in English is 'This is My Body, this is My Blood' quite literally.²⁴

This is an argument against the act of transubstantiation, which under Pope John XXIII, as Burgess viewed it, became increasingly simplified to the point where the Catholic faithful wished to more and more closely represent the body and blood of Christ. Indeed, Carlo encourages acts of 'free adaptation' of the Eucharist (see EP, pp. 342-343), in the novel, similar to those Burgess complained of in the press.

Carlo's view of the Eucharist notably contrasts with the view of the more Burgess-esque character of Christopher Marlowe in A Dead Man in Deptford. Marlowe takes breakfast before the Catholic Eucharist in Scotland and thinks:

The sacrament on an empty stomach. But it was no sacrament, it was but bread. And yet throughout all of the Christian time it had been Christ's body. Could the edict of mortal men, preening in fine robes, cancel Christ's own words? But Christ was but a mortal man. Or Christ never was. (DMinD, p. 186)

Burgess through Marlowe puts forward a Unitarian position in A Dead Man in Deptford, a position similar to the one he confesses at the end of Man of Nazareth, where he wrote:

Though I am no Christian, I believe that Jesus of Nazareth was a great man and his life worthy of that disinterested recording which only a non-believer is able to give. When I say no Christian and non-believer I mean that I am not

²³ Ivor Davis, 'The Power-Hungry Pastor Behind the "Death Cult" in Guyana', The Times, p. 76, col. 2

²⁴ Darling, 'Haunted Exile', p. D9, cols. 3-4

greatly concerned one way or the other with the supposed evidence of Jesus's divine origin, with his virgin birth, with his resurrection, with his so-called miracles. (MofN, p. 354)

It is very clear indeed that Carlo's position with regard to the Eucharist and Church symbolism, and, by association, Pope John XXIII's position was opposed by Burgess. It was for him problematic to the point of being physically dangerous, and more desirable was his own detached interpretation.

Of course, Burgess was not the first writer of the twentieth century to identify problems with the use of language in religion; one need only turn to Friedrich Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil,²⁵ for a highly influential text written at the beginning of the century. Erich Auerbach, meanwhile, a closer contemporary of Burgess observed: 'The Old Testament ... presents universal history: it begins with the beginning of time, with the creation of the world, and will end with the Last Days, the fulfilling of the Covenant, with which the world will come to an end.'²⁶ 'The Bible's claim to truth', he wrote, 'is tyrannical – it excludes all other claims. The world of Scripture stories is not satisfied with claiming to be a historically true reality – it insists that it is the only real world, is destined for autocracy.'²⁷ Further, Burgess was not the only writer to become convinced that the Jonestown massacre in particular was a product of language, or rather was enabled to happen because of language. Shiva Naipaul in Journey to Nowhere: A New World Tragedy (a book first published in the same year as Earthly Powers) comments on how religious language can be transformed into political power, and further identifies it as a 'symptom of cultural and intellectual regression'.²⁸ He describes how the transformation of the religious into the political manifested itself in Jones (who was notably named Humanitarian of the Year in January 1976 by the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner and the following year received a Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award).²⁹ According to Naipaul, Jones appeared to the outside world to be taking the impoverished from America and rehabilitating them, and hence the awards. Jane Fonda notably visited The People's Temple, as did Eric Gairy, Prime Minister of Grenada. The People's Temple was also

²⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future, trans. Helen Zimmern, 4th edn. (1907; London: Allen & Unwin, 1923; repr. 1967)

²⁶ Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature, trans. Willard R. Trask (1946; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968; repr. 1974), p. 16

²⁷ Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 14-15

²⁸ Naipaul, Journey to Nowhere, p. 26

²⁹ Naipaul, Journey to Nowhere, p. 223

praised by Walter Mondale, Vice President of the United States.³⁰ Naipaul's opinion of Jonestown was that:

The People's Temple rooted itself in disintegration and ruin. It has often been said that the Temple was reared on an idealism which, somehow, became perverted. It would, I think, be more correct to say that the Temple was reared on – or, better still, inherited – an idealism that had already gone wrong, that had already lost its way and been twisted out of shape in the promiscuous chaos of the sixties. Jim Jones was a beachcomber, picking up flotsam and jetsam washed ashore from the sixties shipwrecks. The 'idealism' on which he fed was not virginal but considerably shop-soiled, eaten up with inner decay.³¹

Despite this frustration, Naipaul, in contrast to Burgess, does not place the blame at the feet of an individual for the mistranslation of religious language into life. For this Burgess consciously turned to Thomas Hobbes, as is made clear when an 1839-1845 edition of Hobbes's Leviathan falls into the possession of Kenneth Marchal Toomey, narrator of Earthly Powers, while in a taxi in Milan. He opens it in New York and his eyes fall upon the description of the 'prince of the power of the air' (EP, p. 427).

It was in his overtly political seventeenth-century text, Leviathan,³² that Hobbes identified what he deemed to be a wrong turn in the papacy. He wrote, '[Christ] never said, that of what bread soever, my priest whatsoever, should say, This is my body, or, this is Christ's body ... Nor did the Church of Rome ever establish this transubstantiation, till the time of Innocent the Third; which was not above 500 years ago, when the power of popes was at the highest ...'.³³ Hobbes saw the position upheld in the Eucharist of the seventeenth century as a betrayal of language that leads to the ritual and superstition that is evident in the ceremonies of baptism, exorcism and marriage.³⁴ Part IV of Leviathan is entirely devoted to renouncing the power of the Roman Church through its faults, inconsistencies and absurdities. Hobbes complains that the mingling of Scripture with the metaphysics of Aristotle has created arguments of a supernatural nature that is a nonsense never intended by the Greek philosopher.³⁵ For example, the 'prince of the power of the air' came to signify a

³⁰ Naipaul, Journey to Nowhere, p. 224

³¹ Naipaul, Journey to Nowhere, p. 297

³² Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, or The Matter, Form, and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil, ed. J. C. A. Gaskin (1651; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)

³³ Leviathan, pp. 408-409 [338]

³⁴ Leviathan, p. 409 [338-339]

³⁵ Leviathan, pp. 446-457 [371-380], 460 [383]

commingling of darkness, evil and the devil, and Hobbes describes this as arising out of a simple allegory for those men, as a collective, who neither knew, understood, nor adhered to the teachings of Scripture, and hence were in a condition of darkness and sought to interfere with those who did follow Scripture and hence were enlightened or were in the allegorized light.³⁶

In You've Had Your Time, the second part of his autobiography, Burgess tells the reader of his intention to name Earthly Powers, 'The Prince of the Powers of the Air', and assigns responsibility for the title Earthly Powers to his American editor at Simon and Schuster, Michael Korda (You've Had Your Time, p. 355); the truth of which is partially confirmed by a typed outline with the Hobbesian title held by The Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Texas.³⁷ The title from Hobbes, however, or more rightly from the 1st century Epistle to the Ephesians, as Frank Kermode reminds us,³⁸ was not the only other title that the work received over its 10-year gestation (and 18 month writing period).³⁹ It was also named 'Eagles in My Life', as mentioned in the autobiography (YHYT, p. 350), and once again verified by a typescript held at the Harry Ransom Center.⁴⁰ And, according to Burgess its working title had been 'The Instruments of Darkness', a title taken from Macbeth. Further, Roger Lewis writes that it was once named 'The Creators',⁴¹ while Geoffrey Aggeler claims that its preliminary title was 'The Affairs of Men'.⁴² Biswell in his PhD thesis, meanwhile, identifies 'Absolute Power' as 'the working title for the novel given in Burgess's contract with Hutchinson', and confirms that it was Michael Korda

³⁶ Leviathan, pp. 403-404 [333-334]

³⁷ The typescript is eleven pages in length, copyright is handwritten at the end of the document assigning it to Burgess himself and his wife Liana jointly, dated 1979. [Harry Ransom Center, box 12, folder 1, 'Prince of the Powers of the Air', outline, n.d. (see <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/uthrc/00143/hrc-00143.html>)]

³⁸ see Frank Kermode, 'Books: Prince of the Powers of the Air, You've Had Your Time: Being The Second Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess', Guardian (25 October 1990)

³⁹ see Herbert Mitgang, 'Book Ends: Busy Burgess', New York Times, Book Review (18 January 1981), p. 39

⁴⁰ It is thirty-three pages in total (including a one page cover), at the top of the first page after the title page is written 'EP draft'. [Harry Ransom Center, box 12, folder 2, 'Eagles in my Life', outline, n.d. (see <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/uthrc/00143/hrc-00143.html>)]

⁴¹ Roger Lewis, Anthony Burgess (London: Faber and Faber, 2002), p. 43

⁴² Geoffrey Aggeler, Anthony Burgess: The Artist as Novelist (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1979), p. 23

(‘Burgess’s New York publisher’) who changed the title to Earthly Powers ‘against the author’s wishes’.⁴³

Although Burgess ultimately asserted that the title Earthly Powers was without meaning, and that all titles are somewhat insignificant (YHYT, p. 355), in reading Earthly Powers, the pertinence of the ‘Prince of the Powers of the Air’ title can be appreciated. Burgess, like Hobbes before him, chose a popular Pope to focus his criticisms upon and to develop his own examination of language and religion. Burgess’s complaints about John XXIII are strikingly similar to Hobbes’s complaints about Innocent III, particularly when it comes to transubstantiation in the Eucharist. Burgess cannot expect, however, to take Hobbes’s complaints about Pope Innocent III and to transfer them unproblematically to Pope John XXIII. After all, 300 years separates Burgess from Hobbes, and more than twice that separates John XXIII from Innocent III. For a text to ‘triumph’ it must renew the trope that it employs. The tropes that a text employs are, as Greene notes, ‘metaphorical’ in nature and provide transient descriptions that it is impossible to concretize without error: ‘The structure of the trope at the determinant moment of origin stems from intangible intuitions, beliefs, and intellectual habits that fade and cannot easily be recovered. Thus the trope is potentially subject to misreading at a radical, intuitive level.’⁴⁴ Of course, there is a legitimate argument in Earthly Powers surrounding the language of symbolism. Ludwig Wittgenstein with the illusion of the ‘inner’, and Gilbert Ryle with the ‘ghost in the machine’,⁴⁵ similarly identified that poetic linguistic devices are often taken as a means of description for the real world without recognition of their nature as linguistic tools (that is, they do not finalize meaning and remain transient and temporal). For example, it was Wittgenstein’s opinion that the way people attach the personal pronoun ‘I’ to experiences such as pain helps to create an image that pain is something subjective, and that likewise there is something subjective about consciousness and all of our senses. It has thereby become the case that the illusion of an inner has been created with a series of ever flowing pre-linguistic thoughts

⁴³ Andrew Biswell, ‘Conflict and Confluence: Anthony Burgess as Novelist and Journalist’, PhD Thesis (University of Warwick, 2002), p. 161

⁴⁴ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. xiv

⁴⁵ For example, a university is a collective term used for a series of component units (such as faculties), but take away all of these and there is no university, the university is not a thing separate from its component parts, and to think of it as such creates a ‘ghost’. (see Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind, introduction by Daniel C. Dennett [1949; Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 2002], pp. 16-19)

unformulated in language.⁴⁶ Wittgenstein like Hobbes and Ryle in their respective arguments judges this to be a mistake created by the metaphors used to describe sensations, which are understood not as metaphors but as literal language. It can further be understood that this is problematic when used inappropriately in religion, because of the prescriptive, or what Auerbach labels 'tyrannical', nature of religious language. This does not mean in turn, however, that the novel manages to demonstrate that Pope John XXIII was a 'bad man'. The text is restricted by the very restrictions that it identifies in other texts: it generalizes and employs tropes. Burgess acknowledges therefore through his approach the impossibility of the reader ever truly being able to collude with him in his attack on Pope John XXIII. The grotesque portrait of Carlo is too distorted to enable sensible and grounded judgements to be made by the reader on the real life alter ego.

The narrator, Kenneth Marchal Toomey, is likewise a grotesque caricature of his alter ego: Maugham. He is an impotent, ageing homosexual who is 'running to fat', whose unreliable secretary Geoff Enright is his younger lover. He has a housekeeper from Tangier called Ali, and in his past is a lover called Ralph. He is a successful playwright and novelist aged eighty-one who lives in Lija, Malta,⁴⁷ whose stage successes have been He Paid his Way, The Gods in the Garden, Oedipus Higgins and Break, Break, Break among others (EP, p. 12). He lives, or rather prepares to die, in Malta rather than London, because of taxes, estate duty and climate (EP, p. 10). He is obsessed by Who's Who, and his life is shortened with the smoking of cigarettes and cigars. A bowl of matchbooks from restaurants and hotels remind him of where he has been (EP, pp. 14-15). The majority of Toomey's work is prevented from entering Malta due to its secular and supposedly blasphemous content. One magazine article, in particular, about the author (rather than by the author) falls victim to the censor, not due to its content, but because a swimsuit feature was on the other side of the page. From the outset, the name Toomey, alluding to Maugham's deathly 'tomb-like' physiognomy and pallor, and in addition the way that the phrase

⁴⁶ see Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (1953; Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), pp. 243-275; see also Hacker, P. M. S., Wittgenstein's Place in Twentieth-Century Analytic Philosophy (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 129.

⁴⁷ In his Foreword to the American edition of the Eve of Saint Venus Burgess signs off 'A. B./Lija, Malta'.

from The Razor's Edge, 'running to fat',⁴⁸ is turned in on the alter ego show an unforgiving portrayal of the real-life author.

Toomey's role in the novel is to interpret Carlo and his actions. The Maltese Archbishop chooses him for this role, because he is immoral, anarchic, agnostic and rational (EP, p. 8). This does not mean, however, that he is an objective or reliable narrator. Toomey is able to guide the reader through some of the textual workings of symbolism problematized by Carlo, but not all. For instance, he gives his houseboy Ali a lecture on the distinction between Allah as a translation of the Latin for the Christian God Deus in Arabic and Maltese, and Allah as in the Moslem God.⁴⁹ Then, later on in the novel Toomey describes a scene in which he lights a Golden Flake cigar for Carlo's mother, Concetta Campanati (EP, p. 300), in which he at first says he uses a Maltese Cross lighter given to him as a gift by his house boy Ali (see EP, p. 25), and then changes it to a Swan Vesta match, in order to avoid misplaced symbolism. Toomey's awareness of symbolism is dissolved, however, when reflecting on, or actually in, Malaya. For instance, Toomey allows himself a cigar from a silver box, given to him as a gift by the (Malay) Sultan of Kelantan (EP, p. 42), to be lit by the same Maltese Cross lighter he elsewhere denies himself. And, when Toomey witnesses Carlo's vigorous attempt at exorcism in Kuala Kangsar (Malaya), he writes: 'If this were fiction, I should have no trouble in imposing on you a suspension of disbelief, but it is not fiction and I require your belief.' (EP, p. 276). For Toomey, Malaya is a place where the division between art and life does not hold in the same way as it does outside the country. He views 'The tropical day as an allegory of life, starting in coolness and cleanliness and Edenic beauty and too soon continuing with sweat and the feel of grubbiness and the shirt and shorts already defiled.' (EP, p. 243).

Toomey's struggle with symbolism could, in the particular, be read as a criticism of the Maugham's Malayan short stories, which often end with grand gestures such as death or cross-cultural partnerships, that make promises of being symbolic, but fail to complete on them. An example of this is to be found in a short

⁴⁸ See W. Somerset Maugham, The Razor's Edge (1944; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963; repr. 1968), p. 138

⁴⁹ This echoes a statement by Burgess that 'In Arabic, God becomes Allah, [and] it becomes very confusing.' (Darling, 'Haunted Exile', p. D9, col. 4; see also 'After This Our Exile' (1985), One Man's Chorus, p. 114)

story called 'The Outstation'.⁵⁰ It is the story of a Mr Warburton who works in Malaya in the colonial service having squandered his fortune in England, and brings to the country the sensibilities of his Pall Mall club he left behind. He is assigned an assistant called Mr Cooper who is a complete contrast to him in terms of character. Warburton dresses formally for dinner every evening, and the only concession he makes to the heat is a white jacket. A similar white dinner jacket, it should be noted, to the one Jack Birkbeck, Toomey's literary agent suggests he buys when discussing a commission to write short stories about Malaya (EP, pp. 211-212). Cooper, meanwhile, is 'a creole born and bred in Barbados,' as Srinivas Aravamudan notes in 'The Return of Anachronism',⁵¹ who 'has never been to England or to public school and treats his "nigger" servants with contempt. He does not respect the oriental niceties as the Resident [Warburton] does but shows up for dinner in khaki shorts and a ragged jacket, joking that he "very nearly put on a sarong"'.⁵² A central point in the narrative, as Aravamudan identifies, is the fact that Warburton receives his copies of The Times in six-week batches, and instead of reading them all at once gets his houseboy to bring each morning the newspaper of the same day that is exactly six weeks old. When Warburton leaves Cooper in charge of the station while on a sojourn, the copies of The Times arrive and Cooper tears them all open at once to see the outcome of the stories. When Warburton returns he is devastated, because Cooper has violated the strict order. This marks the difference in the two men. Cooper wishes to be up to the minute, while Warburton likes to maintain order even though this places him outside of time. While Warburton gets on with the Malay people, who respect him because he maintains his formality and with it his dignity, Cooper they do not respect. Eventually Cooper, as Warburton suspects will happen, is murdered, and this is the end of the story. If there is a symbolic message here it seems to be a conservative one: that only traditional and institutional England can govern Malaya. The death may however as simply signify a full stop to the story. It is difficult to tell, such is Maugham's well-turned detachment. Rather than expanding the possible meanings, Maugham's detachment leads the reader to a point of symbolic inconclusiveness in which there is a grand event that either means something or it

⁵⁰ W. Somerset Maugham, 'The Outstation', pp. 338-365, in Collected Short Stories, Vol. 4 (1951; Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1963; repr. 1971)

⁵¹ Srinivas Aravamudan, 'The Return of Anachronism', Modern Language Quarterly 62, 4 (December 2001), pp. 331-353

⁵² Aravamudan, p. 338

means nothing at all, it does not take flight, as other symbolism does, into a multiplicity of meanings.

In Earthly Powers, Toomey rewrites the story of Adam and Eve, and replaces Eve with a male companion called Yedid (EP, pp. 183-187). The story is Toomey's attempt at artistry and at approaching the issue of homosexuality. He shows the story to Ford Madox Ford, who dismisses it, because in his opinion it is not in Toomey's capacity to be an artist. Its lack of artistry appears to stem from its confused symbolism and the distance between the author and the story created by the narrator. It begins with a couple called Robert and Ralph having sex, and it is the former who reads the Adam and Yedid story to his lover. The reworking in many ways echoes a story told in The Razor's Edge by a character who adapts the story of Jesus in the Wilderness in order to allow Jesus to fall. There the story is censored for its frivolous blasphemy by a character called Isabel,⁵³ and such censorship and distancing always appears to be there in Maugham's work diluting the symbolism.

In an introduction to Maugham's short stories, Burgess criticized the writer for being in essence a tourist to the East.⁵⁴ In his autobiography, meanwhile, Burgess claimed superiority to Maugham and Joseph Conrad in understanding Malaya and the Malay language. He complained that while Maugham's stories portrayed the expatriate experience in Malaya, the Malay people in his stories were reduced to the sound of feet on the veranda. This, Burgess claimed, he attempted to rectify by making the Malay, Chinese and Indian people the centre of his novels.⁵⁵ Burgess's claims of superiority, however, did not mean that his opinions towards Maugham were unambiguous. For example, when prefacing a point on which he was in agreement with Maugham, he was quoted as having said: 'There is a very bad novel by Somerset Maugham called Cakes and Ale ...'.⁵⁶ Years previous to this, however, he had written: 'Cakes and Ale is a textbook of literary criticism as well as a superb novel'.⁵⁷ Admittedly the latter was in an obituary, and Burgess may well have held

⁵³ Maugham, Razor's Edge, p. 209

⁵⁴ William Somerset Maugham, Maugham's Malaysian Stories (Heinemann Educational Books, 1969)

⁵⁵ Anthony Burgess, 'Le pays que j'ai aimé' [The Country I Loved], GEO, 68 (October 1984), p. 41

⁵⁶ C. Robert Jennings, 'Anthony Burgess: A Candid Conversation with the Visionary Author of "A Clockwork Orange"', Playboy (September 1974), p. 72, col. 2

⁵⁷ Anthony Burgess, 'W. Somerset Maugham: 1874-1965', The Listener (23 December 1965), p. 1033

back his criticisms, but this was not the only praise that he gave to the novel. In his classification of Class 1 and Class 2 writers (discussed in the chapter on Napoleon Symphony), he wrote that there was a type of novel that was able to cross the boundary between Class 1 and Class 2 (or as he described it, overlap the two classes), and he chose Cakes and Ale as his example. He wrote: 'Transparent language – like that of W. Somerset Maugham in his novel Cakes and Ale – can be elevated to a high level of aesthetic interest through wit, balance, euphony, and other devices of elegance.' He soon qualified this however by stating that: 'Elegance ... is the most that Class 1 prose can achieve; for dandyism one must go to Class 2 writers.'⁵⁸ Further highlighting the schizophrenic duality of Burgess's attitude towards Maugham is the fact that Burgess can kill off Joseph Conrad in Earthly Powers (see p. 221), but he cannot kill Toomey.

Notably, Toomey's line at the end of Earthly Powers, 'I have always, all through my literary career, found endings excruciatingly hard.' (EP, p. 649), applies as much to Burgess as it does to Maugham. Burgess himself was after all no straightforward Class 2 novelist, and his antagonism towards Maugham comes in part from the very similarities between the two authors. The latter author is for Burgess inescapable, especially when it comes to geography (in particular Malaya), and the character of Toomey does not put a distance between Burgess and Maugham, in fact the opposite: it brings them closer together. Toomey's locations are as much Burgess's as Maugham's, in fact more so, to the point where Toomey is living on the same street in fictional Monaco as Burgess did in the real Monaco. Burgess lived at 44 rue Grimaldi, Monaco while writing Earthly Powers, and the description that he gives in his autobiography (see YHYT, p. 323),⁵⁹ is very similar to the one Toomey writes in Earthly Powers: 'I had a bare and airy topfloor apartment rented, on a six-month lease, from a M. Guizot who was visiting Valparaiso.' (EP, p. 114). Further, where Maugham's geography is correct, such as in Malaya, then the geography is shared with Burgess. In addition, Toomey's experiences and observations of Malta are often lightly adapted versions of Burgess's own experiences. For instance, when Toomey finds an article cut from the magazine because of a swimsuit advert on the

⁵⁸ Joysprick, pp. 15-16

⁵⁹ see also Lewis, Anthony Burgess, p. 365

reverse, this is an adaptation of Burgess's own experience. Burgess wrote of the Maltese censors: 'Newspapers arrived with swimsuit adverts cut out.'⁶⁰

The elements of Burgess's biography combine with those of Maugham's biography in *Toomey*: for instance, the secretary lover Geoff Enright suggests a similar relationship to that of Maugham with Gerald Haxton.⁶¹ There are then elements that are an exaggeration of Maugham. In the court case against Val Wrigley, for example, *Toomey* admits his homosexuality, while the closest Maugham is said to have come to a confession is to have admitted how flawed he would appear if he was to write as Jean-Jacques Rousseau had written in his *Confessions*;⁶² when asked by Arthur Jeffress to submit a letter to *The Times* in support of the defendants in the Montagu versus Pitt-Rivers homosexuality scandal in the 1950s, it is reported that 'Pale with anger, Maugham pushed aside his snifter of brandy, threw his cigarette in the fireplace and left', never speaking to Jeffress again.⁶³ *Toomey* then is at once Burgess, Maugham and an exaggeration of Maugham, and in addition echoes other authors as well: his Nazi radio broadcast (*EP*, p. 424) echoes Ezra Pound's wartime broadcasts; and, his residence in E2 Albany echoes at once Aldous Huxley and Graham Greene.⁶⁴

One notable contrast between the character of *Toomey* and the character of Carlo is that although the former is a Maugham type or Maugham-esque figure, he is not a replacement for Somerset Maugham, and his existence does not preclude that of Maugham in the world of the novel. Maugham still enjoys his stage success (see *EP*, p. 83), despite the imaginary counterpart, and a number of references are made to him (as they are to James Joyce, Ford Madox Ford, T. S. Eliot, Rebecca West, etc.), while the novel spans the twentieth century from the middle of the First World War onwards. Pope Gregory XVII however is a replacement for Pope John XXIII: Pope Pius XI dies on 10 February 1939 and Eugene Pacelli, Pope Pius XII succeeds him in the novel (*EP*, p. 397), as was true in life. In October 1958 Carlo Campanati ascends

⁶⁰ 'After This Our Exile', p. 114

⁶¹ Ted Morgan, *Somerset Maugham* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1980), p. 40

⁶² Morgan, *Somerset Maugham*, p. 41

⁶³ Morgan, *Somerset Maugham*, pp. 38-39

⁶⁴ *Toomey* also lives at E2, Albany where Lord Byron, George Canning and Bulwer Lytton, and Aldous Huxley lived (taking over Huxley's actual apartment [*EP*, p. 378; see also *EP*, p. 404] and Burgess had apparently been asked to deliver a parcel of silk shirts from Kota Bharu, Malaya to Graham Greene's apartment in Albany, E2 (see Lewis, *Anthony Burgess*, p. 213; see also Biswell, *Anthony Burgess*, p. 179).

to the papal role of Gregory XVII in the novel, as John XXIII had in life. In contrast, Kenneth Toomey is celebrating his 81st birthday (on 23 June 1971) when the novel begins, and although Maugham lived until he was 91 years of age,⁶⁵ Maugham was 89 years of age when Pope John XXIII died at 7.49pm on 3 June 1963,⁶⁶ and both were dead for over a decade before the Jonestown massacre in 1978. Making Toomey an anachronism is not without its purpose, however, as is now explained.

Greene, in The Vulnerable Text, identifies five types of anachronism (naive, abusive, serendipitous, creative and pathetic [or tragic]). The first three of which are all, in their own way, applied unknowingly.⁶⁷ It is only in the fourth and fifth type that the employment becomes conscious. 'Creative' anachronism 'confronts and uses the conflict of period styles self-consciously and creatively to dramatize the itinerary, the diachronic passage out of the remote past into the emergent present'.⁶⁸ Anachronism of the 'pathetic (or tragic)' type cannot be easily summarized,⁶⁹ but it is within this latter categorization that Greene locates his theory of the 'superannuated character', a concept that appears capable of explaining in part Burgess's relationship to Pope John XXIII and W. Somerset Maugham in Earthly Powers. Greene writes that 'the superannuated or anachronistic character can be regarded as a complex sign for that past out of which emerges the writer's work together with his culture.'⁷⁰ Pope John XXIII and Somerset Maugham are for Burgess such symbols of his past in terms of culture and work. Although fond of the label 'lapsed Catholic', Burgess was proud of being a cradle Catholic, and felt superior to Catholic converts, such as Graham Greene. Further, he is quoted as having said: 'I'm not a communicant but ethically I

⁶⁵ W. Somerset Maugham was born 25 January 1874 inside the British Embassy on the Faubourg Saint Honoré, France to Edith Maugham, and died 15 December 1965; his ashes were buried outside the Maugham Library at King's School, Canterbury on 22 December (Morgan, Somerset Maugham, pp. 4, 617-619).

⁶⁶ John XXIII, Journal, p. lvii

⁶⁷ Naive anachronisms 'help to compose the texture of a work without pretensions to historical control, and they accommodate the available knowledge to the available means' (Greene, Vulnerable Text, pp. 220-221); abusive anachronism, meanwhile, is where the writer 'wants to repress history, not out of ignorance but out of a misconceived, rigid, and inappropriate decorum' (Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. 221); while, serendipitous anachronism occurs, as the name suggests accidentally but at the same time enhances the work of art: for example in the visual arts, when 'Brunelleschi, incorrectly believing the Florentine baptistery to be ancient used some of its Romanesque elements to design a neoclassical masterpiece, the Pazzi chapel' (Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. 221).

⁶⁸ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. 221

⁶⁹ Greene, Vulnerable Text, pp. 221-222

⁷⁰ Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. 233

abide very powerfully by the church. There's nothing else, you see, nothing else.'⁷¹. Burgess's attitude towards the Church was therefore similarly schizophrenic to his attitude to Maugham, which as has already been discussed, was a combination of dislike and respect. Further, Greene writes of the superannuated character that it is 'a highly stylized sign, often a distorted or reductive sign, of th[e author's] past,' and this is seen with Toomey and Carlo in their exaggerations of Maugham and John XXIII.

The thing that divides Toomey and Carlo is not their role, but that Toomey, as has been noted, exists in a world where Maugham also exists, while Pope Gregory does not exist in a world where Pope John exists. Of this type of relationship Greene writes:

In thinking about the treatment of the superannuated character in literary texts, one question we can ask is whether that character is allowed ... or condemned to confront his or her anachronistic pathos, or whether on the other hand he or she is shielded from it ...⁷²

In Earthly Powers it is Toomey that must accept his lack of place, while Carlo/Gregory need not. Carlo it would seem is shielded, while Toomey is not. This is telling, because all that Burgess can do when faced with John XXIII is to demonstrate very forcefully that he thinks that he is mistaken in his teachings. In order to do this he creates Carlo and turns at the same time to Hobbes, whose argument over Innocent III cannot wholly justify Burgess's position, for it is a trope that does not convincingly renew itself and 'triumph'. It fails to triumph because Burgess cannot separate himself wholly from Catholicism. Catholicism was a part of Burgess's cultural past, and as he admitted time and again it nurtured his sense of self.

In trying to understand Burgess's representation of John XXIII, it is important to consider Greene's assertion that:

The text that presents ... a [superannuated] character will seem to turn aggressively against the past. Superannuation invites irony; by presenting the superannuated figure ironically (even when this figure is the poetic speaker), the text ostensibly detaches itself from that figure's archaic perspective and asserts its own relative modernity, points to the greater width of its own horizon. The text refuses to subject itself to this figure's limitations of

⁷¹ Dudar, 'A Nomad Pens a Big Book', p. 55, col. 1

⁷² Greene, Vulnerable Text, p. 226

understanding; it takes a step into an emergent present that the superannuated are incapable of taking. And yet in those texts that merit our interest, this gesture of detachment is not taken without misgivings, since the outmoded character will incarnate to some degree the past that has nourished the writer and his work, a past that he repudiates at his peril. The repudiated character will typically attract ambivalence, the ambivalence of all historical change, and this divided awareness will affect the posture of the text toward its own historicity.⁷³

The words, although they can be seen to apply to Carlo/John XXIII, also apply to Toomey as well. And, it is through the attempted superannuation of Maugham/Toomey that Burgess and Maugham are ironically pushed closer together rather than pulled further apart. In The Razor's Edge, there is a character by the name of Larry who goes to a Father Ensheim and tells him that he had 'never thought much about God [and] couldn't understand why there was evil in the world',⁷⁴ and he is told in return that 'Our wise old Church ... has discovered that, if you will act as if you believed belief will be granted to you ... '. Further, the priest tells Larry that, 'The distance that separates [him] from faith is no greater than the thickness of a cigarette paper.'⁷⁵ There are resonances here with the distinction between faith and belief in Kierkegaard's Fear and Trembling,⁷⁶ and Maugham would not have included such lines in his novel, had he not been aware of issues surrounding religion, or not have reflected on such issues. However, he puts a distance between himself and the young Larry, through the older and wiser first person narrator of the novel, who can sympathize with the young man, but at the same time, remains detached. Maugham is no less moving beyond Larry than Burgess attempts to move beyond Toomey. The difference between Maugham and Burgess, however, is that the latter wants to wrestle very directly and forcefully with the characters that he wishes to superannuate, whereas Maugham does not choose to deal with subjects with the same ferocity. Maugham appears simply to mention and to dress the narrative philosophically, whereas Burgess attempts to manipulate ideas more directly, and intrinsically build them into the structure of his work. This does not mean that both do not wish to superannuate, and also that both do not fail to wholly do so, as is the nature of such attempts, but instead that they use different approaches. And in fact it is Maugham's

⁷³ Greene, Vulnerable Text, pp. 224

⁷⁴ Maugham, Razor's Edge, p. 252

⁷⁵ Maugham, Razor's Edge, p. 253

⁷⁶ Søren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling: Dialectical Lyric by Johannes de silento, trans. and intro. Alastair Hannay (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985)

different approach to superannuation, among other things, that Burgess wishes to superannuate.

In many ways Earthly Powers is Burgess's denial of what fiction can do. Although the novel very clearly demonstrates its awareness of the limitations of fictional language, Burgess puts himself at the mercy of the reader, by committing the errors he identifies in others, and thereby creates a 'vulnerable text'. This is because he attempts to do something highly political,⁷⁷ which is only political because it is first and foremost highly personal. It illustrates the inefficacy of the language used by others through its own errors, and demonstrates the inescapability of such errors, for it commits them too. This is the reality that Toomey and Carlo inhabit and out of which they are constructed.

⁷⁷ Burgess notably told Samuel Coale that, 'I've never been politically minded', EP however demonstrates how he can still be political. (Samuel Coale, 'An Interview with Anthony Burgess', Modern Fiction Studies 27, 3 [Autumn 1980], p. 434)

CHAPTER 6

Futures Past: The End of the World News

The End of the World News is composed of three concurrent narratives divided into short segments of differing lengths. There is no rigid pattern or cycle that the narratives follow in terms of order. They rely instead on resonances between scenes and words to determine when one narrative gives way to another (what Burgess calls ‘literary counterpoint’). The first narrative to commence concerns Sigmund Freud’s exile to England prior to the Second World War, and is written in a pseudo-television documentary style. The second narrative is a science fiction story, called henceforth the Lynx narrative (since Lynx is the name of the planet destined to collide with Earth in the story). The final narrative is the libretto for an off-Broadway musical based on Leon Trotsky’s time in New York after being exiled from Russia. Each narrative has references to the end of the world: for Trotsky this comes on page 338, for Freud immediately after on page 339, and for Valentine Brodie et al. (in the Lynx narrative) references are numerous and ever present. In the novel, Trotsky and Freud dismiss the physical end of the world as nonsense and yet they each have visions of a new world: for Freud, following the treatment of neuroses, ‘the world will come to an end and then start all over again – a new world’ (The End of the World News, p. 94), and for Trotsky the new beginning will come when the ‘stainless steel executive machine’ has been grabbed (EofWN, p. 92). The fictional Valentine Brodie, meanwhile, is part of a physical end and new beginning for the world. Freud and Trotsky, then, are central to narratives of what has happened, while Brodie is central to a science fiction narrative of what might happen – how human life might irrecoverably change, physically and mentally – a possible future, but one that for the inhabitants of the spaceship at the end of the novel is a mythical past.

Burgess in his second volume of autobiography, You’ve Had Your Time, tells his reader that he had been commissioned to write an end of the world disaster movie (but had instead written a short science fiction book about a ‘rogue’ planet called ‘Puma’),¹ that he had also been commissioned to produce a television script for a series about Freud, and in addition that he had been commissioned to write a libretto

¹ ‘Puma’, Burgess writes, was inspired by a meeting at a cocktail party in Iowa with a Professor Van Allen, who told him that a planet’s collision with Earth was a more likely source of destruction than nuclear war (YHYT, p. 326). The typescript is held by the Harry Ransom Research Center in Texas.

for an off-Broadway musical focusing on Trotsky in New York.² He wrote that all of these projects were ultimately aborted,³ and that the composition of The End of the World News came about when he found the three pieces of writing sitting in the same folder and saw that they were really ‘the same story’ (You’ve Had Your Time, p. 326). He wrote: ‘I was able to salvage for a kind of sub-literature what the livelier media rejected. I hate waste.’ (YHYT, p. 327). The sense of serendipity that the author felt at the rediscovery of the three pieces of writing that constitute The End of the World News sounds too much like wishful thinking to be convincing, however. It is hence a novel that it is very easy to be dismissive about, since its origins appear various and overly avant-garde and with it ambivalent. There are themes common to Burgess in the novel: first, the interrelation between music and literature, second Nazi psychology (which is also explored in Earthly Powers), third the subject of Freud, on whom Burgess claimed to be halfway through writing a libretto in Little Wilson and Big God (p. 109),⁴ fourth the geographical location of New York,⁵ and fifth the status of exile.⁶ The themes however do not guide the reader into a meaningful way of reading the novel, and the lack of semantic cohesion is only exacerbated by the comments made by Burgess in his autobiography. Because of this lack of cohesion I have looked more speculatively for ways of understanding The End of the World News. This has led me to Reinhart Koselleck’s book Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time (originally published in German as Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten). The central concerns of Futures Past include the end of the world, revolution, dreams and the disposability of history. When read together with The End of the World News a series of relationships develop between the two books, and it is these that are explored in this chapter.

² The Freud script was a look at the life of the Austrian psychoanalyst for Canadian television, and the Trotsky libretto was to accompany a score by Stanley Silverman according to Burgess (YHYT, p. 326).

³ ‘The Zanuck-Brown [Puma] film was never made, for the film financiers saw no future in the ultimate disaster; the Canadians grew scared of a Freud series; Stanley Silverman developed a composer’s block. I wrote the music myself for the Trotsky project and put it in a drawer, though I performed one of the songs on BBC radio.’ (YHYT, p. 327).

⁴ In addition, Freud’s Psychopathology of Everyday Life was left behind for Nabby Adams to find in Time for a Tiger by Richard Ennis.

⁵ see New York.

⁶ The correlation between himself as exile and writers such as James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence has continuously interested Burgess, and here we have Trotsky and Freud, and even Valentine Brodie in a sense exiled (see for example ‘After This Our Exile’ [1985], One Man’s Chorus, pp. 111-117)

Koselleck's book begins with a chapter entitled 'Modernity and the Planes of Historicity', which opens with a discussion of Albrecht Altdorfer's Alexanderschlacht (a painting that was commissioned in 1528 by Duke William IV of Bavaria to record the Battle of Issus).⁷ Koselleck notes how Altdorfer consulted the court historiographer, Curtius Rufus, in order to find out the total number of combatants, the number killed and the number taken prisoner in the Battle of Issus, and then incorporated these on the banners carried by the armies in the painting. The men still fighting and those lying wounded on the battlefield are included in those numbers. Koselleck interprets this in the following way: 'Altdorfer made conscious use of anachronism so that he could faithfully represent the course of the completed battle'.⁸ He further identifies another point of anachronism in the painting: 'From their feet to their turbans, most of the Persians resemble the Turks who, in the same year the picture was painted (1529), unsuccessfully laid siege to Vienna. In other words, the event that Altdorfer captured was for him at once historical and contemporary.'⁹ Koselleck goes on to argue that for Altdorfer, in the sixteenth century, '[t]he present and the past were enclosed within a common historical plane', and that '[t]emporal difference was not more or less arbitrarily eliminated; it was not, as such, at all apparent.'¹⁰ Altdorfer's picture is, he argues, simultaneously ongoing, complete, historical, contemporary and timeless;¹¹ and the timelessness is further punctuated for Koselleck by the fact that the picture does not have a date on it.

When, almost three hundred years later, Friedrich Schlegel discovered the painting, he was, in contrast to Altdorfer, writes Koselleck, 'able to distinguish the painting from his own time, as well as from that of the Antiquity it strove to represent'.¹² The reason Koselleck gives for this is that history had 'gained a specifically temporal dimension',¹³ one that for Altdorfer had been absent; and this leads Koselleck to question:

⁷ Reinhart Koselleck, Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time (1979; New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 9

⁸ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 9

⁹ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

¹⁰ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

¹¹ see Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

¹² Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

¹³ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

What had happened in these three hundred years that separate our two witnesses, Altdorfer and Schlegel? What new quality had historical time gained that occupies this period from about 1500 to 1800?¹⁴

And onto the following thesis:

... this period must be conceived not simply as elapsed time, but rather as a period with its own specific characteristics ... in these centuries [1500-1800] there occurs a temporalization [*Verzeitlichung*] of history, at the end of which there is the peculiar form of acceleration which characterizes modernity.¹⁵

Much of Koselleck's thinking from this point onwards in Futures Past is centred on Napoleon and the French Revolution, but also on how events from the Reformation forwards began to give birth to modernity, created a shift in terminology from histories to history, and developed the modern conception of the importance of temporality and chronology. In this way Futures Past not only suggests ways of addressing the end of the world, revolution and dreams in The End of the World News, but also anachronism, semantics, and broader concepts such as the novel's bold declarations in the 'Foreword' that the novel presents the major achievements in the history of the twentieth century. There is in addition a more speculative reason for reading Koselleck alongside Burgess in this chapter, however, and this is centred on possibility.

In the 'Foreword' among the various notes that the imaginary estate manager John B. Wilson, BA provides to the reader, is the following:

You can take your choice of time and space. In matters of history you can't have both, esp. if you're German. Young K, a German, thinks me more capable of Nazi sentiments than himself, because I was brought up in the Nazi period. (EofWN, p. ix)

Burgess has already, in the passage that precedes this one, labelled himself old man (or mon vieux) and young K is presumably therefore younger than him, i.e. born after 1917, which indeed Koselleck was (since Keith Tribe writes that he was forty-two in 1965).¹⁶ Koselleck is also German, is interested in time and space (as indeed was Kant, another German K), and has written on the Third Reich. The only thing that does not fit is that according to Burgess young K was not brought up in the Nazi

¹⁴ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 10

¹⁵ Koselleck, Futures Past, pp. 10-11

¹⁶ Keith Tribe, 'Introduction', in Koselleck, Futures Past, p. ix

period. Premised upon this point, it could be argued back and forth that K is or isn't Koselleck. One might say for instance that Burgess was mistaken about Koselleck's age or that this indicates that it is someone else, or even that Burgess inserted an intentional error. However, the reduction of a name to an initial is always an expansion of the possible identities to which it alludes, as has been stated twice already in this thesis.¹⁷ As such, it becomes imprecise, error creeps in, and it is an invitation to speculate. For example, in Napoleon Symphony, Josephine is reduced to the letter J, and blurring occurs between J standing for Josephine and J standing for Jesus. Similarly, whether or not K begins by referring to Koselleck, the uncertainty, even if it is only my own uncertainty, invites it to be explored. The inspiration for formulating an argument on such a point comes in no small part from Umberto Eco's The Limits of Interpretation, which is much concerned with the effects of C. S. Peirce's 'unlimited semiosis', Jacques Derrida's 'infinite deferral', and what he terms 'hermetic drift' and 'connotative neoplasm' in literary texts.¹⁸ Each can help to explain unexpected and abnormal growths when reading, which is not unimportant, and on the contrary is in the spirit of the reading of the novel undertaken in this chapter,¹⁹ which begins firstly with the Lynx narrative, then moves on to the Trotsky libretto and ends with Freud's exile.

When Professor Frame asks Valentine Brodie, in the Lynx narrative, to hypothesize on how science fiction might deal with the end of the world, he replies:

The situation's not uncommon in science fiction. Indeed, it's rather a banal situation. If the work of fiction isn't to end with everybody dead, then somebody builds a sort of Noah's Ark and a selected few, the cream of mankind, get into it, and, by the grace of God or somebody, they find a new and highly habitable planet after only a short cruise in space. (EofWN, p. 54)

And, it is this common structuring of science fiction that is essentially what happens in the Lynx narrative, although there is notably no planet discovered and the story not only reflects Noah's Ark, but also the Birth of Christ and the Apocalypse.

The Lynx narrative begins in the playground of St Bede's Primary (Nowra, New South Wales) on 18 December 1999, where Jack Tamsworth, Tony Warwick and Bertie Domville are performing in a nativity play while their English teacher Mr

¹⁷ see chapters in this thesis on Napoleon Symphony and Earthly Powers.

¹⁸ see Umberto Eco, The Limits of Interpretation (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 29

¹⁹ More detail is included in the chapter on A Dead Man in Deptford.

Lithgow and a group of parents look on (EofWN, p. 20). Present is Gerald Bathurst - reporter on the Wagga Wagga Sentinel, a small yachtsman and former air navigator, winner of an astronomical quiz on Channel 37 - who notices a new star in the east, and remarks 'Christ, there's a coincidence' (EofWN, p. 21). As in the majority of Burgess's novels an exclamation such as 'Christ' actually refers to Christ, and makes the 'new star' at once a religious symbol. This is further emphasized, when showing on the television in a bar in New York is Calvin Gropius speaking at the Westchester University Stadium (EofWN, p. 61). He is an evangelist in the style of Billy Graham, and says of the new star sighted in Australia:

We have been told of a new star in the east. The folks down under ... have been vouchsafed a glimpse of its pinpoint of fire. It has come at Christmas, as a star came for the first Christmas two thousand years ago. (EofWN, p. 62)

Gropius takes the star to be the sign of a second coming. The irony is of course that a star in the east in Australia will not be over Bethlehem, since for Australia the Middle East is north west; and the star is not a star anyway, it is a rogue planet, heading for Earth. This does not mean that the second coming is not enacted in the novel, however.

The evangelist and prophet, Gropius, has a son called Dashiell, and they both become a part of the 'Birth of Christ' narrative in The End of the World News when Edwina Duffy comes to them looking for help. Duffy's husband and the father of her unborn child Nat Goya was originally due to board the 'Noah's Ark' spaceship, but realizing that he would have to leave his wife and child behind attempted to flee the Centre of Advanced Technology (CAT) base and ended up being shot dead. Duffy being religious gets it into her head that she is carrying in her womb the Son of God. She therefore goes to Gropius and his son Dashiell, and the latter becomes her Joseph: the man who becomes her partner and that takes her to a safe place to give birth to her child, which in this instance is the spaceship America. As such the Lynx narrative unites Noah's Ark, the Birth of Christ and the Apocalypse, through the spaceship, the child and the end of the world.

The Lynx story is not only in familiar territory with its religious narratives, but also in familiar territory for readers of science fiction and action adventure. Professor Frame has engineered a scheme to save a group of brilliant (scientific) intellectuals from the impending disaster facing the Earth by launching a spaceship (named firstly

Tallis then America). His daughter, Vanessa Brodie, who is also a brilliant scientist, meanwhile, is married to the science fiction writer Valentine Brodie. She wants him onboard the spaceship, but his father-in-law does not. Brodie, although he has a place on the spaceship, finds himself in a police cell when it comes time to leave for the top secret launch site (having gone out to get drunk with his actor friend Willett). This sets in motion the story of two friends, who first of all run for their lives across the hotel skywalks of New York, eating fine food and drinking fine wines on the way, and then arm themselves with guns and steal a car in order to leave the city. The mission really gets going when Willett realizes that Brodie all along knew the location of the spaceship. This happens when Brodie and Willett are working with others to clear dead bodies and cars from the Ghersom Tunnel (EofWN, p. 287), and one of the workers (Murphy) has a copy of Brodie's book, Not to Call Night. It tells a story very similar to the Lynx narrative, and Willett realizes that it tells them the location of the spaceship. This spurs them on to steal a helicopter, and side by side the two races (Valentine Brodie's and Edwina Duffy's) to board the spaceship take place.²⁰ Not only are the storylines predictable, but the Lynx narrative also follows the typical science fiction attitude towards death, i.e. a lack of sentimentality. Demonstrating this, Nat Goya is punished with death for his attempt to escape from the CAT base; Frame, when it comes time for him to die, switches off his respirator and goes into the cadaver-recycler, where 'Silently, the task of salvaging protein, carbohydrate, phosphorus, fluids cleansed and potable, and converting waste to fuel for the ancillary heating engines was consummated' (EofWN, p. 331); Calvin Gropius is killed very simply by being run over by the trucks exiting the CAT base (EofWN, p. 358); Bartlett is 'very neatly shot' by Dr Adams, in order to let Val Brodie in (EofWN, p. 359); President Skilling allows himself to crash into the sea when the end comes after having tasted his last chocolate (EofWN, p. 378); and, when it comes for the end of the moon, although everyone stops work to watch it, it is still reported in a wholly dispassionate way ('all work stopped as they went to the great screen to see the end of the moon' [EofWN, p. 384]).

For Koselleck understanding how the predicted end of the world is viewed holds great importance in understanding history. He explains that prior to the Reformation, the Church controlled prophecies of the End and they were shaped by

²⁰ There is also a group of proles that have gathered in Sloansville wishing to board the ship, but these are fought off by Dashiel's heavies at the site of the spaceship.

the story of the Apocalypse. Hence, while the Holy Roman Empire was in place it held in abeyance the End of the World, but ensured at the same time that it was maintained as a constant threat. The Reformation changed this because it saw the Apocalypse figuratively arrive in the shape of people such as Luther and Calvin, and thus enacted, the Church could no longer control prophesy, and the End of the World looked imminent. When the End did not arrive, prophecies started increasingly to 'prorogue' the date of the End of the World, before state control and intellectual criticism from writers such as Francis Bacon discredited the prophecies altogether.²¹

It was around the middle of the seventeenth century, Koselleck writes, that man became aware of the modernity in which he lived, and this coincided with a shift from prophecy to prognosis:

While prophecy transgressed the bounds of calculable experience, prognosis remained within the dimensions of the political situation. The prognosis is a conscious element (Moment) of political action. It is related to events whose novelty it releases. Hence time continually emanates from the prognosis in an unforeseeable, but predictable, manner.²²

Prognosis looks to the past in order to predict the future, and a future presaged on the past demonstrates the repeatability of history. However, Koselleck explains that the notion of progress accelerates history, not prognosis. With progress there are unknowns, and these unknowns exist in a space increasingly abbreviated by reference to the past as a source for the present (that is, prognosis). The idea of history repeating itself, but at the same time progressing, 'robs the present of materiality and actuality',²³ because the present is all too efficiently accounted for, and the unknown future is the only thing of interest. Applying this to the Lynx story it can be seen that pre-existing narratives are everywhere. There is, as has been discussed, Noah's Ark, the Birth of Christ and the Apocalypse, and one can even add Brodie's novel to the list. In addition to pre-existing narratives there are also a series of pre-existing names: for example, the school is named after St Bede (c.673-735),²⁴ whose name also echoes George Eliot's Adam Bede; and, Bertie Domville might be thought a portmanteau composed of P. G. Wodehouse's comic character Bertie Wooster and the

²¹ see Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 17

²² Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 19

²³ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 23

²⁴ see Magnus Magnusson, ed., with Rosemary Goring, Chambers Biographical Dictionary, 5th edn. (1990; Edinburgh: Chambers, 1991), p. 126

eponymous character of the Henry James play Guy Domville. Many other names, meanwhile, clearly allude to locations in New South Wales (e.g. Lithgow, Bathurst and Tamsworth); and, Calvin Gropius's name might be read as a portmanteau of the 16th-century religious reformer, John Calvin - the same Calvin that Freud draws into his lecture at Clark University (EofWN, p. 210) - and the architect Walter Gropius.²⁵ Each name gives the promise of meaning, and some appear, at least in part, to even be in harmony with one or more of the originals that are alluded to. For instance, Nat Goya's namesake, the 18th/19th-century Spanish painter, Francisco Goya, 'castigated the follies of the court',²⁶ and this castigation is echoed in Nat Goya's unwillingness to embrace the follies of the followers of Calvin Gropius. The names for apartments, university buildings, and streets, etc. make similar historical reference. For example, Duffy in order to visit Goya, who works at Westchester University, drives down Gottlieb Way, Tucci Avenue and Nesbitt Street to arrive at Pell House. The first may well allude to Adolph Gottlieb, the avant-garde painter who was born in New York;²⁷ Tucci could be Guiseppe Tucci, an Italian scholar,²⁸ while Nesbitt might allude to the actuarial mathematician, Cecil J. Nesbitt;²⁹ and, Pell is most likely Thomas Pell, who bought vast areas of land in New York in the 17th century.³⁰ Each offers to foreshorten time by offering pre-existing names, notions, concepts and ideas, but none is able to foretell the precise details of the outcome of the story.

The offering up of narratives does not begin with the Lynx narrative in the novel. It begins instead at the very start, with the cover blurb, the subtitle and the 'Foreword'. Burgess, not the publisher, writes the cover blurb, and in it he explains his authority. The blurb tells the reader that the book is a bargain, intended primarily as entertainment, and will slip down as easily as a dozen oysters. The subtitle, then reiterates that it is 'An Entertainment', and at the same time alludes to Graham Greene with whose work the subtitle became synonymous. In the Foreword, John B.

²⁵ An American Architect, born in Germany, responsible for the Bauhaus, 'which aimed at a new functional interpretation of the applied arts, utilizing glass, metal and textiles' (Chambers Biographical Dictionary, p. 616)

²⁶ see Chambers Biographical Dictionary, pp. 613-614

²⁷ Chambers Biographical Dictionary, p. 611

²⁸ See 'Tucci, Giuseppe', A Dictionary of Buddhism, ed. Damien Keown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003),

<http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t108.e1906> (accessed 21 October 2005)

²⁹ see <http://www.math.lsa.umich.edu/research/actuarial/cjnes.html> (accessed 31 May 2005).

³⁰ see Lloyd Ultan, The Bronx in the Frontier Era: From the Beginning to 1696 (New York: Bronx County Historical Society, 1993), pp. 65-67

Wilson, BA then presents the reader with among other things the following list of texts:

a volume of Henry James's letters; a book of poems by one Geoffrey Grigson, most of the pages of which had been roughly torn out for presumably a tersive purpose; a work of musicology by a certain Hans Keller, much scrawled with bitter pencil obscenities; and a number of works of paperback fiction, e.g. Let Her Scream, by Anthony Powell; Death in Undress, by S. Bellow; Thrust of the Gun, by Paul Bayley. (EofWN, pp. viii-ix)

Of course, Henry James's letters have been published and Geoffrey Grigson was indeed a poet, and Hans Keller was a musicologist. Anthony Powell and Saul Bellow (if we take the S. to stand for Saul) are likewise well known, but there is a portmanteau of novelist and work, the books do not belong to them, they are spoofs. Meanwhile, Paul Bayley is a name that is homonymous with Paul Bailey, an approximation like the name S. Bellow, and a misspelling, while the name of his book can be read as an innuendo. All of these books, like the name of Burgess's own novel, The End of the World News (see p. x), have names given to them by John B. Wilson, BA. There is ambivalence in the character of Wilson, a lack of respect for any of the books or writers he sees before him, they are entertainment only, and tomorrow they will be toilet paper (as suggested by the word tersive, from the Latin *tergo* meaning to wipe, which is used to describe the use to which Grigson's poetry has been put).³¹ Why are they included? Koselleck writes that: 'The processual character of modern history cannot be comprehended other than through the reciprocal explanation of events through structures, and vice versa.'³² That is to say, the means of explanation are at once necessary and at the same time problematic. The End of the World News from the very beginning scrabbles around for structuring narratives through which to tell its story, and these prove inefficacious. In the Lynx narrative Duffy uses the Birth of Christ story to try and convince others of her role in carrying the child, but it is met by scepticism. Similarly, many fail to be convinced by the coming of an apocalypse.

³¹ As recently reported by Colin Burrow, 'Geoffrey Grigson, in a review that Burgess seems to have learned by heart, said that his journalism was driven by a desire to convince himself that "an insatiable liking for words amounts to an ability to use them well and to distinct purpose."' (Colin Burrow, 'Not Quite Nasty', London Review of Books, 28, 3 [9 February 2006], http://www.lrb.co.uk/v28/n03/print/burr01_.html [accessed 3 April 2006]). Lewis also noted that Burgess had complained for thirty years about Grigson's review of his work (see Lewis, Roger, Anthony Burgess, [London: Faber and Faber, 2002] p. 15).

³² Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 110

In fact, the quality of being carried along by pre-existing narratives, to borrow once again the earlier quotation from Koselleck, ‘robs the present of materiality and actuality’ for characters such as Willett: he is happier living in the here and now than concentrating on some unknown point in the future.³³ Part of the problem, as Koselleck outlines, is that the narratives that explain events have often been used since modernity during events to explain something that is not concluded. For example, Koselleck describes how battles are often defined by the simple rhythm of ‘veni, vidi, vici’ (Julius Caesar’s message to Rome: I came, I saw, I conquered).³⁴ This is at once necessary, but it does not predict the outcome of the future, and can only be effectively employed after the battle has been won, because a victory cannot be predicted previous to a war. Likewise, an unborn child cannot be assumed to be Jesus, he would have first to do all that Jesus did, and the Apocalypse cannot be the Apocalypse if it does not herald with it the End and all that goes with it. When Duffy and Gropius, make their prognoses based on religious narratives, they are racing ahead of themselves. This does not mean that the end of the world does not occur and that Duffy’s child is not born (although the spaceship’s future generations have their doubts about these events), but that these narratives fight to distort the actuality. This is something that they are unable to do, however, because they are limited by their metaphorical nature. As Koselleck writes:

Every event historically established and presented lives on the fiction of actuality; reality itself is past and gone. This does not mean, however, that a historical event can be arbitrarily set up in this or that manner. The sources provide control over what might not be stated. They do not, however, prescribe what may be said.³⁵

It is at once clear that one cannot read the Lynx narrative in its bringing together of Noah, Christ and Apocalypse at a literal level, and that these narratives can only ever metaphorically describe the events. The actual events of the novel, which are known once it is read as a whole, prevent the narratives from such a level of meaning. For example, Valentine Brodie’s claim, in The End of the World News, is that in science

³³ It is only in assisting Brodie that he is willing to use his powers of prediction, e.g. in finding out the launch site of the spaceship.

³⁴ see Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 109

³⁵ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 111

fiction those that escape Earth's destruction typically arrive at a new planet fairly quickly. In the Lynx narrative, however, this does not actually happen.

Not only can structuring narratives not change outcomes, but also the deviations highlight the anachronistic qualities of the structuring narratives: the narratives are at once necessary, but at the same time out of place. These anachronisms sensitize the reader to the manipulation of narrative, and in this way the Lynx story instructs the reader on how to read the rest of the novel. This is made explicit when Nat Goya has sex with Edwina Duffy to the rhythm of the chemical formula for monosodium glutamate 'HOOC (CH₂)₂CH (NH₂) COONa', which is translated into 'hook chacha coona hook chacha coona' (EofWN, p. 64), and becomes the opening rhythm for the Trotsky libretto. The rhythm is labelled 'somewhat anachronistic' (because the food additive was not introduced into the USA until the middle part of the twentieth century and is therefore out of place in 1917),³⁶ and similar to the narratives that project forward the Lynx story, the rhythm is out of time.

In Altdorfer's Alexanderschlacht, as has been discussed, Koselleck found anachronism to be indicative of an absence of the modern conception of temporality in the sixteenth century, but conversely that such anachronism sensitizes the modern reader to a period by being able to judge something as being out of place. This sensitization at once makes the reader aware of the historical point in time, but also open to the possibility that the point in time can be connected to other points in time through anachronism, and this can clearly be seen in the Trotsky libretto, that in contrast to Altdorfer's picture, which carries no date, begins:

1917:
The scene: Manhattan
Four years have flown
Since Wilson first sat in
The White House. (EofWN, pp. 67-68)

The song highlights in the first instance that the libretto is about 1917 and President Wilson. It then continues:

Europe's burning hot

³⁶ 'The food additive, monosodium glutamate, was first used in the United States in any quantity in the late 1940s.' (<http://www.truthinlabeling.org/IVhistoryOfUse.html> [accessed 3 June 2005]); see also Andrew F. Smith, Popped Culture: A Social History of Popcorn in America (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1999), pp. 118-119

But not this nation.
She shines alone,
A bright isolation-
ist lighthouse ...
There's a glow in the January
Snow though.
Is something going to happen?
Is the European war
Going to rap on
America's door? (EofWN, p. 68)

There is nothing difficult to understand in the lines themselves, in fact the opposite. They succinctly and efficiently portray a position of foreboding in the USA, where it is uncertain whether the European war is going to affect them. This is continued in the following lines:

1917:
We've seen the warning.
Something's in store
This perishing morning.
Is it peace or war coming on?
We'll know much more before
1917
Has been and gone. (EofWN, p. 68)

The sense of anxiety present (or at the very least a sense of what the anxiety might have been like) in the USA when President Thomas Woodrow Wilson guided the USA into the First World War is captured here.³⁷ The libretto, however, is not only about President Wilson and 1917, but also Trotsky and 1917. This is made clear by the lines that mirror these opening ones later on in the novel:

1917 –
The scene won't alter.
Two months have gone
Since Trotsky first called to
His comrades.
Europe's still at war,
And gory headlines
Show what's going on –

³⁷ 'Wilson's administration, ending in tragic failure and physical breakdown, is memorable for the prohibition and women's suffrage amendments of the constitution, trouble with Mexico, America's participation in World War I ...' (Chambers Biographical Dictionary, p. 1570).

All corpses and breadlines
And bomb raids.
And still they haven't told us what we'll get yet.
America's not in it,
But the President may talk
Any minute.
Get ready, New York.
1917 –
Some green is glowing.
Spring's ripe to burst,
The Hudson is flowing,
And the snow is going away.
We'll know the worst
Or else still be okay
Before 1917
Has seen
The first
Of May! (EofWN, p. 221)

The date 1917, which time and again punctuates the libretto in these two sections, becomes the centre for two different concepts: President Wilson and the First World War, and Trotsky and Socialism. Here, William Empson's third type of ambiguity, which 'occurs when two ideas, which are connected only by being both relevant in the context, can be given in one word simultaneously',³⁸ goes at least some way to describe how the two concepts fit together in the novel through the date 1917, that is, uncomfortably.

The uncomfortableness does not go away when the reader reflects on the fact that the date 1917 is also the year of Burgess's birth, and not only this, but he was born Wilson not Burgess (Anthony Burgess was his pen name, which he describes in Little Wilson and Big God as popping out of the cracker when he pulled the two ends of John Anthony Burgess Wilson [LWBG, p. 6]). Of course it meant nothing to President Wilson or Leon Trotsky that Burgess was born in 1917 under the name Wilson, but one cannot ignore such facts about the writer, especially when in novels such as Nothing Like the Sun and Earthly Powers there are characters who clearly share biographical details with the author and who impinge on the historical details of the texts in forcefully anachronistic ways. As a piece of ambiguity it would seem best categorized as Empson's fourth type:

³⁸ William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, 3rd edn. (1930; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961), p. 102

An ambiguity of the fourth type occurs when two or more meanings of a statement do not agree among themselves, but combine to make clear a more complicated state of mind in the author.³⁹

It is the much simpler second type of ambiguity, however, that has the greater political impact on the reader of the novel. This ‘occurs when two or more meanings are resolved into one’,⁴⁰ and is found when American attitudes to involvement in the First World War are presented in the following section of the libretto:

We’ll fight all right if we must.
In God, meaning us, meaning US us,
We kind of trust. (EofWN, p. 69)

The word ‘us’ is conflated with ‘US’ to make us and US the same word with the same meaning. The implication of the concept of ‘them and us’ is clear, the US becomes the all encompassing us, and you are either with US/us or against us/US, and if you are not US you are them. ‘Them and Us’, like ‘Friend and Foe’, are what Koselleck terms ‘asymmetrical counterconcepts’. Koselleck explains: ‘The conceptual couple Friend and Foe is characterized by its political formalism, delivering a frame for possible antithesis without identifying them.’⁴¹ Unlike ‘Hellene and Barbarian’ and ‘Christian and Heathen’, friend and foe or them and us, are by their unspecific nature ‘concept[s] of the political, not of politics’, this is because they do not point to a specific antithesis. As Koselleck explains, the terms ‘barbarian’ and ‘heathen’ are used in a dual way that can be general or specific, but that paired with their partnering terms they are of the politics of a moment in history. Whereas the pairings of ‘Them and Us’ and ‘Friend and Foe’ are non-specific in terms of history, and their generalized nature leads to an ideological overuse that is political. The interesting thing that Burgess does by attaching the unspecific ‘them and us’ to a historical moment, is that he thereby makes it ‘of politics’, where previously it had been simply ‘political’. Koselleck explains how in a historical context this disambiguation can become important:

³⁹ Empson, Ambiguity, p. 133

⁴⁰ ‘An example of the second type of ambiguity, in word or syntax, occurs when two or more meanings are resolved into one. There are alternatives, even in the mind of the author, not only different emphases as in the first type; but an ordinary good reading can extract one resultant from them.’ (Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, p. 48)

⁴¹ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 191

In use a word can become unambiguous. By contrast, a concept must remain ambiguous in order to be a concept. The concept is connected to a word, but is at the same time more than a word: a word becomes a concept only when the entirety of meaning and experience within a sociopolitical context within which and for which a word is used can be condensed into one word.⁴²

The transformation of 'us' from a word to a concept is just one example of how meaning is adapted by the language in a historical situation.

The use of ambiguity, of which I have only given a small number of examples, pervades in its numerous ways the entire libretto. Trotsky's New York is a place where words mean different things to different people. Failure to understand and be understood in New York plagues, in particular, Trotsky himself. For example, when he sees people on the streets smashing shop windows, he thinks it is the socialist ideology taking hold (EofWN, p. 88), but it is just a protest (as Bokharin tells him) against rising prices with supplies being sent to the ports in preparation for war (EofWN, p. 89). Outwardly all of the socialists appear the same in the libretto and yet they are in fact in discord. While looking for a revolutionary spirit in New York, Trotsky instead finds religious spirit when Mr Krumpacker, Grace Bishop Smith and a group of 'socialist gentlemen' sing, much to Trotsky's disgust, an appeal to God to keep the workers safe: 'Christ was a worker/And was crucified/With two more workers,/One on either side.' (EofWN, p. 104). In the Lynx narrative it had been Calvin Gropius and Edwina Duffy who gave religious form to the events, here in contrast, against Trotsky's wishes, religious form is given to socialist ideas; and Trotsky is no more able to arrest these changes in meaning than anyone else. They have more control over him than he has over them, as becomes clear when the religious tone brings Rabbi Yehonda in to remind Trotsky of Yanovka, the place of Trotsky's childhood. Mention of Yanovka evokes, against Trotsky's rational self, 'the inner voice of Lev Davidovich' who sings:

Yanovka, Yanovka,
Where we fed the stove with straw,
And the samovar sang all day,
And as far as the eye saw
The steppes lay.
Yanovka, Yanovka,
With the brown eggs fresh and warm,
And the rollicking in the hay,

⁴² Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 85

And the smell of the spring storm,
The spring day ... (EofWN, p. 105)

Trotsky finds the song's sentimentality undesirable and a 'brass and strings agitatio'
kicks in to allow the other unromantic self to retort:

No! No!
It wasn't so idyllic –
Those orders in Cyrillic
Script
Forcing the peasants to fight for the Tsar
Some place far away ... (EofWN, pp. 105-106)

This however cannot be sustained and sentimentality returns, when he sings:

Yanovka, Yanovka,
Where I loved both sun and shade
And was happy and very young
And I heard the violins played,
The songs sung ... (EofWN, p. 106)

The struggle with sentimentality and spirituality sends Trotsky into a daze. Reflection on Yanovka takes him outside of himself and outside of time in the novel. When Trotsky stops daydreaming and returns to reality there is Olga, whom he has been dictating a letter to. Rather than write what he says she mildly translates it into what she believes to be true. He protests and she calls him stupid, just as he calls Christianity, idealism and Parliamentary Democracy stupid (EofWN, p. 107).

In 1885, Olga, Trotsky's cousin, brought the concept of time into his consciousness. He wrote in his autobiography, My Life:

Uncle Abram, an old egotist, who would neglect the children for weeks, called me over in a bright moment and asked: 'Now tell me, without mincing words, what year is it? Ah, you don't know? It's 1885! Repeat that and remember it, for I'll ask you again.' I could not comprehend the meaning of the question. 'Yes, it's 1885 now,' said my first cousin, the quiet Olga, 'and then it will be 1886.' This I could not believe. If one admitted that time had a name, then 1885 should exist forever, that is, very, very long, like that large stone at the threshold of the house, like the mill, or in fact like myself. Betya, the younger sister of Olga, did not know whom to believe. The three of us all felt disturbed at the thought of entering a new realm, as if some one had suddenly thrown open a door leading into a dark, empty room where voices echoed loudly. At last I had to yield. Everybody sided with Olga. And so 1885 became the first numbered year in my consciousness. It put an end to the formless, prehistoric, chaotic epoch of my earlier life: from now on I knew a chronology. I was six

years old at the time. It was a year of crop failures, of crises, and of the first large labor disturbances in Russia. But it was the incomprehensible name of the year that had struck me. Apprehensively I endeavored to divine the hidden relation between time and numbers. There followed a series of years which moved slowly at first and then faster and faster. But 1885 stood out amongst them as an elder does, as the head of the clan. It marked an era.⁴³

The name Olga, which presents itself again in New York, becomes a point of ambiguity about which to make a synchronic connection. It makes the libretto at once about 1885 and 1917. A similar point of synchronic connection to this comes later when a rally of workers are having a socialist party celebration, and Trotsky attends only to see 'a lone Mexican [who] appears in shabby shirt, torn trousers, moth-eaten sombrero, with a battered guitar' and sings:

Mexico Mexico
A good place to die
Is Mexico,
Under a harsh blue sky
Where the condors fly ... (EofWN, p. 153)

The Mexican is a ghost that points to Trotsky's death in Mexico, not present in the narrative. This takes attention away from his time in New York, and once again broadens the time that the libretto is concerned with, as the name Olga does (only in a forward temporal direction rather than a rearward one). The word Mexico from here hangs over Trotsky's head in the novel like the banners recording the dead on Altdorfer's battlefield.

As time passes in the Trotsky narrative, the reader of the novel is informed that the central figure becomes 'Quieter, less ebullient, though with an American city-slicker suit and a bow tie with a pattern of blue spots.' (EofWN, p. 237), and sees himself as a living expression of the 'dialectical process':

Comrades, don't mock ... You see in me a walking breathing living model of the dialectical process. The thesis called Trotsky meets the antithesis called New York. They clash, they fight, they attempt reconciliation. The synthesis, whatever it is, will be something never known before. It certainly will not be the old Lev Davidovich. (EofWN, p. 237)

⁴³ Leon Trotsky, My Life: The Rise and Fall of a Dictator (London: Butterworth, 1930), p. 37

Bokharin calls on him to find the strength that his name suggests (i.e. Leon equating with lion).⁴⁴ Trotsky lets out a roar, but warns his comrades that he is not 'king of beasts' (EofWN, p. 238). There follows a song in which Trotsky claims to like New York, its 'Gillette shaves' and its women, while Bokharin, Volodarsky and Chudnorsky argue that New Yorkers 'rattle the larynx' when they speak and that their food is full of sugar (EofWN, pp. 238-241). New York however is no more able to change who Trotsky is than an off-Broadway musical of his life is able to, and although Trotsky may at one moment feel himself to be in confluence with New York, by the end of the song he is brought back to his earlier attitude and dislikes all that New York stands for. In the move from conflict to confluence and back to conflict in his relationship to New York, Trotsky undergoes a revolution, in the cyclical sense.

Koselleck in his book, Futures Past, makes much of the semantic meaning contained in the word 'revolution' when used in its political sense. It was, according to Koselleck, the French Revolution that irrevocably changed our understanding of the word revolution in its political context.⁴⁵ Before this it had retained its sense of cyclical movement still remaining in everyday usage of the word today, afterwards it came to mean a move into an endless state of existence. Quoting Hobbes on the English 'Revolution', Koselleck notes how it was used in the seventeenth century in the sense of a departure from and return to the natural order of things.⁴⁶ It was in Hobbes's case an observation made following the completion of the cyclical movement away from monarchy and back again. According to Koselleck, the word revolution came after the French Revolution, however, to replace the term 'civil war'.

In The End of the World News the reader does not witness the Russian Revolution, but Trotsky's revolution, i.e. his arrival from Russia as exile and his departure to Russia at the end, a completed cycle: a revolution into the Revolution. And additionally, in line with the modern political concept of revolution, at the end of the novel the inhabitants of the spaceship from the completed Lynx narrative do not believe that they are on a journey to arrive anywhere (see EofWN, p. 388), but that the ongoing journey is their destiny.

⁴⁴ Joel Carmichael notes how Trotsky's parents name him 'Leib, in Russian Lev. Later, in other languages, he was to be called Leo and Leon as well.' (Joel Carmichael, Trotsky: An Appreciation of his Life [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1975], p. 15)

⁴⁵ see Koselleck, Futures Past, pp. 44-53

⁴⁶ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 46

The Freud story begins with Dr Ernest Jones having travelled from the UK to Vienna in order to secure Freud's release from the country. Arriving in Vienna Dr Jones photographs the airport with his Kodak camera, and as he arrives at the Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag to see the Brownshirts emptying books from the building, he claps a coke to his head (EofWN, p. 4). It is not the only product placement in the novel; later, in the Trotsky libretto the famous soft drink is mentioned again, and by its full trade name Coca-cola (EofWN, p. 151). It seems more in place there in Trotsky's struggle between New York and Socialism, however, than here in the Freud narrative where it appears to be a point of unreality. As with the monosodium glutamate rhythm of the Trotsky libretto it helps to expose the artificiality of the overriding narrative, which here begins as a rescue mission and is filled with similar heroics as the journeys of Edwina Duffy and Valentine Brodie in the Lynx narrative. The Freud narrative is also, in the first instance, a story of defiance and the strength of human will in adversity, where the Freuds are exceptionally polite, making the Nazis appear ridiculous. They stand strong and defiant in the situation they find themselves in, and as the Nazi soldiers steal the money belonging to the Freuds, Anna tells the soldiers that 'the desire for money is infantile' and that it goes back to playing with one's own mess (EofWN, p. 6). Further, when Freud enters the scene, he is described thus:

He was small, old, neat-bearded, suffering, his mouth strange and lumpy-looking ... Behind his back, like a concealed weapon, he had been holding a cigar. He now put it with pain into his mouth, forcing the jaws to open with an irritable pressure of his free fingers on his bearded chin. The cigar was still alight. He puffed and went on puffing. (EofWN, p. 7)

Freud as we see is not only defiant against the Nazis, but also against cancer. Later in the novel, Freud also demonstrates his defiance against the science that tries to cure the cancer when he removes his prosthesis from his tongue (see EofWN, p. 307), echoing his defiance of science in general in the novel (and one might argue Valentine Brodie's in the Lynx narrative as well). The narrative structure, however, changes in the second section of the Freud narrative, which begins with Anna reading a book that she puts aside to fall asleep (EofWN, p. 33), and ends with her reawakening and picking up the book again (EofWN, p. 52); another revolution! The section in between is a space between reading, it is also a space of dreaming, where Anna and

Martha are asleep, and a space of hypnotism, the rhythm of the train speaking ‘ungrateful bastards’ transports Freud to earlier events (EofWN, p. 33). The first event to be recorded in this semi-conscious state is a lecture by Freud on hysteria in response to Professor Charcot, where Freud is challenged by Gauss, Oschier and Hausman. It leads into Freud’s treatment of Fleischl and his subsequent death (EofWN, pp. 33-35). Freud chastises himself for the error he made with cocaine, and Breuer tells him that he generalizes the particular and takes what for him is true to be true for everyone (i.e. he thought that because cocaine was not addictive for him that it would not be for anyone [EofWN, p. 36]). Freud’s self-chastisement leads on to warnings from Meynert and Krafft-Ebing to leave neurology alone: ‘Meynert, looking like a cleaner and less untidy Beethoven warns Freud to leave the human mind alone.’ (EofWN, p. 36);⁴⁷ while Krafft-Ebing observes that ‘[Freud’s] writing ... sometimes attains a force and elegance more often associated with poetry or fiction than with scientific investigation.’ (EofWN, p. 48). These two comments act as bookends (or parentheses) to memories of Frau Neurath (EofWN, p. 37), Frau Ohler (EofWN, p. 39) and Ilse (EofWN, pp. 45-46, see also p. 324); to a performance of Oedipus Rex that is ‘an adaptation rather than a straight translation’ (EofWN, p. 42-43);⁴⁸ and, to mention of the attachments shown by Anna O. and Bertha Pappenheim to Josef Breuer (EofWN, pp. 43-44). In reaction to such comments from Meynert and Krafft-Ebing, Freud insists that his case studies give him observable facts and that his work is scientific (EofWN, p. 49). As the narrative progresses, and more of Freud’s case studies are cited - the rat man (EofWN, pp. 177, 180, 184), Fräulein Peter (EofWN, p. 178), the case of Sylvia in London (EofWN, p. 363), etc. – they are increasingly combined with personal recollections from Freud’s life. These include, notably, the neuroses inducing moment of Freud walking into his daughter’s room one morning naked (EofWN, p. 51); and this personalization becomes even more evident when the personal and professional combine in making Freud Moses. He calls himself, ‘Dr Freud, the slow of speech’, which Dr Deutsch correctly identifies as a reference to Moses (EofWN, p. 304); and, when Professor Hill hands him a copy of Moses and

⁴⁷ Later Jung will be given a similar warning to those given to Freud (by Meynert and Krafft-Ebing) by the steward onboard ship to New York: ‘Don’t meddle with people’s brains too much. Very delicate piece of machinery the brain is. Like a clock. You should know all about clocks, coming from the place you come from.’ (EofWN, p. 207).

⁴⁸ A chorus to which also occurs later (see EofWN, p. 50).

Monotheism to sign, it sends him back in time to the Vatican, where Minna calls him Dr Moses Freud (EofWN, p. 365).

‘As Burgess tells the Freud story, there is much that will strike the reader as bizarre or improbable,’ wrote Scanlan, citing Freud’s cancer, his exit tax, his witty recommendation of the Gestapo to others on his signed statement and the ‘cretinous dwarf’ that saves his life, ‘[b]ut what strikes the reader as improbable is in fact historically true ... The comic texture of the Freud story owes much more to careful selection of the bizarre or unflattering ... than to outright invention.’⁴⁹ She continues:

Burgess has in effect defamiliarized Freud; selectivity and exaggeration have produced such an irréalisation of the biography that most readers are likely to confuse fact with invention. At the same time, much of the larger historical context of Freud’s life – the medical theories of his day, for example, or the Jewish culture of Central Europe as more than family life à la Dan Greenberg – is effaced. It is consistent with this displacement of context that Burgess’s Freud is frequently seen on trains, or as a visitor or refugee in English-speaking countries. Burgess’s emphasis on Freud’s identification with Oedipus, Moses, and Hannibal similarly takes him out of his historical context.⁵⁰

The unreality and timelessness of the story gains greater and greater emphasis when the novel turns from dreams to delirium in order to compose its reality. This first takes the mode of improbability, when in Zürich at a restaurant called Zum Roten Kreuz the Italian composer Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari is playing the piano, practising his opera The Jewels of the Madonna, while Lenin sits at one table, James Joyce sits at another and Jung is there too (EofWN, p. 279). Joyce chastises Jung, and claims to be superior to psychoanalysis, then chastises Lenin as well (see EofWN, pp. 279-280). The delirium then progresses further after Freud’s surgery by Dr Hajek to remove Leucoplakia from inside his mouth, when a new growth is discovered and he goes in for the operation under Dr Pilcher, and his cancer speaks to him, warning him that it will grow again (EofWN, p. 306). After this there is Freud’s dream in the Bonaparte mansion, where he rests, and thinks:

It was not right ... that the dead as well as the living should be present ...
Restored to youthful middle age, he could forgive the resurrection of Adler

⁴⁹ Margaret Scanlan, Traces of Another Time: History and Politics in Postwar British Fiction (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 179-180

⁵⁰ Scanlan, Traces of Another Time, pp. 181-182

whom he saw there in the background, chatting animatedly with Ferenczi and Jones. Into the mirror leapt a mature woman of astounding beauty, swathed in scarlet silk and white fox, metallic hair, metallic jewels. 'You know who I am?' her reflection said. Freud turned cautiously to meet the reality. (EofWN, pp. 340-341)

The 'mature woman', Lou Andreas-Salome, introduces herself as the former mistress of the poet Rainer Maria Rilke and Friedrich Nietzsche, and declares herself to be now Freud's mistress. When Freud refuses Andreas-Salome's advances, the book he is quoting from turns into flypaper,⁵¹ then a cat and then slithers away. Andreas-Salome claims she is going to take up psychoanalysis and become a colleague and friend of Freud's, because women are more in touch with reality (EofWN, p. 343). She also tells him that he is to give a lecture, and around him materialize Hélène Deutsch and Melanie Klein, and his own mother (EofWN, p. 343). It is Freud's mother's ninetieth birthday (EofWN, p. 343), and he has just been told by Andreas-Salome how Baroness de Neuchâtel when she was ninety-three claimed she didn't know when sexual desire in women died (EofWN, pp. 341-342), so when his mother asks for a kiss this is fresh in his mind and it horrifies him. He then lectures the women on the inferiority of women and the envy in them, at the end of which his mother dies (EofWN, pp. 343-344). The women protest and Freud claims that 'WHAT DO WOMEN WANT?' is a riddle he cannot solve, because he is not Oedipus (EofWN, p. 345). This is an outright rejection of the trope that Burgess attempts to impose upon him in the scene. As with Napoleon and Josephine in Napoleon Symphony, the author tries a mask, or a costume, on Freud in order to see how it fits, in this case Oedipus. It is ill fitting enough for Freud to wriggle out of, conscious as he is of the imposition, but that does not mean that the memory of it is not left behind, and with it his rejection of it.

In Futures Past Koselleck examines the accounts of the dreams of Jewish people subjected to life under the threat of the Third Reich. He argues that dreams 'occupy a place at the extremity of a conceivable scale of susceptibility to historical

⁵¹ He quotes: 'The sexual life of adult woman remains a dark continent. A riddle not to be solved.' (EofWN, p. 341). The quotation is from Freud's 'The Question of Lay Analysis', although 'A riddle not to be solved.' is Burgess's own appendage. (Sigmund Freud, 'The Question of Lay Analysis' (1926), pp. 179- 258, in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. 20, trans. and ed. James Strachey with Anna Freud, assisted by Alix Strachey and Alan Tyson [London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1959; repr. 1981], p. 212)

rationalization. Considered rigorously, however, dreams testify to an irresistible facticity of the fictive, and for this reason the historian should not do without them.’⁵² He further argues not only that the dreams record the terror felt at that time by these people, but that they ‘are physical manifestations of terror’, and ‘[e]ven as apparitions, the dreams are instrumentalizations of terror’.⁵³ Interestingly, what happened when the Jewish people were placed in concentration camps was that the actual events of the camps were worse than could be imagined, forcing the people into a paralyzing diabolic terror, and the dreams became ever more abstract, involving ‘musical scenes, or natural or architectonic landscapes’.⁵⁴ They became utopian, they were dreams of what was beyond the camp, and the actual camp was blanked out.⁵⁵ Koselleck states that:

In the camp prevailing conditions made a mockery of all previous experience; conditions that appeared to be unreal, but were in fact real all the same. The compulsion to de-realize oneself so that one might become immobilized at this final stage of existence also led to an inversion of temporal experience. Past, present, and future ceased to be a framework for the orientation of behaviour. This perversion went deep, and had to be savored to the full if one were to free oneself of it. The salvational dreams testify to this. They no longer sought to anchor the person of the dreamer in reality; they thus became, seemingly paradoxically, the sign of a chance of survival.⁵⁶

As Koselleck explains, the absurd hope of survival that lives on in the dreams, recorded in a book,⁵⁷ once the people have been murdered appears to nullify the historical worth, since: ‘The inner evidence of the chance of survival evident in the spontaneous behaviour of the inmate and in his dreams is not commensurable with the statistical frequency with which gassing took place. In this way, those destroyed were deprived of a final meaning, that of being a sacrifice; absurdity became event.’⁵⁸ And, the lack of finality is not the only problem, there is further difficulty involved in how to translate between the individual and historical situation, Koselleck wrote of this:

⁵² Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 209

⁵³ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 211

⁵⁴ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 214

⁵⁵ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 214

⁵⁶ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 215

⁵⁷ In this case, C. Beradt, Das Dritte Reich des Traumes (Munich, 1966), cited in Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 210

⁵⁸ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 216

It is completely impossible to transfer the psychoanalytic instrumentarium from the level of individual therapy to that of social diagnosis, or even into historical analysis, for the subject of therapy is not identifiable as an individual and, moreover, already belongs to the past.⁵⁹

This does not mean, however, that it is not worth attempting the combination of psychoanalytic and social diagnoses. In fact, Koselleck argues for a situation where even if the tools of anthropological interpretation are not wholly sufficient for describing a given situation that it is still worth attempting, because the interpretations can always be extended and adapted later, and that it is better in the case of history to follow diachronic and synchronic lines of investigation together – as is the case in his approach to the dreams of concentration camp victims – than to give into what is wholly knowable at the exclusion of all else.

In the Freud narrative, there is certainly absurdity - there is also a breakdown in the sequence of time connected to dreams - but it is the absurdity of cancer not of the Third Reich that ultimately destroys him. The dreams he has are not utopian they are illustrations of his fears. In a sense not being sent to a concentration camp means that the terror is ongoing in his dreams, but it is a very personal set of fears, not surrounding war but surrounding his work. The similarity though is that it too ends in recording bliss, not misery. Dr Pilcher has given Freud a third of a grain of morphine, and he dreams of a train and 'the bare flesh of the young and beautiful mother.' (EofWN, p. 368). Possibly, when it comes to Freud's final dreams, Burgess does not go far enough, perhaps he sticks too rigidly to elements of the psychoanalyst's biography, and his forward looking dreams are projections too connected to life. For, even at the blissful end Freud is still thinking of trains and mothers as he has done throughout the narrative. Ultimately, it is impossible to say whether Burgess does or does not convince, since the concentration camp dreams, with which Freud's dreams have been briefly compared, were not just connected to the threat of death, but a very perverse threat and treatment. It must be noted also that Burgess here, as in his other novels concerned with historical figures, relies heavily on recorded biographical details. This produces a sense of the inescapably two-dimensional nature of the personages he records, because they are clearly drawn from paper, not flesh and blood. He finds it preferable to expose the fictional rather than to hide behind the pretence of realism.

⁵⁹ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 220

The jettisoning of realism leads on to the final issue to be addressed, and that is the 'disposable' notion of history that The End of the World News appears to invite through the framing of its narratives as pieces of popular culture. In a chapter entitled, 'On the Disposability of History', Koselleck argues that the concept that man 'makes' history, which he says was born after Napoleon, has implicit within it that history is also thereby disposable. He writes that:

History seems to be disposable in a dual fashion: for the agent who disposes of the history that he makes, and for the historian who disposes of it by writing it up. Viewed in this way, both seem to have an unlimited freedom of decision. The scope for the disposition of history is determined by men.⁶⁰

However he concludes the chapter by writing:

Technical and economic conditions have changed in such a manner that today it is no longer possible to steer the fates of continents from a small island, or even exercise to any effective influence. The British – with their politics, political ethics, and achievements in science and technology – have themselves taken a leading role in this change. But they did not “make” the history which has resulted, and to which we are the witnesses today. It has – contrary to all intentions and deeds, but certainly not without intentions and actions – happened.⁶¹

Koselleck's conclusion would seem to be - although he does not make this explicit - that since man does not 'make' history, it is by the same token not disposable. It can therefore be stretched to its limits and it will still remain purposefully a record of events. The End of the World News is certainly a stretching and distorting of history, and is at the same time a record of events. The distortion does not invalidate the events no matter how much it defamiliarizes them, while the anachronisms purposefully sensitize the reader to the narrative play, a narrative play that is at once overt but contains many subtleties. Burgess is not out to trick the reader, but to expose his own fallibility in writing, and at the same time demonstrate how the diachronic moments of history can influence the synchronic interpretation. As such, his 'entertainment' is a far more complex and valuable work than he was willing to admit in his writing.

⁶⁰ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 193

⁶¹ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 204

CHAPTER 7

Stendhalian Tropes in Mozart and the Wolf Gang

I have on my bookshelf UK first editions of the novels Byrne and A Dead Man in Deptford. When I open them and turn to the verso of the half-title page I find under the title 'By the Same Author' quite familiarly a list of Anthony Burgess's other works. However, despite the comprehensive nature of the lists in each novel I do not find Mozart and the Wolf Gang under the heading of 'Novels'. I think therefore, well since it has elsewhere been mistakenly classified as a play,¹ I will look under the heading 'Theatre'. It is not there either. I start to wonder why in such a comprehensive list published subsequent to Burgess's Mozart novel this work has been omitted. But no, there it is as the penultimate entry under 'Non-fiction' before A Mouthful of Air.² This is a typographical error, and one that has subsequently been rectified in more recent editions of Byrne and A Dead Man in Deptford. However, it reminds me of an article about misprints that appeared in Household Words and began:

If the art of printing be one of the most useful inventions which the world has known, the art of misprinting is certainly one of the most ingenious. Misprinting in its best – or worst – acceptance, does not simply consist in mere blundering, but in blundering so peculiarly as exactly to invert the sense of the original, and make a writer say the reverse of what he intended. There is one noticeable feature beyond all the rest in errors of the press: they occur in the very places where they most affect the context.³

Mozart and the Wolf Gang is a work that is without question a work of fiction, but one that contains biographical details, as with the other novels discussed in this thesis. To label it a work of non-fiction, however, very much 'invert[s] the sense of the original', for the reasons that are discussed in this chapter and for the one stated in the introduction to this thesis: history resorts to conjecture and supposition out of

¹ see Peter Parker, ed. (consultant ed. Frank Kermode), The Reader's Companion to Twentieth Century Writers (London and Oxford: Fourth Estate and Helicon, 1995), p. 120

² In A Mouthful of Air itself Mozart and the Wolf Gang appears as the final entry under non-fiction.

³ 'Misprints', pp. 232-238, Household Words: A Weekly Journal, Conducted by Charles Dickens, XI, 263 (7 April 1855), p. 232

necessity, whereas conjecture and supposition in fiction can be employed for their own end.

Hayden White argues that to think of fiction and history as separable was a development of the early nineteenth century, where rhetoric became detached from historiographical writing.⁴ It is a rather grand narrative that denies the complexity of the literary minds of the nineteenth century currently being reassessed.⁵ However, it is not integral to accepting other ideas put forward by White about history; and, the inseparability of history and fiction is the first of these ideas. For White, history must follow pre-existing narratives given to it by literature, and literature in turn must look to myth to extend its narratives, because there is no other alternative and so it is down to literature to increasingly enhance and expand the means of narrative representation, while history must accept symbolism and metaphor as necessary to its development.⁶ Even chronicles and annals do not escape this necessity, and in his argument White quotes from Roland Barthes's 'The Discourse of History':

... in 'objective' history, the 'real' is never more than an unformulated signified, sheltering behind the apparently all-powerful referent. This situation characterizes what might be called the realistic effect (effet du réel).⁷

Chronicles and annals do not, from White's perspective, circumvent narrative, but instead provide it unformulated and explained. Far from being mere decoration to historical events or worse obfuscating the truth, narrative is part of a reaching towards what is true, even in its allegorizing and making symbolic of past events. White therefore suggests that narrativism be considered in terms of its mimetic quality:

⁴ see Hayden White, Figural Realism: Studies in the Mimesis Effect (1999; Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000). [Appeared as 'Figuring the Nature of the Times Deceased: Literary Theory and Historical Writing', in The Future of Literary Theory, ed. Ralph Cohen (London: Methuen, 1988)], p. 5

⁵ see for example John Bowen, 'The Historical Novel', in Patrick Brantlinger and William B. Thesing (eds), A Companion to The Victorian Novel (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 244-259; Zahra A. Hussein Ali, 'Adjusting the Borders of Self: Sir Walter Scott's The Two Drovers', PLL (2001), pp. 65-84; Joep Leerssen, 'Literary Historicism: Romanticism, Philologists, and the Presence of the Past', Modern Language Quarterly 65, 2 (June 2004), pp. 221-243.

⁶ see for example Hayden White, The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation (1987; Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), pp. 33, 42-43, 43, 44, 45, 48, 57

⁷ Roland Barthes, 'The Discourse of History', cited in White, Content of the Form, p. 37

... the story told in the narrative is a mimesis of the story lived in some region of historical reality, and insofar as it is an accurate imitation, it is to be considered a truthful account thereof.⁸

While White's argument is appealing in terms of the justification it gives to writing such as Burgess's novels discussed in this thesis, at the same time it appears to threaten the very modernist and modernist-type techniques employed in his writing. The lack of narrative description and cohesion, in particular, appears to be part of the 'realistic effect' that Barthes and White deride. However, while texts with obvious modernist leanings in terms of style appear to embrace a similar illusion of objectivity to the chronicles and annals of history through a reduction in narrative description, the opposite is in fact true. By employing for example colloquy or verse, novels immediately bring attention to their form and its omissions. The overt display makes the impositions on the text clear, because it sensitizes the reader and creates a distrust of the writer in the reader, which may well cause them to question other areas of the text as well. Mozart and the Wolf Gang is an example of such a novel, using as it does colloquy, opera libretto and film script as its vehicles. In contrast to annals and chronicles, where brevity appears to enhance authority, in a fictional text narrative description is expected and when it is missing this immediately raises questions, because it goes against the form of the novel.

The events of Mozart and the Wolf Gang are set in the terrestrial year of the bicentenary of Mozart's death, i.e. 1991. In Heaven there is going to be an opera performed about Mozart (MWG, p. 9), while down below on Earth the first Gulf War is happening. The novel begins with two German composers, Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827) and Felix Mendelssohn (1809-47),⁹ in colloquy. 'Dona nobis pacem' says Beethoven in reaction to the noise of Saddam Hussein's gunfire. It means 'give us peace', but it is also the title of a traditional hymn, included in Beethoven's Missa Solemnis. As with Napoleon Symphony, ideas are multiply punctuated in Mozart and the Wolf Gang within the dialogue from the smallest linguistic units upwards, each providing invitations of meaning.

Burgess's ultimate aim in Mozart and the Wolf Gang is to find a place in his own 'sonic universe' for Mozart. In order to achieve this he sets up a number of

⁸ White, Content of the Form, p. 27

⁹ All dates are from Magnus Magnusson, ed., Chambers Biographical Dictionary, 5th edn. (Edinburgh: Chambers, 1990)

dialogues between composers, writers and librettists. The dialogues occur in Heaven, a place where earthly time does not separate individuals from one another. The Russian composer Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) and the English composer Sir Arthur Bliss (1891-1975) join Beethoven and Mendelssohn soon after the novel begins. Prokofiev and Bliss were not born until almost half a century after Mendelssohn's death, while Richard Wagner (1813-1883), who enters subsequently, was born around a decade before Beethoven died and died around a decade before Bliss and Prokofiev were born. Prokofiev, given the opportunity of the face-to-face meeting with his predecessors, makes one of the most significant first critical attacks of the colloquy. It is on Wagner, and finding him even more extreme than Beethoven or Mendelssohn, living in his own mad world, reprimands his music in the following way: 'You have only one chord. You hammered to death the secondary seventh on the leading note. The leading note of the dominant.' (MWG, p. 11). In reprimanding Wagner in this way, Prokofiev places Wagner within the category of musician that regards, in Wayne Bowman's terms, 'Music as Autonomous Form'.¹⁰ To understand music as an autonomous form is to believe:

that an understanding of music's nature and value is not to be found in its effects, the insights it affords, the feelings it arouses, or indeed, its connections with anything outside itself. Its value ... is strictly its own, strictly intrinsic, located wholly within a purely musical realm. Interesting and important though people's subjective musical experiences may be, it is the "objective" cause of those experiences [that is of interest].¹¹

Those that consider music as an autonomous form, such as Wagner, are able to ignore the sensory responses to music, and focus on the theoretical (and the cerebral). Prokofiev meanwhile positions himself within a school of phenomenology (or 'Music as Experienced') when he denies Wagner's accusation of pedantry and says that he is more interested in providing the public with something they can enjoy (see MWG, p. 12). Bliss being of the same time as Prokofiev joins him in that school of thought when he says that to base music on the purely cerebral holds it back (see MWG, p. 15). Bowman elaborates:

¹⁰ see Wayne D. Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 133-197

¹¹ see Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, p. 133

As a philosophical approach to music, the phenomenological [or 'Music as Experienced'] method typically resists efforts to explain what music is 'about', resembles, symbolizes, or is useful for, preferring instead to describe as richly as possible what music itself says, how music is experienced. Instead of explaining, it describes. Meaningful claims about music's nature or value can follow only from close attention to the way it is actually heard, experienced, lived through.¹²

Beethoven takes neither side in the divisions between Prokofiev, Bliss and Wagner, and states instead that 'music does not progress', while Mendelssohn adds that music is 'the one universal language'. It is the 'ideal' in music that Beethoven and Mendelssohn understand, for they view 'Music as Idea'. Music as idea, means that there is a struggle, as with Plato, between the material world and the world of ideas (or ideals), because while it comes undoubtedly from the human mind, bodily and sensory responses to it cannot be ignored.¹³ Despite some shared similarities, Prokofiev contests the position that there is an ideal that music is reaching towards and that the ideal will never change. He says that God is unable to dictate the 'ideal' because he has no hands to compose (MWG, p. 9). This highlights that although the composers may be in dialogue it is not a dialogue out of which they themselves grow and change, but instead they maintain univocal positions.

In Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Colloquy of Monos and Una',¹⁴ Monos and Una describe how they have come in their twilight days to think of the world as 'Art-scarred'.¹⁵ 'Art – the Arts – arose supreme, and, once enthroned, cast chains upon the intellect which had elevated them to power.'¹⁶ Poe's work satirizes the idea that nature in its purest form can be understood without the arts, and without the narrativizing tools of fiction. And, although at the point of death Monos seems to have glimpsed the perfect forms, in death all that appears to have happened is that Time and Place have solidified. Without art, it would seem that the fluidity of thought is arrested. Burgess's Heaven in Mozart and the Wolf Gang is a place of similar solidification, where composers remain of their time, rather than undergoing change.

After Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Prokofiev, Bliss and Wagner have each put forward their own singular voices, debating the merits of the infant prodigy Mozart,

¹² Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, p. 255

¹³ see Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, p. 69

¹⁴ Edgar Allan Poe, 'The Colloquy of Monos and Una', in Selected Tales (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994), pp. 178-187

¹⁵ Poe, 'The Colloquy of Monos and Una', p. 182

¹⁶ Poe, 'The Colloquy of Monos and Una', p. 180

alongside the value of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the leitmotifs of Richard Strauss, Act One of the untitled Mozart opera is delivered (MWG, pp. 16-33). The opera, or at least its libretto (for that is all there is in the novel, there is no music), opens in the Viennese palace of Prince Archbishop Hieronymus Colleredo of Salzburg where Mozart is court musician. The story is of how while working there, Mozart sees Aloysia Weber, who he wants to write an opera for (MWG, pp. 25-30). The opera begins with the composer in dialogue with servants and ends with one of the leitmotifs of the novel: the division between the cerebral (which is often synonymous with the celestial in the novel) and the bodily. Mozart while in the palace plays a piece of music given to him by Constanze, and then Colleredo (who is labelled 'tenor') criticizes Mozart for a division of the 'sonic/Sacred and secular' based merely on his playing style (MWG, p. 31). Finally, the scene dissolves into anger and madness when the orchestra plays 'the opening of the Angelus' by Salieri (MWG, p. 31), and Mozart is convinced that it is a copy of one of his own compositions.

As Volkmar Braunbehren, Mozart's biographer explains, Mozart travelled with his employer, Colleredo, to Vienna in March 1781, in order to visit Colleredo's sick father.¹⁷ Mozart subsequently left Colleredo's employment in order to stay in Vienna, where he lodged with the Webers.¹⁸ 'Four years previously, in Mannarouse, Wolfgang had not only fallen in love with one of the Weber daughters, Aloysia, but had tried to save the entire family (which included five children) from financial ruin, and had even planned to journey to Italy to improve Aloysia's singing skills and thus help support the family.'¹⁹ It was however Aloysia's sister Constanze Weber that Mozart ultimately married.²⁰ In the first act of the opera these characters and elements of biography are introduced economically and efficiently, as are the tensions between Salieri and Mozart. The first victim of this efficiency is however realism, which is evident when Braunbehren asserts that: 'The conflict between Mozart and the director of the Hoftheater [Salieri] is mostly the product of wild speculation and has been so exaggerated as to include even the preposterous notion that Salieri poisoned his

¹⁷ Volkmar Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, trans. Timothy Bell (1986; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 8

¹⁸ Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, p. 29

¹⁹ Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, p. 34

²⁰ Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, pp. 63-64

rival.²¹ As has been noted though from Nothing Like the Sun forwards, Burgess is not afraid to include wild speculation in his novels that feature public personages as protagonists, and the form of the opera libretto is even more suited to this than traditional prose, because it must be very succinct in conveying its points. Further it can be read as a criticism on biography, which, as Braunbehren identifies in the particular, has a tendency, to sensationalize.

When the curtain falls on the first act, Rossini and Stendhal appear with their criticisms of it. The Italian composer, Rossini (1792-1868), comments: 'Brief, I think. It has the feel of brevity. I will not judge the music until I know who the composer is.' (MWG, p. 33). Following this remark Rossini then immediately engages the Barman about the champagne before talking with the French novelist, Stendhal (1783-1842), and the French composer, Berlioz (1803-1869) (MWG, pp. 33-39). The discussion that the three men hold is over the value given to literature by its translation into music, and also a division of music and literature along the lines of the celestial and the bodily respectively. Berlioz says: 'Literature is the one true art. Music is merely there for its supererogatory adornment. Virgil, Shakespeare, Byron – I could not be them so I had to be their translator.' (MWG, p. 36). Rossini replies: 'You gave them a superior sonic binding.' (MWG, p. 36). Stendhal, at a tangent to this, argues that because one cannot be aroused in a bodily way by literature in the celestial position of being in Heaven that literature can no longer be enjoyed. He claims that the great writers are confined to the lower echelons of Heaven, while musicians enjoy the upper echelons: 'Music is the Armagnac of the saved. The musician alone has access to God.' (MWG, p. 37). The others are not in agreement, Rossini replies, 'God was always a fine intellectual concept, but it's his all too physical son that inspired the loftiest music. My Stabat Mater, for instance.' (MWG, p. 37), and Berlioz says, 'It's the words that move. The music merely seasons the meat of emotion.' (MWG, p. 37). As with the dialogue in the first section of colloquy the characters are not really talking to one another, but pontificating.

Stendhal tells Rossini and Berlioz that he wants to use the opportunity while in Heaven and free from the constraints of publishers and royalties, and with a scant readership, to write 'fiction in the shape of Mozart's 40th Symphony'. (MWG, pp. 38-39). The result (or so the reader is led to presume) is the section of the novel entitled

²¹ Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, p. 165

'K. 550 (1788)' (MWG, pp. 81-91), whose title refers to the second of Mozart's three final symphonies, No. 40 in G minor (K. 550). 'K. 550' imagines Mozart's life in its decline, which includes the decline in his marriage as well as the decline in his work, and his confinement in his home. The prose rhythm mimics Mozart's symphony. The setting of prose to music in Mozart and the Wolf Gang has nowhere near the same time expended on it, however, as the novel it calls to mind, that is, Napoleon Symphony. Indeed, M. L. Holloway in his PhD thesis 'Music in Words: The Music of Anthony Burgess and the Role of Music in his Literature',²² notes how the 'K. 550' section focuses on replicating individual notes and rhythms rather than trying to replicate the entire symphony.²³

The section entitled 'K. 550' is Stendhalian in two senses, the first is that it exaggerates Stendhal's efficiency and lack of decoration in his prose, and the second is that Stendhal was himself interested in Mozart. The latter of these facts is evidenced by Stendhal's translation of a biographical work on Mozart, which was subsequently translated into Lives of Haydn, Mozart and Metastasio,²⁴ by Richard Coe. However, the Stendhalian elements in the novel are far broader than the short piece of text labelled 'K. 550' and as is demonstrated in this chapter they infect the whole libretto. The American edition of Mozart and the Wolf Gang, or On Mozart as it was called in the USA, has the following subtitle: 'Being a celestial colloquy, an opera libretto, a film script, a schizophrenic dialogue, a bewildered rumination, a Stendhalian transcription, and a heart felt homage upon the bicentenary of the death of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart'. The Stendhalian transcription that the American subtitle refers to applies to the text as a whole not just a segment of it, as do the schizophrenia, the bewilderment, the homage. In order to understand this it is necessary to understand a little about Stendhal's focus in fiction. Erich Auerbach notably wrote that:

²² M. L. Holloway, 'Music in Words: The Music of Anthony Burgess and the Role of Music in his Literature', PhD thesis (University of Huddersfield, 1997)

²³ Holloway, 'Music in Words', p. 220, Table 6

²⁴ Stendhal (Henri Beyle), Lives of Haydn, Mozart and Metastasio, trans., intro and ed. Richard N. Coe (1814; London: Calder & Boyars, 1972). Stendhal claims to have translated Herr Schlichtegroll's biography of Mozart. The translator notes however that this is a lie and that it is in fact a straightforward copy of Winckler's translation into French of Adolf Schlichtegroll's Nekrolog.

[Stendhal] finds the smell and the noise of the masses unendurable, and in his books, outspokenly realistic though they are in many respects, we find no 'people,' either in the romantic 'folk sense' or in the socialist sense – only petty bourgeois, and occasional accessory figures such as soldiers, domestic servants, and coffee-house mademoiselles. Finally, he sees the individual man far less as the product of his historical situation and as taking part in it, than as an atom within it; a man seems to have been thrown almost by chance into the milieu in which he lives ...²⁵

More specifically, Stendhal's most famous work Le Rouge et le Noir (The Red and the Black)²⁶ concerns the fortunes of Julien Sorel, a man from the peasant class who learns Latin, has a fondness for Napoleon and desires to enter the priesthood. His knowledge and ability to learn and recite the Bible in Latin by heart earns him entry into the world of the bourgeoisie. He works first of all for M. de Rênal as a teacher to his sons, but the respect that he receives is constantly in jeopardy because of his peasant roots and finally forces him to move on. This produces a tension in Sorel, one that ultimately leads him to attempt the murder of Mme de Rênal at the end of the novel. The tense relationship between servants and masters in Mozart and the Wolf Gang mirrors the tension in Stendhal's work, and is evident from the very beginning of the libretto. For, the first group of actors to sing are the servants:

Humble humble humble humble
Servants of his princely grace,
Fashed and fagged we groan and grumble,
Outcasts of the human race ... (MWG, p. 16)

Just as Sorel puts a distance between himself and the servant or peasant class from which he has risen, Mozart similarly puts a distance between the servants and himself, when he attacks them vehemently and sings:

Slavishly begot,
Slavery's your lot.
Luggers in of logs,
You are less than dogs. (MWG, pp. 16-17)

Mozart is not the only character to cast derision upon the servant class, however. The major-domo enters upon the scene with even more caustic words:

²⁵ Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 464-465

²⁶ Stendhal, The Red and the Black: A Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century, ed. and trans. Catherine Slater (Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, Oxford University Press, 1991; repr. 1998)

Scum. Go on. Hard at it. (MWG, p. 19)

Mozart's inability to scold the servants, as effectively as the major-domo, however, demonstrates his closer proximity to them than the other members of the household. This is supported when he says to Aloysia, 'I will accompany you. Accompaniment is one of my duties here', and she replies, 'I see. You are still a servant. You look like a servant. Can you not afford better clothes?' (MWG, p. 26). As well as servitude Mozart shares other characteristics with Julien Sorel. When the Prince Archbishop Hieronymus Colleredo walks in on Mozart taking Aloysia's hands and reprimands him (MWG, p. 29), it is a reminder of the importance of hand holding in Stendhal's work: much time in Le Rouge et le Noir is spent on the giving, withdrawal and succumbing to hand holding when Sorel is seducing Mme. de Rênal. Further, when a king comes to Verrières, the local town in Stendhal's novel, we are told: 'There was a Te Deum, clouds of incense and endless volleys of musket and artillery fire; the peasants were intoxicated with happiness and piety ... ',²⁷ and it is likewise a Te Deum that Mozart is told to prepare in Act One of the libretto (see MWG, p. 19), which presumably 'intoxicates' the peasants in a similar way.

Act Two, Scene One of the opera opens in the drawing room of the lodgings of the Webers in Vienna (MWG, p. 40). Constanze's ears are still ringing to the applause that Aloysia received in her performance. Aloysia is dissatisfied with the performance and the reception by some critics. Constanze reassures her sister with the following remarks: 'It's true, there was a time/When voices were sublime/And wooden instruments/Humble accoutrements./But now they have a soul/Which animates the whole./They play a living part/In colouring your art/And striking to the inner heart.' (MWG, p. 41). Her words indicates that the master/servant relationship is not just present in the human interactions in Mozart and the Wolf Gang, but are also one of the motifs found in the musical analogies that abound, allowing the Stendhalian trope relating to the master/servant relationship to seep into every corner of the text. Indeed, before the opera began Bliss remarked: 'Music began as verbal intonation. The separation of words and music may be regarded as the heresy. Opera

²⁷ Stendhal, The Red and the Black, p. 113

may well be the highest of arts ... Everything is a servant of everything else, and so everything achieves mastery.' (MWG, p. 15, emphasis added).

Analogous to the instruments that are discussed in Mozart and the Wolf Gang, Mozart is a servant that has a great spirit and has gained a soul. It is his bodily appearance to Aloysia and Constanze, however, at the request of the former that causes the chaos that ends the first scene of Act Two (MWG, pp. 44-47). Mozart and Lorenzo come to the window of Aloysia and Constanze Weber like characters from Shakespeare, or indeed Stendhal, and their asthmatic father beats the two men off with his stick (MWG, p. 46).²⁸

When Scene Two of the second act opens, the concentration on the dichotomous relationship between the celestial and bodily aspects of music continues, with Mozart telling Gluck that writing music is like playing billiards:²⁹ 'There's no taxing of cerebral substance at all.' Here, Gluck disagrees: 'To me', he says, 'it has always been a matter of hard cerebration. Composition is an intellectual process.' (MWG, p. 48). This forces the discussion towards one of Burgess's favourite musical subjects, counterpoint (MWG, p. 51-53), of which Mozart considers himself a master since it is instinctive rather than worked out, something bodily. And as the scene unfolds, it is Mozart that replaces Gluck with his body upon the composer's death:

MOZART

... Gluck's given up his post,
Also, it seems, the ghost.

COURT

Dead! So Gluck is dead.
That more than Orphic head
Floats down the river, free
To join Eurydice. (MWG, p. 56)

²⁸ There is in addition an act of kicking that occurs between the major-domo, Mozart and Lorenzo (MWG, p. 33), which is echoed in Le Rouge et le Noir, when Signor Geronimo, a young singer talks of being kicked up the backside by Signor Zingarelli (Stendhal, The Red and the Black, p. 161). For, it is the way one treats one's inferiors in Stendhal's work.

²⁹ Billiards was a favourite pastime of the real Mozart that is popularly reported in biographical mentions of him; 'Mozart ... was not a wicked man: his most grievous vice was probably billiards. Nor was he an intellectual. Instead he was quite simply a universal genius of music; his facility, grace and polish, the swiftness and fecundity of his thought, his innate sense for phrasing and gift of melodic beauty, his mastery of form and the richness of his harmony, all contributing to his excelling in every genre of the music of his day, which he raised to a sublime pitch of perfection.' (Chambers Biographical Dictionary, p. 1049)

When His Imperial Majesty Joseph II arrives at the scene of Gluck's death, Salieri leaves and only Mozart is left (MWG, p. 56). Mozart is appointed 'Kammermusicus at an annual stipend of eight hundred gulden.' (MWG, p. 57). He quibbles that Gluck received two thousand gulden, but he is told by the Emperor to learn decorum. Burgess's Mozart cites Rousseau, Voltaire and Beaumarchais, telling the Emperor that along with the rise of the common people may well be the rise of the free musician. However, although these philosophers were of Mozart's time, and it is true that Mozart is celebrated as the first free musician, being as he was without patronage, he was not celebrated for his political and philosophical nous: The Lives of Haydn, Mozart and Metastasio, although overly extreme in its caricature, argues that Mozart was a child in everything apart from his music.³⁰ Further, the philosophers that Mozart cites are notably Stendhalian and are recurrently mentioned in Le Rouge et le Noir. The Emperor's diatribe upon freedom, meanwhile, is as improbable as Mozart's words to which it is a retort:

EMPEROR

Freedom's ever relative.
Emperors are free to give.
You have freedom to refuse
And may choose.

Freedom to eat humble pie,
Freedom to decay and die,
Pen your bass or treble clef
For the deaf.

Write your music, hold your tongue.
You are young but not too young.
The gold mouth that's in your name
Learn to tame.

Freedom's ever relative.
I have freedom to forgive.
Freely I extend it. So.
Let us go. (MWG, p. 59)

The lines capture not realism but the political situation, which Braunbehren describes thus:

³⁰ see Stendhal, Lives of Hadyn, Mozart and Metastasio, p. 182

The Josephine decade [1780-1790] was a period of unprecedented “enlightened” reform under the aegis of a centralized autocracy, an attempt to establish reason and enlightenment from above, through the power of the sovereign. The cornerstones of reform were a state church oriented toward a practical religion that would seek to control the monasteries and curtail the influence of Rome; the elimination of aristocratic privileges as part of a plan to establish a more just system of taxation; and the introduction of personal freedoms ranging from the abolition of censorship to tolerance laws for minorities.³¹

The second scene of the second act then ends as it had begun, with Mozart rolling a ball up and down the billiard table. Mozart is now alone, he bounces the ball on the table and it comes back up and hits him (MWG, p. 59). When the curtain falls a discussion begins between the American composer, George Gershwin (1898-1937), and the Austro-Hungarian Jewish composer, Schoenberg (1874-1951). The latter thinks the opera absurd for its historical inaccuracy. However, Gershwin comes back at this by challenging the inaccuracies of Schoenberg’s Moses and Aaron. The discussion then shifts to consider whether truth is music itself (MWG, pp. 61-63). There follows an argument about Jazz and the tonic and dominant, and with this the novel begins to lead the reader towards considerations of other types of music, often thought inferior, but prominently argued to be of importance notably by Theodor Adorno.³² It does not however provide any resolutions, as in the previous sections of colloquy the participants pontificate rather than debate.

Following Act Two and its accompanying colloquy, the concern of Act Three is the end of Mozart’s life (MWG, pp. 64-76). Predictably the most poetic element of his end is there: the writing of his Requiem. Mozart had been commissioned by Count Franz Walsegg-Stuppach to write a Requiem, which was incomplete upon his falling into illness and subsequently finished by Franz Xaver Süssmayr.³³ It is reported by biographers that the Requiem was performed at Mozart’s bedside the day before he died, but Braunbehren judges this to be a poetic distortion of the facts, and that it was probably performed much earlier.³⁴ Burgess’s distortions go much further than having the Requiem performed at a pertinent point in time, however. A chorus calls:

³¹ see Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, pp. 4-5

³² see Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, p. 315

³³ see Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, pp. 401-406; see also Stendhal, Lives of Hadyn, Mozart and Metastasio, pp. 199-200

³⁴ Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, p. 406

A man must die, it seems,
Before his life can start.
One of our major themes. (MWG, p. 75)

This leads the novel into the realm of delirium, a realm that Burgess likewise employed in Nothing Like the Sun, ABBA ABBA and The End of the World News for exploring the ends of his characters. In this instance, delirium enables Mozart to travel in time and see an SS Camp Commandant and a Jew who was gassed in a concentration camp (MWG, p. 74). Henry James's comment on the opera, when it closes is that it is:

Totally preposterous. A travesty of the life of a great artist. Apart from the ineptitude of the execution, it is inadmissible to consider that the artist's personality possesses any pertinence to the artist's work. This is a heresy permeating the modern world ... (MWG, p. 76)

Similar to Schoenberg, James (1843-1916) dismisses the opera as nonsense. At the same time James tries to claim superiority over Mozart's librettist, Lorenzo Da Ponte (1749-1838), since he is a novelist and Da Ponte is a mere librettist. Da Ponte tells James however that he has not experienced life,³⁵ and that life is a comic opera, or opera buffa (MWG, p. 80). Previously Schoenberg, being of a similar era to James, had used the same term to deride the Mozart opera (MWG, p. 59), but here it is used to describe how comedy displays a deep knowledge of life.

Schoenberg and James are shown to stand apart in their inability to understand comedy. They are products of the nineteenth century, whereas Da Ponte is a product of the eighteenth century. Schoenberg and James do not so much react to the events of Mozart's life being wrong, but rather the portrayal of how these events occurred, that is, the finer details, which are a part of the troping process. They lack for the nineteenth-century composer and the nineteenth-century writer the expected historical realism, which is instead replaced by something comic. Had the account of Mozart been written in the style of nineteenth-century realism, they would have felt more at home. This is less a criticism of Schoenberg and James, however, but an acknowledgement that realism itself is a type of trope.

³⁵ 'In London [Da Ponte] taught Italian and sold boots. In 1805 he moved to New York, where he sold liquor, tobacco and groceries and ended up as professor of Italian literature at Columbia College from 1825.' (Chambers Biographical Dictionary, p. 384)

Tropes are in the view of White necessary in historiographical writing, but notably, not defined by the events that they portray. He writes:

There is no necessity, logical or natural, governing the decision to emplot a given sequence of events as a tragedy rather than as a romance ... To emplot real events as a story of a specific kind (or as a mixture of stories of specific kinds) is to trope those events. This is because stories are not lived; there is no such thing as a real story. Stories are told or written, not found. And as for the notion of a true story, this is virtually a contradiction in terms. All stories are fictions. Which means, of course, that they can be true only in a metaphorical sense and in the sense in which a figure of speech can be true ...³⁶

In the Mozart libretto Burgess clearly manipulates events making them operatic, Stendhalian and comic. This plays with a similar view of history as that of White, where there is no reason to give a 'sequence of events' a specific 'trope' and where 'emplotment' is something actively imposed by the writer. For, in White's opinion:

it is only by troping, rather than by logical deduction, that any given set of the kinds of past event we would wish to call historical can be (first) represented as having the order of a chronicle; (second) transformed by emplotment into a story with identifiable beginning, middle, and end phases; and (third) constituted as the subject of whatever formal arguments may be adduced to establish their 'meaning' – cognitive, ethical, or aesthetic, as the case may be.³⁷

By playing with tropes in the libretto and highlighting their manipulation in the accompanying colloquies Burgess actively explores the notion that tropes need not be logical choices. In addition he uses anachronisms such as the SS Camp Commandant and the concentration camp victim, in the same way as he does in The End of the World News and Earthly Powers, as a means of sensitizing the reader to all of his contrivances. It helps open the reader's eyes to the intentional troping that Burgess performs, and by extension the 'invisible' troping of chronology and realism that usually goes unacknowledged. Through this process Burgess highlights points in Mozart's biography and also difficulties with biographical writing and theories premised upon it, in the libretto and its accompanying colloquies.

When the libretto and its accompanying colloquies end, they are followed by section 'K. 550 (1788)'. As has already been discussed this section is itself troped: by

³⁶ White, Figural Realism, p. 9 (emphasis added)

³⁷ White, Figural Realism, pp. 8-9 (emphasis in original)

Stendhal and the symphony that it is named after. There is then a chapter in which Burgess dismisses for a while the other characters in the novel, and is divided in two for a personal colloquy. The personal colloquy is not a new approach to debating a point for Burgess. In a review of Nell Dunn's Talking to Women,³⁸ Burgess divided himself whimsically into A. and B.,³⁹ and in his spiritual reflection in The God I Want he divided himself into Anthony and Burgess.⁴⁰ Three decades later, in the same division of Anthony and Burgess, Burgess is supporting a position of music being larger than the human being that creates it, and Anthony is demanding that the human must make some contribution:

BURGESS

... Mendelssohn produced the Midsummer Night's Dream Overture at seventeen. He never wrote anything better, and he knew it. That music can be produced so early in life, and that music can be performed more than adequately in babbling infancy ought to make us wonder how genuinely human it is. I mean, a child's, not strictly human. He hasn't had the experiences out of which literature is made. We don't take six-year-old poetlings seriously, but some of us are prepared to listen with rapture to some little angel-demon rattling off his own banal little sonatina. There's danger in music. (MWG, p. 94)

This leads into questions of form:

ANTHONY

The intellect is concerned with ideas. There are no ideas in music.

BURGESS

But what is an idea? A constraint on emotion. A formulation, a formalisation, a form. Rhapsodise without form, and you admit nothing but pure, or impure, emotion. (MWG, p. 95)

Burgess explains to Anthony that Mozart's music was of the city and befitting the Age of Reason. He also explains how we feel totally at home with Mozart and yet are completely out of time with him and this makes us feel guilty (MWG, p. 102). Anthony wants this to mean that 'we can't understand Mozart unless we understand

³⁸ Anthony Burgess, 'Sisters under the skin', Review of Talking to Women by Nell Dunn, The Listener (2 December 1965), p. 914

³⁹ The review is of interest if only for its mentions of Genet, Camus, Kierkegaard and Simone de Beauvoir, and for its lack of empathy with the book being reviewed, which is quite unusual in a review by Burgess.

⁴⁰ Anthony Burgess, 'Anthony Burgess', in James Mitchell, ed. and intro., The God I Want (London: Constable, 1967), pp. 57-70

the period that produced him, and that means understanding an exceptional product of the period, through one thoroughly at home in it. We have to know something about the man.' (MWG, p. 102). Burgess partly concedes this point, but infers that it is more complex than this. As with the earlier debates in the novel, no firm resolution is reached. The novel then moves from personal colloquy to film script.

Using a film script in a novel was, like the opera libretto and the division of one's self into two, nothing new for Burgess. He had done this previously in The Clockwork Testament, where the poet protagonist, Enderby, scripted an adaptation of Gerald Manley Hopkins's The Wreck of the Deutschland. And, a film script, like an opera libretto, lacks something when printed in a novel and thus once again draws attention to its form.

Whereas the libretto lacked its audio accompaniment, the film script lacks its visual (and audio) accompaniment. It is a stripped back use of dialogue and narrative. The position of the camera and the lighting tell as much as anything else. In Scene 1 of the Mozart film, Mozart and his father sit in a coffee house discussing Mozart's lack of mathematical knowledge and money sense. In Scene 2 the action remains in the same coffee house location for the arrival of Baron von Dittersdorf, but the camera angle changes. Mozart's animosity towards Dittersdorf is then learnt in the most economic of terms. The next scene then demonstrates a similar animosity towards Clementi with similar efficiency. Then the composer's move to Berlin in order to write for the Prussian court is witnessed. Mozart's temperament does not go down well in Berlin, and so he returns to Vienna. His increasing unpopularity forces him to reflect on who he is in service of and question whether there is any merit in immortality through art (MWG, pp. 126-127). As with the opera libretto Burgess does not invent the larger events and relationships,⁴¹ but rather compresses them and economically portrays them.

The film provides an analogy for the novel as a whole, and for all of the novels by Burgess that contain public personages as protagonists. A shift of perspective shows something new, be that a shift of camera angle or the shift of philosophical perspective. After the film, the novel returns to Heaven to hear Mendelssohn speak to some newcomers, who are musicians and victims of the Gulf War. They are the Grazioso Quartet of Tel Aviv, or Graceful Quartet of Tel-Aviv,

⁴¹ see Braunbehren, Mozart in Vienna, pp. 166, 308; see also H. C. Robbins Landon, 1971: Mozart's Last Year (Thames and Hudson, 1988), p. 56

who were killed by one of Saddam Hussein's scud missiles. They were rehearsing Mozart's 'The Hunt' (K. 458) when 'Muslim savagery confront[ed] the distillation of Western culture.' (MWG, p. 134). As Esh explains:

On our fiddles there are more than semitones. F sharp is not G flat. The future of music may well lie in following barbaric examples. The subtle splitting of the semitone. But we have for the moment to be satisfied with the tempered scale that was good enough for Mozart. We may be children of the Middle East but we accept that we're a transplanted West. What music better expresses what the non-Islamic world stands for than the music of Mozart? (MWG, p. 136)

There is not long to appreciate the presence or importance of the quartet, however. Just after their arrival, the 'real' Mozart (i.e. not the actor from the opera) appears, and he is four or five years old (MWG, p. 138). In explanation, Burgess writes:

We have to be aware of approaching Mozart while polishing the spectacles of historical perspective. Nostalgia is behovely, but it is inert. The vision he purveys must not be that of a long-dead stability for which we hopelessly yearn. In a world which affronts us daily with war, starvation, pollution, the destructions of the rainforests, and the breakdown of public and domestic morality, we may put a Mozart string quartet on the cassette-player in the expectation of a transient peace. But it is not Mozart's function to soothe: he is not a tranquilliser to be taken out of the cupboard. He purveys an image of a possible future rather than an irrecoverable past. (MWG, p. 147)

As discussed in the chapter on The End of the World News, the notion of the 'irrecoverable past' is one shared by Koselleck. The only access to the irrevocable past for Koselleck is through fiction: 'Every event historically established and presented lives on the fiction of actuality'.⁴² 'This does not mean, however, that a historical event can be arbitrarily set up in this or that manner. The sources provide control over what might not be stated. They do not, however, prescribe what may be said.'⁴³ None of this restricts how things may be said, though, which is virtually if not wholly limitless. In this chapter the application of Stendhalian tropes to the life of Mozart are a testing of history's plasticity and elasticity, it does not remould but

⁴² Reinhart Koselleck, Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time, trans. and intro. Keith Tribe (1979; New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 111

⁴³ Koselleck, Futures Past, p. 111

instead explores promises of meaning premised upon the chance of highlighting something new.

It cannot be said that Mozart means this or that to the early 1990s in light of the Gulf War. Suggestions can be made, but nothing can be finalized. These suggested meanings are still important to explore, however, for they are of assistance in attempting to grasp, even if it is not possible to fully comprehend, Mozart's ongoing significance. Echoing Burgess, Bowman wrote:

Music is not something that occasionally and tangentially serves social ends ... it is itself social, always and already ... music is never a 'pure', self-contained thing, however convenient and reassuring that may be to believe. It is cultural, and culture is constantly being created, recreated, modified, contested, and negotiated. As well, music's sociocultural facts pose significant challenges to ideas like musical autonomy and the existence of culturally invariant musical universals. As sociocultural constructions, musical values and functions are not 'absolute', but relative: culturally specific, and as fluid, various, diverse, and unstable as culture itself. From the perspective of the views it undermines, these may sound like negative claims. But for those who advance the social view of music, they are vivifying ideas: convictions that promise to confer upon music renewed senses of potency and force, of relevance and import wrongly taken from music by the misguided doctrine of musical autonomy.⁴⁴

In understanding the renewal of music's continuing importance, it is necessary to also incorporate a broader global range of music. In order to highlight this, in Mozart and the Wolf Gang, Burgess introduced the Grazioso Quartet of Tel Aviv, whose quartertones are as yet unused in their playing of Western music, but are there awaiting the time when Eastern music becomes better understood by the West. Explaining more fully, Bowman wrote:

Musical philosophy ... often made unarticulated assumptions about which music, whose music, was music at its best; and that most musical of musics was generally the 'high art' music of the European masters. But as technologies have brought the far corners of the globe closer together, it has become increasingly difficult to sustain the idea that music is essentially of one cloth, such that it can be hierarchically arranged in terms of its efficacy in achieving a common musical end. People have become acutely sensitive to the fact that music's plurality cannot be subsumed by a single set of values, that musical differences cannot be reduced to differences in quality. Different musics serve different needs and answer to different interests. There is

⁴⁴ Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, p. 305

growing recognition that the evaluation of music by values foreign to its intent is unjustified as colonial occupation of territory. Recognition of the integrity of diverse and divergent musics, and of the need to understand them on their own terms, has transformed the way most people engage in musical philosophy today. Musics of different cultures clearly do not all conform to the same sets of concerns, cannot be judged by the same standards without distortion. 'Other', it is increasingly recognized, must not be taken for 'worse', only for 'different'.⁴⁵

In light of these remarks, the reader of Mozart and the Wolf Gang may try to relate the extreme youth of Mozart with the Quartet and to see them as somehow interconnected. Once again however it is the promise of a meaning that cannot be concretized, and when put too simply might even offend. Likewise there is no firm answer as to why it is appropriate to select Stendhal as a means of troping Mozart, despite the possibility of making many suggestions premised upon it. Troping is of value simply for its suggestions, and for the questions it raises, because in this way it interrogates history and shakes up previous certainties. Burgess appeared in his work to be aware of this, making the novels discussed in this thesis of value for their exploration of pertinent and contemporary philosophical perspectives that in the case of Mozart and the Wolf Gang at once concerns the philosophies of music and the philosophies of history.

⁴⁵ Bowman, Philosophical Perspectives on Music, pp. 356-357

CONCLUSION

Alongside the novels discussed in this thesis Anthony Burgess published three novels based on Biblical narratives: Moses: A Narrative, Man of Nazareth and Kingdom of the Wicked. Each novel was the basis of a film, these were titled respectively: Moses the Lawgiver,¹ Jesus of Nazareth,² and A.D.³ The one with the most interesting history was the six-hour made-for-TV film, Jesus of Nazareth. Sir Lew Grade, a man who Burgess described as an ‘ennobled British Jew’, proposed the film. Funding for it came in the first instance from General Motors, who reportedly invested almost US\$5m.⁴ The money was withdrawn when it was heard that the film’s director, Franco Zeffirelli, claimed that it would ‘depict Christ as a man rather than as a divine miracle worker’,⁵ a position that Zeffirelli later described in more detail in his autobiography.⁶

The director saw himself, in making Jesus of Nazareth, as walking a fine line. He needed to please everyone without falling into Hollywood clichés and at the same time he had to get across his own view of Christ.⁷ Burgess, whom co-wrote the script, similarly described the comical sight of being followed wherever he went with his

¹ Moses the Lawgiver, directed by Gianfranco De Bosio, written by Vittorio Bonicelli, Anthony Burgess, Gianfranco De Bosio and Bernardino Zapponi (1975) [TV Film]

² Jesus of Nazareth, Directed by Franco Zeffirelli, Written by Anthony Burgess, Suso Cecchi d’Amico and Franco Zeffirelli (1977) [TV Film]

³ A.D., directed by Stuart Cooper, written by Anthony Burgess and Vincenzo Labella [TV Film]

⁴ Anthony Burgess, ‘The Gospel According to Anthony Burgess’, New York Times, Art and Leisure (3 April 1977), p. 1

⁵ Burgess, ‘The Gospel According to Anthony Burgess’, p. 1

⁶ ‘The point I wanted to make most evident was that Christ was a Jew, a prophet who grew out of the cultural, social and historical background of the Israel of his time, with its farms and small villages, each with its cramped little synagogue; an Israel occupied by an arrogant enemy and always smouldering on the edge of a civil disorder. More than that, Christ’s words had to be seen as a continuation and fulfilment of centuries of Jewish religious teaching. It is not at all an original notion that Christ behaved, thought and spoke as a Jew of his time, but it is one that is often overlooked.’ (Franco Zeffirelli, Zeffirelli: The Autobiography of Franco Zeffirelli [London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986], p. 274)

⁷ ‘It was an unnerving thought that for once I would not simply have a producer to contend with but church leaders, theologians, historians and even the ordinary faithful. Also much of the potential audience would be unbelievers who, without the forgiveness of faith, would readily find any bad dialogue or over-sentimentality ridiculous. All those Hollywood epics were stacked in the background ready to provide an all-too-easy batch of clichés and schmaltzy scenarios. If any hint of that should creep in we would be pilloried.’ (Zeffirelli, Zeffirelli, p. 274)

'caravan, typewriter and Greek testament' by Radiotelevisione Italiana: a company involved in the film, who he claimed constantly tried to influence his writing.⁸

Zefferelli and Burgess were acutely aware that religious language is highly sensitive to change: every word of The Bible counts, and this is something that is explored in the films and in Burgess's novels. As an example, when Jesus says in Man of Nazareth that a rich man entering the Kingdom of Heaven is like a camel passing through the eye of a needle, the word that Jesus uses is not heard clearly by those gathered, some think he said camel and others that he said rope. Burgess makes here a comment on the Greek for camel being close to the Greek for rope, which potentially changes the whole meaning of what Jesus said.

Burgess was not the originator of the observation that the Greek kamilos (cable or rope) is similar to kamelos (camel). There have been various attempts to rationalize Mark 10:17 in this way for centuries, but it is something that theologians more often than not reject.⁹ Rather than exclude it from Man of Nazareth, however, Burgess includes it in an ambiguous way whereby one or other meaning may be accepted. It is not an attempt to assert the correct meaning, but instead to demonstrate the sensitivity of meaning to the interpretation of individual words. The importance of doing this is to demonstrate how meanings can be taken to be concrete, and in Auerbach's terms 'tyrannical', where there is the possibility of uncertainty. It is not only religious history that can become tyrannical, however. History in general can become tyrannical if all alternate possibilities are rejected for the most likely or most realistic one in each case. Part of the reason for this lies in the necessity of narrativizing and employing tropes, as is discussed in the chapter of this thesis on Mozart and the Wolf Gang.

Even chronology is a trope that restricts what can be written and how it can be written. Biographers, for example, in order to construct a plausible and realistic

⁸ '... [it was] not only a matter – with so dangerous a subject – of pleasing director, producer and the men who pay the bills. There are the theologians, professional and amateur, to satisfy; there is the need to reconcile a myriad sectarian images [sic.] of Christ (including, in this post-Johannine age, the Jews if not the Arabs).' ('The Gospel According to Anthony Burgess', p. 36)

⁹ see Ethan Walker III, The Mystic Christ: The Light of Non-duality and the Path of Love as Revealed in the Life and Teachings of Jesus (Norman, OK: Devi Press, 2003), pp. 66-67; see also John A. Broadus, Commentary on Matthew (1886; Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Classics, 1990), p. 408; R. T. France, Matthew (1985; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002), p. 287; Leon Morris, The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians: One and Two (1956; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1984; repr. 2002), p. 237; Rudolf Schnackenberg, The Gospel of Matthew (1985/1987; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), p. 189

account of events that 'moves forwards' have gone so far as to demand definitive identities for Shakespeare's Dark Lady and the Rival Poet, as is discussed in the chapter on Nothing Like the Sun. This, however, ignores the whole wealth of opportunity for ambiguity and multitudinous identity that poetry and literature affords. Writers such as Reinhart Koselleck and Hayden White argue that this needs to be a part of historical writing as well.

Shakespeare is of universal importance to literature, but as the chapter on Nothing Like the Sun demonstrates there is no theory of Shakespeare that when applied to the world can be accepted as wholly convincing. There is so much conjecture, so much fiction contained within the playwright's biography that to make correlations between his life and work appears absurd and implausible when taken into a realm that purports to be life. The quest for certainty has a tendency to simplify to a worrying level. In order to counteract this Burgess populates Shakespeare's life with numerous dark ladies and drenches it in alcohol. It is a means of adding texture not providing answers. The world of MF, meanwhile, is drenched in structuralism, where meaning is constantly punned upon and punctuated across time and languages. This I have labelled a Rabelaisian quality in Burgess's work, it is also a modernist one, where every word appears to invite new and diverse meanings. MF demonstrates how reality can be troped by a philosophical theory just as Nothing Like the Sun does, but goes even further by having its personage, Claude Lévi-Strauss only present through manipulations of language.

In Napoleon Symphony Burgess's ideas on the comic, which are nascent in Nothing Like the Sun and MF, are expanded more explicitly, with Napoleon himself spouting theories upon it. Napoleon Symphony is also where nineteenth-century historical realism is grappled with most directly in a series of parodies and pastiches, demonstrating how realism has influenced all history. Further, it is a novel about not submitting to pre-existing narratives, which enables Burgess to address realism without wholly denigrating it. Finally, Napoleon Symphony refocuses the reader's mind on the nature and relationship of universal and particular, which began in Nothing Like the Sun, when WS observed 'you could not write verses of the one and particular but only of the All or Universal' (NLTS, p. 17), and continued through MF and its search for similarity.

Napoleon Symphony, and its concerns with the universal and particular, paved the way for ABBA ABBA, a novel where Keats verges on being entirely non-

descript, while Pauline Bonaparte is a solid lump of history that floats like a ghost in and out of Keats's life and delirious mind. The latter character has been transmogrified into Venus by Canova's sculpture, while Keats is a Burgess character not unlike many others. The public personage it is seen cannot also be the private individual, the former exists in historical time, while the latter lives in natural time. G. G. Belli, ABBA ABBA's other poet protagonist, is the perfect example of this. He lived out his life in natural time working as a Vatican censor and then came his death when his poems were published and he entered historical time. It is a straightforward division not permitted to any other public personage discussed in this thesis, and at the same time it is a metaphor for the division inherent in all public personages.

ABBA ABBA begins a series of prominent autobiographical insertions that are found in Earthly Powers and The End of the World News as well. The insertions act as a means of disruption that threaten to corrupt the novels, but instead do varying things. In ABBA ABBA, Gulielmi and other autobiographical insertions act to distract and make more real the public personages, while in Earthly Powers Burgess's autobiography acts as a confessional element that admits his inability to 'superannuate' his past. In The End of the World News, meanwhile, John B. Wilson, BA acts as a source of authority, which is paradoxically of little guidance in reading the novel.

Earthly Powers is the most daring and political of Burgess's work, because it is the most personal. Nowhere is the author as open and honest as in Earthly Powers, launching attacks through his grotesque caricatures of Maugham and Pope John XXIII. They are attacks, however, in which the reader cannot collude, because Burgess overloads the responsibility on these individuals for errors in literature and theology, taking not enough account of past history and centring wholly on the twentieth century. Error acts as confession here as elsewhere, and highlights the limits of what language is able to do and its self-censoring effects when read intelligently.

The End of the World News is self-censoring, not because of accusations levelled at individuals, but because of its untenable claim to ambivalence. It takes the reader into speculative readings, it further explores the use of anachronism that Earthly Powers and the other novels began, but more than this it opens out the idea of prognosis and prophecy. Burgess appears to acknowledge, as Koselleck and others do, that as soon as a moment in time is past it becomes retrievable only through fiction and that the fiction can never precisely recapture it. This must be performed,

however, without over-reliance on past narratives for describing the present and future, and with a mind that is always open at once to the necessity of such narratives and to their failure to describe.

Attempts by Burgess to recapture the past are worthwhile for the sense of texture they are able to elucidate, and for the way they demonstrate the two-dimensional nature of historical and biographical writing that is so often taken to be authoritative. This notion resonates from The End of the World News and Koselleck's Futures Past¹⁰ forwards, but in A Dead Man in Deptford the reader is given the greatest sense that they are approaching a possible reality, which although often implausible gives most potently the sense in which texture is important, and the exercise is worthwhile. However, Burgess ultimately refuses to deliver on such a promise and in the novel's final paragraph quashes all hopes.

History for Burgess cannot be neatly packaged up and presented in the background, it is forever spilling over and the novels with public personages as protagonists demonstrate this acutely. By focusing in this thesis specifically on the novels in which the individuals and events of history are at the forefront, it has been possible to show this respect for the writing of history directly, and to provide a means of returning to the larger body of work with an acute awareness of this. In the novels discussed in this thesis Burgess reasserts the value of ambiguity, anachronism, and unexpected tropes in order to break down the unwarranted certainty often displayed in works of history and biography, and prevent them from becoming tyrannical. This need to break down certainty through observations of language is part of a far larger acknowledgement of the awkward relationships between man and history, which is both personal and philosophical for Burgess. The novels that contain public personages as protagonists must recover individuals from historical time and understand them once again within natural time. This process demands the construction of possible worlds, the insertion of purposeful and creative anachronisms, the use of all manner of unexpected tropes and imaginings, each of which break from realism in unusual ways in order to achieve a better sense of reality. This is not a more truthful reality, but one that demonstrates that there is often a lack of nuance in attempts to write history. The outcome is a range of novel histories centred on public personages, as opposed to the fictional individual. As such Burgess

¹⁰ Reinhart Koselleck, Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time, trans. and intro. Keith Tribe (1979; New York: Columbia University Press, 2004)

is a twentieth-century reminder of the challenges to literature that are to be found in the portrayal of historical figures, an art that has a history as long as literature itself.

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