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The Lesser of Two Evils: The State in A Clockwork Orange and The Wanting Seed

Bachelor's thesis

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Abstract

The dystopian genre illustrates an infernal outlook on the potential future awaiting and originates in the concerns of the postwar era. Anthony Burgess's literature, however, reverses the crucial element of government oppression and provides a complex portraiture of the state, its agencies, and its representatives, which prompts the question of the author's initial intention for such an ambiguous depiction. Accordingly, this paper investigates the sociocultural and historical prerequisites for the Burgessian dystopian government and how it could be interpreted.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis titled **The Lesser of Two Evils: The State in A Clockwork Orange and The Wanting Seed** that I have submitted for assessment is entirely my original work, and that no part of it has been taken from the work of others unless explicitly cited and acknowledged within the text of my thesis.

Brno April 26, 2024 .....

Elena Dia

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1 Introduction

A Clockwork Orange and *The Wanting Seed* are dystopian novels by Anthony Burgess, published in 1962. Both works, following from the definition of the dystopian genre, depict a distorted potential future awaiting and reflect an era's uncertainty of the military decades. As Burgess published *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* the same year, there is a perception that the two works supplement each other by operating as a whole mechanism: project similar concepts, yet on different terms. What indeed constitutes this idea is an excellent resemblance of a literary conflict and its resolution, namely of a state and an individual. Notwithstanding an inability to exist separately, this symbiotic relationship is the subject of discussion that seems to be a leitmotif for various author's works. Burgess targets the dichotomy of a government and a civil society, showing the destructive aspects and tactics each possesses and the repercussions they might have. Similarly, *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* seem to not only illustrate the state's tyranny in their narratives but also present an antihero trope as a core for their protagonists, proving the author to be unbiased towards the conflict. With the unreliability of the ultraviolent narrator, Alex, and all the satiric remarks on the protagonists' hardships in *The Wanting Seed*, Burgess sets an unclear picture of whether he approves of the autocratic methods or advertises violation of the law. What might be true is that Anthony Burgess raises the question of moral ambiguity. Whilst the role of individual and human conditioning has been frequently debated, the roles of the state and its bodies have not received such prominent publicity despite them being the instrument to convey the first. Both works illustrate oppressive state bodies, but simultaneously, they seem to have

more complex roles in the narratives, considering the author's neutralism. Furthermore, through comparison, it is possible to infer that the state agencies' polarising portrayals do not diminish objectives to provide reasonable solutions to the problems arising from protagonists' actions, such as overpopulation, rebellions, famine, or juvenile delinquency and ultraviolence. Therefore, considering the ambivalent government position in the works mentioned earlier, it is crucial to investigate Anthony Burgess's prerequisites for the functions and roles state bodies represent in the context of books, their meanings, and their importance to the narratives.

Considering the chosen topic's relevance, it is worth noting that scholarly research done in the segment is minimal. Whilst there is a plethora of academic works related to Burgess's perspective on humanism in the novels, especially *A Clockwork Orange* as a prime example, the amount of research with governmental agencies being the emphasis is insufficient. The academic focus primarily targets minorities' fates in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*, leaving many undisclosed matters regarding the characters representing the state and their portrayals. Accordingly, the unavailability of related materials creates a slim, promising gap in the widespread literary criticism surrounding Burgess's novels. Therefore, it offers an opportunity to cover the unsolved aspects of Anthony Burgess's works, such as the governmental bodies, what they represent, and their meanings in the contexts of both works. In addition, it is crucial to mention that the paper approaches the topic in a sociocultural manner, meaning that the author's time disposition and cultural code affect the investigation. Moreover, it proposes an elaborate review to represent the works' fuller meaning. The prime reason for the lack of

scholarly work seems to be a social bias targeting the central themes of both *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*, namely, an individual's role in the dystopian setting.

The prevalent academic perspective regarding Anthony Burgess's novels, as observed, concerns civil rights and freedoms. The topic that unites the scholarship for this literary work is the humanness of the government's actions. Precisely, academic effort has been put into debating the problem of templating individuals. However, not only is there a tendency to omit the sociocultural and political circumstances Burgess implies, but also the lack of analysis of the secondary characters who contribute equally to the novels' relevance. The author's perspective on the matter is also rarely mentioned. Accordingly, the above-stated reasons provoke an interest in constructive analysis without adherence to universal truths to identify the missed plot points and, presumably, discover new interpretations of Anthony Burgess's novels and the author's stance on the topic. As for the literary criticism present to this day regarding the theme, it is problematic to evaluate its relevance. A novel that is well-known yet one-sidedly examined, *A Clockwork Orange* might seem like an unlimited resource for literary studies. However, considering the chosen topic focuses on government agencies, their functions, and social and political structures, there is a slim chance of finding associated works. On the contrary, *The Wanting Seed* has attracted less attention and is generally less mentioned; therefore, it is challenging to find elaborate research on this work. Accordingly, these factors combined make it beneficial to conduct research to form a fuller image of the topic that is hardly examined in the academic field.

As has been demonstrated, the roles and functions of state authorities in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* have limited portrayals and a narrow list of mentions in the academic field. Furthermore, the topic chosen is addressed exclusively in the context of individuality and civil liberties, describing identity-repressing techniques. This, in turn, may indicate a deliberate exclusion of government institutions' depiction from analysis or a social bias towards the topic. Therefore, this paper's objective is to reveal the representations of the state authorities in both texts, how they could be interpreted regarding historical circumstances and the author's personal beliefs, and which concerns of the era they might reflect. To prove the claims, it is necessary to investigate the author's perspective on government structures, as well as the concepts and personal details Burgess introduces in the context of books. Moreover, the imageries of authorities are to be analysed, resulting in a necessity to consider the primary characters in correlation with the state bodies' representations. In addition, a comparison of the protagonists' profiles and state authorities' features may suggest new interpretations of chosen dystopian novels, thus assisting the research.

To conduct the research, several steps must be taken. Firstly, it is crucial to designate literary theory approaches suitable for research, primarily in cultural studies, along with the involvement of post-structuralist theories. It involves a thorough analysis of the author's biography and the socio-cultural circumstances to identify the beliefs and standpoint of Burgess. This step, in turn, contributes to accurately identifying the governmental bodies' imageries. Moreover, the information gathered from the texts initiates the opportunity for further research using available secondary sources, such as scholarship

perspectives on *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*. As a result of the investigation from secondary sources, opposing perspectives are considered to broaden the portrayal of governmental structures in the novels. Secondly, the secondary sources that provide both scholarship perspectives on the topic and socio-cultural circumstances will contribute to the topic's development. Ultimately, the detailed and elaborate analysis will answer the paper's research question — what are the roles, meanings, and functions of the state authorities in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed,* what they represent and how they could be interpreted within the framework of the author's historical, social, and cultural contexts.

The main objective of this study is to expand and fill the gaps in the existing academic database concerning Anthony Burgess's works. It could outline some problematic aspects of the scholarship perspective, such as research bias, and introduce alternatives to the field. For instance, a more extensive analysis of the themes and characters in the novels. Moreover, this research may provide contemporary input on the subject, for instance, by demonstrating the discovered properties of *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* on governmental structures. Since there is a tangible deficit of associated materials and exhaustive relevant research to this day, this paper serves as an original contribution to the chosen topic, reinforcing its uniqueness in the academic field.

2 Anthony Burgess

2.1 John Wilson

To determine the roles Anthony Burgess assigns to the state, it is vital to highlight the importance of the sources used to examine his opinions. Burgess has written a two-volume autobiography, yet it is hard to declare its authenticity as every memoir is a product of the author's event recollection, which might be misleading. The author claims, "Memories sometimes lie in relation to facts, but facts also lie in respect of memory" (Little Wilson and Big God 7). However, this notion does not entirely diminish the fact that it is worth considering the author's perception of specific points in his biography as, for instance, the remarks on his novels and the processes of writing them, or what affected his formation of views represented in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*. Nevertheless, the experts on Burgess have numerously claimed that the author expresses self-contradictory statements (Biswell).[1] Meanwhile, the semi-authorised biography by Andrew Biswell, a scholar whose research expertise is Anthony Burgess, also presents a factual but somewhat investigative source which aims to reveal inconsistent remarks. Nevertheless, broader cultural and personal backgrounds shape a more comprehensive vision of Burgess's pursuits behind the writings and assist the research question of what interpretations state institutions possess in the works mentioned above. Therefore, the

1 *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess* opens with critics commenting on how the events presented in the book were previously distorted and unclear primarily due to the author's inconsistency. Furthermore, Andrew Biswell provides the contradictions and analyses the data from several perspectives. Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess,* 2005.

information examined for the history of themes employed in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* are mainly a biography by Andrew Biswell, exerts from the two-volume autobiography, collectively "Confessions", and concrete facts that the author frequently mentions in his articles or interviews.

Preceding the novels the author published in 1962, Burgess had lived a buoyant life of accomplishments in academia, music, and travelling, as well as misfortunes in personal life that undoubtedly affected the themes he explores in his works. John Anthony Burgess Wilson was born in 1917 into a Catholic family of Anglo-Irish origin in the suburban area of Manchester. He lived to the age of 76, capturing most of the twentieth century, which was rich in historical events. A promising composer,[2] He also pursued a traditional university education with a degree in English Literature acquired at Manchester University. English Philology, especially Linguistics, became the author's lifelong interest that prepared the ground for his professorship. However, fiction writing as an occupation, despite occasional contributions in poetry, occurred in his later years, particularly in 1956 with his first published novel, *Time for a Tiger*, a book from his *Malayan Trilogy*.

What deserves a particular focus is that Burgess explicitly mentions that the books he produced exploit his life's history as a foundation, meaning they could be interpreted as a complementary element to his biography, "I had to accept that I was what I was, that my books, that they were, were myself" (You've Had Your Time 25). Accordingly, thoroughly exploring his personal history is paramount to gaining insight into the causal

2 Burgess lists music and composing among his matters of life. He composed many pieces in different genres, even orchestral music, and believed he was a better musician than a writer. See "Composer", *The International Anthony Burgess Foundation*.

factors behind these patterns. One of the significant episodes that influenced his perception of writing was the renouncement of faith, specifically Catholicism, which, despite rejecting the faith, continued to be a topic of interest for the author. The Xavierian College was a boys' Catholic college where the author pursued an education and faced his intense moral conflict regarding the role of religion in adolescence (Biswell 33).[3] Catholicism was an integral part of Burgess's cultural code, "It is, I suppose, an inglorious end for a Lancashire Catholic line that always prided itself on holding to the faith, even in the darkest of the penal days." (On Being A Lapsed Catholic). Due to that reason, Anthony Burgess recalls the loss of it as a rather heavy and distressing event, "But for a cradle Catholic to leave his church, it's like the wrenching of palpable bone and muscle — it's like the draining of the very content of the skull. <...> (Burgess and Biswell 36). The process of becoming a "reluctant renegade", as Biswell puts it, was accelerated by the influence of James Joyce's literature, which "summed it all up for him" (Burgess), particularly the famous *Ulysses* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the latter having a severe impact and causing a religious crisis for the writer because it resonated with his story of redefining religion (Biswell 36). These details from the author's biography provide reasons for a repeating theme of faith and religiosity, provoking a defined strategy of categorising characters into groups of pious and sceptical towards God's existence. Such a scenario is especially prominent in the case of *The Wanting Seed,* where Burgess discusses the Bible's prohibition as a method of population control.

3 In Xavierian College, Anthony Burgess's reading recommendation from his college tutor shaped his vision of religiosity, precisely James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. For more details, see Biswell, 30-36.

2.2 Gibraltar and Original Sin

Although the fundamental notion of religion's role in Burgess's writings is already apparent and clarifies his convictions, this concept acquired a more profound meaning in adulthood. A sequence of pivotal occurrences contributed to the idea's evolution, including the post-World War I environment he grew in, the stages of World War II he witnessed, and the Cold War's standing threat, expanding Burgess's view on state agencies. One of these fundamental experiences for Burgess is an army service in the 1940s. The author developed a deep sense of discontent with the military and all related social conventions, especially regarding status, hierarchy, and education.[4] However, what is more critical, Burgess begins to acknowledge the futility of the army, which later unveils as a recurring theme in his works, "He represents the Army as a fundamentally absurd institution in which rank and promotion were unrelated to ability <...>. The emphasis throughout his writings about the war is on the purposelessness of most Army activities." (Biswell 80). Moreover, Biswell elaborates that a landmark meeting occurred during World War II when the writer served in Gibraltar, resulting in an obsessive idea of Burgess's writing — the paradigm of Original Sin in Augustinian and Pelagian rhetorics:[5]

> There is a serious point to A Vision of Battlements <...>. The novel refers, in chapter 13, to a crucial meeting which took place at the end

4 Burgess often mentions intellect as his distinct feature; it is a frequently discussed topic among his contemporaries and researchers, but in a manner that implies his arrogance towards people. For more details, see Burgess, *Little Wilson and Big God*, 1986; *You've Had Your Time*, 1990.

5 See Biswell, 104-106.

> of the war. In a Gibraltarian bar, Burgess met the Spanish-American soldier whom he fictionalised as 'Captain Mendoza'. It was a brief encounter, but one which crystallised his thinking about religion and politics. 'Mendoza' put forward a theory about the well-known theological dispute between St Augustine and the fifth-century heretic Pelagius. Pelagius had famously disagreed with Augustine's notion of Original Sin, which states that man is born in a fallen state, naturally predisposed towards evil, and that it is impossible to proceed towards goodness and salvation without the intervention of a Christian God. The Pelagian heresy claims that it is possible, in broad theory, to perform acts of goodness while remaining ignorant of revealed religion — in other words, that Original Sin is not a universal phenomenon, and that man is born with an inbuilt proclivity towards goodness and charity. (Biswell 104-105)

Accordingly, Burgess employs this theological debate as a central theme in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*, albeit with different implications. In *A Clockwork Orange*, Augustine's ideas drive Alex's violent tendencies, raising questions about the possibility of curing innate malice, which was the reason for the novel's problematic editing process (Biswell 249).[6] Meanwhile, in *The Wanting Seed*, Tristram Foxe's

6 There was a debate about removing Chapter 21 from *A Clockwork Orange*, drastically affecting the resolution of the book's conflict; Anthony Burgess believed that the last chapter was crucial to the novel's reading, yet different versions of *A Clockwork Orange* were published for American and British audiences. See Biswell, 247-249.

prophetic speech introduces a complex exploration of religion and its challenges in the novel's early chapters, drawing from the same Augustine and Pelagius debate.[7] Due to this long-term moral quest Burgess experiences, Original Sin's leitmotif becomes a foundation for social unreliability and irresponsibility discussion as a Pelagian manifestation and governmental reprogramming as a threat to Augustinian ideals.

2.3 Burgessian Political Paradox

Upon examining how frequently the author addresses government and acknowledging that there is an influential autobiographical aspect of works, it seems relevant to mention Burgess's political views. However, it is a complicated topic; the author is allegedly a conservative with anarchic tendencies.[8] This allegation is based on the right-wing direction Burgess follows in the novels by criticising the socialist agenda, as shown through the grotesque dystopian depictions regarding social equality and civic freedom in the novels. Nevertheless, Burgess describes his standpoint as quite complex and intricate to estimate rather than committed to any political division. Simultaneously, analysing the opinions he expressed in both the autobiographies and evaluating the contemporaries' perspectives that Andrew Biswell provided in *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, it seems clear that the author has not only addressed the socialist party as a relatively remote from his political system but also regarded it with criticism:

7 Tristram Foxe gives an introductory lecture and describes the essence of the debate between Augustine and Pelagius.

8 Biswell discusses Burgess's views and uses this statement on *The Anthony Burgess Foundation*, "Anthony Burgess and politics". May 23, 2022.

> He was frightfully conservative in politics. <...> He objected to the working-class people there. He was naturally conservative. <...> He had his toffee-nosed attitude to people he didn't think were of his own social or intellectual class. (Biswell and Morris 139).

Although Morris's input is relevant, such behaviour Burgess demonstrates seems to be a character trait rather than a perspective. What makes Burgess's standpoint indeed deceptive is that he grew up in a liberal, anti-elitist environment.[9] During his university years, the author had connections with many left-liberal representatives and even attended socialist parties;[10] during his Malayan journey, he also displayed prominent liberal tendencies, precisely regarding education, "Burgess had arrived with a firm belief in the liberal educational ideals which he felt it was his duty to disseminate." (Biswell 162). At the same time, the author harshly criticises liberalism and states that it "breeds disappointment", whereas "the traditional disciplines of Europe do not" (The Novel Now 39). Nevertheless, it is critical to mention that Burgess also has, indeed, anarchic ideology's reasoning that is easy to detect. As the author mentions in a globally recognised commentary, "A Clockwork Condition", the general distrust in the state is a duty, and this idea becomes an adhesive trope he adopts to show his lack of interest in politics as they do not fully reflect his position:

9 Biswell discusses Burgess's upbringing's paradox on *The Anthony Burgess Foundation*, "Anthony Burgess and politics". May 23, 2022.

10 Anthony Burgess writes, "The Communist Society was by far the biggest of the university political groups, but I never belonged to it. <…> There were communist parties, some of which I attended because I was after a Latvian girl <…>.". *Little Wilson and Big God,* 182.

> I had never had strong political beliefs. <...> I had never, not even as a university student, written anything that could be construed as politically progressive. <...> I had been unwavering in my lack of faith in statesmen, and it had worried me that certain writers I admired had expressed strong socialist views, which argued an unseemly naïveté in dedicated followers of truth, since a political party can represent only a fraction of the human reality which government is meant to serve." (You've Had Your Time 184).

Moreover, Burgess's Catholic interest is a foundation for this anarchic tendency. This case is a widespread "theologico-political problem", precisely an asymmetrical relation between secular and religious judgements in the political realm that could explain Burgess's uncertainty regarding the topic (Stanford). As a result, it seems that Burgess is relatively conservative on the spectrum due to his upbringing; however, his belief system is reminiscent of a centrist kind, especially considering his inconsistent stance in the political realm where he advocates for conservatism and at the same time addresses the need for liberal approaches.

Be that as it may, it could be argued whether the author has any political leanings at all. Likewise, at first sight, Wilson's discovered centricity could be explained as an apolitical stance where he does not choose sides and is indifferent towards all ideologies combined. While this argument may be plausible, it does not give reasons for the number of governmental depictions in Burgess's works and why they have such leverage in the narratives. Coupled with John Wilson's autobiographical notes on the creation processes

of *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*, it is visible how he draws emphasis on politics, even though he previously expressed disinterest. One of the prime examples of this contradiction could be seen in the manifestation of unions, such as RUSPUN, CHIS-PUN, and ENSPUN, which represent formations of different political directions according to the programs of the encrypted names of states:

> The superpowers are called ENSPUN, RUSPUN and CHISPUN (English, Russian and Chinese Speaking Unions), and these implement demographic control according to their own traditions. RUSPUN and CHINSPUN exact the death penalty for exceeding the limit of one child per family, but ENSPUN is liberal and pragmatic. (You've Had Your Time 33)

However, these remarks are often followed by the notion of Catholicism's influence, which the author, indeed, confirms and has never debunked, which is a crucial matter for revealing the meanings behind the state institutions' depictions. Conducting the research without addressing this element of Burgess's ideology is improbable since it is the basis for revealing the essence of the stated-above question. Therefore, it is efficient for the re-search to perceive the author's philosophy as, presumably, a right-wing centrist, with a notable influence of his religious beliefs on the role of governmental agencies in the works. Consequently, revisiting the briefly discussed motif of the Original Sin is critical.

Returning to the Original Sin concept, the author's political perspective explains the complexity of the circuit Burgess employs to depict government. According to that

idea, the Augustinian-Pelagian debate is seen as a reflection of society. This reflection on the topic, in turn, creates a refined categorisation that correlates with *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*. Firstly, Pelagianism is associated with innate virtue, in this manner with liberal and socialist agendas,[11] which Anthony Burgess tends to illustrate as the anti-heroic side of the conflict (Biswell 105). As a result of his announced conservatism and Catholic relapse, Burgess embodies Augustinianism in state institutions and projects a control pattern for the innate malice that must be suppressed. Whilst the Augustinian standpoint is a significant factor that clarifies this rhetoric, the recklessness of measures taken to ensure order is another aspect that seems to be a criticism towards totalitarianism from Burgess. Therefore, the author describes the extremes of each side as ceasing to exist, which proves Burgess's centrist point of view.

At the same time, as an example of Burgess's inconsistency, the author also emphasises an essential claim — the concept of Literary Politics embedded in the writings that have no value concerning his views but are legitimate with the books (You've Had Your Time 124).[12] This point, however, refutes that there is a degree of politically prejudiced opinion towards the means and strategies that opposite parties apprehend in the books, which does not seem to reflect reality. Nevertheless, what is clear is that there is a

11 Biswell reveals this idea while discussing Burgess's standpoint.

12 In his "Confessions", Burgess often mentions Politics as an instrument for Aesthetics and a field to exploit for artistry rather than a science. One of his specific expressions on the topic is — "Politics is described as the art of the possible, but it is never termed the aesthetic exploitation of the possible.". For more, see Burgess, *You've Had Your Time.*

religiously biased opinion of the author, an Augustinian[13], meaning that the idea of congenital commitment to evil prevails in describing society.

2.4 Summary

Accordingly, Anthony Burgess had a multi-faceted system of views, formed by his cultural characteristics and influenced by life experience. It is difficult to track the author's sincere statements with the obstacles being inconsistent claims, yet his revised life background provides enough information to conclude. Growing up in a Catholic family of Anglo-Irish origin established the author's cultural code. It nourished in him a deep commitment to religious thinking, which remained with Burgess even after the loss of faith. Witnessing wars and their challenges, joining the army led the author to question the legitimacy and authority of state institutions and influenced Wilson's conservative approach to life. At the same time, the author's political stance explains the ambiguity peculiar to the works. It clarifies the incoherence in the government's depictions, as the author himself cannot propose a defined position. However, the most significant aspect of his worldview was an in-depth study and reflection on the Augustinian-Pelagian debate concerning Original Sin. This theme is evident in *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed*, which are the focus of this research and in many of his other works. Acknowledging this information leads to the next stage of the thesis — analysing the texts with the notion of the author's perspective. Therefore, the following parts provide the state's representations and meanings in the contexts, the imageries used in the texts and how they could be interpreted in *The Wanting Seed* and *A Clockwork Orange*.

13 According to the Augustine and Pelagius debate, Burgess's position corresponds with the first.

3 A Clockwork Orange: An Augustinian Manifestation

3.1 Creation of A Clockwork Orange

Anthony Burgess's signature work, *A Clockwork Orange*, earned the author recognition. The novel represents a dystopian vision that addresses a plethora of themes concerning private and public matters, such as humanism, power abuse, juvenile delinquency or free will, the latter being the central motif apart from Original Sin's manifestation. As a well-known work, it has been studied intensively and inspired extensive academic input, resulting in various interpretations of what Burgess expressed, especially on the theme of humanness. Despite being highly recognised and researched, the depiction of state institutions and authorities and their impact on the narrative is a topic that has not attracted substantial attention. Nevertheless, foundational factors related to the authority representations affect *A Clockwork Orange*'s importance, and they do not only concern the protagonist's fate. Moreover, sophisticated imagery could be observed if the focus shifts to the auxiliary aspects that assemble the narrative. To demonstrate this aspect, tracking *A Clockwork Orange*'s creation process and its context are crucial steps in identifying specifics that convey the meanings of the state. Burgess's beliefs discovered in the previous section must be explained in accordance with the work's plot construction. In addition, academic perspectives on the importance of the main character's portrayal concerning the prescribed topic, including contradictory opinions, must be considered. Accordingly, the following section answers how *A Clockwork Orange* was made and what it explains about the novel, what aspects of Burgess's worldview could be found on the

topic, the opinions announced by the researchers, and how they correspond with the analysis.

The creation of *A Clockwork Orange* dates to early 1961, when the author returned to England. After moving to London, Burgess had to publish works to survive in the circumstances of a severe shortage of property and a serious diagnosis.[14] Despite a financial need, there was more personal history to the creation process — an incident during Burgess's service that disrupted his marriage to Lynne, the first wife, and highly likely proposed an idea for *A Clockwork Orange*'s plot. During the service in Gibraltar, Wilson received a letter reporting an assault on his wife, which resulted in her miscarriage and later health issues, but what exacerbated the difficulty of this incident was the administration's objection to his "compassionate leave" request:

> Lynne had been working late <...>. Leaving the office at midnight she had been set upon by four men who, through civilian dress, were evidently GI deserters.<...> The attack was not sexual but in the service of robbery. <...> She remembered being kicked before losing consciousness. She was pregnant and she aborted. She was sick now with perpetual bleeding glossed as dysmenorrhoea. <...> I went at once to Meldrum and demanded home leave. He would not grant it. So, I said, it is more important to keep up this farce of Army Education than to fly to the bedside of a desperately sick wife? That is how army sees it. (Little Wilson and Big God 301).

14 Burgess elaborates on his financial struggles and health conditions in his "Confessions". For details, see *Little Wilson and Big God* and *You've Had Your Time*.

Although the author has not concretely confirmed the linkage, comparing this factual evidence to the novel, it seems to be an event the author incorporates through Alex's gang's general portrayal. Moreover, this incident reinforces Burgess's dislike for the Army conventions and the problem of the state's unreliability with the impunity for culprits. Later in the 1950s, this tragic recollection acquired a new meaning for the author with the emergence of criminal subcultures in England, such as, for instance, *Teddy Boys*, whom the author mentions as the first source of inspiration for the youth in *A Clockwork Orange* (You've Had Your Time 26). Although the work on the novel started in England, there is a misconception that it was written after Burgess's trip to Leningrad, which is not remarkably accurate, "He had already written sixty pages of the novel by the time he visited the Soviet Union later in 1961." (Biswell 237). Nevertheless, the experience was also an inspiration source for a considerable amount of the composition, such as the final style of "*droogs*" collected from *Stilyagi*, a Soviet youth subculture (Biswell 241). Both linguistically and historically, Russian influence is a hallmark of *A Clockwork Orange*. Nadsat, the youth's slang, is not the only component of the novel that emerged from the Russian language. The work that shaped Burgess's vision of his future novel was Dostoevsky's notorious *Crime and Punishment* (1866), and a letter from 1961 provides reasons to believe it:

> <...> I've just completed Part I — which is just sheer crime. Now comes punishment. The whole thing is making me rather sick. My horrible juvenile delinquent hero is emerging as too sympathetic a character — almost Christ-like, set

> upon the scourging police. You see what I mean by moral deterioration. (Biswell 237-238; Burgess)

Burgess adapts Dostoevsky's philosophy and promotes a new interpretation, which reflects not merely a question of an individual's moral consent to perform harm but precisely a question of being predisposed to act violently without any moral anguish afterwards. As the author emphasises, Alex does not have a moral conflict regarding his actions and perceives them as a part of himself, as a characteristic:

> But, brothers, this biting of their toe-nails over what is the *cause* of badness is what turns me into a fine laughing malchick. They don't go into the cause of *goodness*, so why the other shop? If lewdies are good that's because they like it <...>. More, badness is of the self, <...> and that self is made by old Bog or God and is his great pride and radosty. <...> But what I do I do because I like to do. (A Clockwork Orange 31).

3.2 Crime and Punishment

Throughout the novel, the narrator, in the face of Alex, ridicules the modern concern of what affects the state of youth's criminal tendencies, highlighting the fact that there is no condition for it as stated above. This, for the most part, is why the confrontation between state agencies and an individual is so vastly displayed in the novel — the author thus emphasises the conflict's absurdity and, paradoxically, an eternal operation. Such a cycle Rabinovitz addresses as a shift of "mechanisms" and "organisms" is reminiscent of the principles of Chinese philosophy of yin and yang, which are determi-

ned to maintain balance (Rabinovitz 541). Knowing youth crime is shown as de facto; it is reasonable to suggest that the authorities in the novel occupy the position of the force that must control it. Therefore, at the level of legitimacy, the conversation about the authorities' measures seems demagogical and irrelevant considering the undeniable fact of the character's behavioural paradigm. Be as it may, it is a phased debate, and there are further prerequisites for it; there are outcomes and how it has been executed to be discussed.

However, Punishment, as Burgess describes the novel's resolution, has a secondary significance for *A Clockwork Orange* in this matter. Due to this reason, some researchers tend to point to Burgess's permission for his characters to behave under the urge without any severe consequences, "Doing what you do because you like to do it is what the Burgess hero <...> has done and has been punished for doing by his creator. But the hero of *A Clockwork Orange* is rewarded and endorsed in a way more recognizably human characters in a more "realistic" atmosphere could not possibly be." (Pritchard 533). The author, however, claims that the initial idea was to portray the artificial expiration of choice as a greater evil than deliberate malice, which he allows his character to perform (You've Had Your Time 27). This explains why Alex's imprisonment proves inefficient in affecting his moral standing, as well as a Ludovico treatment which does not target the cause of the character's tendencies but rather suppresses them, "Our subject is, you see, impelled towards the good by, paradoxically, being impelled towards evil. The intention to act violently is accompanied by strong feelings of physical distress." (A Clockwork Orange 94). Consequently, the author proves that the outer force cannot affect the indi-

vidual's decision but is capable of limiting it. This restrictive tendency, in contrast, explains Burgess's assigning a sense of untrustworthiness to the authorities in the novel, which corresponds with his announced views. However, paradoxically, the Ludovico technique, presumably destructing for a self, is a treatment the protagonist selects autonomously, and it was not at first imposed by governmental institutions on Alex to undergo this procedure. Furthermore, the prison administration expresses doubt about the treatment's efficiency to the character, emphasising its unknown consequences due to the novelty, "Himself has grave doubts about it. I must confess I share those doubts. The question is whether such technique can really make a man good. Goodness comes from within, 6655321." (A Clockwork Orange 63). As a result, Alex's desire to free himself from the "zoo"[15] and the inability to restrain his inclinations any longer encourage the hero to subscribe to this treatment, meaning that the character, therefore, had a moral choice to either follow the law and nurture goodness in himself, or return to ultraviolence. Considering this fact, what is presented in *A Clockwork Orange* is that even though authoritarian techniques cannot impact an individual's moral choice, they instead suggest solutions to resolve the character's disadvantaged position. Moreover, it presupposes that there is a place for humanness in government bodies' actions, and, as a result, it is essential to designate the source and reasons behind these empathetic intentions.

15 In the novel, Alex numerously asserts courtesy as one of his features, thus, feeling superior towards other convicts and denying that he belongs to the place.

3.3 Government Representatives

Examining actual state bodies' representatives in the text, Burgess illustrates a significant number of characters and structures, and, more importantly, they all are distinct in their status, function, and aspirations. It is worth noting that Burgess creates an extreme depiction in Dostoevsky's manner, providing the categories of "trembling creatures" and the characters who "have the right", considering Rabinovitz's belief, to balance the forces.[16] Burgess also adjusts this paradigm through the social hierarchy of characters as it clarifies the capacity of their influence in the narrative. The Minister of the Interior, being the highest in rank, stands for an authoritative figure that introduces the process of "mechanisation" in the novel, "'Soon we may be needing all our prison space for political offenders.' <...>. " (A Clockwork Orange 69). What is more, Burgess exposes the hypocritical chain of command, making the lower in-class individuals act whilst the Minister of the Interior remains socially neutral, as shown in the dialogue between the Prison Chaplain and Alex, "There is a 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." (A Clockwork Orange 71). Consequently, Anthony Burgess writes the character in a way that reflects the state's resourcefulness in maintaining law and order by manipulating all individuals for the state's needs. The author also reflects this idea through state agencies' attempts to recruit outlaws, such as Alex and his "droogs", for its purposes, "'The Government's big boast, you see, is the way it has dealt with crime these

16 Raskolnikov's infamous quote in *Crime and Punishment*, which articulates the novel's central problem, "Whether I can step over barriers or not, whether I dare stoop to pick up or not, whether I am a trembling creature or whether I have the right...". *Crime and Punishment*, 1866.

last months.' <…>. But he said: 'Recruiting brutal young roughs for the police.' (A Clockwork Orange 118). What is also highly important is the Minister of the Interior's portrayal of using propaganda techniques and information manipulation. Whilst the protagonist is extremely distant from politics, Alex becomes a figure for the political agenda of the state as a successfully relapsed from the criminal world individual:

> I looked very gloomy and like scared, but that was really with the flashbulbs going pop pop all the time. What it said underneath my picture was that here was the first graduate from the new State Institute for Reclamation of Criminal Types, cured of his criminal instincts in a fortnight only now a good law-fearing citizen and all that cal. (A Clockwork Orange 98).

By creating the character physically distant from violent matters, yet responsible, Burgess projects an anarchic idea of deep scepticism towards the government's actions. Therefore, the Minister of Interior serves as the government's two-faced embodiment, conveying a noticeable totalitarian ambience to the narrative and as an allegory to elitism.

In contrast, the Governor, the prison's administration member, is an atypical government representative in the novel — high enough in the hierarchy to have control but not authoritative enough to impose any influence on the system, which leads to "political subordination" (Hickox 313). The character is an embodiment of the middle class's philosophy of post-war Britain, which failed to create its own ideology, humbly remaining discontent with the state (Hickox 313). Burgess ascribes a sense of compassion to the character, emphasising the two integral components of human nature — goodness and badness, yet the Governor, alongside characters of the same status, is the prime example of the ab-

sence of moral choice that the author promotes. However, the Governor disapproves of human conditioning and perceives it as "far from being a reward", his imagery serves as a support to the state's "welfare capitalism" (Sumner 54). As a result, his function in the narrative is to reflect the rising discontent and distrust towards the state and to show the median of the recurring phases of violence (Rabinovitz 539).

Anthony Burgess also illustrates the features of the criminal state through the subordinate members in this social hierarchy. As a hero, P.R. Deltoid is a testimony to the "clockwork condition". The author introduces him as an "overworked veck" with interest in causes of juvenile delinquency, "We study the problem, and we've been studying it for damn well near a century, yes, but we get no further with our studies." (A Clockwork Orange 29-30). Paradoxically, despite being a correctional officer whose objective is to supervise the protagonist, he imposes the most negligible influence on Alex's fate. Moreover, the absence of improvement in Alex's behaviour and, what is more important, the fact of a failed reclamation poses a threat to P.R. Deltoid's career and, eventually, lead to the character's release of repressed evil, "If you have no consideration 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." (A Clockwork Orange 30). Through this imagery, the author portrays how the lack of control and success puts P.R. Deltoid to the phenomenon of the violence cycle and its prerequisites, paralleling him with the criminals:

> "P.R. Deltoid then did something I never thought any man like him who was supposed to turn us baddiwads into real horrorshow malchicks would do, especially

> with all those rozzes around. 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." (A Clockwork Orange 53).

Returning to categorisation, it is also worth noting how Burgess embodies a sense of impunity for a power representative committing such acts. By humiliating the person for whom P.R. Deltoid is responsible, he asserts that he "has the right", but simultaneously, the character is incapable of commanding the protagonist's will. Additionally, the author alludes to P.R. Deltoid's failure as a corrective education figure by introducing an affirmative line from, ironically, "the top millicent", "'Violence makes violence,' said the top millicent in a very holy type golos." (A Clockwork Orange 53). Consequently, P.R. Deltoid's imagery conveys the state's Pelagian perception or naivety of beliefs in unconditional goodness. It serves as evidence of how an individual is, in fact, predisposed to evil tendencies.

3.4 Summary

Summarising the discussion about the roles, meanings, and interpretations of governmental structures in the novel *A Clockwork Orange*, a synthesis point would highlight the multileveled, nonlinear portrayals of these organisations and their participants. Burgess shows that reading government as the collective image through deductive techniques is a misconception in the novel's case because this system is inconsistent with the author's ambiguous approach to political issues. Accordingly, there is a place not only for authoritarian leadership as a group but also for the humanness of these representatives

in isolation. Anthony Burgess captures a dichotomy of the state's representatives, such as the Minister of the Interior, the Governor, and P.R. Deltoid, to elaborate the idea of class inequality and the power dynamics in his worldview, which he fully dedicates to Augustine and Pelagian debate. Additionally, such an abundance of ideas from the government institutions' manifestations shows the vastness of the work's literary conflicts, such as the state and a person, a conflict of values, and an internal conflict, the latter being central in the novel. As mentioned earlier, Dostoevsky served as the ideological inspiration for the book with the work *Crime and Punishment*. For that reason, the author emphasises precisely the concept of the intrapersonal issue of morality, paraphrasing this philosophy into an elaborate belief of a recurring violence cycle and, therefore, questioning the purpose of punishment. As the novel's analysis presupposes, there is no condition for violence, and, more importantly, the author asserts through Alex's and state agencies' interaction that moral ambiguity is natural to humans. As follows, Anthony Burgess also proves that the complete eradication of evil beginning is dangerous for an individual and the authorities as it presupposes the loss of choice. Accordingly, this is the reason why Anthony Burgess depicts the government realm in such a polarising manner, switching its attitudes from one condition, provocatively dangerous to another, nurturing virtue.

4 The Wanting Seed: Anthropophagy, Religion, and the State

4.1 Origins of The Wanting Seed

Although similar genre-wise, *The Wanting* Seed is a distinct and highly creative novel, as often remarked.[17] The overpopulation catastrophe being its premise, the author depicts the consequences of the phenomenon grotesquely, showing how societal conventions and the government's prospects could change to accommodate the issue. Along with numerous administrative bodies Burgess introduces for demographic control, such as the Ministry of Infertility, Population Police, or the Homosex Institute, the author also provides multiple characters for analysis. For the research, *The Wanting Seed* is a work that focuses on statehood and, therefore, presents highly illustrative material to discuss the government and its roles in Burgess's repertoire. Although the sections dedicated to the author's biography and *A Clockwork Orange's* findings reveal the essential points on politics, religion, preconceptions, and particular motifs that could also be observed in *The Wanting Seed*, there are still specifics that have not been indicated yet. Moreover, even though the work was published within the same year, the thoughts, places, and inspirations behind the writing process differed. Accordingly, this part examines the premises and context for *The Wanting Seed*, how Anthony Burgess employs the ideas in the novel's narrative, and, more importantly, how the represented government bodies operate within the work to uncover them.

17 Biswell provides various reviews of the novel. Biswell, *The Real Life of Anthony Burgess*, 268.

The initial idea for *The Wanting Seed* emerged after Burgess discovered *The Aerodrome* (1941) by Rex Warner during his last months in Gibraltar. This novel, as Biswell puts it, "offered Burgess a series of nightmarish ideas" by introducing the infernal outlook on "the possible attractions of Fascism", and later, he was invited to compose an introduction to the book's reissue (Biswell 110).[18] Burgess's South Asian living experience drastically affected his literary efforts and led to a profound interest in fiction, as observed from the mentioned *Malayan Trilogy*. *The Wanting Seed* is not an exception, and Anthony Burgess infused it unconventionally, even for a dystopian setting, with visions accumulated from the cultural immersion. The author's residency in British Malaya coincided with the years of the Malayan Emergency, a period of tension when the communist party rebelled in response to British patronage reinforcements across the colony (Britannica).[19] As mentioned in previous sections, the adverse, uneasy attitude towards the army and wartime have been among the motifs Burgess exploits from personal experience. In *The Wanting Seed*, he delivers it to the extreme by illustrating it as a population control technique which will be discussed further. Nevertheless, *The Wanting Seed*, as Burgess recalls, started with a Malthusian idea and the memories of "pullulating" Malaya, "My book was to be on a theme I had had long in mind — the population explosion. I had lived in the pullulating East and re-read Thomas Malthus <...>. There would, some day, be too many mouths to feed." (You've Had Your Time 33). As for Malthusianism,[20] the theory

18 See "Dystopias: Burgess's Introduction to The Aerodrome by Rex Warner", *The International Anthony Burgess Foundation*.

19 For a deeper historical background, see "Malayan Emergency", *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

20 For more details related to the economic theory, see "Malthusianism", *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

of food supply's inability to fit the population growth, Burgess implements it through the harsh depictions of the cannibalistic tendencies among the civil society to cope with the permanent food deficit and rationing system, which is highly reminiscent of the supply shortage in the USSR (Britannica).[21] The idea of cannibalism has also arisen from the author's travelling experience in his "Malayan days", particularly to New Guinea where he, presumably, unintentionally tried human flesh, "When, on a trip to New Guinea <…>, I was given a crisp piece of roasted meat by my primitive hosts, who had just got over the custom of feeding unwanted children to pigs, I only found out what it was after the ingestion." (You've Had Your Time 34). Acknowledging this information, it is now possible to explain *The Wanting Seed*'s plot features and what accompanied the author's idea. Furthermore, these specifics aim to help characterise the peculiarities of the government's representations in the novel.

4.2 Pelphase, Interphase, and Gusphase: The Downfall of Pelagianism

The Augustinian and Pelagian debate discussed earlier is especially prominent in the novel since the author explicitly references it and alters the concept to convey the notion of a constant recurrence of history. This cyclical system is first mentioned by Tristram Foxe — the character who operates as a prophetic figure and, presumably, the author's voice in *The Wanting Seed*. A history schoolmaster and an intellectual, the hero con-

21 Knowing that the author had experience with exposure to the USSR, it seems reasonable to mention the supply crisis that might have been among the inspirations for work, yet it was not particularly mentioned.

veys the history cycle's nature and its implications on the government's sentiments. Moreover, it is a plot-forming theme as it elaborates the pattern that the dystopian society follows, specifically Pelphase (Pelagian), Interphase, Gusphase (Augustinian), or "a sort of perpetual waltz" collectively (The Wanting Seed 16). Tristram announces the cycle's features accordingly: the Pelphase, a liberal dream of man's perfection, reasons the authorities to believe in civil decency and responsibility for their actions; as soon as the dream is shattered, it leads to the Gusphase and total surveillance (The Wanting Seed 17). Therefore, Burgess applies this strategy to reflect the dichotomy of good and evil and the improbability of either of them to prevail; more importantly, the author presents the problem of individual responsibility and its shortcomings.

Continuing the discussion of the state and its bodies, a distinct feature in Burgess's writing reveals the novel's political connotation — a tendency to institutionalise. The multitude of institutions introduced to the novel, along with cooperating empires divided by language groups and outlawed wars in *The Wanting Seed*, suggest that Burgess's critique targets the gradual decentralisation of the government and liberal institutionalism:

> Thus, liberals rejected realism's fourth proposition that states are fundamentally disinclined to cooperate, finding instead that states increasingly viewed one another not as enemies, but instead as partners needed to secure greater comfort and well-being for their home publics. (Grieco 490).

Liberal institutionalism as a theory focuses on the significance of maintaining international cooperation and is based on the Kantian Democratic Peace theory, claiming that democratic states never wage war on one another (Britannica).[22] Considering Burgess's political stance and Augustinian ideology, the author portrays a world without international tensions as unachievable or utopian. The idealistic perception of the state, precisely the idea of being secure from external conflicts, encourages the authorities to seek domestic menace within its citizenry. Therefore, Anthony Burgess alludes to the hypocrisy of international cooperative strategy as the states register new institutions under the pretext of peaceful population control, calling artificially organised wars an "extermination session":

> 'Extermination Session. That's what the new battles are called, you know. <…> Everybody must die, and history seems to show (you're a historian, so you'll agree with me here) <…> that the soldier's death is the best death. <…> The final problems of the body politic have been solved. Now we have a free state — order without organization, which means order without violence. A safe and spacious community. A clean house full of happy people. But every house, of course, has to have a drainage system.' (The Wanting Seed 269-272).

22 Whilst there are doubts about the democratic overtones of the ENSPUN state presented in the novel, the evidence leads to the conclusion that the theory is applicable. For more details regarding this theory, see "Democratic Peace", *Encyclopædia Britannica*

According to this information, Anthony Burgess initially depicts liberal institutionalism as a method to minimise the consequences of overpopulation. However, as the narrative progresses, it becomes a despotic system aimed at exterminating civilians with the introduction of The Global Population Limitation Authority and related departments. Tristram Foxe, being the author's voice, numerously expresses concerns over the state's enemy and the futile purpose of the "extermination sessions", thus supporting the animosity towards the army as an institution and political criticism in *The Wanting Seed*, "There's no enemy over there. The whole thing is fake. Very shortly this trench will blow up and the blowing-up will be done by remote control, by some bloody big spider sitting at base. Don't you see?" (The Wanting Seed 248).

Some scholars also suppose that Anthony Burgess portrays the government as the only agent capable of solving the "body politics" and advocates for the greater humanness of such actions compared to hunger from civil irresponsibility:

> "One of the things I meant is that in Burgess's world, horrible as it is, government is a largely benign force. It is undemocratic in the name of efficiency, but it is also completely devoid of the lust for power and aggrandizement. When it acts it acts solely for the general good." (Kateb 101).

This argument also seems to be rational and plausible as individual characters, such as Beatrice-Joanne Foxe, prove the liberal democratic approach to be inefficient in circumstances of overpopulation. The premise that individuals are predisposed to act responsibly leads to disappointment and increased penalties due to negligence towards global catastrophe. Consequently, the heroine, whose decision to disregard the recommendations

of one child per family policy, dead or alive, illustrates that problem most prominently and explains the reasons behind the government's later introduction of the Population Police, "I mean, people have been having children in excess of the ration and nothing much has happened to them. I'm entitled to a child, <…>" (The Wanting Seed 71). Following the above-stated points, it is now evident that the state and its agencies combined are not subject to Burgess's criticism, but the initial direction they have a pursuit to follow is the reason for the conflicted yet versatile representation in *The Wanting Seed*. Nevertheless, it is crucial to discuss the elements of cultural and religious origin that could provide a clearer picture of the state and what the author offers it to be.

4.3 Dostoevsky's Polyphony

Prior to discussing further aspects, it is necessary to clarify and summarise the multitude of ideas presented by Burgess in the novel and how they counteract and seemingly contradict each other. To outline this complexity, there is a need to appeal to the influence Fyodor Dostoevsky, as a writer, had on Burgess. The novel's polyphonic impression is reinforced with each level of meaning examined. The reason for such an impression is a set of Dostoevsky's psychological literary techniques, which the author could adopt from *Crime and Punishment* and other works. Polyphony is a thematic literary term and device introduced by Bakhtin regarding Dostoevsky's literary works, which could be described as a "sublimity of freed perspectives" and "a plurality of consciousnesses", which is unsystematic, yet provides a wide range of views (Bakhtin 6). This, in turn, seems to be the reason for Anthony Burgess's multifaceted, multilayered representations

of the state agencies and characters' perspectives in general. What is more, however, there is a narrower term coined by Bakhtin which explains *The Wanting Seed* even more profoundly — carnivalisation. This concept precisely describes the "overturning of hierarchies" and the constant mingling of contradictory notions, such as "the sacred with the profane" or "the sublime with the ridiculous", which could be presented in the form of a ritual activity (The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms). Such manifestations could also be observed in *The Wanting Seed* through the mobile authority of the state's dogmas once the cannibal diner clubs and fertility rituals in a pagan tradition appear. Therefore, acknowledging this information, it is critical to perceive contradictory notions as a part of the polyphonic structure of the novel rather than logical fallacies.

4.4 The State And Christianity

Following the dichotomy of good and evil, it leads to the problem of faith that Tristram Foxe asserts, "We are both God and the Devil, though not at the same time. Only Mr Livedog can be that, and Mr Livedog, of course, is a mere fictional symbol." (The Wanting Seed 11). A "Dog", the palindrome repeatedly used for God, is one of the methods Burgess employs to show the prohibition of a normative religion in the novel. The reason for this lies within the religious taboos on termination of pregnancy, contraception, and homosexuality, which are the state's main techniques to combat the demographic crisis. The author, thus, illustrates Dog or God, despite being an unseen character, as the cause of the demographic collapse and, paradoxically, as an antagonist figure in the dystopian setting, "Overpopulation was his doing." (The Wanting Seed 11). It leads to the understan-

ding that the state agencies, indeed, have an objective for protection as Kateb claims, and possess a multidimensional imagery, which could not be categorised as either positive or negative, but rather neutral. Nevertheless, the author draws parallels between the state, an individual, and God, showing their similarities and interconnectedness.

Burgess states, "Finishing the novel, I saw that it was very Catholic" (You've Had Your Time 34). What supports the statement is the manner that the author employs to portray religiosity, more precisely, the depictions of anthropophagy or cannibalism. The author first alludes to it through the elucidated question of moral ambiguity, "'But if you eat this chap who's God,' said Llewelyn stoutly, 'how can it be horrible? If it's all right to eat God why is it horrible to eat Jim Whittle?'" (The Wanting Seed 121). The imagery of religiosity in *The Wanting Seed* is shown anew through the State as a God figure and, simultaneously, the civil society as an integral part of the State, "The State is each of its members." (The Wanting Seed 42). Accordingly, Anthony Burgess does not only utilise a quid pro quo technique but also demonstrates a Christian doctrine, the Holy Trinity, ""Whenever the Christian speaks of "God," St. Augustine wrote, he means "neither the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Ghost, but the one and only and true God, the Trinity itself."" (Francis and Panofsky 58). Elaborating further, God is an unseen character, correlating with a common notion of God as the Holy Spirit. Following this idea, the State, on the other hand, represents the Father, and the civil society is the Son. Due to that reason, it is possible to assume that cannibalism or anthropophagy is an allegory to the holy rituals. More precisely, anthropophagy and consuming one's own kind in this context is a

concrete religious act similar to theophagy.[23] Therefore, by involving the Catholic background, Anthony Burgess portrays the state agencies as God-like figures, legitimate in their actions and just.

4.5 Government Representatives

As for the state representatives in *The Wanting Seed*, the author conveys the government's polyphonic essence through Derek Foxe, the Commissioner of the Population Police. Childlessness and a low family record are equal to selflessness, which is the most valuable quality an individual could possess in such a dystopian setting. Burgess presents it as a significant criterion for upward career mobility, "Now, I know this sounds crazy, but what gets a man a job these days is not pry-merrily qualifications. <…> It's <…> his family. <…> 'I mean how much of it there is. Or was.' (The Wanting Seed 28). Moreover, "non-productive forms of sexual activity" and homosexuality are demanded and encouraged. The state asserts it through the installation of related organisations and introduction of procreation preventive techniques, "We leave it to education and propaganda and free contraceptives, abortion clinics and condolences. We encourage non-productive forms of sexual activity." (The Wanting Seed 42). Derek, a "highly placed homo",[24] as Burgess puts it, is the character that is subordinate to the system and adjusts his attitude to the con-

23 Theophagy is a ritual from the earliest stage of theology, totemism, which consists in consuming the flesh of a ritual animal or the god in the form of animal (Christian Theophagy: An Historical Sketch 163). For more, see "Christian Theophagy: An Historical Sketch", *The Monist*.

24 Burgess utilises a controversial term "homo" in the novel to describe homosexual individuals. *The Wanting Seed,* 28.

ventional, which contradicts his heterosexual nature and, simultaneously, proves his conscious aspirations for humankind, "He sighed profoundly. 'Dichotomy,' he said, <...>. 'Instincts tell us one thing and reason tells us another. That could be tragic if we allowed it to be." (The Wanting Seed 41). Nevertheless, Burgess illustrates the idea of an individual input's significance regarding global catastrophe and, equally important, depicts that government officials neglect their personal ambitions to achieve the goal of reducing the population rates. Moreover, as a state representative, Derek Foxe becomes the means of Burgess's satiric intention to portray the state institutions as, paradoxically, helpless. A member of the Ministry of Infertility indulges in an incestuous relationship with Beatrice-Joanne. According to the book of Leviticus, the adultery with the brother's wife results in childlessness as a punishment, whereas in *The Wanting Seed* Burgess creates the opposing situation by showing an alternative penalty for the given circumstances — the case of multiple births (Leviticus 20:21). As Derek Foxe becomes a father, the author portrays the rational intentions to be unrealisable due to the imperfect nature of not only civil society but also the state officials by appealing to reinvented religious tenets.

Prime Minister Robert Starling similarly supports Kateb's argument on the government's best intentions and resourceful efficiency. Burgess ascribes him as a character with internally righteous, liberal aspirations directed toward the nation's prosperity, "It's all for their own good; everything we do is for their good" (The Wanting Seed 108). Starling endures a sense of guilt and anguish regarding the demographic tragedy and exhibits concerns over the longevity of the state in such a stance. The author highlights it

through the vocal hallucinations Robert Starling experiences on the topic of global famine:

> 'We can get through this year, we can just about get through this year, but wait till next –' And one very privy voice whispered statistics and showed, against the blackness of the bedroom, horrific lantern slides. <…> 'No! No! No!' The Right Hon. Robert Starling shouted so loud that he awoke his little friend Abdul Wahab, <…>. (The Wanting Seed 107).

Such visions reflect not only Starling's but also the government's vulnerable position regarding the global issue and, therefore, prove to show the humanistic aspect of their initial intentions. Moreover, Kateb highlights the mildness of the state's subsequent solutions to the demographic crisis, calling it a transition from a "mock-utopia to semi-totalitarianism" (Kateb 105). A point that could be inferred from this information is that Burgess once more presents only goodness as a predicament without constructive oppressive measures, confirming the history cycle's relevance. Be as it may, Burgess portrays Robert Sterling in a manner that presumably accentuates the problem of the state's exacerbated preoccupation with citizens' welfare by illustrating the unnatural intervention of scientific progress. The character states:

> "We outlawed war, we made war a terrible dream of the past; we learned to predict earthquakes and conquer floods; we irrigated desert places and made ice-caps blossom like a rose. That is progress,

> that is the fulfilment of part of our liberal aspirations." (The Wanting Seed 109).

What it conveys is that the absence of any threat, even of natural origin, prompts humanity to, ironically, suffer from its own. Accordingly, by introducing Starling's perception, Anthony Burgess allocates the demographic catastrophe as a consequence of a desire to control natural causes and alludes to the potential issue of scientific advancement.

4.6 Summary

Based on the information discussed on the state, its agencies, and representatives in this section, Burgess displays them in a manner that establishes a complex task to uncover the meanings individually. The approach of discovering a universal meaning behind the state in *The Wanting Seed* seems improbable as the evidence in the text presupposes a plethora of possible interpretations which vary depending on the direction of the arguments, which could be theological, political, or economic. As could be inferred, inconsistency and ambiguity are the principles of Burgess's literary manner previously discussed with the state institutions in *A Clockwork Orange*. The author utilises them equally in *The Wanting Seed* and exacerbates them by implementing Dostoevsky's literary technique of polyphony. Considering the importance of the novel's historical background, it clarifies the presence of particular themes, such as cannibalism and overpopulation, and provides the basis for revealing the authorities' imagery. Moreover, the religious foundation contributes to perceiving the government as not merely a dystopian oppression system but rather a struggling power that aims to solve the problem arising from indi-

vidual indifference yet must commit sacrifices to fulfil the obligations. Nevertheless, Burgess proves both civil society and the government to have their flaws by depicting the characters as equally decent and guilty.

5 Conclusion

Summarising the data revealed in the research, *A Clockwork Orange,* and *The Wanting Seed*, in fact, operate collectively and supplement each other by presenting how the core themes of Anthony Burgess's literary style constitute the government's roles, meanings, and functions in the novels. Through the historical background along with the author's personal details provided on the topic, it is now possible to claim that Burgess's ambiguous portrayals of the state, its bodies and its representatives arise from the author's convictions that had been based on personal experiences and involve such topics as politics and, most prominently, religion.

The author's inconsistent yet conservative political perspective clarifies the strong presence of liberal criticism in the novels, as could be observed in the manifestations of Pelagian ideals' downfall in both *The Wanting Seed* and *A Clockwork Orange*. Furthermore, the themes of civil rights and freedoms do not mainly reflect the author's literary intention despite the brief notions of class in *A Clockwork Orange*; as the research shows, it is a rather minor problem that Burgess, in comparison to the academia, offers a clear answer to — the concept of moral ambiguity. Constructing the dystopian narratives, Anthony Burgess not only emphasises the irrelevance of conventional civil virtue but also presents the instances of its inapplicability. Observing the author's stance, Burgess perceives the works cyclically, as the reoccurrence of good and evil states in *A Clockwork Orange*, or history cycle in *The Wanting Seed*, therefore illustrating the unsustainability of the human convictions and the government's control and confirming their equal

fluidity. Accordingly, the Burgessian government and agencies acquire the role of a necessary authorised system that fails, paradoxically, to govern an eternally fluid population; thus, the author projects the imperfect nature of humankind and each of its members, supporting the anarchic leaning of Wilson.

The renouncement of faith reveals the major ideological components of *The Wanting Seed* and *A Clockwork Orange*'s narratives and how they affect the state agencies' imageries. Burgess was brought up in a Catholic tradition; Christianity is within his cultural code. Accordingly, the author demonstrates the cultural frustration from the event in a non-linear, reappearing notion of God in different forms, one of which, however, seems to be the fictional government, as shown previously in the research. Moreover, the Original Sin is among the premises for the two works, meaning that Augustinianism is the justification for not only the government's rigorous treatment but also the explanans for the rise of ultraviolence and the demographic collapse due to humankind's predisposition for malice, from Burgess's perspective. In addition, due to the author's seemingly biased attitude, God also becomes the target of that philosophy. As a result, the governmental agencies do not particularly correspond with the notion of inhumanity but rather support the author's claim on human innate wickedness along with the negligent actions of the ordinary population, such as Beatrice-Joanne or Alex. In an unanticipated manner, Fyodor Dostoevsky poses a particular interest for the research as his literary devices and techniques, such as polyphony, carnivalisation, or the problem of moral consent to perform harm, inspire Burgessian heterogeneous literature and, what is paramount, the state's manifestations in the novels. These notions clarify the complex

imageries of the state and its agencies by proving the author's point on the dichotomy of good and evil, which are inseparable elements of an individual's essence. Accordingly, Burgess's dystopian novels are atypical in a manner that they contradict the canonised tyranny of authorities in the genre. *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* present the state's benevolent behaviour patterns and intentions to portray the "plurality of consciousness" that Bakhtin asserts.

Therefore, the revealed information and findings discussed in the paper not only answer the research question of the state authorities' roles, functions, and meanings and how they could be interpreted within the context of *A Clockwork Orange* and *The Wanting Seed* but also provide proof of the author's intention in relation to the historical, social, and cultural context. Furthermore, the original contribution confirms the topic's relevance and fills the slim academic gap regarding the government, its representatives, and agencies in Burgess's literature. Therefore, the research offers a modern analysis of the subject, suggests an elaborate review by utilising the cultural studies approach, and investigates previously omitted themes of Anthony Burgess's literary works.

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