Travelling philosophy: from literature to film

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II. The Novel

Anthony Burgess

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE

Anthony Burgess

(1917-1993)
Introduction

John Anthony Burgess Wilson was born in Manchester, England into a middle-class Catholic family. Exhibiting the influence of James Joyce, his first novel, *A Vision of Battlement* (1949), was loosely based on the *Aeneid*. In 1954, Burgess became an education officer in Malaya and Brunei and during this time wrote his trilogy *Time for a Tiger* (1956), *The Enemy in the Blanket* (1958), and *Beds in the East* (1959). In 1960, *A Clockwork Orange* was just one of a quartet of novels Burgess penned during his self-proclaimed "pseudo-terminal year" when he was erroneously diagnosed with a brain tumor and given only a year to live (Jennings 1974: 69).

Essayist, composer, critic, translator, and novelist, Burgess published over fifty works before he died in 1993. Yet, despite his impressive output of fiction, Burgess wished for the public to view him as a musician first and a novelist second. In fact, Burgess turned his novel into a musical titled *A Clockwork Orange: A Play with Music* (1987). Interestingly, the play concludes with:

...a character dressed like Stanley Kubrick coming out onto the stage with a trumpet, playing "Singin' in the Rain" until he is kicked off the stage. A few years later, Burgess brought out yet another musical version, *A Clockwork Orange 2004*, this one produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company in London at the Barbican Theatre and featuring the music of Bono and the Edge (from the Irish rock band U2) (McDougal 2003: 2).

Burgess believed that music was a more “pure” form of art because it had no direct connection with human events and existed beyond the field of moral judgment. In contrast to the morally benign nature of his music, his most commercially successful novel was also the novel he liked the least. To this day, *Clockwork* maintains a polarizing affect on its readers and is still often celebrated for its profound examination of violence and innovative diction or condemned for its lack of moral judgment.

The inspiration for *Clockwork* seems to have been drawn not only from the growth of teenage gangs and the universal application of American psychologist B.F. Skinner’s behavior theories, but also one of his most deeply personal experiences. In an interview published in *Playboy Magazine* (1974), Burgess revealed:

We’re all inclined to love the pornography of violence, but for me that work (*Clockwork*) was a kind of personal testament made out of love and sorrow, as well as of ideas and theology. My first wife had a traumatic experience during the war, when she was working at the Ministry of War Transport on ships for the D-Day landings. She was working very late one night and was very severely mauled by four GI deserters (Jennings: 70).

In the interview, Burgess goes on to disclose that his wife, who was pregnant at the time of the assault, lost her baby through the gynecological complications that ensued and later committed suicide as a consequence. It appears that this intensely traumatic incident was the impetus for Burgess’ particular brand of political philosophy that explores how the state should treat those violent individuals who are neither good citizens nor good men. What makes such *Clockwork* a compelling novel is that, in light of Burgess’ devastating past, it critically examines not just the violent individual, but also the selfish ambitions and resulting oppression of the individual by the state.
Machiavellian Ambition and Augustinian Redeeming Love

The Machiavellian view of innate selfish ambition carries with it two corollaries relevant to this discussion of Clockwork. First, the desire for glory often leads to the oppression of others. Second, this craving leads to a kind of malleability and, as a result, humans can be made into good citizens through compulsion. *Clockwork* develops and makes a commentary on both of these ideas. The fabula demonstrates the notion of oppression by taking a three-sided approach: it pits the selfish ambitions of the individual against the citizenry, the state against the individual, and the citizenry against the individual.

In the first third of the novel, the protagonist (Alex DeLarge) viciously employs others as the means to achieve his sadistic ends of self-gratification. Alex's acts are exemplified in the following passage, as his dreams expose the true character of his heart:

...I knew such lovely pictures. There were vecks and ptitsas, both young and starry, lying on the ground screaming for mercy, and I was smeckin all over my rot and grinding my boot in their litsos. And there were devotchkas ripped and creeching against wall and I plungin like a shlag a into them, and indeed when the music, which was one movement only, rose to the top of its big heist tower, then, lying the on my bed with glazzies tight shut and rookers behind my Gulliver, I broke and spatterered and cried aaaaaaah with the bliss of it.

The embodiment of the Platonic tyrant, Alex turns his nightmarish dreams into reality as he acts out his subconscious desires in his waking life. This notion is evidenced as Alex describes his rape of two ten-year-old girls this way:

...I leapt upon these two young ptitsas. This time they thought nothing fun and stopped creeching with high mirth, and had to submit to the strange and weird desires of Alexander the Large which, what with the Ninth and the hypo jab, were choodessny and zammeechat and very demanding. O my brothers. But they were both very very drunken and could hardly feel much (46).

Thus, the tyrannical Alex has made what was a mere subconscious fantasy in the first passage into a waking reality in the second.

In the middle third of the novel, however, Alex is arrested and the fabula makes a rather striking tonal shift. The state, supposedly enacting justice on behalf of the citizenry, exploits Alex to meet its selfish ambitions of preservation, or re-election. It is in this portion of the fabula that the Machiavellian malleability of man begins to surface as the state attempts to forcibly turn the "bad into good" (93). Through an education of Pavlovian conditioning, the state tries to transform Alex into both a good citizen and a good man. However, the end is not virtue, but rather political self-preservation as is made evident by the newspaper (gazetta) headlines after Alex is released from prison and presumably "cured" of his violent tendencies:

This gazetta I had seemed to be like a Government gazetta, for the only news that was on the front page was about the need for every veck to make sure he put the Government back in again on the next General Election which seemed

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68 Plato, *The Republic*, translated by Allan Bloom. (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 255. Socrates describes the tyrant as: "...what he had rarely been in dreams, he became continuously while awake."
to be about two or three weeks off. There were very boastful slovos about what the Government had done, brothers, in the last year or so... (...) But what the Government was really most boastful about was the way in which they reckoned the streets had been made safer for all peace-loving night-walking lewdies... (...) And on the second page of the gazetta there was a blurry like photograph of somebody who looked very familiar, and it turned out to be none other than me (131-132).

In the final third of the novel, although Alex has been released as a free man back into society, he has been stripped of his ability to act violently and is unable to defend himself against the attacks of his former victims who now seek revenge:

"Don't let him go. We'll teach him all about punishment, the murderous young pig. Get him." And, believe it, brothers, or do the other veshch, two or three starry dodderers, about ninety years old a piece, grabbed me with their trembly old rookers, and I was like made sick by the von of old age and disease which came from these near-dead moodges (144).

Thus, the fabula comes full circle as Alex's attackers assail him, which effectively forces the reader into a critical examination of the Pelagian division between the well us and the sick them. The oppressive actions of all parties involved problematizes the natural attempt to distance ourselves from such acts, and by highlighting the universal depravity of man the fabula mirrors our own veiled agendas.

In light of this Machiavellian-Augustinian view of man, the prison chaplain interjects the concept of a redeeming love as a solution to the vicious cycle of oppression. As the state tests Alex's conditioning with taunts of sex and violence, the chaplain reacts by quoting 1 John 4:18: "Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear" (127). It is this perfect love that is contrasted with the fear and punishment enacted by not only the state, but also by every principal character in the story. Considering these ideas, in the following analysis of Clockwork, I aim to better understand how Burgess' story articulates a fabula that conceptualizes his particular brand of political philosophy, which is influenced by the dialogue between Athens and Jerusalem.

Alex: Triple Narrative Agency

Alex DeLarge represents Clockwork's protagonist anti-hero and character-bound narrator (cn) as "I" is identified with a character (Alex) in the fabula he narrates, autobiographically recounting the "facts" as he remembers them. Alex also functions as an internal, character-bound focalizor (cf), the subject of focalization, serving as a point from which the elements in the fabula are viewed. More precisely, cn Alex is narrating a story that is focalized by cf Alex who "colors" the events in the fabula, or in other words, "Alex says what Alex saw and did". This is accomplished through narrative

69 NASB (1999), 1174. 1 John 4:18 reads: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love."
70 Bal, Narratology (1997), 22. Bal asserts that if the "I" is to be identified with a character in the fabula it itself narrates, we speak of a character-bound narrator, a "cn."
71 Bal, Narratology (1997), 146: "When focalization lies with one character who participates as an actor in the fabula, we could refer to internal focalization. We can then indicate by means of the term external focalization that an anonymous agent, situated outside the fabula, is functioning as focalizor."
72 Bal, Narratology (1997), 146: "Focalization is the relationship between the "vision," the agent that sees, and that which is seen. This relationship is a component of the story part, the content of the
distance, or the temporal and psychological distance between the narrating "I" and the experiencing "I." An older and wiser Alex is narrating the story of a younger, more foolish Alex who focalizes the events. It is this older Alex who says:

Then I got it open, and who should be on the doorstep but old Dim, me just being able to viddy the other two of my so-called droogs belting off. "Away," I creeched to Dim. "The rozzes are coming," Dim said: "You stay and meet them huh huh" and then I viddied that he had his oozy out, and then he upped with it and snaked whishhhhh and he chained me gentle and artistic like on the glazlids, me just closing them up in time (64).

The above passage relays the event caused by the actor Dim, its perception by the focalizer "I" (cf Alex) and the narrative act by the narrator "I" (cn Alex). Cn Alex relays the entire passage to the reader as he autobiographically recounts what happened in order to explain the events caused by the actor Dim. The event is perceived by the focalizer "I," which is also Alex, who "viddied that he had his oozy out." Thus, we have the following narrative situation: cn (Alex) (cf (Alex) - Dim). Two of the three agents have the same name and the same identity.

Furthermore, Alex not only effectively functions as cf and cn, but also serves as an actor propelling events in the fabula. This is clear, for example, in these two passages:

"You deserve to be taught a lesson, brother," I said, "that you do." The crystal book I had was very tough bound and hard to razrez to bits, being real stary and made in days when things were made to last like, but I managed to rip the pages up and chuck them in handfuls of like snowflakes, though big, all over this creeching old veck, and then the others did the same thing with theirs. old Dim just dancing about like the clown he was (6).

"Bastard. Filthy drooling mannerless bastard." Then I leaned across Georgie, who was between me and horrible Dim, and fistied Dim skorry on the rot (28).

The preceding passages all provide insight into Alex's threefold function in the fabula as cn, cf, and actor driving events. As an actor in the first passage, Alex rips up the books, and in the second he hits Dim on the mouth. While both passages exhibit Alex as an actor in the fabula, they also give insight into Alex as a character in the story who detests both books and poor manners. Alex provides an elucidating interchange between fabula and story because it is largely through his behavior as an actor that Alex the character is fleshed out for the reader. Such an interchange, revealing Alex the character, is essential to a thematic thrust of the narrative concerning society's response to such a reprobate individual.

While focalization does shift to other actors in the fabula, Alex's threefold function as cn, cf, and actor remains rather consistent throughout the narrative. Alex's "triple
capacity" supplies the narrative with its distinctive, personal feel in that the story is told by a narrator who autobiographically recounts events he once caused and experienced. In this way, the reader is forced to view the copiously violent events perpetrated by the younger "experiencing" Alex through the older "experienced" Alex, and the result is somewhat unnatural. Through this brand of focalization, Burgess creates within the reader a sense of compassion for the character Alex despite the ghastly events caused by the actor Alex. This paradoxical conflict of emotion generated within the reader is largely achieved through Burgess' employment of Alex as a visible figure of the perceptible narrator who, in most narratives, typically refers to her / himself as "I." While this is also true in Clockwork, Burgess takes this device one step further. Specifically, on several occasions Alex explicitly refers to himself as the "Narrator":

Then all the lights went out and then there came on two like spotlights shining from the projection-squares, and one of them was full on Your Humble and Suffering Narrator (124).

And all they gave me, brothers, was a crappy starry mirror to look into, and indeed I was not your handsome young Narrator any longer but a reall stack of a sight, my rot swollen and my glazzies all red and my nose bumped a bit also (68).

In the first passage, the younger, focalizing Alex is referred to as your "Humble" and "Suffering" narrator as he would eventually grow into the older, narrating Alex. In the second passage, he refers to the readers affectionately as his "brothers." Seen after cf Alex had directly induced nine violent events including two rapes, both passages represent illustrations of a recurrent, endearing motif that emotively personalizes cn and cf Alex.

The device of a personal, perceptible narrator is employed throughout the narrative and the general effect is that the readers find themselves, although at times begrudgingly, caring for a rather likable character in the story despite his rather odious counterpart in the fabula. While Alex does function as cn and cf, it is Alex the actor who conveys the most valuable insight into Alex as the protagonist. Therefore, I now consider Alex's characterization as it is implied by his behavior as an actor causing events and explicitly by his own narration including the alter-characterization of others in the story.

Characterizing Alex

Analysis of characterization investigates the means of creating the personality traits of fictional characters by focusing on three basic parameters: narratorial vs. figural characterization (identity of the characterizing subject: narrator / character); explicit vs. implicit characterization (personality traits attributed in words / implied by appearance

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25 Bal, Narratology (1997), 146: "If the focalizer coincides with a character, that character will have an advantage over the other characters. The reader watches with the character's eyes and will, in principle, be inclined to accept the vision presented by that character. The reader is shown the violent events through the limited vision of younger Alex who only gradually realizes the consequences of his actions. But the reader is not a fourteen year-old boy. S/he does more with the information s/he receives than Alex does, s/he interprets it differently. The difference between the childish vision of the events and the interpretation that the adult gives them determines the novel's special effect."
or behavior), auto vs. alter characterization (characterizing subject characterizes him or herself / somebody else).76

I first consider the character of Alex DeLarge. If, indeed, *Clockwork* presents Burgess’ Augustinian “abhorrence of the view that some people were criminal and others not” and condemns the attempt (of Pelagian societies) to “cure” evil by eliminating the ability to make moral choices, such an attempt can only be truthfully authenticated by creating a character that would be seen as undeniably evil by even the most tolerant of audiences.77 Thus, through cn Alex, Burgess confronts the reader with a cf Alex that hyperbolically embodies the malevolent half of the Augustinian schizophrenia inborn in every human being. What is more, it is through cn Alex’s narratorial characterization that cf Alex is transformed from a terribly loathsome actor in the fabula, into an oftentimes irresistibly likeable character in the story.

As noted earlier, the focalization of cf Alex and the narration of cn Alex are made functional through narrative distance. The older, more mature Alex who has experienced the events of the fabula narrates a story of his blithe youth. The reader is, therefore, presented with a narrator whose intention is to relate the events of his own life in a story, in which he will explain its eventual outcome.78 The corollary is that the preponderance of Alex’s characterization is effectively narratorial with the age and circumstances of cn Alex remaining largely ambiguous while he relays the personality traits of his younger self to the reader. Accordingly, we can also classify cn Alex as an unreliable narrator.79 His presentation and or analysis of events can be called into question due to the perceived lack of objectivity of a character who is recounting his own personal involvement as an actor in the fabula. Cn Alex is the key component of the narrative’s discourse. As a consequence, the older cn Alex also serves as focalizer filtering the story through his consciousness. The majority of what we learn of the younger cf Alex as a character in the story and an actor in the fabula is given to us through a grown-up cn Alex looking back and recounting events as he chooses to remember them. The narratorial characterization given by the older Alex is exceedingly emotive in a blatant attempt to garner empathy from the reader for his younger self despite the

76 Jahn, *Poems, Plays, and Prose* (2001), N7.1: “Characterization analysis investigates the ways and means of creating the personality traits of fictional characters. The basic analytical question is: who (subject) characterizes whom (object) as being what (as having general properties).”

77 Carol Dix, “Anthony Burgess About A Clockwork Orange,” in *Transatlantic Review*, no. 42 (1972). In Dix’s interview, Burgess stated that he wrote *Clockwork* in abhorrence of Pelagian societies’ (like that of Britain) notion of “inhuman” treatment for “inhuman” criminals. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that he wrote *Clockwork* to “shock” those individuals who would tolerate such an idea.

78 Bial, *Narratology* (1997), 26. This can also be interpreted as: (I narrate: (I state autobiographically in order to explain)).

79 Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), 158. First introducing the term, Booth discusses the term “unreliable narrator”: “For practical criticism probably the most important of these kinds of distance is that between the fallible or unreliable narrator and the implied author who carries the reader with him in judging the narrator. If the reason for discussing point of view is to find how it relates to literary effects, then surely the moral and intellectual qualities of the narrator are more important to our judgment than whether he is referred to as ‘I’ or ‘he,’ or whether he is privileged or limited. If he is discovered to be untrustworthy, then the total effect of the work he relays to us is transformed. Our terminology for this kind of distance in narrators is almost hopelessly inadequate. For lack of better terms, I have called a narrator reliable when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author’s norms), unreliable when he does not.” Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 100. Building upon Booth’s discussion, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan defines an “unreliable narrator” as: “A narrator whose rendering of the story and / or commentary on it the reader has reasons to suspect. The main sources of unreliability are the character’s limited knowledge, her / his personal involvement, and her / his value-scheme.”
overt cruelty and viciousness with which he had lived his life in Part I of the novel (chapters 1-7).

Alex serves as cn and the narratorial characterization of cf Alex is necessarily auto-characterization as he is fleshed out both explicitly and implicitly. We also learn about the younger Alex in an “alter” fashion through his description of other characters in the story. However, the majority of what can be gleaned about the younger Alex can be learned tacitly through his behavior in Part I of the novel. Therefore, an implicit auto-characterization analysis of younger Alex as narratorially recounted by the older Alex is to be expected. In line with this expectation, I review instances of cn Alex recounting his own actions, or episodes he was involved in as an actor giving mention to explicit auto and implicit alter-characterization as it assists in imaging the younger Alex. It is chiefly through these episodes, or series of events, that cf Alex materializes as a character in the story. For the purposes of this discussion, it should be understood that Alex’s droogs are also directly involved in the proceeding episodes; however, it is Alex who serves as dominator and inciter of events. The preponderance of the episodic analysis will come after they have all been described.

In Episode 1 (chapter 1), Alex and his droogs abuse an elderly “prof type” leaving a public library with an armful of books. Alex, as he typically does, begins a conversation with his potential victim on amicable terms. He does not speak in Burgess’ fictional slang “nadsat” (which might frighten the victim), but rather in more proper English, which serves him more pragmatically in the adult world. Seen in Episode 1, the following two quotes serve primarily to reveal both Alex’s cunning nature:

“I see you have books under your arm, brother. It is indeed a rare pleasure these days to come across somebody that still reads, brother” (5).

The fact that Alex calls his potential victim “brother” begins to call into question his sincerity towards the readers whom he also refers to as his “brothers.” Alex then snatchers the man’s books (The Miracle of the Snowflake and The Rhombohedral System) and thumbs through them finding several “F” and “C” words. Upon discovering these words, he exclaims: “You’re nothing but a filthy-minded old skitebird” (6). After inventing his fictional justification, Alex then proceeds to rip up the books and ruthlessly beat the man. We can therefore assume that since Alex sees the need to somehow justify his actions, he is in some way aware that they are wrong.

Episode 2 (chapter 1) reveals the violent actions of Alex and his droogs who rob and beat a shopkeeper and his wife. In addition to his violence, it is this episode that initially divulges Alex’s taste for blood and his distaste for the appearance of filth:

I’d got my rooker round her rot to stop her belting out death and destruction to the four winds of heaven, but this lady doggie gave me a large foul big bite on it and it was me that did the creeching, and then she opened up beautiful with a flip yell for the millicents. Well, then she had to be tolched proper with one of the weights for the scales, and then a fair tap with a crowbar they had for opening cases, and that brought the red out like an old friend (10).

As they finish robbing the shop, Alex notices Dim’s disorderly appearance and states:

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I didn’t like the look of Dim; he looked dirty and untidy, like a veck who’d been in a fight, which he had been, of course, but you should never look as though you have been (11).

In Episode 3 (chapter 2), Alex breaks into a writer and his wife’s home, savagely attacks the man and forces him to observe the rape of his wife. The following two passages reaffirm Alex’s slyness, his brutality, in addition to revealing him as a sexual predator:

...then it was only a matter of me putting in the old rooker and undoing the chain, me having softened up this devotchka with my gent’s goloss, so that she hadn’t shut the door like she should have done, us being strangers of the night (20).

So he (Dim) did the strong-man on the devotchka, who was still creech creech creeching away in very horrorshow four-in-a-bar, locking her rookers from the back, while I ripped away at this and that and the other, the others going haw haw haw still, and real good horrorshow goodies they were that then exhibited their pink glazzies, O my brothers, while I untrussed and got ready for the plunge. Plunging, I could slooshy cries of agony and this writer bleeding veck that Georgie and Pete held on to nearly got loose howling bezoomny with the filthiest of slovos that I already knew and others he was making up (23).

In Episode 4, (chapter 4), Alex skips school (as he frequently does) and heads to the local record store, since he is very keen on music. There, he meets two young girls whom we learn to be around ten years of age. This episode confirms Alex’s deceitfulness and emotionally callous sexual deviancy, and introduces his ironically aggressive reactions to classical music – particularly Beethoven:

Then an idea hit me and made me near fall over with the anguish and ecstasy of it, O my brothers, so I could not breathe for near ten seconds. I recovered and made with my new-clean zoobies and said: “What you got back home, little sisters, to play your fuzzy warbles on?” Because I could viddy the discs they were buying were these teeny pop vesches, “I bet you got little save tiny portable like picnic spinners.” And they sort of pushed their lower lips out at that. “Come with uncle,” I said, “and hear all proper. Hear angel trumpets and devil trombones. You are invited.” And I like bowed (44).

At this point, the unwittingly girls accept his invitation and go with Alex back to his parent’s empty apartment where, to Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, he intoxicates and rapes them:

Then I pulled out the lovely Ninth out of its sleeve, so that Ludwig van was now nagoy too, and I set the needle hissing on to the last movement, which was all bliss. There it was then, the bass strings like gvooreeting away form under my bed at the rest of the orchestra, and then the male human goloss coming in and telling them all to be joyful, and the lovely blissful tune all about Joy being a glorious spark like of heaven, and then I felt the old tigers leap in me and then I leapt on these two young jittsas (46).

Then they were going down the stairs and I dropped off to sleep, still with the old Joy Joy Joy Joy crashing and howling away (47).
The preceding four episodes impart a great deal concerning the younger Alex at age fifteen as they are recounted by the older, narrating version whose age is unknown. Most of what can be gleaned about cf. Alex is implied in his behavior as an actor causing many of the episodic events. Cn Alex is also implicitly fleshed-out as he characterizes the younger version of himself. In Episode 1, his interaction with the prototype characterizes Alex as a clever manipulator of persons cognizant enough to speak in a manner that befits the situation. Alex’s speech is both proper (which would appeal more to a learned individual) and ingratiating as he refers to his potential victim as “brother.” This pattern is recurrent throughout the narrative and can be seen in episode 4 when Alex refers to himself as “uncle,” stylizing his language to gain the girls’ trust. Likewise, we see Alex “soften-up” the writer’s wife by speaking to her in a “gent’s goosh.” In this way, Alex resourcefully employs language to manipulate both individuals and situations to his advantage.

Not only is he shrewdly calculating, Alex is also depicted as overtly violent. For example, in episode 2, Alex strikes a woman with a crowbar that brings out the “red” like an “old friend,” which reveals his unique and somewhat disturbing relationship to blood—a product of violence. More than just violent, Alex begins to demonstrate his psychology in his peculiar kinship to blood. A psychopathic personality has a disorder of behavior toward other individuals or society in which physical reality is clearly perceived except for an individual’s social and moral obligations. While frequently exhibiting a lack of remorse, an individual often seeks immediate personal gratification in criminal acts, drug addiction, or sexual perversion (Heritage 2002: 1125). While all four episodes inventory his criminal acts, this notion of a “psychopathic Alex” is reinforced in episode 4, which exposes his sexual perversion while, concurrently, characterizing Alex as an individual who seems to lack a conscience. Just after raping the two girls, Alex is entirely without remorse as he falls asleep with “Joy Joy Joy Joy” echoing through his head.

Finally, episode 4 discloses Alex’s particular relationship to music, on which several points can be made. First, Alex not only enjoys classical music, but also has a reasonable comprehension and an avid appreciation of it. This becomes clear when he is mindful of specific movements and exhibits a base knowledge of their meaning. Second, the music affects him in a way that is antithetical to conventional human reactions. For Alex, classical music inspires “Joy,” which in itself is not odd, but this “Joy” manifests itself in the form of violence, which is. In other words, the hearing of classical music provokes Alex to act out aggressively as he leaps like a “tiger” onto his prey.

While Alex is predominantly characterized implicitly through his behavior, there are several explicit examples worth noting. In chapter 4, Alex’s post-corrective advisor (parole officer) P.R. Deltoid (the “muscle” of the state) warns him that if he is caught, he will be sent to prison rather than juvenile detention. In a rare example of explicit figural auto-characterization, Alex responds with the following:

But, brothers, this biting of their toe-nails over what is the cause of badness is what runs me into a fine laughing malchick. They don’t go into what is the cause of goodness, so why of the other shop? If lewdies are good that’s because they like it, and I wouldn’t ever interfere with their pleasures, and so of the other shop. And I was patronizing the other shop. More, badness is of the self, the one, the you or me on our oddy knockies, and that self is made by old Bog or God and is his great pride and radosty. But the not-self cannot have the bad, meaning the schools cannot allow the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave malenkys selves fighting these big machines? I am serious with you, brothers, over this. But what I do I do because I like to do (40).
The preceding passage is multifaceted in its imaging of the younger Alex making particular, elucidating admissions about himself. Viewed in terms Augustine and Pelagius, Alex is aware that both good and evil actions emanate from the Augustinian self marked by the conflicting desires inherently contained within it. He is also cognizant that the "not-self" (the state) cannot have the bad because they cannot allow the Pelagian self noted by the ability to make free moral choices of someone like Alex who chooses evil because he enjoys it.

Alex as an actor in the fabula is fleshed out into a character in the story as one of eminently complex and singular paradoxical dimensions. The younger, cf Alex is an adroit manipulator of persons and situations wielding language as a means to achieve his self-serving, diabolical ends. Alex’s reasonable awareness and keen appreciation of classical music could be viewed as "typical" of the Western notion of someone who is at least in part – "cultured." Nevertheless, despite a certain level of personal and social enlightenment one associates with a cultured individual, Alex is peculiarly spurred to violence upon hearing classical music. Furthermore, Alex also exhibits psychopathic characteristics in his unique relationship to not only music, but also to blood which he views as his "old friend." However, Alex’s psychopathic personality is best demonstrated by a complete lack of remorse after committing heinous acts of rape and brutality even though he is aware that his behavior is in some way wrong.

Burgess’ characterization of Alex as one of eminently paradoxical dimensions appears to be consistent with his particular notion of Christianity that “oscillates” between the antithetical poles of Pelagianism free will and Augustinian determinism. Burgess has, in Alex, created an intensely violent character-bound focalizer and personal, perceptible character-bound narrator to articulate a story that considers the primary topic of the constitutive endowment of inherently sinful humans to make moral choices. Through cn Alex, Burgess is able to confront the reader with a cf Alex that hyperbolically embodies the evil half of the Augustinian schizophrenia inborn in every human being. The effect of this narrative strategy is that the personal narration of cn Alex endears the reader to cf Alex in spite of his deeds. This sense of affection lends (potential) potency to Burgess’ indictment of the attempt to cure evil in civilized society by eliminating an individual’s ability to make moral choices. Therefore, Alex’s purpose is not merely to convey the evil of violence and its ruinous effects, but to reveal that eliminating one’s Pelagian moral freedom is, in a sense, a “greater” evil (even when it is being applied to an evil person).

Alex perpetrates evil knowingly because he ecstatically desires it; he is a physical manifestation of Burgess’ sentiment that: “there is so much original sin in us all that we find evil rather attractive. To devastate is easier and more spectacular than to create.” Burgess’ view appears to contradict Alex’s notion that: “If lewdies are good that’s because they like it...” (40). In contrast, doing “good” seems to resonate with a Christian notion of selfless altruism. In other words, choosing the good is not what we would selfishly elect to do if, naturally, inherently sinful humans prefer devastation. Indeed, the

81 American Heritage College Dictionary (2002), 346: “‘Cultured’: educated, polished, and refined.” In Western cultures, classical music is largely considered an “enlightening” aesthetic experience. Therefore, one who is familiar with classical music could reasonably be considered – at least in part – “cultured.”
82 Dix, “Anthony Burgess” (1972), 183. Dix’s interview implies Burgess’ indictment of the attempt to cure evil in civilized, Pelagian societies (Britain).
83 Anthony Burgess, “A Clockwork Orange Resucked,” in A Clockwork Orange (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1986), ix. The notion implied here is that the existence of original sin in all humans gives us an innate proclivity toward evil and destruction over good and creation.
intrinsic extension of the Augustinian notion of original sin is manifested effectively in Alex and his actions of devastation.

In *Clockwork*, it appears that the existence of Augustinian inborn evil is as natural as the good. Moreover, that inherent “necessary” evil is fundamental to defining an individual. Burgess has circumscribed humans by their abilities to make moral choices, and in order to make moral choices there must be at least two options from which to choose. Alex chooses evil because, as he states: “I do what I do because I like to do” (40). Alex’s actions, while evil in their own right, only provide Burgess an opportunity to reveal the greater evil presented in the narrative, which is the selfish elimination of individual moral choice by the state.

**Characterizing the State**

When viewed allegorically, *Clockwork* functions to reveal the nature of the naturally antagonistic relationship between the designs of the collective (state) versus the aims of the free individual (Alex). In *Clockwork*, the actors that comprise the state include members of law enforcement, doctors, and politicians; each group externalizes the “not-self” and position themselves antithetically to Alex. This opposition manifests in the state’s efforts to stifle the Pelagian self, which includes the prospect of moral choice.

The capacity to make moral choices (free will) inexorably contains within it the potentiality that the free will of the individual can be, and often is, in direct opposition to the will of the state. Historically speaking, the stability of any state depends on the compliance of its citizens. Therefore, it is in the state’s best interest to minimize the amount those citizens either “want to,” or have the “ability to” (if they indeed want to) make choices in opposition to the will of the state. Consequently, the contract between the state and the “free” individuals it seeks to govern is inherently one of ascendancy and control. In other words, the more the Machiavellian state can command the free will of its citizens, the longer it will tend to survive. With these ideas in view, this section is devoted to the characterization of *Clockwork*’s state and circumscribes the nature of its relationship to Alex, which will ultimately function on a more thematic level.

The state is characterized explicitly through Alex’s words and implicitly by the conduct of its own members. Such behavior, as will be made evident, largely concerns the endeavor to control the will of the individual through the attempt to induce self-denial by imposing morality upon its citizens. The following passages exemplify aspects of Machiavellian political philosophy and are grouped according to the subjects of focalization (or focalizers), which include members of law enforcement, the Governor, and Dr. Brodsky (director of a state-run conditioning program) respectively:

“If you have no concern for your horrible self you at least might have some for me, who have sweated over you. A big black mark, I tell you in confidence, for every one we don’t reclaim, a confession of failure for every one of you that ends up in the stripy hole” (38).

“If you’d like to give him a bash in the chops, sir,” said the top millicent

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84 Karl Beckson, Arthur Ganz, *Literary Terms: A Dictionary*. 3rd ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1999), 8. “Allegory”, an extended narrative that carries a second meaning along with the surface story. The continuity of the meaning involves an analogous structure of ideas or events. It is reasonable to assume that *Clockwork*s narrative level “entertains” while its allegorical level “instructs” the reader concerning the historically antithetical relationship between the individual (Alex) and the collective (the state).
(policeman), "don't mind us. We'll hold him down. He must be another great
disappointment to you" (71).

"And," said the warder, "It's going to get worse, not better. A right dirty
criminal world you lot are trying to build" (85).

In the first passage, Deltoid, Alex's parole officer, exemplifies the state's intrinsic
egocentrism in that he is more concerned with his professional record than with Alex's
rehabilitation. The second passage illustrates the violent, retributive nature of the state,
which is typically and most obviously manifested by the members of law enforcement
who abuse Alex after they have arrested him. The third passage implies the state's
Pelagian distinction between those who are inherently criminals and those who are not.

While not as overtly violent, the Governor serves to reinforce the notions of
retribution and the Pelagian distinction first mentioned by the prison
warden:

"An eye for an eye, I say. If someone hits you you hit back, do you not? Why
then should not the State, very severely hit by you brutal hooligans, not hit back
also? But the new view is to say no. The new view is that we turn the bad into
good" (93).

Here, the Governor reasserts both the "eye for an eye" (lex taliones) sentiment of
retaliation and the Pelagian distinction between the "bad" and the "good" as if they are
both separate entities, not contained within the same Augustinian individual. The
Governor also introduces the Machiavellian "new view," which is to turn the bad man
into a good man, or a good citizen in the eyes of the state. Dr. Brodsky attempts to
realize this transformation through a procedure known as Ludovico's Technique, or an
experimental aversion therapy (being tested on Alex) that consists of forcing a patient to
view films of ghastly acts of sex, torture, and violence while incorporating drugs to
produce nausea. This process, in effect, restricts free will by permanently conditioning
the patient to react with intense physical illness even after s/he has reentered "free"
society. In the following passages, Brodsky expresses the state's view of this procedure
and its consequences:

"These are subtleties," like smiled Dr. Brodsky. "We are not concerned with
motive, with the higher ethics. We are concerned only with cutting down crime"
(126).

"He will be your true Christian," Dr. Brodsky was creeching out, "ready to turn the
other cheek, ready to be crucified rather than to crucify, sick to the very heart at
the thought of even killing a fly" (129).

In the first passage, Brodsky's comments convey the state's failure to understand the
deeper ethical concerns in regard to the Technique's power to limit one's ability to make
moral choices. Rather, Brodsky feels that Alex's resultant lack of the ability to make moral
choices will render him a "true Christian" ready to turn the other cheek. However, any
future "act" of Christianity would be merely to eliminate the sickness Alex would
experience as a result of his conditioning and not the consequence of moral choice
based on any internal virtue.

NASB (1999), 179. Exodus 21:24 reads: "Eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for
foot." The footnote for this verse assert that "Eye for an eye," or "lex taliones," was a principle
applied in the Old Testament to prevent extreme brutality in exacting retribution.
The state's ignorance in regard to any unforeseen consequences of the conditioning is evidenced in the following interchange between Brodsky and his assistant – Dr. Branom:

"Music," said Dr. Brodsky, like musing. "So you’re keen on music. I know nothing about it myself. It’s a useful emotional heightener, that’s all I know. Well, well. What do you think about that, eh, Branom?" "It can’t be helped," said Dr. Branom. "Each man kills the thing he loves, as the poet-prisoner said. Here’s the punishment element perhaps. The governor ought to be pleased" (113).

This passage reveals the Technique’s inadvertent eradication of Alex’s ability to enjoy classical music – specifically Beethoven’s Ninth. It was not the design of Brodsky and Branom to induce this response. Rather, it was entirely by accident that Alex was conditioned to involuntarily react to Beethoven as he would to violence.

In addition to a kind of consequential ignorance, the state seems equally oblivious to its own moral accountability as it pertains to the creation of the Technique. Specifically, it is only Alex who understands the state’s culpability in creating the violent films it uses to condition him:

This was very real, very real, though if you thought about it properly you couldn’t imagine lewdies actually agreeing to having all this done to them in a film, and if these films are made by the Good or the State you couldn’t imagine them being allowed to take these films without like interfering with what was going on (103).

Here, Alex points out the “realness” of the films and implies that either the state directly sanctioned the violent acts or filmed the acts in progress without interfering. In both cases, the state is left morally accountable. However, being in power, the state is not answerable for its actions and is in a position to impose its collective will on that of the individual. With his own will being infringed upon, Alex notes that the individual often fights back:

But the not-self cannot have the bad because they cannot allow the self. And is not our modern history, my brothers, the story of brave selves fighting these big machines? (40).

Alex explicitly describes the state’s (the "not-self") denial of the self, which is a categorical stifling of the human capacity to make moral choices. The state cannot allow the self, or the bad citizen because s/he has the potential to be a direct threat to those in power. Therefore, it is in the state’s best interest – in the name of “crime reduction” – to manipulate an individual’s capacity to make choices. Conversely, not restricting individual choice would be politically hazardous because the state could easily be expunged through the choice presented in open elections or outright insurgency. Thus, by denying the self, freedom of choice is limited, therefore (potentially) increasing the state’s capacity to maintain its Machiavellian constancy.

In an effort to control the will of the individual, the state not only sanctions violence, but performs it as well. What is more, the state is egocentrically incognizant of the greater ethical ramifications of their actions and unaware of the significance of moral choice and its inherent interplay with moral responsibility. This obtuseness is evidenced by Brodsky’s reference to the “motive” and “higher ethics” behind crime as “subtleties” when viewed in light of the “true Christian” he espouses. Thus, Clockwork’s state – implicitly characterized by both its own members and Alex – begins to materialize. The state endeavors, oftentimes violently, to exercise control over Alex’s will. While such
efforts are occasionally done in the name of altruism (Alex's parole officer), they appear to resonate more with the notion of self-preservation – a notion evidenced when Brodsky claims that "cutting down crime" is his only concern. A government that can significantly reduce crime is generally one that will remain in power, and Clockwork's state has succeeded in effectively limiting Alex's ability to act in a way that may threaten to its long-term stability.

However, Ludovico's Technique has also added an unforeseen punishment element in the eradication of Beethoven as a source of joy for Alex. With this point in mind, Burgess stated:

The gates of heaven are closed to the boy (Alex), since music is a figure of celestial bliss. The State has committed a double sin: it has destroyed a human being, since humanity is defined by freedom of moral choice; it has also destroyed an angel."86

Burgess' comment implies that the state may have overstepped the bounds of lex taliones in their elimination of Alex's love for music, or have committed a "double sin." Hence, the state exemplifies Clockwork's "double" or "greater" evil by forcing one to do socially acceptable acts of goodness not out of moral conviction, but simply from a state-run programming. Such a collective imposition of will is spiritually damning relegating the individual to a sub-human, robotic condition (a clockwork orange).87 In other words, the balance of the contract is weighted in favor of the state, rather than the individual. In such a case, the state becomes the annihilator of an individual's authenticity and innate sense of autonomy and self-expression in order to ensure its own survival. In Clockwork, imaged through the relationship between Alex and the state, Burgess contends that authentic, selfless goodness is not coerced goodness. Therefore, good accomplished through free choice is infinitely better than the forced good of one who is oppressed into a kind of pseudo-morality. In other words, freely chosen evil is, in a sense, paradoxically good in that the act was freely chosen.

Characterizing the Prison Charlie

The prison charlie (or chaplain) is vital to the reader's understanding of Clockwork's presentation of political philosophy and, in particular, the Pelagian-Augustinian contention. The charlie, while certainly not portrayed as the paradigm of moral perfection, presents the reader with an intermediary viewpoint in response to Alex's openly vicious use of his free will and the state's more clandestinely sadistic use of the Ludovico's Technique as a "cure." While explicitly characterized by en Alex, it is largely through his participation as an actor in the fabula that the charlie is implicitly revealed as a character in the story who presents the reader with perhaps the only even-handed insight into the moral implications of the Technique.

Contrasted with the state, the charlie assumes the role of conscientious spokesperson in regard to the deeper moral considerations that the Technique provokes:

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86 Carol Dix, "Anthony Burgess" (1972), 185. This passage further reinforces the tremendous importance Burgess placed on the inviolability of moral choice in Dix's interview. This importance is signified by the term "double sin" as it refers to the state's elimination of Alex's ability to make moral choices.

87 Burgess, "Resucked" (1986), ix. Burgess defines a "clockwork orange" as someone who can only (robotically) perform good or evil. Frank Northen Magill, ed., Magill's Survey of Long Fiction (Salem: Salem Press Inc., 1991), 370. In contradistinction to this, Burgess reinforces the idea that: "No matter how awful one's actions become, s/he should be allowed to choose them."
"The question is whether such a technique can really make a man good. Goodness comes from within, 6655321. Goodness is something chosen. When a man cannot choose he ceases to be a man" (83).

"It may not be nice to be good, little 6655321. It may be horrible to be good. What does God want? Does God want goodness or the choice of goodness? Is a man who chooses the bad in some way better than a man who has the good imposed upon him?" (95).

"Choice, " rumbled a rich deep goloss. I viddied it belonged to the prison charlie. "He has no real choice, has he? Self-interest, fear of physical pain drove him to that grotesque act of self-abasement. Its insincerity was clearly to be seen. He ceases to be a wrongdoer. He ceases also to be a creature capable of moral choice" (126).

The preceding passages reveal the charlie's reactions to the weighty moral implications of the aversion therapy being tested on Alex who has been further dehumanized by simply being referred to as "6655321." In the last passage, echoing Burgess' own sentiments noted earlier, the charlie also defines humanity by our ability to make moral choices and the notion of that ability as a "greater good" even when it is used to do evil. What is more, the elimination of moral choice results in the eradication of moral responsibility, which may be a necessary component of a more Pelagian "moral transformation."

While the prison charlie may be the only character that seriously considers Alex's well-being as a human and an individual, he cannot escape either his own selfish concerns of his career in the face an ambitious regime or his own frailty that frequently manifests in drunkenness:

And all the time he had this rich many von of Scotch on him, and then he went off to this little cantora to peet some more (79).

"Were it expedient, I would protest about it, but it is not expedient. There is the question of my own career, there is the question of the weakness of my own voice when set against the shout of certain more powerful elements in the polity" (94).

However, despite his weaknesses, it is the charlie's understanding of the importance of choice that ultimately affects on Alex's awareness of its significance:

"What's it going to be then, eh?" said the prison charlie for the third raz. "Is it going to be in and out of institutions like this, though more in than out for most of you, or are you going to attend to the Divine Word and realize the punishments that await the unrepentant sinner in the next world, as well as this?" (77).

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88 Burgess, "Clockwork Resucked" (1986), ix: "Evil has to exist along with good, in order that moral choice may operate."

89 B.R. Rees, The Letters of Pelagius (Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1989), 20. The Pelagian individual's own "moral transformation" based on the doctrine of free will and strength of mind counters the Augustinian notion of predestined "salvation" based on the doctrine God's electing individuals unto salvation through grace.
Here, the initial question posed by the charlie implies the human capacity of (Pelagian) free will to make moral decisions between good and evil. The relationship between Alex's and the charlie's cognizance of the weight of choice is manifested in Alex's repetition of the charlie's question ("What's it going to be then, eh?") four times in the first four pages of the novel. This "question-motif," which was gleaned by cf Alex from the charlie, is addressed to the reader by the older, wiser, cf Alex who, looking back, realizes the value of moral choice and emphasizes it to the reader in the form of a motif.

In the entire narrative, it is only the charlie who realizes the inherent moral uncertainty in regard to the Technique. He recognizes that this procedure merely dehumanizes Alex by restricting his capacity to make decisions, and while it may make him a good citizen, it cannot make him good man. The Technique strips Alex of moral responsibility and forces him to choose the good to avoid the painful consequences of his conditioning, which leaves him as something less than human. It is only the charlie who grasps the moral ramifications included in the state's creation of this "sub-human," which can only perform a relative good. This new being is referred to by Burgess as a clockwork orange; "meaning that he (Alex) has the appearance of an organism lovely with colour and juice but is in fact only a clockwork toy to be wound up by God or the Devil or (since this is increasingly replacing both) the State" ("Resucked" 1986: ix). Both as an actor in the fabula and a character in the story, it is the prison charlie who most clearly presents Clockwork's thematic thrust with respect to the gravity of moral choice.

Implicit Characterization and the Retributive Nature of Violence

While cf Alex is blatantly destructive, the reader is confronted with numerous acts of violence committed by other actors in the fabula. Although Alex's acts are certainly heinous, the vicious exploits of the other actors must also be examined to fully form the complete picture of Clockwork's violence. The passages in this section confront the reader with acts of retribution performed by members of disparate strata of society. The first passage reveals the retributive violence of the police:

I will not go into what they did, but it was all like panting and thudding against this like background of whirring farm engines and the twitttwittering in the bare or nagoy branches (150).

Here, Alex describes how these particular policemen (former gang-members the state has recruited whom Alex had previously beaten in Part I) execute their revenge, although he has left out the more graphic details.

The second and third passages exemplify the retributive violence of the "traditional" police and Deltoid (parole officer) respectively:

"A real pleasure this is," I heard another millicent goloss say as I was tolchoked very rough and skorry into the auto (65).

He came a bit nearer and he spat. He spat. He spat full in my litso and then wiped his wet spitty rot with the back of his rooker (71).

In both instances, members of the state seek reprisal for the wrongs they believe Alex has committed against them. Specifically, they intend to make Alex pay for the violent and cleverly elusive behavior that has been their source of recurrent humiliation.

The fourth passage discloses the retributive violence of the old "prof type" (and his companions) whom Alex had also previously beaten:
"Kill him, stamp on him, murder him, kick his teeth in," and all that cal, and I could viddy what it was clear enough. It was old age having a go at youth, that’s what it was (144).

Here, we can clearly see the cyclical nature of revenge as “old age having a go at youth” reverses the young (Alex and his droogs) “having a go at old age” seen earlier in the fabula on page 14.

In the fifth passage, F. Alexander – a writer and political dissident – takes revenge for the prior assault and rape of his wife. F. Alexander and his associates lock Alex in a room and play Beethoven’s Ninth fully aware that it was a part of his conditioning:

And all the time the music got more and more gromky, like it was all a deliberate torture, O my brothers (167).

Calculatingly, F. Alexander uses the music to torture Alex and force him to jump out of a window, which is his only escape. He ultimately intends to use Alex’s death as a propaganda weapon against the state.

In each case presented above, violent revenge is taken upon Alex for the vicious acts he had previously committed upon those same actors. Using these actions as a form of implicit characterization, it appears that Burgess has constructed a fabula that impels the reader to consider the retributive nature of violence. Although Alex’s violence was dispensed for his mere indulgence and the resulting retribution tends to be viewed as “justified” (lex tationes), one could also argue that the violence perpetrated against Alex was also born out of kind of selfish indulgence. While it is the case that retributive actions tend to correlate neatly with our innate sense of equity, the examples seen in Clockwork are motivated by not only revenge, but also by an underlying layer of professional arrogance, generational vanity, and political expediency. To state it differently, although their revenge is warranted, each revenging actor appears to be motivated less by Alex’s prior act and more by deeper selfish ends. What is more, no revenging actor exhibits the slightest measure of the charlie’s Augustinian notion of altruistic love as a response to how they have been individually wronged by Alex. Thus, all acts of violence work in fixed interdependence with one another to effectively force the reader into larger considerations in regard to the selfish motivations of those who desire the power to consummate their egoistic intents.

**Redeeming Love and Chapter Twenty-one**

The last chapter – twenty-one – was originally edited out for American audiences by Burgess’ New York publisher, whereas European readers had access to the full text Burgess originally produced. In 1986, chapter twenty-one was finally restored for American audiences.

For the first twenty chapters of the narrative, Alex desired to commit only evil. However, twenty-one presents the reader with a new chapter beginning to Alex’s story and exposes a dramatic tonal shift that unveils the “possibility of moral transformation,” which Burgess believed should be fundamental to the creation of any novel. In twenty-

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90 Burgess, “Clockwork Resucked” (1986), viii: “There is, in fact, not much point in writing a novel unless you can show the possibility of moral transformation, or an increase in wisdom, operating in your chief character or characters.”
one, Alex has turned eighteen and both numbers (21 and 18) are symbolic ages of human maturity in many Western cultures. While twenty-one sheds new light upon Alex, it is also representative of an age not only of maturity, but also of adulthood. Accordingly, he “outgrows” the incorrigible ways of his youth as he states: “Yes yes yes, there it was. Youth must go, ah yes” (190). However, he goes on to assert that:

Youth is only being in a way like it might be an animal. No, it is not just like being an animal so much as being like one of these malenký toys you viddy being sold in the streets, like little chellovecks made out of tin and with a spring inside and then a winding handle on the outside and you wind it up grrr grrr grrr grrr and off it itties like walking, O my brothers. But it itties in a straight line and bangs straight into things bang bang and it cannot help what it is doing. Being young is like being like one of these malenký machines (190).

Here, Alex likens being young to being a wind-up toy banging into things because it is devoid of autonomy and self-control.

In the following passage, Alex reveals his concern for the well-being of a future son because he knows that like the windup toy he will be powerless to prevent his son from mechanically committing many of the same atrocities:

My son, my son. When I had my son I would explain all that to him when he was starry enough to like understand. But then I knew he would not understand or would not want to understand at all and would do all the veshches I had done, yes perhaps even killing some poor starry forella surrounded with mewing kots and koshkas, and I would not be able to really stop him (191).

Both passages divulge the robotic and animalistic nature of youth, which presents a potential dilemma when viewed in light of the tremendous importance Burgess places on moral choice. On Alex’s connection between the young and a mechanical toy that continually and impotently errs is problematized in light of the thematic significance of moral choice. For contained within moral choice is its inherent significance in association with moral responsibility, which plays a requisite role for one to ultimately make a Pelagian “moral transformation.”

Alex is aware that what he had been doing was in some way wrong as he frets about his own son following in his path. However, Alex only came to this insight after naturally shedding youth and sensing some level of matured moral responsibility. Like the windup toy that cannot control itself, the actions of youthful Alex were beyond his command and he is thus freed from all moral responsibility, which undermines the value of moral choice. The mechanistic actions of the youthful Alex expose a precarious relationship with the tremendous weight Clockwork places upon moral choice and, conversely, the great evil of taking it away. This awkward relationship between action and choice may be easily reconciled as an authorial oversight or simply by the unreliability of Alex’s narration. On Alex displays the common propensity for those who have finally matured to offhandedly dismiss their former misgivings to being “young,” as opposed to taking complete ownership. However, such an inconsistency can also be attributed to the characteristic outflow of Burgess’ oscillating, residual Christianity, which
precariously attempts to straddle the theoretical opposites of Pelagian free will and the universal inheritance of sin and the resulting determinism of Augustinianism.  

**Literary Space and Implied Temporal Derivatives**

Literary space is an inclusive term that refers to the environment, or the surroundings that situate objects and characters. The relevance of the following explication of *Clockwork*’s literary space rests on this aspect’s capacity to influence the reader’s conception of the fabula elements and resulting interpretation of the story. While much of this section focuses on language, such a discussion functions as a temporary device exclusively for the explication of these particular aspects as they assist the overall textual analysis.

In chapter three, the Alex reveals that he lives in “Municipal Flatblock 18a between Kingsley Avenue and Wilsonway” (31). From his disclosure, several things can be gleaned. First, judging preliminarily from the street names and the word “municipal,” Alex presumably inhabits a relatively modern Western, English-speaking city, which is divided into municipalities and has addresses designated by numbers and letters (18a). Most Western readers recognize such typical street names as Kingsley Avenue and Wilsonway and are acquainted with a municipality, but may be slightly vexed by the term “flatblock.” This term, for what we assume is a sort of apartment building, presents the “unfamiliar” (fabricated) within the “familiar” (existent), which creates a slightly futuristic flavor, or the special effect contrived by Burgess.

This modern Western, rather ambiguous city and its bordering suburbs circumscribe *Clockwork*’s first, or largest degree of literary space. Burgess moves the reader from the city to the suburbs in one of the narrative’s more explicit depictions of space:

> We filled round what was called the backtown for a bit, scaring old vecks and cheenas that were crossing the road and zigzagging after cats and that. Then we took the road west. There wasn’t much traffic about, so I kept pushing the old noga through the floorboards new, and the Durango 95 ate up the road like spaghetti. Soon it was winter trees and dark, my brothers, with a country dark...(19).

Extracted from the city, the reader is transported into the less crowded suburbs that are left dark from the scarcity of the city lights and abundance of trees. The lesser degrees of space in *Clockwork*, whether it is Alex’s home in the city, or another character’s home in the surrounding country, are left virtually undescribed, which leaves *Clockwork*’s conveyance of literary space rather amorphous. It encompasses all things that can be conceived of as spatially located objects and persons (Jahn 2001: N6.2). Viewed in this way, a place is an abstract concept, while space is concrete and describable. In other words, Alex’s apartment or the city he lives in can only become “real,” in a sense, through the description of literary space. Thus, *Clockwork*’s amorphous conveyance of literary space adds the narrative’s special disorienting and futuristic effect.

Although a particular event within the fabula occurs at a specific locale or place, the event is provided context through the degrees of space it is embedded within. For example, Frank Herbert’s epic science-fiction classic *Dune* (1965) incorporates the largest

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91 Rees, *The Letters of Pelagius* (1989), 20: “Pelagius taught that redemption in Christ enables man to co-operate with God in the ascetical struggle toward deification. The English Monk and scholar St. Bede stated that Pelagius’ theology contains: ‘much excellent moral instruction but is marred by the author’s failure to emphasize the need to rely on divine grace rather than free will and strength of mind.’”
conceivable degree of literary space, as the entire known universe is accessible to its inhabitants. The characters of *Dune* are able to “fold space,” or “travel without moving” to any part of the universe instantaneously. Embedded within this largest possible space, or frame, specific events of the fabula occur. For example, a particular event early in *Dune*’s fabula consists of the birth of its protagonist—Muad’Dib:

A beginning is the time for taking the most delicate care that the balances are correct. This every sister of the Bene Gesserit knows. To begin your study of the life of Muad’Dib, then, take care that you first place him in his time: born in the 57th year of the Padishah Emperor Shaddam IV. And take the most special care that you locate Muad’Dib in his place: the planet Arrakis. Do not be deceived by the fact that he was born on Caladan and lived his first fifteen years there. Arrakis, the planet known as Dune, is forever his place (1990: 1).

Muad’Dib’s birth is far-reaching in that it influences all other events in the fabula. His birth marks the beginning of a jihad that will cleanse the universe and every degree of space that lies embedded within it. Therefore, it is imperative that the reader gets a sense of the vastness of *Dune*’s first degree of literary space in order to place the embedded birth event in its proper context. For Muad’Dib will ultimately transform the entire universe.

Space can be perceptually represented through sight, hearing, and touch; and to what extent the writer chooses to describe each is the proportion of “feel” given to the reader. Literary space can also be depicted implicitly as the reader makes connections between the information provided and the most logical space for it to operate in. For example, if a character is riding a motorcycle, then the reader naturally infers that the character is outside on a road. Moreover, literary space can also serve to imply literary time. Literary time is also a comprehensive term that refers to the time the story “impresses” upon its readers in the most general sense, rather than the way time specifically frames a particular event in the fabula. For example, if a human being is walking around without a breathing apparatus on a lush and green Mars, the reader would likely infer that the character is some time in the distant future since the planet’s landscape has been dramatically transformed and a human is able to exist without oxygen supplied artificially. Literary space, then, is material to the story as the author is able to intimate a sense of literary time and give the reader multiple degrees of descriptive context in which the fabula can operate. Most substantially, that context can, in varying degrees, influence how the reader views the elements of the fabula and, in turn, how s/he interprets the story. This also holds true for *Clockwork*.

In the following passage, Alex and his droogs drive a stolen car into the suburbs where they have their ill-fated encounter with F. Alexander and his wife:

> The luna was well up now, and we could viddy this cottage fine and clear as I eased up and put the brake on, the other three giggling like bezoomny, and we could viddy the name on the gate of this cottage veshch was HOME, a gloopy sort of name (19).

Earlier in chapters one and two, the reader was confronted with several violent events in the city where they are typically more prevalent. However, perhaps the most brutal violence perpetrated by Alex and his droogs takes place in the outlying suburbs where oftentimes people go to escape the turmoil of urban life. What is more, the event takes place in the victim’s “HOME” where we often tend to feel most secure from the evils of

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Bal, *Narratology* (1997), 140: “...space is always implicitly necessary for every activity performed by a character.”
the outside world. With this example in view, we can see how an event's significance, as it relates to the reader's interpretation of the story, is affected by the degree of literary space in which it occurs.

Similar to Terry Gilliam's futuristic, yet anachronistic realm envisioned in his film Brazil (1985), Clockwork conveys a world set in the near future by juxtaposing the familiar and the unfamiliar within a rather commonplace, ambiguous sense of literary space. While the novel does, at times, present space explicitly through description, Clockwork implies literary time through a fusion of existent and fabricated language, customs, and objects. A literary time set in a bizarre fictional past or present is immediately dismissed in the first chapter when Alex and his "droogs" (gang) rob a man of his letters that date "back to 1960" (7). As Clockwork was first published in 1962, Alex's disclosure of the letters dating "back to" 1960 as something noteworthy lends credence to the early assumption of Clockwork being set in the future. According to the description of Alex's address and the mention of the stolen letter's date, the reader should begin envisioning a world set in the future rather than the past or the present. As a result, s/he must then determine if they are reading a story set in the near or distant future.

In addressing the reader's present dilemma, Burgess utilizes several devices that are simultaneously familiar and unfamiliar as clues; it is this paradoxical interplay that gives the reader the sense of the near, rather than distant future. For example, people drive cars such as the "Durango 95" and watch movies in the "Filmodrome." The reader is assuredly familiar with cars and movie theaters, but unfamiliar with their more futuristic fictitious counterparts in Clockwork. It is through this paradoxical interaction of coexistent familiarity and unfamiliarity that Burgess is able to create a sense of the near future just beyond the immediate experience of the reader. In further illustration, George Orwell first published 1984 in 1948 and set it in the late twentieth century, or the near future for a 1948 audience. Conversely, for a present-day audience, a story set in the late twentieth-century would be the past. However, while the year 1984 has come and gone, the story is still able to impress a sense of the near future upon its readers through its particular union of the familiar with the unfamiliar. Similar to 1984, it is Clockwork's paradoxical sense of literary time that is able to convey a continual sense of the near future.

While deftly utilizing the realm of fictitious objects, Clockwork makes a related use of language, imagery, and custom, much to the same effect. The most cogent device he used to these ends is his use of language. Similar to, although not as extensive as, J.R.R. Tolkien's use of imagined languages in his Lord of the Rings (1944) trilogy, Burgess, both as a writer and an established linguist, employs his novel as a repository for a developed exploration of languages. Nadsat stems from the Russian word "nadsat" (a

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93 As evidenced on page 19 of the text, Burgess refers to the writer F. Alexander's place of residence as "HOME." Even though it is not the only residence presented in story, using all capital letter clearly emphasizes the importance of this particular location. There are two likely possibilities for such an emphasis: one, it connects the fictional incidents in F. Alexander's "HOME" to the actual incidents in Burgess' life; two, it emphasizes the irony of the violence which occurs within the typically protected environment of one's home.

94 Terry Gilliam. Brazil (Los Angeles: Universal Pictures, 1985). Although set in the future, the actors in Brazil use antiquated typewriters, drive old cars, watch old televisions, and dress in a Western 1950's style. This confronts the viewer with fictional futuristic devices as well as overtly anachronistic ones. The effect is, generally, that the film conveys a sense of the "near" future.

95 George Orwell. 1984 (New York: Penguin Group, 1977). Orwell's novel 1984 (1948) is widely recognized for its ability to continually impress upon its readers a sense of the near future. This capacity allows it to serve as a perpetual caveat in regard to the state's oppressive tendencies.

suffix for the teenage numbers 11 through 19) and is made up mainly of Russian, child speak, and Cockney, while also incorporating German, Malay, French, Arabic, and Romany. It is incorporated in Clockwork as a type of slang used only between Alex and his droogs. A postmodern pastiche of language, nadsat is (in Clockwork) the language of youth. Alex uses a more standard version of English when he is speaking to any other actor besides his droogs and often bounces back and forth quite rapidly between the two. The reader is, therefore, concurrently unfamiliar with Alex's use of fictional nadsat and familiar with his use of Standard English.

Bizarre imagery and customs are also utilized shrewdly along these same lines. Early in the fabula, cn Alex describes the appearance of cf Alex and his droogs:

The four of us were dressed in the heighth of fashion, which in those days was a pair of black very tight tights with the old jelly mould, as we called it, fitting on the crutch underneath the tights, this being to protect and also a sort of a design you could viddly clear enough in a certain sort of light, so that I had one in the shape of a spider... Then we wore waisty jackets without lapels but with these very big built-up shoulders (pletchoes we called them) which were a kind of a mockery having real shoulders like that. Then, my brothers, we had these off-white cravats which looked like whipped-up kartoffel or spud with a sort of a design made on it with a fork (2).

The reader is likely to be acquainted with the types of clothing, but unaccustomed with the manner in which it is being worn. On the same page, teenage girls, or "sharps," are described as wearing "purple and green and orange wigs" with make-up painted in a rainbow around their eyes. These same sharps also demonstrate the extrinsic custom of wearing silver badges on the front of their clothing near their breasts with the names of those they had slept with before they reached the age of fourteen. In addition, it is not remarkable that Alex and his droogs use drugs, but it is peculiar that they drink milk laced with the fictitious hallucinogenic drugs "vellocet or synthemesc or drencrom" (1). As a result, the reader is simultaneously acquainted with the functions of clothes, make-up, fashion, and drugs, and unfamiliar with the way in which they are being displayed or applied.

Burgess' uncommon use of language interwoven with bizarre character appearance, invented customs, and objects gives the reader a sense of the unfamiliar within the somewhat familiar surroundings of a modern Western city that serves as a point of disorientation and - having ruled out a bizarre fictional past or present - the reader is therefore inclined toward the future. While the world of Clockwork exists as a foreign place of the Durango 95 and the Filmodrome, it is concurrently a recognizable world where people watch television, read printed newspapers, and rot in cramped prison cells behind iron bars. It is precisely this paradoxical juxtaposition within the context of a modern Western city that enables Burgess to create a perpetual sense of the near future as literary space and time. The impression of the near future allows Clockwork to continually impress upon its readers its allegorical representation of the antithetical relationship between the collective and the individual.

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97 McDougal, Kubrick’s A Clockwork Orange (2003), 3: “For his novel, Burgess created a new language - which he calls ‘nadsat’ from the Russian suffix for ‘teen’ - comprised of a mixture of slang, baby talk, Romany, and Russian derivatives to express a reality that is at once near and distant.”

98 Beckson, Ganz, Literary Terms (1999), 31: “Placed among the various forms of artistic imitation, pastiche is a work made by pasting together scraps from different parts of works from other artists.”
Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to ascertain if *Clockwork*’s particular political philosophy conceptualized a Christianity that oscillated between Pelagianism and Augustinianism through the narrative’s treatment of self and other. I did this through a close textual reading that incorporated an articulation of the story through character analysis and an examination of the fabula elements.

In *Clockwork*, the conception of universal original sin is elucidated as virtually every actor in the fabula chooses to act, oftentimes violently, out of innate selfish desire. This desire, according to Burgess, is “easier and more spectacular” than selfless goodness. The novel reinforces the importance of Pelagian moral choice by diminishing the magnitude of the evil committed by Alex against society. Thus, he is able to accomplish the moderation of Alex’s evil by juxtaposing it with the “greater” or “double” evil ingrained in the abolition of moral choice best evidenced by the state-run Ludovico’s Technique. This distinction is magnified exponentially when placed in light of Burgess’ own devastating personal experience when his wife died as the indirect result of an attack by four GI deserters during WWII.

Through a device known as “mise en abyme” (a typical feature of postmodern narrative), it appears as though Burgess has implicitly linked himself to a character in the narrative (F. Alexander) that is writing a book called *A Clockwork Orange*. Like Burgess, F. Alexander’s wife also died as an indirect result of a viscous attack by strangers (Alex and his three droogs). Such a correlation begs the question: why would Burgess place such a heavy emphasis on the sanctity of moral choice in light of Alex’s actions committed against F. Alexander and metaphorically himself? The extraordinary import of moral choice must find its being within the realm of moral responsibility and moral transformation, which form a Pelagian interdependent alliance. As noted earlier, Burgess stated that: “there is not much point in writing a novel unless you can show the possibility of moral transformation” (“Resucked” 1986: viii).

Alex was ultimately transformed from a creature who only desired to commit evil acts to one who was beginning to see beyond his own selfish desires. Alex’s concern for the well-being of a hypothetical future son in chapter twenty-one provides evidence of his rudimentary conversion from “selfishness” to “selflessness.” He was not “conditioned” into this transformation by the Machiavellian efforts of the state, but came to a comprehension of his own evil from the sense of moral responsibility he gleaned from the destructive consequences of his choices. In short, Alex grew up.

*Clockwork*, therefore, demonstrates Burgess’ oscillating Christianity since evil moves through the story as the repercussion of universally sinful humans who act on their ability to make moral choices. It would appear, according to the narrative, that Pelagian moral choice and the potential of learned moral responsibility might be the only corridor to a positive moral transformation for inherently sinful Augustinian individuals. The narrative demonstrates Burgess’ willingness to accept our innate evil and its

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*Burgess, “Resucked” 1986. ix. Burgess argued that because of our inherent original sin, “selfishness” comes more naturally than “selflessness.”

*Jennings, Robert. “Candid Conversation with Anthony Burgess.” In *Playboy Magazine*, no. 9 (September 1974). 70. In his interview, Burgess stated that the result of the attack was a gynecological disease that: “begot its own psychological aura.” The result of this was that she resigned herself to the idea of wanting to die and drank herself to death.

*Sim, ed. *Postmodernism* (2001), 318: “Mise-en-abyme”: originally a heraldic term denoting an escutcheon bearing in its center a miniature replica of itself. mise-en-abyme was used by André Gide to describe the same technique in literary narratives. In contemporary criticism, it has been used since the 1950’s in a more general sense to describe self-reflexivity or self-consciousness in fiction.”
destructive potential of choices that may result in aimless violence, pain, and despair, because without it moral choice would cease to exist. Burgess stated: “I don’t want comfort, I want God, I want poetry, I want real danger, I want freedom, I want goodness, I want sin.” In other words, without moral freedom, one could not learn moral responsibility and, ultimately, experience a positive moral transformation that, according to Burgess, is only valid if it is chosen. The actuality of moral freedom equals the plausibility of moral responsibility that can, perhaps, lead to a positive moral transformation, which is not coerced.

In *Clockwork*, the principal characters’ good and evil actions are the direct result of the desires found in their inherent Augustinian “schizophrenia.” While the violent actions driven by selfish desire for power were portrayed as evil, they were not as evil as the state’s restriction of moral choice (a “double sin”). The greater good is founded upon Pelagian moral choice, which, in turn, is instituted upon the constitution of the Augustinian individual that is simultaneously good and evil. To put it differently, it is only through the dual nature of humanity inherent in Augustinianism that the Pelagian individual is able to make moral choices, which necessarily entails at least two options to choose from. Hence, Burgess’ oscillation ostensibly works. Burgess’ oscillating Christianity as evidenced in *Clockwork*, simply stated, intimates that despite being inherently sinful, Alex can effectively “save himself” and experience a moral transformation as he learns from the consequences of his choices. However, such a proposition, while apparently workable in the fictional narrative of *Clockwork*, remains fundamentally paradoxical.

The nature of *Clockwork*’s incongruity materializes as the deeper implications of the antithetical theological poles of Augustinianism and Pelagianism play out. Humans, according to Augustine, are innately sinful – totally deprave d – which leaves the Augustinian individual (Alex) utterly incapable of saving himself. In light of this view, redemption is left in the pre-destined election of God. Conversely, Pelagian denial of original, universal sin and God’s pre-ordination of our lives converts God’s salvation into a free individual’s ability to make a positive moral transformation on their own as a result of the moral responsibility learned from the consequences of moral choices. Therefore, while Burgess’ oscillating Christianity seemingly works in a narrative that images the “greater good” of moral choice and the “greater evil” of its eradication, a further examination confirms its paradoxical disposition in relation to the central tenets of Augustinianism and Pelagianism.

Lastly, this theological discussion must ultimately be placed back into the context of political philosophy. For it was the oppositional tension between the self and the state that generated *Clockwork*’s dialectic. Niebuhr’s description of mutual love appears to be the kind of Augustinian remedy that the charlie advocates, as opposed to the more Machiavellian degenerative form of “mere calculation” based on selfish ambition. *Clockwork* demonstrates how this manipulative relationship between self and other inexorably leads to selfish oppression, or the self’s the attempt to make an instrument of the other to achieve its ends. While, Burgess’ work condemns such actions, it is shown to be the lesser evil in comparison to the state’s systematic elimination of an individual’s capacity to make moral choices. *Clockwork* denounces this kind of Machiavellian oppression in favor of a nobler, altruistic love as a means to foster the transformation of unredeemable criminals into not only good citizens, but also good men.

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102 Dix, “Anthony Burgess” (1972), 185. Burgess stated that he viewed man as the “Savage” in *Brave New World*, which implies that he is willing to accept man’s savagery because without it, man’s beauty and freedom would cease to exist.